67th PRECINCT
CLERGY COUNCIL, INC.
“THE GODSQUAD”

Public Safety Coalition
2018 Year End Report
Message From Our President
Pastor Gilford T. Monrose

Over the last decade, the 67th Precinct Clergy Council, Inc., “The GodSquad”, has committed to partner with law enforcement and the community in making our neighborhoods a safe place for everyone.

I am pleased to present our East Flatbush Public Safety Coalition 2018 Year End Report outlining the work that The GodSquad has executed over the duration of the year. I thank all the members of The GodSquad who worked tirelessly throughout the course of the year to assist in the drastic reduction of gun violence crimes in the confines of the 67th Precinct.

Included in this report are strategies and innovative ideas that The GodSquad implemented in 2018. We share these initiatives with our clergy colleagues, elected officials, and community members with hopes that these ideas will add to the conversation of clergy involvement in promoting public safety. The work will continue for years to come and we encourage you to join us in continuing to make public safety a shared responsibility.

Gil

No more silence, end gun violence
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Introduction

The sharing of responsibility for public safety by police with community, social service agencies, and violence interrupter organizations, as coordinated by strong clergy leadership, continues to contribute toward historic declines and lows in crimes and criminal activity within the boundaries of the 67th Precinct.

The 67th Precinct Clergy Council (Clergy Council) serves as the liaison between the police, community, and congregations to promote healthy neighborhoods while minimizing crime and reviving activism within our churches. The membership is comprised of clergy, local pastors, associate pastors, ministers, elders, and evangelists. It focuses on lessening neighborhood tensions and the burdens on government, combating community deterioration and juvenile delinquency, and further supporting police officers, community, and houses of worship.

Since 2010, with the full cooperation of the 67th Precinct, the Clergy Council has been a valued partner in the fight against senseless gun violence. The Clergy Council has responded to numerous calls concerning gunshot victims and their families with hospital visits, counseling sessions, prayer vigils, community walks, gun violence forums, and funeral services. We have the full support of the New York Police Department (NYPD), community members, support services, law enforcement, and religious leaders. With 70 member churches and our solid and esteemed board of directors, the Clergy Council was strongly positioned to make a great impact this year in the community that we love, serve, and cherish.

The Public Safety Coalition’s plan, in operation since 2017, is designed to implement a collective, comprehensive, community initiative to decrease the involvement of young people in gangs, crimes, and gun violence within the jurisdiction of the 67th Precinct. This plan embodies a holistic approach involving various partners and supporters in our diverse neighborhood, with resources invested by these community partners for the betterment of the entire Brooklyn community.
East Flatbush – Where We Serve

Inner city communities are often described in terms of the challenges they face. While there certainly are some challenges, the vibrancy and resilience of these communities is often overlooked and underappreciated – and such is the case with East Flatbush. Located in the heart of Brooklyn, East Flatbush is one of the Borough’s most enduring communities. The area was populated after WWII predominantly by immigrant Jews and Italians, then in the 1960s by African Americans. It has most recently become home to many West Indian immigrants. Blacks now comprise over 90% of the neighborhood, with 51% foreign born and 22% speaking a language other than English at home.

It is mostly residential, consisting primarily of private homes, with two large housing complexes within its confines. There are two small industrial areas, one on Glenwood Road and the other on Ditmars Avenue. While there are pockets of affluence, the population is mostly working-class, with a median household income in 2016 of $52,259 and 16% of families living below the poverty line (NYU Furman Center’s NYC neighborhood data profile). As in many locations, poverty is one of the many indicators that often drives crime.

Gun Violence in New York City

Total shooting incidents declined 4% since 2017 and 32% since 2013 citywide

- 2013: 1,103
- 2016: 998
- 2017: 789
- 2018: 753*

2018 saw the largest shooting incident decline in the 2nd quarter of the year – at 7% reduction between April through June, compared to 2017

Safer Summers: Between 2016 and 2017 the largest gains in shooting reductions happened during the summer months (-31%)

- July - September 2018: 234 Shooting Incidents
- July - September 2017: 240 Shooting Incidents
- July - September 2016: 350 Shooting Incidents
- July - September 2008: 474 Shooting Incidents
NYPD 67th Police Precinct - How We Got Here

