



REDEEMER COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

SOUTH LOS ANGELES | WINTER 2021 UPDATE

Building & Becoming THE BELOVED COMMUNITY In South LA



Jefferson Drill Site Closed

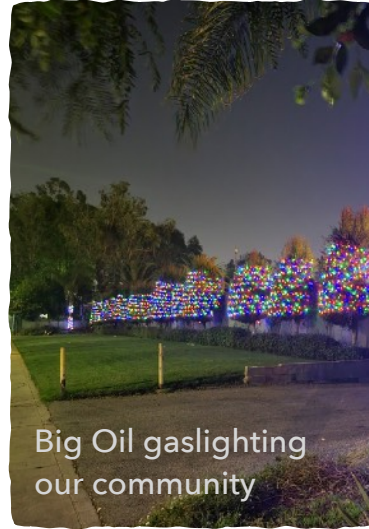
The news arrived just two weeks ago. Every oil well at the Jefferson Drill Site is now permanently plugged and capped. The oil industries' toxic violence against children in our community has come to an end--at least at this drill site.

Prayerfully, we are leaning into what a redeemed drill site might look like. Could it become a place of joy, peace and blessing for our community? Possibly a park and housing? We think so. A constellation of efforts to realize this vision are coalescing.

Murphy Drill Site

Meanwhile, a mile away at the last active oil drill site in South LA, our prayers for light to shine in the darkness continue to be answered. Earlier this year we shared photos with CalOSHA, the worker safety regulator, showing workers' safety imperiled. The oil company referred to our investigation request as a "fictitious memo" and chastised the agency for "prosecuting false claims". Last month CalOSHA cited the oil operator for nine violations and fined the company \$12,000.

In October, the company's senior vice president publicly denounced our assertion that the company was leaving this dangerous and toxic drill site



Big Oil gaslighting
our community



unattended at night, saying "People don't leave the site. That site is covered 24 hours." We provided the City with months of photos and video showing workers leaving the site unattended for more than five hours.

Each one of these instances and many more have served to expose more negligence and dishonesty. Initially, the City was reluctant to take action. Now they will hold a public hearing in early February to review the company's compliance (or lack thereof) with its operating conditions and the sufficiency of those conditions to protect public health and safety.

City-Wide Policy Change

This local work opened our eyes to the need for a citywide solution. Seven years ago Redeemer Community Partnership co-founded the Stand Together Against Neighborhood Drilling (STAND-LA) coalition. Last week, our policy proposal cleared its final hurdle before going to the full City Council for a vote. The policy declares neighborhood oil drilling a nonconforming land use citywide, stops new oil drilling in neighborhoods, and phases out existing operations. Years of effort locally and across the City are beginning to bear fruit.



We're so grateful to be back in person with our students this year!



Safe Routes to School

As we look to transition away from fossil fuels and their toxic impact on our community, we recognize that substantial investment will be needed to make active modes of transportation a viable alternative. Historic redlining and disinvestment in South LA have left our streets in a dangerous state of disrepair. Every major street in our community is on the City's so-called High Injury Network, the 6% of streets that account for 65% of all deaths and severe injuries to people walking. It is common for our neighbors to bike on sidewalks and drive wheelchairs into the streets because broken sidewalks are inaccessible.

Five years ago Redeemer helped the City of Los Angeles win a \$6 million state grant to turn this topsy-turvy reality around. The Jefferson Beautiful project will create a mile-long safe route to school on one of these dangerous neighborhood streets. The City recently decided to add \$2.2 million to the project, which will break ground by March 31. We cannot wait to see the transformation that repaired sidewalks, pedestrian lighting, street trees, bike lanes, signalized crossings and more will make for our whole community, especially kids walking to school with their families.

Adventures Ahead

Meanwhile, our Adventures Ahead instructors continue to help local kids succeed in school. Our director Ms. Lauren has been with the program for 17 years. Ms. Crystal is a retired LAUSD teacher. Ms. Karina is a mother of an Adventures Ahead student. Ms. Tiffany grew up in the community and now attends USC. Ms. Cynthia has a bachelor's degree in child development. This all-star team works in concert with a wonderful group of in-person and online Reading Buddies from far and wide. Together, they are helping kids catch up to grade level reading, all during an especially challenging time.

A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices

In this season of Advent and Christmas we reflect on light shining in the darkness, unexpected miracles, and a day of small beginnings. Here in our neighborhood, we celebrate that Light still pierces dark places, that miracles still unfold, and that days of small beginnings contain seeds of profound transformation.

We are so grateful for your partnership in building and becoming the beloved community in South LA. Merry Christmas!

Richard Parks, President

