

8twelve COALITION



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DIRECTOR'S NOTE



It's been a while since you've had an update from your 8twelve leadership team. Thank you for your patience. I'm Patrick Smith, a retired church pastor and transitional leader, serving as your Interim Director.

This year has been a rebuilding and rethinking year. I've had an opportunity to listen to many of your concerns and dreams. Our Steering Committee members and Action Teams have continued to meet all year. We've been in intentional conversations with these groups.

We also have a new group – the Governance Council – individuals who, like you, are community stakeholders – people who care deeply about where we live and how to make our neighborhoods even better. They're helping think through the structure of 8twelve.

We're working on updates to the 8twelvemuncie.com website. We're partnering with Ball State University Cardinal Media students to produce this newsletter, and we're forging new partnerships across the community.

In football, everything hinges on the snap of the ball. The players know what play has been called, who's in the formation and what they are to do. Determined and focused, they see the ball snapped and instantly move as one.

Our 8twelve Coalition is poised at such a moment. Ten years ago, we came into existence to listen deeply to the hopes and aspirations of our neighborhoods. Profound collaborative investment has resulted in growing awareness of need and produced dynamic work that continues to bring about deep change.

A year ago, our residents and partner leaders decided it was time to do a thorough assessment of how far we've come, what still needs to be done, and determine the next steps for our lasting impact. As a part of this intentional transition chapter, I was invited to facilitate this part of 8twelve's journey.

We expect to be looking for a permanent Director in the coming year.

As we shift into 2026, we have a fresh resolve to deepen personal connections and strategically collaborate on transformational improvements block by block that will make Muncie's south side a place where everyone can experience life that is truly good for all.

Determined. Focused. Ready. It's time for the ball to be in play for a whole new decade.

— Pat Smith, 8twelve Coalition Interim Director

NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Muncie Arts & Culture Council broke ground in September on the Habitat for Humanity Gateway Gathering Space, as part of a \$500,000 public art initiative funded through the City of Muncie's American Rescue Plan Act allocation. Artist Greg Mueller designed the sculptural installation at West Eighth Street and South Hoyt Avenue as a welcoming space for conversation, quiet reflection, play, and performance.

This project is one of four new public artworks coming to South Central and Whitley neighborhoods.

The initiative also includes a sculptural installation at Shaffer Chapel by Cheryl Derricotte, a vibrant mural at ArtRize by Ashley Nora, and an interactive sculpture at the Boys & Girls Clubs by Project One Studio. These community-driven projects were selected through extensive public input to reflect neighborhood values and support economic development. Installation will continue in phases through early 2026, with community celebrations planned for each unveiling.



Artist rendering.

A BETTER PLACE TO BE!
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NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS

Avondale Christmas service set

Every Thursday evening, on the corner of 10th Street and Sampson Avenue, a community meal is served by the Avondale United Methodist Church.

This work provides meals for more than 75 guests every week, filling both empty stomachs and spiritual needs alike. For those interested, dinner is at 5 p.m., but a hot pot of coffee is on by 4 p.m. for those who show up early. Everyone is invited and welcome to join. A Christmas Eve service will be at 6 p.m. and regular Sunday services will be 11 a.m. on Dec. 28 and Jan. 4. Donuts and coffee will be served both Sundays.



The exterior of Avondale United Methodist Church.



Muncie representatives who attended the Christian Community Development Association annual conference. In the front is Lezlie McCrory, Tenisha Harris and T'eLar Fasel. In the back is Neil Kring, Jasmine Taylor and Patrick Smith.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Grand Rapids conference transformational for 8twelve team

In November, a group of 8twelve Coalition representatives visited Grand Rapids, Mich. for a Christian Community Development Conference. The conference brought together community leaders to exchange strategies for neighborhood revitalization.

Neil Kring, Lezlie McCrory, Jasmine Taylor, Patrick Smith, Tenisha Harris and T'eLar Fasel were among those who attended in hopes of bringing ideas of networking, collaboration and fellowship back to Muncie's neighborhoods. Attendees said the conference left them feeling hopeful and excited for what is to come in the new 8twelve operation.

This new chapter of 8twelve aims to remind Muncie community members that 8twelve Coalition is not going anywhere and attendance at the conference helped jump start future initiatives for 8twelve's neighborhoods.



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