## ALY LAYMAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MERCY CLINIC alylayman@mercy-clinic.org



Mercy Clinic opened its doors in 2013 and has provided care to this community for a decade. Mercy Clinic's mission is to show Christ's love and compassion by providing free medical, dental, and spiritual care. Annually the clinic cares for thousands of people in South Fort Worth. Before the Mercy Clinic doors opened there were no healthcare options for this community.

Mercy Clinic serves patients in the 76110 and 76104 zip codes with free medical, dental, and spiritual care. 76104 is one of the zip codes identified as having the lowest life expectancy in the state of Texas. Mercy Clinic patients are the working class that make daily choices about paying for electricity or health care. 95% of our patients speak Spanish and many are not citizens. They do not have any other health care options. Mercy Clinic was built to break the barriers to access to healthcare for this underserved community.

In 2020, the Mercy Clinic board determined an expansion of our services could make a greater difference. Plans for a new building across the street from our current location to house ten patient care rooms and six dental chairs were created. In 2021, a generous donor gifted the building that formerly held the Berry Street Theater. Unfortunately, recommendations by qualified architects deemed the building unsuitable for occupancy. Built in the 1930's, the building has not been taken care of and is too costly to renovate. Even potential federal grants for historic preservation would not bring this cost down enough to not pull funding from the Mercy Clinic mission.

After exhaustive efforts and numerous conversations with community leaders and stakeholders both in public and private, the Board of Mercy Clinic has voted to demolish the building that formerly held the Berry Street theater to make way for an expanded free clinic to serve more people in the South Fort Worth community with free medical, dental, and spiritual care. Mercy Clinic has been a part of the health of this community for a decade. A new clinic facility will show this community many more decades of Mercy.