One of the inner city challenges faced by residents of East Flatbush is crime. A brief historical survey indicates that the City’s drug epidemic of the 1980s and 1990s did not spare East Flatbush, ravaging such areas as the Vanderveer Estates Apartments, now known as Flatbush Gardens. The intersection of Foster and Nostrand Avenues was nicknamed “The Front Page” because of media attention to drug murders there. Foster Avenue between New York and Brooklyn Avenues to the south was called “The Back Page” because its many murders went unnoticed. While murder rates have declined in correlation to the City’s declining rates, the 67th Precinct began to experience a spike in the 2000s. Its murder rates once again garnered attention as being among the 5 precincts in the City accounting for 25% of violence. Statistics showed that the precinct witnessed an increase from 53 shootings in 2015 to 62 shootings (76 victims) in 2016. Much of the increased murder, and indeed the violence itself, was attributable to youth gangs and crews operating within certain sectors of the neighborhoods.

To address the rise in violence, the NYPD focused on rapid response to reported crime, swift presence at crime scenes, and the implementation of Neighborhood Policing throughout New York City. The 67th Precinct became a Neighborhood Community Officer (NCO) command under Neighborhood Policing. The NYPD made additional personnel available during the summer months to increase police presence through the “Summer All-Out” plan.
NYC Ceasefire, under the new Office of Collaborative Policing’s gun violence intervention model, is an initiative that was officially launched in December 2014, in collaboration with David Kennedy and the National Network for Safe Communities. The 67th Precinct Clergy Council was one of two clergy groups that were the first to be trained in this model. NYC Ceasefire recognizes that most of the violence in New York City is committed by a small number of people involved in street groups: gangs, crews, and drug sets, who are the main perpetrators of violent offenses. The initiative focuses on reducing violence by communicating clearly and directly to these group-members through call-ins and custom notifications. Similarly, the Clergy Council addresses gun violence creatively through unique faith-based programs and street level initiatives (listed further in this report).

The 67th Precinct had steeper declines in homicides and shootings than both Brooklyn and New York City

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- Homicides **declined 65%**, from 17 to 6
- Shooting Victims **declined by 21%**, despite a 6% total increase in shooting victims in Brooklyn.
- Shooting incidents **declined 15%**, while citywide shooting incidents fell by 4%
Programs and Services
The following programs and services were created and structured for a collaborative response by clergy and community organizations that can provide free wraparound services to high-risk individuals. These operations also show the community that clergy leaders care and are involved in our community.

- Bereavement service
- Unsolved murder case follow-up
- Mothers Support/Peer Group
- Clergy self-care
- Flatbush Leadership Academy
- Roll Call at the Precinct
- Tilden Residence Hall Program
- Shooting responses
- Block Take-Over
- Occupy the Corners
- Prayer vigils
- Operation Sky Watch
- Memorial services
- Funeral services
- Clergy Walks
- ER Crisis Response Team
- J’Ouvert Operations
The Mayor’s Office of Criminal Justice (MOCJ) is our main partner, and the NYPD (primarily the 67th Precinct Command) helps to build relationships with and support of NYPD personnel. With their support, the Clergy Council:

- acts as a liaison between the NYPD and the community
- advises on community concerns
- offers solutions to community problems
- interfaces with Commanding Officers
- supports youth programs
- supports crime prevention programs
- supports NYPD community affairs initiatives
- collaborates with other clergy groups/community agencies
- provides spiritual and wellness care for all

**Community Events**

- Reducing Gun Violence Summit
- Preventing Youth Violence Through Faith-Based Partnerships series
Wraparound Service Providers
As members of the clergy talk to youth, gang members and residences, our partners offer:

- job training;
- immigration services;
- lawyers and legal services;
- social services;
- food pantry locations;
- counseling; and
- many other services

Assistance to Families

- Creating an atmosphere of healing by offering comfort/care to families
- Being a constant presence for those needing support
- Guiding families through the grieving process (*from identifying their loved ones to guiding them through all aspects of the funeral*)
The GodSquad ER Crisis Response Team

Emergency rooms can be very chaotic when family members and friends gather to seek information about the victim. This can spill over to the operating and recovery floors as well. Because of this reality, we provide support and comfort to victims of gun violence and/or their family members, and incorporate intervention/prevention strategies for potential assailants. Office space is provided to serve as a contact point where victims of gun violence and their families may conference and receive adequate support, necessary hospital visits, and follow-up care. We have transformed the way that gunshot victims and their families are handled, and walk with them though the crisis, providing clergy care for all.

