

A New Home, A New Name

In recent Stamford news came tales of a happy ending and a fresh start.

The ending: School and city officials have found a new home for the Alternative Routes to Success program that will not involve ceding control of public education to the church.

A lease agreement to house the alternative high school program at St. Clement's Church includes a ban on sex education and other provisions that allow the bishop to determine what teachers can and cannot say in church classrooms.

It's appropriate for the church to control what happens on its property, but school and city officials should never have agreed to those terms.

But the issue has been resolved with a new agreement by which the ARTS program, starting next year, will be located on the second floor of the former Rogers School. There, the people making curriculum decisions for public school students will be public school officials, which is how it should be.

As for the fresh start: That belongs to Inspirica -- what Stamford residents and countless people whose lives have been saved there know as St. Luke's LifeWorks.

Officials there explained the old name causes confusion, in that the agency hasn't been affiliated with the church for a quarter century, and its crucial services are open to anyone, regardless of religious affiliation.

But named for a saint or not, the 133-year-old nonprofit continues to perform God's work. St. Luke's ... sorry ... Inspirica is the region's leading provider of services for the homeless. It provides emergency shelter as well as transitional housing, permanent supportive housing and affordable housing to families, single women and people living with mental illness, HIV or AIDS. It also operates four permanent residences in Stamford and runs area education, employment and youth services programs.

Inspirica deserves all of our support, financial and otherwise. Times are never easy for agencies that perform this type of work, but the recent past has been particularly difficult, even as more and more people have plummeted toward the safety net.

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Inspirica in the News

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The good people at Inspirica are as committed to holding that net together, whatever they're called. That is one thing that will not change.

To read the article online, please visit: <http://www.stamfordadvocate.com/news/article/A-new-home-a-new-name-3445287.php>