
Gospel-Centered Community Development

Sub Committee under “Ministry to the Marginalized”

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Welcome to Gospel-Centered Community Development!

Our Ministry with Margins Gospel-Centered Community Development (GCCD) team was charged to develop a simple and scalable guide to support this powerful Kingdom movement. We were blessed with significant experience that included intentional neighborhood residents, a pastor of marginalized communities, a founder of the Christian Community Development movement, founders of GCCD organizations, hands-on practitioners, and renowned authors of key works that have illuminated the path for the Church. Like John Wesley's "quadrilateral" our report leans heavily on our Holy Spirit-led experiences that were launched from biblical principles and mandates.

Christ-centered relationships, not programs: One risk of this report would be for emerging GCCD practitioners to attempt to simply copy program examples shared here. The core values are relational, striving to build hope and dignity through the Gospel applied to the needs of marginalized in love. This work's journey must be done together in a long-term trusted exchange that empowers and reconciles with the marginalized within their context.

Count the Cost of Time, Resources, & Yourself: Heed the wisdom in Luke 14 and consider the cost in time and resources. To begin and quit is far worse than never beginning. Many of the activities do not require significant funding while some will require more. Effectiveness has less to do with funds and more to do with application and dedication over years and decades. Personally, living and working at the margins often exposes you and yours to opposition and violence. Satan will not go quietly as his Church storms his strongholds in word and deed. But, you are never alone.

Unanswered Tensions: We did not address many tensions inherent in GCCD. Should we create GCCD organizations outside of a church? What should be the bounds of a partner church's authority over the work or their funds? What should be the

*if you pour yourself out for the hungry
& satisfy the desire of the afflicted,
then shall your light rise in the darkness
& your gloom be as the noonday.
& the Lord will guide you continually
& satisfy your desire in
scorched places
& make your bones strong;
& you shall be like a watered garden,
like a spring of water,
whose waters do not fail.*

Isaiah 58:10-11

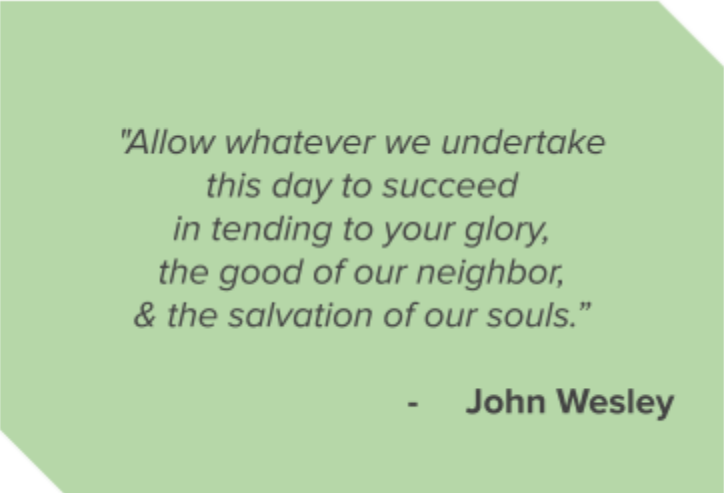
neighborhood's local church's authority over your work? How should we work with secular, for profit, and government partners? How do we build decision processes that honor the residents' wishes that may be opposed to Christ or the Church? How do we combat destructive personal behaviors while affirming the inherent value and environmental context of the individual? Our team is in agreement that there are not clear answers in most of these tensions and often the right path is best influenced by the context, relationships, and the individuals involved.

Bob Lupton uses the term “exchange” when referring to working with those on the margins. You will invest time, resources, and long-suffering. Even though the personal cost is great, if you follow Jesus down the path of commitment to GCCD, you will see the miraculous work of the Spirit, know Jesus more fully, and take from this journey far more than you ever imagined or invested. He promised: you are not alone.

So, come join the movement of the Spirit!

GCCD Team

Summer, 2020



*"Allow whatever we undertake
this day to succeed
in tending to your glory,
the good of our neighbor,
& the salvation of our souls."*

- **John Wesley**

A WORD FROM BOB LUPTON

When Mercy & Justice Collide

Compassion is a dangerous thing. It can open a person to all manner of risks. It has caused reasonable people to make extravagant heart-decisions, like spending untold hours collecting supplies to assist flood victims, or journeying into harm's way to feed starving refugees. Some have even left successful careers to devote full time to a cause that has gripped their hearts. Compassion is a powerful force within the human spirit, a stamp of the Divine nature. It lies within us all – from tender child to hardest criminal – waiting for the right trigger to set it off. A bird with a broken wing, a lonely widow whose family and friends have moved on, a child orphaned by a terrorist car bomb. For me it was fatherless boys growing up on mean streets with little chance of escaping the deadly undertow. So strong was that force within me that it caused me to leave a budding business career, depart my secure surroundings, and move with my family into the inner-city.