Public Safety Coalition Clergy Training & Curriculum

Some imperatives related to ending gun violence in America include faith that it can be done, the will to act, and the tools to bring about change. To this end, the GodSquad hosted intensive trainings based on our battle-tested model for reducing gun violence through faith-based initiatives. This training covers the role of faith and the intricacies of gun violence prevention, and includes an in-depth look at all our major programs that are now part of the City’s first Public Safety Coalition. Topics covered include:

- The Hidden Effects of Gun Violence on Communities and Families
- Our Community Response to the Culture of Gun Violence and Gangs
- Potential Partnership and Resource Sharing
- Praying with Our Feet: Our Response
- The Role of Faith: How to Preach and Teach on Gun Violence
- Understanding the Role of “Wraparound” Service Providers
- NYC CeaseFire Protocols
Mothers’ Support Group Activities and Advocacy

- **Peer Support Sessions for Families of Homicide Victims**
  Every fourth Friday, survivors meet for peer-support sessions for healing, recovery, and growth.

- **Hope & Healing Survivors of Violence Holiday Party**
  Survivors are encouraged to give encouragement and to activate resilience within their family circle. During the holidays – a time that is often not happy for the surviving families, this event provides hope, support, and celebration for the families who have lost loved ones through gun violence.

- **Support for Families with Unsolved Homicide Cases**
  Many of our grieving mothers (families) have lamented over the growing number of unsolved murders arising from gun violence. According to a January 2014 Daily News article, Tale of Two Cities: As murders hit record low in NYC, a mountain of cases languishes in outer boroughs as cops focus more manpower, the top three precincts with the most open murders are the 67th Precinct (East Flatbush) with 10 out of 12 unsolved, the 77th Precinct (Crown Heights) with 9 out of 13 unsolved, and the 75th Precinct (East New York) with 8 out of 17 unsolved. (https://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/nyc-crime/forgotten-record-murder-rate-cases-unsolved-article-1.1566572)

  As a result, we have launched this pilot program to work on a specific number of unsolved homicide cases from our Mothers Support Group. The information provided by family members is shared with the Brooklyn District Attorney’s Office and the NYPD Detective Squad so that these cases can be given priority and justice can be served.

**WE SUPPORT AND ADVOCATE THAT:**

- the New York City Police Commissioner appoints a Detective (First-Grade) that will serve as a liaison between the Detective Squad and the victims’ families during the investigative period

- the Brooklyn District Attorney’s Office appoints an experienced survivor advocate as a permanent liaison who will communicate with families and offer referrals to therapeutic services, grief counselors, and resources specifically relating to mental health.
THIS WILL CREATE:

- enhanced communication between law enforcement and families;
- improved relationships and trust between law enforcement and community;
- timely justice for grieving families and accountability of violent offenders; and
- some level of closure and healing.

We are working tirelessly to reduce gun violence and to address the trauma and negative psychological and emotional impact that unsolved homicide cases have made on grieving families and the larger community. Clergy, law enforcement, and the community must work in partnership to ensure that families are able to obtain justice.

_We can end gun violence_
Mayor’s Office Features the Public Safety Coalition
[www.nyc.gov/peacenyc]

With citywide crime rates plummeting throughout much of the 2000s, the Brooklyn neighborhood of East Flatbush saw a pattern of violence that remained stubbornly persistent.

To address violence, community groups, neighborhood leaders, and clergy formed partnerships with the Mayor’s Office and the 67th Precinct in order to form the first-ever Public Safety Coalition. Acting in concert from July 1 to September 29, 2017, the Coalition witnessed historically low shooting incidents and correspondingly low numbers of shooting victims as compared to rates of the prior year. Coordinated by strong clergy leadership, the crime rate in New York City – particularly in areas that once experienced endemic violence – can continue its decline to historic lows with the sharing of responsibility for public safety by police, community, social service agencies, and violence interrupter organizations.

The voices and sounds of this work reflect the heartbreaking reality of gun violence in New York City. While it is deeply upsetting and may not be suitable for everyone, we hope it inspires others to develop similar coalitions in other communities affected by gun violence. Visit www.nyc.gov/peacenyc to listen to the important and often difficult work of the Public Safety Coalition.

