



BUILDING ON COMMON GROUND

TRANSFORMING LIVES. STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES.

MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS:

Bethel Temple COGIC
 Catholics for Peace and Justice
 CMPerceptions: A Fine Art Gallery
 Community Baptist Church
 Congregation Beth Jehudah
 Congregation Emanu-El B'Ne
 Jeshurun
 Congregation of Sisters of
 St Agnes
 Core El Centro
 Corinth Baptist Church
 Gesu Parish
 Grace Lutheran Church (LCMS)
 Hanson Dodge Creative
 Hopewell Baptist Church
 Immanuel Presbyterian Church
 Invisible Reality Ministry
 Islamic Society of Milwaukee
 Marquette University
 for Common Ground
 Mt Calvary Church LCMS
 Mt Hermon Baptist Church
 Mt Horeb Baptist Church
 Mount Mary College
 North Shore United Educators
 OK Organization
 Pilgrim United Church of Christ
 Progressive Baptist Church
 Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church
 St Anthony on the Lake
 St Catherine Congregation
 St Francis Cabrini Parish
 St James Episcopal Church
 St Luke's Lutheran Church
 St Mark's Episcopal Church
 St Martin of Tours Parish
 St Michael Parish
 St Paul Episcopal Church
 Tippecanoe Presbyterian Church
 Transformation City Church
 Uniting Garden Homes, Inc.
 UU's United for Social Justice
 Unitarian Universalist
 Church West
 Village Church (ELCA)
 Wauwatosa Presbyterian Church
 WI Nurses and Health
 Professionals

Editor: Sharon DePue
 Layout: Ruth Vonderberg

• TEAM MEETINGS

• EDUCATION

Date: Thursday, January 12
 Time: 6:30—8:00 pm
 (6:00 pm briefing — see below)
 Place: Crossing Jordan Church
 4236 N. Teutonia Avenue

Childcare available*

EDU Briefing: Please join us at 6pm
 prior to the Education Team meeting
 to ask questions and get updates
 from EDU team leaders.

**Reserved childcare available with your
 RSVP —\$5 for two kids, additional \$3
 for more children. RSVP to Julie Lange.*

• FORECLOSURES (Milwaukee Rising)

Date: Thursday, January 5
 Time: 7:00 pm
 Place: St. Catherine's Parish
 51st and Center

• HEALTHCARE

Date: Tuesday, January 3
 Time: 7:00 pm
 Place: St. Mark Episcopal
 2618 N. Hackett

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Common Ground is an organization of organizations. Our members are congregations, businesses, religious groups, unions, schools, non-profits, neighborhood associations and civic groups. As a member organization, you are able to request the time of Common Ground's staff to help work on issues that are of concern to your members. If you're interested in supporting or joining Common Ground, please contact us.

SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN



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FRIENDS OF COMMON GROUND CAMPAIGN

We are verry, verry close to meeting the goal of the Friends of Common Ground campaign, but we're not quite there. If you haven't made your commitment yet, resolve in this new year of both challenges and opportunities to make your gift, small or large, toward the important work of CG. You may make your gift online at:
www.commongroundwi.org/donate.

HEALTHCARE COOPERATIVE

Tick, tock, tick, tock. I don't know about you, but I've never been very good at waiting, and this wait is more painful than most because \$62.1 million, a brand-new Wisconsin health insurance company, and the prospect of more affordable health insurance for employees of non-profits and small businesses, and the self-employed are at stake.

In early December, five members of our Common Ground Health Care Cooperative board traveled to Washington, D.C. for the "vetting" of our application for a start up loan allowing CG to go into the health insurance business. The presentation went extraordinarily well (our representatives were uber prepared), and January should bring us news of the decision. In the meantime, we wait — tick, tock, tick, tock.



MILWAUKEE RISING

The December 10 Milwaukee Rising tour of rehabilitated foreclosed homes in Sherman Park did not start smoothly (bus troubles), but after hasty but efficient car pooling arrangements were made, we were off to a thrilling look at some truly impressive transformative changes in that neighborhood.

Five homes were open for inspection, with one of the five in “before” status, still in the condition it was at the time Milwaukee Rising and its partners acquired it. Its future holds the prospect of major renovation and rehabilitation.

But let me tell you what more than 55 “tourists,” some of them potential buyers, saw and what we learned. We saw large, airy rooms, 3 and more bedrooms, lots of new kitchen cabinets, new countertops, appliances and vanities, freshly painted and carpeted rooms, plenty of closet space, built-in buffets and china cabinets, beautiful hardwood floors, new lighting fixtures, new plumbing fixtures — I could go on and on — all in homes listed for prices from \$100,000 to \$150,000 (a duplex one block from St. Joe’s Hospital). On hand were an ACTs housing counselor, a Marine credit union representative, realtors, employees of the City of Milwaukee Neighborhood Stabilization Program, and a representative of the Sherman Park Community Association to explain how restoration of these homes has been financed and, more important, what it takes to become a proud homeowner. To top it off, there were snacks, too! Early on it became clear that one could easily buy one of these houses for less than typical monthly rent.



So — tell your friends, tell your neighbors, tell your grown children and your aunts and uncles and cousins by the dozens. A miracle is unfolding in Sherman Park, and it’s waiting for those lucky (and smart) enough to envision the future of this neighborhood.

Common Ground’s mantra, “Change You Can See,” is being realized in Sherman Park, and we can take great pride in the role we are playing in making that happen.

Please contact Kathleen.Scott@commongroundwi.org if you are interested in having your organization participate in a Milwaukee Rising Home Tour.

www.CommonGroundWi.org • Like us at [facebook.com/](https://www.facebook.com/commongroundwi)

EDUCATION

Unintended consequences are always interesting. The Common Ground Education study group is continuing its travels to look at schools that work and, in the process, several of those high performing schools have expressed their interest in membership in Common Ground.

The extensive research undertaken by the dedicated individuals who make up the study group is moving CG forward to an understanding of the areas in the broad field of education where we are best equipped to make a critical difference.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT — Bob DeVita is a renaissance



man. This Milwaukee native, first generation American (his father immigrated from Italy), and recently retired Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of Wheaton Franciscan Medical Group is thus far resisting the dubious allure of perpetual golf games and early bird dinners to instead devote his life to living the Gospels in action. His watchwords: “Preach the Gospel. Use words if you must.” (St. Francis of Assisi)

Bob, who serves Common Ground as a member of the Wisconsin Healthcare Cooperative Board of Advisors and Strategy Team, has been a vital part of CG since its inception, through his and his wife Jean’s relationships with their parish Three Holy Women and his with Wheaton Franciscan, both founding members of CG. But his activism doesn’t stop with us. He is a member of his Parish Council, serves as an Instructor and Adjunct Faculty member at UW-M, is on the Boards of PeaceHealth and PET Ministries, travels from time to time to Italy (almost goes without saying) and Ireland (he’s in love with Irish history) and, in his spare time, volunteers as a high school football coach.

Finally, you need to know that all of this generosity of spirit does not make Bob self righteous — far from it. His sense of humor and affability make him eminently approachable. So — if you find yourself in his company, invite him to share some pasta with you, but offer up a Guinness, too.

WISH FOR THE NEW YEAR

As the “busyness” of the 2011 holiday season fades, we set our sights on a 2012 full of promise for the increasing effectiveness and influence of Common Ground. We wish you all a new year of “Change You Can See” and the personal fulfillment that comes from making a real difference in the lives of real people.

