

New beginnings. New challenges.

It was February, and our Cohort had just met together for the first time, sharing honestly about goals and fears for the upcoming six months. We extended hands around the table as KJ closed in prayer, and just as she finished, a bright ray of sunlight streamed through the window.

It was such a simple moment, our small Cohort gathered around a table with the flatbread crumbs from our lunch still in front of us. Following nearly a year of planning and a dark and gloomy Michigan winter, we all welcomed this moment as God's encouragement for what lay ahead.

We did not anticipate that what lay ahead would involve keeping social distance from our neighbors and each other, rescheduling learning intensives, and reshaping our justice and mission priorities to look less like highly relational community building, and more like dropping off food baskets at the closed doors of at-risk community members.

Yet, at the core of Cohort Detroit's work, we aim to grow leaders who respond to the needs of neighbors with Spirit-led action as they learn to love and trust God more deeply. Crises are times for deep growth, and I am committed to supporting our community leaders through this challenging period, excited for how God will lead. I encourage you to read the Resonate vision statements written by Cohort participants, [Josh Cook](#) and [KJ Pearson](#).

[View this email in your browser and see my past newsletters](#)



I led a spiritual retreat in the Michigan woods for our Cohort, a time to rest and refocus. As house leaders, Josh and KJ (top right) are almost always on call.



Our advisory council met in late February. Kwasi (far right) reminded us that programs move at the speed of relationship. Much of my work is slow relationship building, listening carefully, unlearning my own biases, experiencing the challenges of our marginalized contexts, like taking four hours and five stops to try to get a check cashed with one of our community leaders.



Eight Mile Wall, present (left) and 1940's (right)

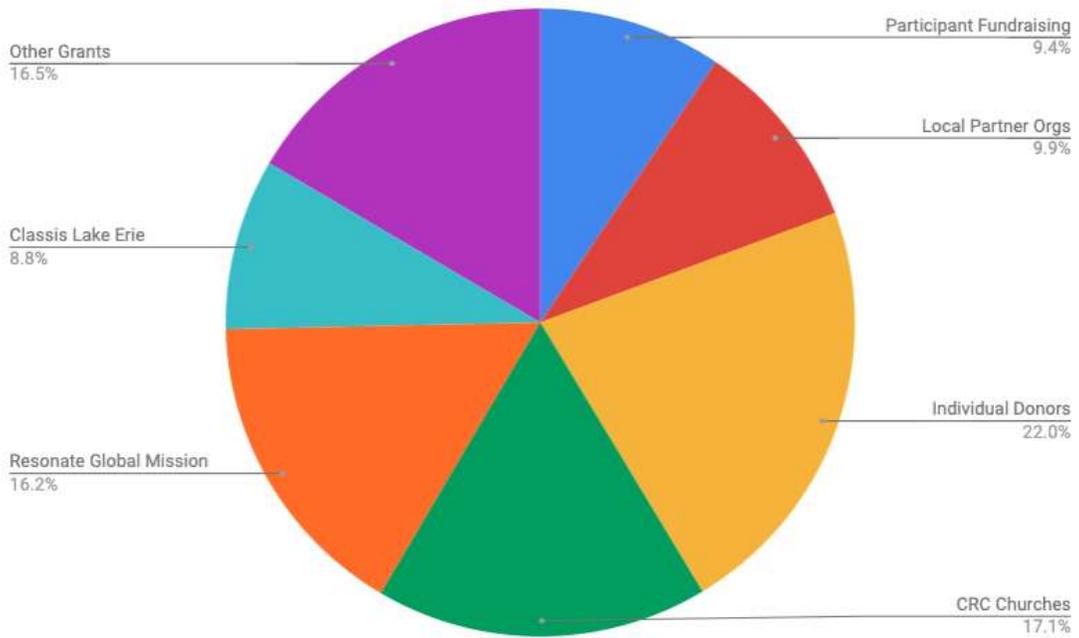
Part of our Cohort Detroit curriculum centers around how our faith intersects with justice, and that requires us to understand the history of racism embedded in Detroit's fabric. I took a trip with two community members to the 'Eight Mile wall,' a 6-foot high concrete wall that was built in the 1940's so that an all-white housing project could receive government funding. Because the project was located one mile away from a black neighborhood and was considered 'at-risk' of integration, the city required a wall be built to ensure African Americans would not enter. Though repurposed and painted, that wall still stands today, now symbolically representing the barriers of wealth, health, and education that still exist between more affluent suburbs (85% white) and Detroit (85% non-white). Theresa Wells, one of our advisory council members, recalls growing up next to this wall during the height of segregation.