“Peace cannot be achieved through violence, it can only be attained through understanding.”

Ralph Waldo Emerson
Safe Summer Campaign 2018

During Memorial Day Weekend, the GodSquad, elected officials, law enforcement officers, mothers who lost children to gun violence, community leaders, service providers, and concerned residents kicked off our Safe Summer Campaign, our call to keep “praying with our feet” as we plan to keep a vigilant eye in our neighborhoods for a safe and violence-free summer. We launched this joint, comprehensive, community plan to decrease the involvement of high-risk youth with gangs, crime, and gun violence in the summer months. Our goal is to create a safer, more peaceful neighborhood during the summer months.

Since public safety is a shared responsibility, this plan embodied a holistic approach from our various partners and supporters. Through our partnerships, we achieved a significant reduction in the number of gunplay incidents. Our holistic collaborations include grassroots organizations, elected officials, and service providers mixed with prayer and promotion of resources as part of our intervention and prevention. Our Safe Summer engagements included the following:

1. “Occupy The Corners” (OTC) took place, in partnership with East Flatbush Village, Inc., every Friday and Saturday from 11:00 pm – 2:00 am in the months of July and August, along with Clergy Walks before and during J’ouvert. During OTC, partners and volunteers shared positive solution driven conversations on how we can reduce the violence in the community.
2. Brownsville Prayer Vigil & Walk, 400 Rockaway Avenue (Friday, June 1, 10:00 am)
3. “Not In MY Hood” March & Rally, Meyer Loves JHS (Saturday, June 2, 1:00 pm)
4. Shooting Response, E. 95th and Rutland Road (Tuesday, June 12, 6:00 pm)
5. Father’s Day Pledge Against Violence, City Hall (Thursday, June 14, 12:00 pm)
6. Active Shooter in House of Worship Training, Kingsbrook Jewish Center, 585 Schenectady Avenue (Tuesday, June 19, 10:00 am – 1:00 pm)
7. Block Take Over, Rutland Road & E. 93rd Street (Tuesday, June 19, 6:30 pm)
8. LiveFree National Gun Violence Summit, Los Angeles, CA (Thursday, June 21)
9. Block Take Over, Flatbush Avenue & E. 32nd Street (Tuesday, June 26)
10. ADL Board Meeting – “Gun Violence & Mass Shooting Conversations,” New Jersey (Wednesday, June 27)
11. 4th Annual Evening of Remembrance & Reflections to End Gun Violence, 1049 Utica Avenue (Thursday, June 28, 6:00 pm)
12. WBAI 99.5 FM Interview on Gun Violence (Monday, July 9, 11:00 am)
13. Hospital Response, Kings County Hospital Emergency Room (Monday, July 9, 10:00 pm)
14. Shooting Response, “Justice for Justin Hackley”, Flatbush Avenue (Wednesday, July 11, 6:30 pm)
15. **Shooting Response**, March, Clergy Counseling, 1396 Broadway (Thursday, July 12, 9:00 am)
16. **Police & Community Unity Walk Meeting**, 323 E. 53rd Street (Thursday, July 12, 6:30 pm)
17. **70th Precinct Interfaith Clergy Council Meeting**, Offer Technical Assistance in Ceasefire Council (Tuesday, July 17, 11:00 am)
18. **Shooting Response**, E. 98th Street & Rutland Road (Tuesday, July 17, 6:30 pm)
19. **Meeting with Major General Anderson**, Jamaica's Police Commissioner, Marriott Brooklyn Bridge (Thursday, July 19, 7:00 pm)
20. **Conference Meeting** (Friday, July 20, 7:00 pm)
21. **Justin Richey Funeral**, Grace Funeral Chapels, 607 North Conduit Boulevard (Tuesday, July 24, 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm)
22. **Shooting Response**, 222 E. 39th Street (Wednesday, July 25, 7:00 pm)
23. **Kyon L. Jackson Funeral**, Brooklyn Funeral Home & Cremation Service, 2385 Pacific Street (Thursday, July 26, 7:00 pm)
24. **Unity Walk**, Empire Boulevard & Flatbush Avenue to Utica Avenue & Church Avenue (Saturday, August 4, 11:00 am – 6:00 pm)
25. **Nail Salon Rally & Protest** (Monday, August 6, 2:00 pm – 8:00 pm)
26. **67th Precinct National Night Out** (Tuesday, August 7, 6:30 pm – 9:30 pm)
27. **70th Precinct Interfaith Clergy Council** (Tuesday, August 7, 11:00 am – 12:00 pm)
28. **KAVI**, Kings County Hospital Violence Intervention Program, Downstate Hospital, (Tuesday, August 14, 11:00 am – 3:00 pm)
29. **Preventing Youth Violence through Faith-Based Partnership**, Goshen Temple SDA, 2414 Church Avenue (Wednesday, August 15, 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm)
30. **CeaseFire/Call In**, Lenox Road Baptist Church (Thursday, August 16, 5:30 pm)
31. **Operation Ceasefire** visits (approximately 130 for the year)
32. **8th Annual Reducing Gun Violence Summit**: Families with Unsolved Homicide Cases, Kings County Hospital, T Building Auditorium, 2nd Floor, 451 Clarkson Avenue (Thursday, August 23, 6:30 pm – 9:30 pm)
33. **Peer Support Sessions for Families of Homicide Victims**, BrightPoint Health (July 20 & 27, every 4th Fridays, 6:00 pm)
34. **Pre-J’Ouvert Prayer Tour**, Empire Boulevard/Flatbush Avenue (6:30 pm), Empire Boulevard/Nostrand Avenue (7:00 pm), Flatbush Avenue/Church Avenue (7:45 pm), Church Avenue/Utica Avenue (8:30 pm) (Sunday, September 2)
35. **67th Precinct Clergy Council Monthly Meeting** (Tuesday, September 20) – training and updates meeting.
Brooklyn Clergy Task Force 2018 Statistical Snapshot

