



## Shrine of the Black Madonna

National Office: 700 Seward ~ Detroit, Michigan 48202

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**December 9, 2017**

The PAOCC is founded on upon the principle that nothing is more sacred than the liberation of Black People. This principle is our guiding mantra and reason for being. In keeping with this principle in 1971, we launched a program of national expansion. To facilitate this program of national expansion, in December of 1972, we purchased 700 Seward to train missionaries and house their families. The facility had a clear and urgent organizational purpose and made an invaluable programmatic contribution. The NTC has been incredibly successful. Over the years, the NTC has served many purposes. It relieved members of many of the responsibilities of everyday life so that energy could be focused on the church mission and program. It has made education, skill building, child care and group life easier. It provided members a refuge and safe haven where life essential food and shelter was never in doubt. It served as a visible symbol to the greater community of our commitment to our city and our mission. The NTC has allowed the PAOCC to remain viable as an organization long after other similar organizations have ceased to exist.

Over the last 45 years, many things have changed. In its present condition the NTC drains valuable resources that could otherwise be devoted to our mission and program. It is an aged building (almost one hundred years old) with many systems in need of replacement, retrofitting and renovation including a heating and cooling system that is neither reliable nor cost effective. Our 25% occupancy rate is insufficient to sustain the building. At present, the NTC plays no vital organizational role in our program of liberation to justify the financial resources tied up in maintaining a situation that is frankly, unsustainable.

We have to end the drain on resources caused by the NTC. There are now a number of strategies under consideration simultaneously. We can borrow money to retrofit the aged system and employ an outside company to increase occupancy and manage the building. We can sell the property outright now that New Center property is in great demand. We are aggressively pursuing both options. Either strategy will change the way we live. If we extensively retrofit and increase occupancy, the character of the building will radically shift from a community dominated by church values to a commercial residential development with diverse residents. If we sell, the new owner will manage the commercial building and retain the current residents. Or, the new owner will re-vamp the building and current residents will have to move.

Regardless of which strategy we employ, we are seeking the best outcome for our church and our members. We are committed to helping all of the building's residents transition in the best way possible. To the extent we have to relocate, we are prepared to offer assistance by:

- Providing as much advance notice as possible of the need to relocate.
- Providing potential landlords with excellent references.

Finding safe affordable housing through the use of relocation professionals working with our Ministerial staff.  
Offering financial assistance with relocation costs, including the actual physical move, deposits, and utilities.

If we retrofit and redevelop the building, we will demonstrate respect and appreciation for our long-term tenants by:

Carefully vetting new residents.  
Selecting management professionals who share our core values.  
Proceeding on any renovation in the least disruptive manner.  
Communicating essential information to residents and consulting them as we progress.

We will keep you informed as this process goes forward. If you have any questions, you may contact Bishop Mbiyu, Rev. Ifetayo, or Rev. Nilaja. We have also established an email account if you prefer to communicate by email. It is: [PAOCCQuestions@gmail.com](mailto:PAOCCQuestions@gmail.com). Or, you may leave a note in Box 711 at the NTC.

Sincerely,  
PAOCC Board of Directors