

Owners siege, fiddles

will have to die before
on?"
ernández, president of
tion of New York, begs

gueros have been easy
who seem to act with in-

is back after a period
said. "And this time it is
er before had this kind

usually well-liked and
supportive of the com-
munity, that are the
ones being so vicious-
ly victimized. Of
course, the fact that
the criminals have
been getting away
with murder does not
help.

According to
Fernández, 17 bode-
a 30-day period. Tragi-
ar Cruz was assassinat-
e head. The crime that
ninican immigrant and
e 11 at his store, the
zone Park.

Ofelia Espinal, Cruz's
News. "He worked too

here are no suspects in
Fernández said. "Our
s are living in terror be-
getting adequate police
does not seem to be a

st change.
adequate police protec-
n end to the impunity
e," he said.

ating Cruz's murder.
puzzled by Mayor
a Safe Store. This was a
s and 911 warning sys-
time areas.

h fanfare by Mayor
n, like today, the num-
and robberies had in-

installed in 10 stores in
d a success. Yet accord-
ore has been extended
more than 10,000 that

four years, the city has
he Safe Store program
e mayor had forgotten

se crimes is not a priori-
ández said of the may-
ot safe, New York can-
stretch of the imagina-

de Bodegueros have
ice Commissioner Ray

k," a clearly worried

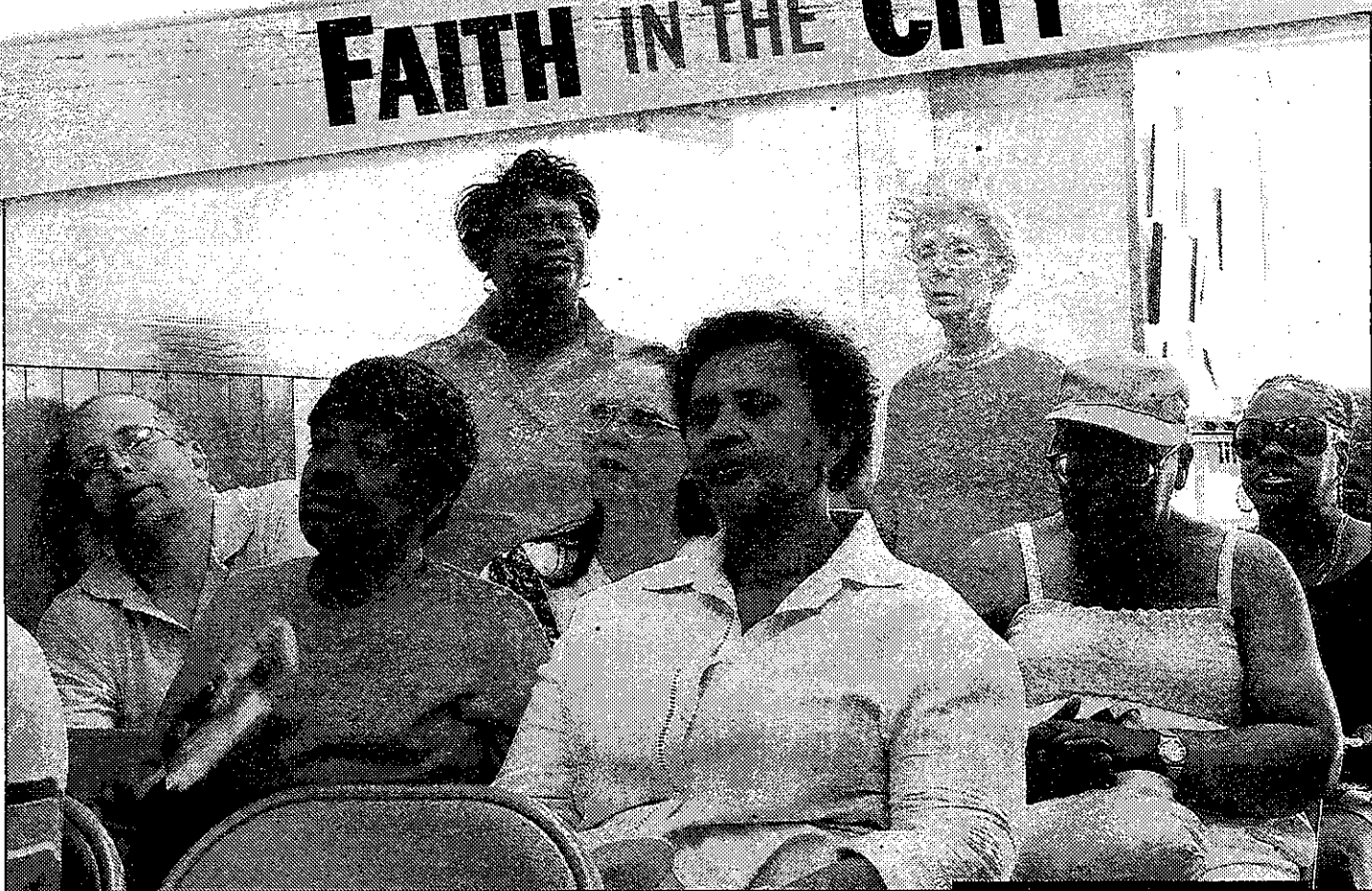
his to say in a written

crimes against bodega
esources are devoted to
ga owners and employ-
es that has been identi-

beleaguered New York
ought and their stores
should die.

aruiz@nydailynews.com

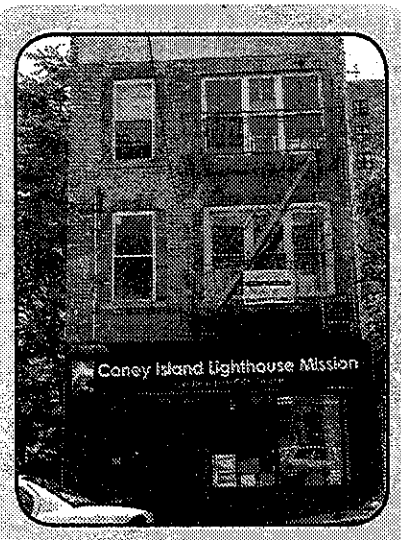
Visiting our Communities of Belief



DESIRE NAVARO

Congregants listen during recent Sunday service at the Lighthouse Mission.

Coney Island Lighthouse Mission



Biggest wish-list item
"That Coney Island can get saved and restored to dignity, and people get their lives changed. By having a relationship with God and the church, things can turn around along with job training and subsidized housing," said Fusco.

Tell us about your place of worship
Send its name, address, telephone number, e-mail address and the name of the spiritual leader to:
VOTE@NYDAILYNEWS.COM

- **Religious affiliation:** Independent Charismatic.
- **Address and neighborhood:** 2114 Mermaid Ave., Coney Island.