A statistical summation of both murders and non-fatal shootings within selected communities of Central Brooklyn this year determined that Saturday, Sunday, and Monday are the most dangerous days of the week, accounting for 40% of the murders. These murders have predominantly occurred during the evening or early morning hours. In terms of motive, dispute related murders accounted for 34% of the murders, while another 22% were gang related. In these selected communities, 84% of the victims were male, with 77% being African American and 19% of them between the ages of 18 and 24. Notably, 28% of the victims had some degree of criminal background. These trends were used to focus and target these hotspots during Occupy The Corners.
West Indian Day Parade and J’Ouvert Engagement

The Clergy Council assembled a group of dedicated community partners to coordinate its efforts with MOCJ and local law enforcement partners in order to create a safe experience for all participating New Yorkers during J’Ouvert and the West Indian Day Parade activities.

- **Community Partners** – East Flatbush Village, Lay the Guns Down, Immigrants Responding to Crisis, GMAAC.

- **Street Level Engagement** – Clergy members identified high risk areas within the community and distributed public education materials, canvassed the service area, and provided prayer and support. Our presence at the location and during the times where youth with risk factors for criminal involvement were apt to congregate helped us to engage them. Trained clergy and community partners built positive relationships as they engaged in street-level and one-on-one work in order to identify and meet resource needs.

- **Thursday, August 30** – Strategic Planning Conference Call for Safe Summer.

- **Friday, August 31 and Saturday, September 1** – Community coalition members received intensive instruction in community engagement and conflict resolution.

- **Sunday, September 2** – Clergy members occupied corners and canvassed blocks in identified “hot spot” areas along the parade route, and prayerfully watched for any signs of violence, talked to residents, offered prayers for individuals and parade goers when asked, and created public visibility on the streets. Occupy The Corners locations:
  - Empire Boulevard and Flatbush Avenue
  - Empire Boulevard and Nostrand Avenue
  - Flatbush Avenue and Church Avenue
  - Church Avenue and Utica Avenue

*Come on guys, let’s have safer streets*
- **Monday, September 3 (4:00 am – 9:00 am)** – Clergy members and partners vigilantly identified violent conflicts and mitigated these issues through their familiarity with high risk individuals and other community members. Distribution of public education materials in addition to canvassing the service area at neighborhood events and other activities were effectively completed. The J’Ouvert route locations were:
  - Empire Boulevard
  - Flatbush Avenue
  - Bedford Avenue
  - New York Avenue
  - Nostrand Avenue & Lefferts Avenue

- **Monday, September 3** – West Indian Day Parade route canvassing and street level engagement.