Compassion beckons us into unexplored territory. Most often it ushers us into a world of pressing human need – the destitute needing food and clothes, the homeless needing shelter, the refugee needing a connected friend. In my case it was attention-starved boys. I forged friendships with them in all sorts of male-grabbing ways – mini-bike riding, cave exploring, deep sea fishing – enticing rewards for good grades and for staying out of trouble. My friendship was the medium for showing them that they were highly valued, yes loved, by a God who carefully created them and desired for them to know Him personally.

Some call this “mercy ministry.”

But in time, that compassionate impulse that compels one toward acts of mercy will inevitably collide with an ominous, opposing force – injustice. Against this dark, daunting force, acts of mercy can sometimes seem meager. What good is a sandwich and a cup of soup when a severe addiction has control of a man's life? Or a night in a shelter for a young woman who must sell her body to feed her child? Is there no treatment program to address the addiction? Is there no job training that leads to legitimate employment? Mercy inevitably points the way to justice. Building relationships with street kids seemed so right, yielded so many positive changes, until young boys became young men and faced survival on their own. Immediate cash took precedence over school attendance. Basketball and adventure trips did little to enhance their earning capacity. Bible studies did not get them jobs. I watched helplessly as one by one my young friends were pulled under by the survival ethic of the street. Mercy alone is insufficient.

Perhaps that is why scripture places equal emphasis upon both mercy and justice. The ancient prophet Micah succinctly states Yahweh's desire:

“He has told you, oh man, what is good and what the Lord desires of you – that you love mercy and do justice and walk humbly with your God.”

Love mercy. Mercy is “compassion, kindness or forgiveness shown especially to someone a person has power over.” Do justice. Justice is “fairness or reasonableness, especially in the way people are treated or decisions are made.” Twinned together these commands lead us to holistic involvement. Divorced they become deformed. Mercy without justice degenerates into dependency and entitlement, preserving the power of the giver over the recipient. Justice without mercy grows cold and impersonal, more concerned about rights than relationships. The addict needs both food and treatment. The young woman needs both a safe place to sleep and a way out of her entrapping lifestyle. Street kids need both friendship and jobs.

Mercy is a door. It is an opening, an invitation to touch and be touched by a life, to make a difference. But it is not a destination. Get stuck in doing mercy ministry and we will find ourselves growing impatient with the recipients of our kindness, wondering why they don't help themselves more, feeling a growing discomfort with the half-truths they tell us to justify their persistent returns. Mercy that doesn't move intentionally in the direction of development will end up doing more harm than good – to both giver and recipient.

Mercy is a door. It is a portal through which we catch a glimpse of the heart of God. A gentle tug on our heartstrings draws us in. But soon we encounter brokenness so overwhelming that neither the tender hearted nor the inventive problem-solver feel up to the task. Our solutions fall short. Pathologies are too deep, poverty too entrenched. And we descend into our own poverty, a poverty of spirit, a crisis of confidence in our own abilities to rescue. We are tempted to withdraw, to retreat to a more manageable world. Yet our hearts constrain us. Or our guilt. We feel trapped. And, like the broken, we find ourselves calling out to God for answers. When our best efforts have failed us, we are left with nothing to cling to but frail faith. In a strange twist of divine irony, those who would extend mercy discover that they themselves are in need of mercy.

Bob Lupton

Gospel-Centered Community Development Leader, Author, & Practitioner

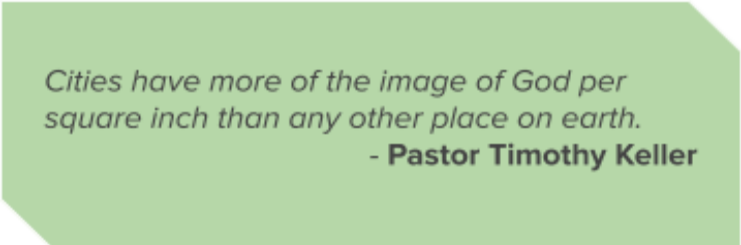
DEFINING GOSPEL-CENTERED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

What is Gospel-Centered Community Development?

