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Churches offer leadership to improve neighborhood

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I thank the 150 participants who attended the Congregations United for Neighborhood Action meeting at Sacred Heart Church on June 2. The Local Organizing Committee at Sacred Heart Parish worked hard to research blighted properties and other 9th Ward issues. We thank Mayor Ed Pawlowski and City Housing Supervisor David Rimmel for patiently listening.

We were also gratified that 24 members of other congregations joined in this effort. They included St. Paul Lutheran, Dubbs UCC, San Martin de Porres Lutheran, St. James UCC, Zion Reformed UCC, Christ Lutheran, St. Catharine of Sienna, Vision Missionary Church, Our Lady Help of Christians, Lehigh County Conference of Churches, Mt. Sinai Pentecostal, St. Paul Catholic, St. Francis of Assisi Catholic and New Covenant Church, all of Allentown.

There also were several Bethlehem churches, including First Presbyterian, the Unitarian Universalist Church, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Holy Infancy, St. Anne, Holy Ghost and Notre Dame, the Korean Congregation of the Lehigh Valley, Wesley United Methodist Church and the Lehigh Valley Friends.

Together we presented our concerns about irresponsible landlords and tenants, high turnover of properties, poor management by absentee landlords, blighted and deteriorating properties and required inspections. We also encouraged the mayor to support programs that would increase home ownership, affordable housing and increased owner-occupancy of properties.

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Allentown

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Editor

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