

METRO & STATE

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DYING YOUNG | LIBERTY CITY



PHOTOS BY DONNA E. NATALE FLAMAS/MIAMI HERALD STAFF

ATONEMENT: The street ministry of Mt. Tabor Baptist Church shares a moment of prayer in the church parking lot after walking the streets of Liberty City's Pork 'n' Beans neighborhood to recruit worshippers.

TAKING BACK THE STREETS

Outdoor church services are being held every Friday night in an effort to spur a spiritual revival to curb the violence in Liberty City.

BY PETER BAILEY
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"Go out to the roads and country lanes and make them come in, so that my house will be full." — Luke 14:23

JoeAnn Glover walked the sidewalk quoting the verse, heading toward a group of teenagers, her eyes glued on a young woman sitting with two children.

"We're holding a church service around the corner," Glover said.

"I have four kids with me, and they're really hungry," the girl sighed.

"Well there's gonna be a lot of good food. Make sure those babies come get something to eat," Glover replied.

Hungry kids, single mothers and impassioned ministers were among 200 people who attended a church service Friday evening outside New Mt. Moriah Baptist



WORSHIPERS: Tiffany Wright participates in an outdoor service with her 1-year-old nephew, Quentin.

canvassed the Pork 'n' Beans neighborhood late into the back the streets. "We can't wait on the gov-

out fliers.

"The church has to be at the forefront of saving this neighborhood."

More than 30 ministers from churches throughout Liberty City have committed to holding an outdoor church service every Friday night at Pork 'n' Beans in an effort to spur a spiritual revival to curb the violence plaguing the community.

"We just decided to do God's work. We're in a crisis right now, and the church has always been the savior in the black community," said Rev. Devin Brown, who spearheaded the effort.

Rooted in urban America's tumultuous soul, the church has been a steadfast force in the community even as poverty rocks its walls daily.

At Pork 'n' Beans, the church finds itself faced by a most formidable foe — the community's apathy.

Nine-year-old Sherdavia Jenkins was killed July 1 by a stray bullet while playing in her front yard. Neighbors say they're doubtful another

EDUCATION

New school to open amid high hopes

The founders of a new charter school — the first in Miami Beach — are active in a controversial self-awareness group.

BY MATTHEW L. PINZUR
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For years, every attempt to open a charter school in Miami Beach has failed — the process is arduous, the application is time-consuming and suitable land is hard to find.

The first possible charter school could open next month near the 79th Street Causeway, launched by a group of people who have little background in education and who are active in a self-awareness group known for its intensity.

"We had no idea [about opening a school], but whatever you don't know, you can learn," said Gladys Palacio, the school's director, who sold her janitorial-supply company to work full-time on the Charter on the Beach Middle School.

The idea was born during

Palacio's work with Landmark Education, which runs self-improvement seminars and has a record of aggressive recruitment.

Palacio leads introductory seminars for the San Francisco-based company, which has no official connection to the school. Three of the six members of the school's board of trustees are involved with the group, as is the woman who owns the building that will house the school.

Some of the volunteers helping Palacio establish the school are also active. At a recent school open house, one offered to register a Miami Herald reporter for Landmark's introductory seminar.

But Palacio said she will not bring Landmark's programs onto campus.

"If people come to me, I'll tell them," Palacio said. "But I'd never tell [a student or parent] they should do this or you have to this."

Some Miami Beach

*TURN TO CHARTER SCHOOL, 58



ROB VALLERONA/MIAMI HERALD STAFF

"Kids can have fun and learn from their core and who they are."

— GLADYS PALACIO, above, in front of the art gallery that she wants to turn into a charter school in Miami Beach