Gospel-Centered Community Development (GCCD) is about loving our neighbor by fostering a dignifying exchange that empowers those that live in the impoverished margins of our world. GCCD is about the Kingdom of God coming to marginalized communities through the people of God committing to long-term relationships that foster sustainable development and restoration of under-resourced neighborhoods. By the power of Christ, GCCD seeks to tangibly demonstrate the hope of the Gospel by building an individual's capacity to prosper in all areas of life and, ultimately, live as a redeemed community together.

What are the biblical foundations for Gospel-Centered Community Development?

Cities and communities are made up of *people*. And the Bible is clear: *God loves people*. And equally as plain: *God loves the poor and the marginalized*. In both the Old and the New Testaments, we see that He has uniquely called his Church to serve these people groups.



Cities have more of the image of God per square inch than any other place on earth.
- Pastor Timothy Keller

In the New Testament, Jesus mandates that we are to love our neighbor, to serve the poor, and to reach out to the marginalized (See Appendix 4 for specific Scripture references). The cornerstone of GCCD is this commandment: *to love our neighbor*. The goal of GCCD is to love the poor and marginalized in a dignifying, empowering, and sustainable manner.

Among many examples in the Old Testament, we see the example of a city being restored in Nehemiah, we see God's heart for justice in Amos, and we see God's call to his people to seek the welfare of the city in Jeremiah. Through his willing servants (such as Isaiah) to his unwilling servants (like Jonas), the Kingdom of God will be extended throughout the high places and the low, throughout cities and hills, to every people, tribe, nation, and tongue.

The question is: will we answer this Biblical imperative to love the poor in word and deed? Will we do so in a way that is dignifying, empowering, and strategic?

*⁶Is not this the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of injustice,
to undo the thongs of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
& to break every yoke?
⁷Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
& bring the homeless poor into your house;
when you see the naked, to cover them,
& not to hide yourself from your own kin?
⁸Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,
& your healing shall spring up quickly;
your vindicator[a] shall go before you,
the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.
⁹Then you shall call, & the Lord will answer;
you shall cry for help, & he will say, Here I am.
If you remove the yoke from among you,
the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,*

*¹⁰if you offer your food to the hungry
& satisfy the needs of the afflicted,
then your light shall rise in the darkness
& your gloom be like the noonday.
¹¹The Lord will guide you continually,
& satisfy your needs in parched places,
& make your bones strong;
& you shall be like a watered garden,
like a spring of water,
whose waters never fail.
¹²Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt;
you shall raise up the foundations of many
generations;
you shall be called the repairer of the breach,
the restorer of streets to live in.*

Isaiah 58: 6-12

What are the key principles of Gospel-Centered Community Development?

Gospel-Centered Community Development is an incredibly broad task, and is only effective to the degree that it is first about the people of the community, which is unique in every neighborhood and every person. The work must, must, *must* be **led in full partnership with the neighborhood**, its felt needs, its heart. At best, the GCCD organization is but one tool in the arsenal, but one that often proves a **God-powered** tipping point toward justice and health.

GCCD is about **building relationships, dignity, capacity, and hope**. Success depends on trust and is often a fitful, long-term journey where the Holy Spirit forges a **community** of Christ-like neighbors. Therefore, the work of GCCD practitioners - whether paid or volunteer - must be viewed as **sacred** and as a **long-term commitment**. To start and depart in an unreasonable time, only reinforces stereotypes, distrust, and hopelessness. It is destructive to the community. Similarly, this **slow process** must be viewed by partner churches and other organizations in an equally critical long-term commitment perspective.

In the US, GCCD became a **movement** inspired by the visionary leadership of John Perkins, Bob Lupton, Wayne Gordon, and other urban leaders who coalesced to form the Christian Community Development Association (CCDA.org). The core principles guiding CCDA were known as the 3 R's: Relocation, Redistribution, and Reconciliation.

Relocation emphasizes the importance of living among the people we serve, becoming a redemptive influence with neighbors who live in neglected and crime-ridden communities. Relocated neighbors bring much-needed resources and connections into the community, and join with residents to strengthen personal faith, improved quality of life, and economic capacity.

Redistribution is the predictable result of becoming caring neighbors. When we see a neighbor in need and have the capacity to assist them, our hearts compel us to share our time, our resources, and our connections, in personal, responsible, and accountable ways. In this way, sharing can become reciprocal and the healthy exchange among neighbors becomes empowering.

Reconciliation is the bringing of alienated humanity into a right relationship with God and with each other. Building a "Beloved Community" as envisioned by Dr. King involves bridging respectful, trusting relationships across the divides of race, class, status, and other barriers that separate people. Genuine reconciliation can be best accomplished when diverse neighbors share life together in the same community.