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2019**

- Stationed areas throughout the J’Ouvert and West Indian Day Parade route.
- Mapping of high risk areas and setting up appropriate stations.
- 2-3 meetings/planning sessions with all service providers prior to J’Ouvert/West Indian Day Parade.
- Better communication with NYPD regarding awareness of organizations and groups that are providing anti-violence interventions during J’Ouvert and the West Indian Day Parade.
**NYC CeaseFire and Custom Notifications Visits**

In an effort to reduce violence among street groups, custom notifications are an opportunity for the NYC Ceasefire partnership to meet with members of groups (i.e., gangs, crews, and drug sets) and speak about keeping group members alive, safe, and out of prison. NYC Ceasefire’s strategy focuses on group violence because group members are at greatest risk of being the victims of violence and/or committing violence themselves. Custom notifications provide group members with information on the consequences of continued violence as well as the availability of support and services.

The NYC Ceasefire message is clear:

1. we want you alive, safe, and out of prison;
2. stop the violence: don’t kill anyone, don’t shoot anyone, and don’t stab anyone;
3. there will be real consequences for continued violence; and
4. we will help any group member who asks.

**Role of Clergy in Delivering Custom Notifications**

Custom notifications are delivered by a joint team of law enforcement personnel and clergy members of the GodSquad, who come from various backgrounds. We share our experiences with violence or street life, and convey our own personal message about the importance of the group member’s life. The law enforcement partnership will identify groups or group members to receive notifications in an attempt to prevent violence. Custom notifications can be delivered to group members who have recently been the victims of violence, group members who are involved in disputes that are likely to cause violence, and/or group members who are known to have access to weapons. Approximately 130 visits were made in 2018.

*Shoot hoops, not guns*
2019 Strategic Priorities and Vision

In 2019, it is our goal to build and grow on this collective, comprehensive, community plan to decrease young people’s involvement in gangs, crime, and gun violence in Central Brooklyn. The plan will embody a holistic approach from various members of Brooklyn’s diverse neighborhoods for the betterment of the entire Brooklyn community.

Providing Technical Assistance for 69th & 70th Precinct Clergy Councils

The clergy within these precincts have long played a significant and unique role in building and maintaining trusting relationships between their communities and the NYPD, serving as bridges between residents and the police. Our extended program, which will provide technical assistance for our neighboring Clergy Councils, will introduce a strategic alignment that will decrease gun violence and crime spots through street-level intervention. The development of a “Center of Expertise in Preventing Youth Violence Through Faith-Based Partnerships” will provide academic support to assist faith leaders in addressing youth violence in their particular communities, and will work collaboratively to initiate a model, namely a “Season of Peace,” to address circumstances that lead to spikes in violence during the summer months.
Season of Peace Strategy
Alternative dispute resolution models are now being utilized to negotiate terms for truce and peace, to prevent future violence, and to collaborate with our partners to attain a shooting-free summer. Highly visible community-led events – such as shooting responses, community rallies, sustained night walks, prayer vigils, candlelight street memorials, pop up tents, town halls, outdoor meetings, and communal meals – are held to continue to promote and maintain peace.

The GodSquad Mobile Unit
With capital funding from Assembly Member Diana Richardson (43rd A.D.), we have started the process of designing and formalizing the concept of a prototype GodSquad Mobile Unit that will serve not only as an emergency response vehicle that responds to crime scenes and victims’ homes and make visits to hospitals but will be used as an anti-violence educational tool. This Mobile Unit will be able to also serve as a beacon of hope as we service the high-risk community and youth. The presence of an onsite Mobile Unit that will serve as the command center to plan and meet with families and advocates will help maintain peace in the community.

Furthermore, this Mobile Unit will serve as a command center for prayer vigils and to provide a place for families and community members to meet at the location of the violence. It will also be used at schools and other public events as an anti-violence mobile station and will serve as an office for gang members or high risk youth to apply for social services and benefits. Through this unit, we will bring the services of nonprofits and government agencies directly to the disenfranchised youth.