I am so grateful and humbled by all the financial gifts and partnership you have extended. Thank you for your commitment to our ministry. We are on track to meet our financial goals, but we're not there yet!

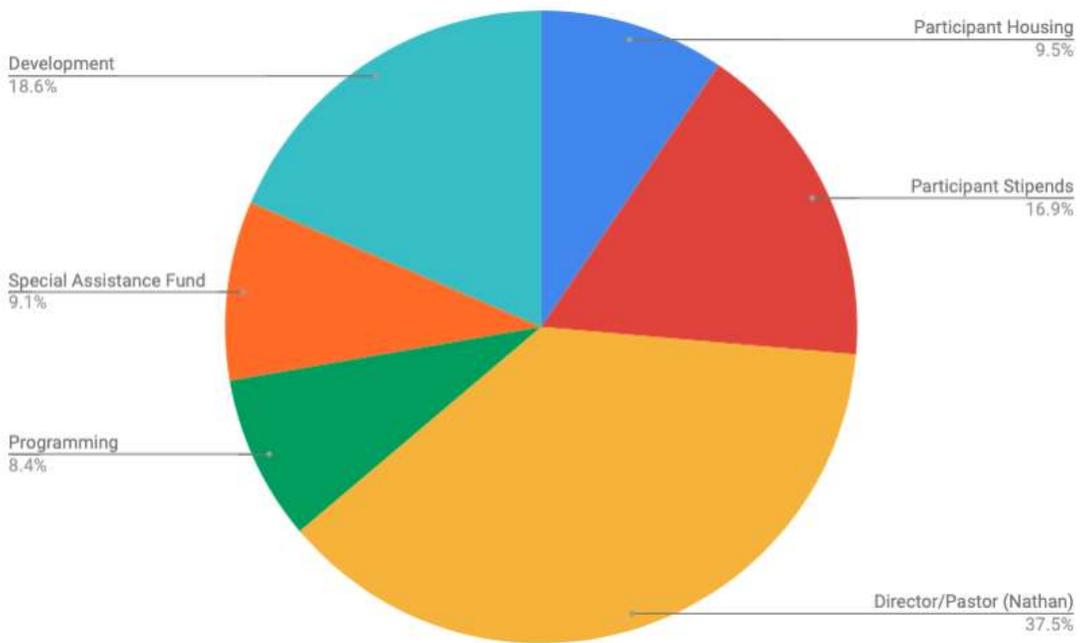
In order to sustain my support network and meet my ministry budget, I need 10 additional individuals to support my work with \$25/month, 5 individuals at \$50/month, and 2 individuals at \$100/month. Are you interested in partnering with me to meet this goal? Individual giving has a big impact in our budget (see the pinwheel below).

I am also seeking three additional churches to support me in my ministry work alongside Resonate Global Mission. **Would your church be interested?**

You can recap our vision and follow a [link to give here](#). Thank you again!



Above: Cohort Detroit support streams.



Above: Cohort Detroit expenses which we developed as an advisory council.

Please join me in prayer for:

1. Our Cohort participants (community leaders) as we work together to navigate the new challenges presented by COVID-19. That they maintain safety and health and a deep sense of God's love and patience. Marginalized communities will be the most deeply impacted by job loss, food insecurities, and access to health resources.

2. Wisdom for me and for our advisory council as we adapt our curriculum, travel intensives, and community service to a more 'virtual' platform, while actively responding to the on-the-ground needs of our communities: food, toiletries, and addictions exacerbated by isolation.

3. Young adults who may be interested in joining our Cohort beginning in September, and those who are actively applying. They can learn more [here](#).

4. Pray for Ann Arbor CRC, our host congregation, and churches across the region who are transitioning to the 'new normal' of remote programming and meeting community needs.

And in THANKS: I passed a 1.5 hour oral examination in front of Classis on March 7, which means I will be ordained on June 14 as a CRC pastor (pending COVID-19 rescheduling).

Partner with me

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I send these emails as periodic updates and prayer requests regarding my ministry work in Detroit.

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