- **Years in present location:** The mission was founded in 2002 and was moved to its current location in 2004. It began as an outgrowth of the Gravesend New Jerusalem City Church, located at 1913 W. 7th St. The mission, housed in a storefront building offers homeless families transition out of the shelter system and subsidized housing, temporary housing in the four family residential unit above the church.
- **Size and character of congregation:** The church receives about 25 multi-ethnic and multigenerational members every Sunday.
- **Spiritual leaders:** The Rev. Vincent Fusco, founder along with wife, the Rev. Susan Fusco.
- **Scheduled services:** Sunday: 11 a.m. service. Tuesday: Bible study, 7:30 to 9 p.m. Thursday: prayer service, 7:30 p.m.
- **What makes the congregation special:** "Well, they are mostly local people from the neighborhood where 50% are below the poverty level. However, there is community transformation. We are affecting change in the community with the 1,500 families to whom we serve food and offer clothing to on a monthly basis. Government funding allows us to pay, pre-

Biggest issue
The church needs professional volunteers for its kitchen.

- pare and distribute," Fusco said.
- **Largest service (and turnout):** "At Thanksgiving and Christmas, people want to come by and get turkey and food. Last year, we served 200 hot meals and distributed over 200 turkeys," said Fusco.
- **Most prized possession:** "Our church. You don't have to be a large church to have large mission," Fusco said.
- **Proudest moment:** Fusco remembers his first moments at the mission church. "When we first came here, one of the people said, 'Rev., we are so happy that you are here. You bring hope to us, we are people who have no hope,'" he said.
- **Longest-attending congregant:** Team Leader Gary Brosman. "He is one that had a vision for Coney Island. He serves the homeless directly and has a team that does outreach to distribute and assist," said Fusco.
- **Other programs:** An after-school program for 5- to 13-year-old students, 2:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Mondays to Fridays, run by early childhood teacher Jessica Fusco; Drug and Alcohol 12-step programs; food pantry; soup kitchen; computer classes; GED classes; ESL; Kinder music program; a huge outreach to distribute food and clothing twice per year. During the summer, the church shows movies in the park and serves popcorn and Cokes to 60 to 80 people.

Compiled by Gayle DeWees