*(The 3 have expanded to the 8 that are in Wayne Gordon's referenced summary
<https://nsc-church.org/CCDA%208%20Points.pdf>)*

How do we affirm the dignity of people, motivate them and help them take responsibility for their own lives? By beginning with the people's felt needs we establish a relationship and a trust, which then enables us to move to deeper issues of development. This idea of beginning with people's felt need is what is called the felt need concept. It is summed up in a Chinese poem...

Go to the people
Live among them
Learn from them
Love them
Start with what they know
Build on what they have:
But of the best leaders
When their task is done
The people will remark
"We have done it ourselves."

**-Excerpt from John Perkins in
Restoring At-Risk Communities**

How is development different from a handout?

From Bob Lupton

Have you noticed that many of the same people return week after week for free food from our food pantries? Ever wondered whether our handouts were really helping or merely perpetuating a dependent lifestyle? Admitting and verbalizing these observations, at the risk of appearing heartless, is the essential first step toward truly effective service.

A **crisis** requires emergency intervention;
A **chronic** problem requires development.
Address a **crisis** need with a **crisis** intervention,
and lives are saved.
Address a **chronic** need with a **crisis** intervention,
and people are harmed.

-Bob Lupton

The key to effective service is accurately matching the need with the appropriate intervention.

The universal need for food is a good place to begin. Starvation is a crisis issue; hunger is a chronic issue. When famine sweeps a land, or a tsunami devastates coastal cities, starvation becomes an urgent, life-and-death situation. Emergency food supplies must be rushed in without delay. But in a stable nation with abundant supplies of food and adequate government food subsidies, occasional hunger – not starvation – is the reality that faces the less advantaged. Food insecurity is a chronic, not crisis, poverty issue.

Food security is what free-food advocates talk about these days. That means access by all people at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life. The poor in our country, roughly 15% of our population, are food-insecure at least some time during the year. Even though four out of five of these households receive food from the government, there are times when their cupboards are bare.

But food-insecurity is not a crisis issue. It is a function of chronic poverty. Unlike during the great depression of the 1930's when one in four of our workers stood in bread lines with no government safety net to rescue them, today more than 90% of our workforce is employed and our public subsidies are ample. Hunger is not our problem. Poor nutrition perhaps but not hunger. Food insecurity is a chronic poverty issue and chronic problems require altogether different strategies from crisis problems.

Starvation is a crisis need;

Hunger is a chronic issue.

Address hunger (chronic) with a free feeding program (crisis)

And unhealthy dependency occurs.

As our hearts constrain us to intervene on behalf of our needy neighbors, we certainly want our responses to be effective. And to be truly effective we must match the need with the appropriate response. Distributing free food (an emergency response) is seldom an appropriate response to those facing chronic food-insecurity. It may seem compassionate at the moment but in all likelihood it will prove to be more hurtful than helpful.

But isn't it a crisis when a family does not know where their next meal is coming from? Admittedly, this is a crisis of a sort, the type of crisis that spurs one to action. Hunger is a powerful motivator. It stretches budgets. It drives creativity. It forces choices. It accepts peanut butter sandwiches over McDonald's big-meals, cool-aide over coke, beans and rice over potato chips and dip. Food insecurity may not be all bad.

Lest we become hard-hearted and err on the judgmental side, however, let's proactively pursue some helpful responses to chronic hunger. Of course, one of the best antidotes to food insecurity is decent employment. Adequate income provides adequate food. And, as ancient Talmudic wisdom contends, the highest form of charity is to provide a man a job. Employment training and job creation is obviously a major shift from the food pantry paradigm but it is certainly one that should be considered. Another alternative more directly related to food is the food cooperative – a "buying club" model that gives members legitimate access to surplus food through non-profit or church structures. Another is a bartering system that exchanges food (and other commodities) for work performed in the community. Rather than dependency-fostering emergency responses, these and other development strategies strengthen the capacity of people in need to assume greater measure of control and self-sufficiency over their own lives.

Compassion is essential but not sufficient – the mind as well as the heart must be engaged.

The Golden Rule of empowering service:

Never do for others what they have the capacity to do for themselves.

How is participatory development different from blueprint development?

Ideas and quotes from Brian Fikkert and Kelly Kapic pages 113-114 of *The Field Guide to Becoming Whole: Principles for Poverty Alleviation Ministries* (Moody Publishers 2019)

As much as we would like to take control, we cannot make choices for others, especially in the context of community development. Every course of action must be “owned” by the individual or community that it is seeking to help in order for there to be lasting and sustainable change.