In violence we forget who we are
Center of Expertise

The Center of Expertise (COE) program, one of the first in New York City, will be modeled after the best practices of national clergy led efforts such as the “Boston Miracle.” Along with our partners, we purpose to design and implement a comprehensive clergy engagement strategy that will build a “Center of Excellence for Faith Based Initiatives to End Youth Violence.” These partners will include the NYPD’s Office of the Commissioner, a university (to be announced), Medgar Evers College of the City University of New York, and MOJC.

The Clergy Council, with NYPD police leadership, will design and implement the model, as well as train volunteer clergy on the first phase of building out this model. The COE will serve as a model for the rest of the City as well. What makes this model different from existing models of clergy-led efforts already implemented in New York City and around the country is that this program will be both reactive and proactive, and will not be activated only in response to a shooting or homicide. As an adage of a group of firefighters clearly illustrates, “It’s too late to build relationships when smoke is in the air.”

The university (to be announced) will continue the faith-based aspect of the work and provide sustainability of the effort by giving its students the opportunity to work therein. This university will have an added interest in the model because of its desire to develop a COE to reduce youth violence through faith-based initiatives. The other partner, Medgar Evers College of the City University of New York, will be the research component of the initiative, ensuring the reliability, replicability, and scalability of the model through data analytics.

One child is worth more
Than all the guns on earth
Flatbush Leadership Academy
The Flatbush Leadership Academy (FLA) strives to groom and support potential male leaders residing in East Flatbush through personal growth, professional development, and mentorship. FLA will provide each young man with the training and tools necessary to develop into a more socially conscious, goal oriented, and responsible young adult.

The Need
The East Flatbush community is in dire need of career development centers and is in even greater need of solutions to tackle the prevalent violence amongst youth, particularly our young men. A crucial component associated with high rates of violence is poverty. Many East Flatbush residents suffer high rates of unemployment due to lack of academic achievement and/or criminal engagement. The FLA will provide East Flatbush’s emerging male leaders with vocational training, job development, and increased access to mentorship and guidance.

Use your brain, violence is insane
Our Goals & Objectives

- Reduce the violence committed by youth in East Flatbush
- Expose “at risk” young men to opportunities that will allow them to grow emotionally, mentally, and professionally
- Placement of these young men in an academic institution or career
- Provide support and resources to ensure all individuals attain their ideal life
- Empower young men to be positive leaders and catalysts of change in their homes and community at large

This initiative will provide life-changing opportunities for young men who are deemed “at risk” to grow as individuals and acquire skills that will allow them to reach their highest potential. Areas to be covered: Manhood, Financial Literacy & Overcoming Poverty, Community Organizing & Leadership, Career Development & Workplace Etiquette, Post-Evaluations, and Mentorship.

Final Outcomes

It is our goal and life’s work to reduce the violence in the communities in which we serve as pastors and faith leaders. Gun violence and the loss of life has a significant and traumatic effect on families and the communities in which they reside. The Public Safety Coalition has proved to be proactive by providing engaging activities, information, and training that has deterred further violence in our communities. Through the work of the PSC, there has been a significant reduction in the number of gun violence crimes that have overtaken our communities.

Don’t let people pull you into their storm, pull them into your peace.
With coordination by strong clergy leadership, the sharing of responsibility for public safety by the police with community, social service agencies, and violence interrupter organizations can continue the decline in crimes to historic lows, not only in the 67th Precinct but also throughout areas in New York City and beyond that are experiencing endemic violence.

We are eternally grateful for our partners – the 67th Precinct and its Commanding Officer, NCOs, and Community Affairs; the Police Commissioner’s office; NYC Ceasefire staff; MOJC; violence interrupters GMAAC, KAVI, East Flatbush Village, BrightPoint Health, Kings County Hospital, Kingsbrook & Brookdale Medical Centers, Mother’s Elect, and CAMBA; elected officials; and other community volunteers – for the success of the first-ever Public Safety Coalition. Acting in concert with all these groups to prevent shootings, we have witnessed historically low shooting incidents and correspondingly low numbers of shooting victims as compared to rates in previous years.

Our ultimate prayer and goal is to restore, heal, connect, recover, and empower our community to exist without violence. All we need to end gun violence in America is faith that it can be done, the will to act, and the tools to bring about change.

We have the faith, the will and the battle-tested methods to bring about that change. Amen!

**FAITH + ACTION = CHANGE**