As we walk with Joe, we must view him as the responsible party for making lasting changes happen in his own life. And like other folks, Joe will be more likely to take ownership of plans that he has helped to shape and direct, rather than a blueprint plan that has been forced upon him.

Blueprint approaches do not seek to engage Joe in the process or value his input. Instead, blueprint plans take the power out of Joe’s hand. Blueprint plans presumptuously and ineffectively impose an outsider’s directive. As Kapic and Fikkert write:

“A blueprint approach fails to create the necessary ownership of the change process that is essential if materially poor people are going to initiate and sustain the necessary changes in their lives. In addition, a blueprint approach tends to exacerbate the harmful dynamic in which the materially non-poor ‘play god,’ speaking and acting in ways that confirm the sense of inferiority and shame that many low-income people already feel.”

Clearly, blueprint approaches should be avoided if we are to see the long-lasting fruit of GCCD in people and communities. Instead, participatory approaches value the individual by asking good questions, supporting, providing feedback, and helping generate strategies. Along with approaches like Asset Based Community Development (discussed later), we must seek to see Joe’s assets, not just the deficiencies of his situation, because Joe is a capable image bearer of God. As they write,

“This does not mean that we should never speak into [Joe’s] life, but simply that we should try to act in a way that is consistent with biblical truth, recognizing that, as an image bearer, Joe has insights and abilities, and he is called by God to be the primary person who stewards those insights and abilities by using them to initiate and sustain changes that move towards becoming whole.”

How do we start?

GCCD is NOT a program to be copied and deployed in under-resourced communities. It is a redemptive, relational process founded on the Gospel of Jesus Christ. GCCD builds hope, capacity, and dignity while addressing the felt physical and spiritual needs of everyone involved.

This committee strives to offer material that it believes the Holy Spirit has empowered and that are helpful to build awareness for those embarking on GCCD commitments in under-resourced communities. The examples here are a product of the team members' experience, both in the Wesleyan tradition and from other Christ-centered, Kingdom-minded traditions. Additionally, the broad GCCD/CCD community is incredibly generous with their insight and experience. We strongly encourage you to reach out and build relationships in the movement, learn from each other, and find strength for the journey.

The “elephant” in this room is important for all GCCD practitioners to embrace is that while this is a rewarding and God-anointed call, to truly help those at the margins, it is also often gut-wrenchingly painful and fatiguing. Those who lead and resource this work must always be mindful not to apply the secular norms of achievement and ease, and to adequately care for the front-line practitioners and their holistic health. They will be rejected and confronted. Their clients' development or progress will be slow or often marked by self-destructive retreats. They, their neighbors, and their clients will be assaulted and literally killed. As Jesus said: “Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves” (Matthew 10:16).

Just as Jesus promised, we have collectively experienced much pain, grief, and loss throughout our years of serving communities on the margins. And yet...

God has proven himself to be our Sustainer, our Hope, and even our Joy through the pain. May He be so to you. He will not keep you from experiencing deep pain, but *He will be with you.* (Matthew 28:20b)

What is the task of the church? We are to embody Jesus Christ by doing what He did and what He continues to do through us: declare—using both words and deeds—that Jesus is the King of kings and Lord of lords who is bringing in a kingdom of righteousness, justice, and peace. And the church needs to do this where Jesus did it, among the blind, the lame, the sick and outcast, and the poor.

- **Fikkert & Corbett in**
“When Helping Hurts

What are essential resources for jumping into GCCD?

- *8 Components of Christian Community Development* by Dr. Wayne L. Gordon (https://www.nsc-church.org/CCDA_8_Points.pdf)
- *Becoming Whole: Why the Opposite of Poverty isn't the American Dream* by Brian Fikkert and Kelly M. Kopic (Moody 2019)
- Christian Community Development Association (ccda.org)
- *Compassion, Justice, & the Christian Life* by Robert Lupton (Regal 2007)
- FCS / Lupton's Urban Perspectives Archives
<https://www.fcsministries.org/blog/category/Urban+Perspectives>
- *A Field Guide to Becoming Whole: Principles for Poverty Alleviation Ministries* by Brian Fikkert and Kelly M. Kopic (Moody 2019)
- *Helping without Hurting: The Small Group Experience*, facilitator's guide and online videos, by Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert (Moody 2014)
- *Let Justice Roll Down* by John Perkins (Baker Books 2012)
- *Nonprofit Management: Principles and Practice* by Michael J. Worth (SAGE Publications 2016)
- Online Course: Practicing the King's Economy
<https://chalmers.org/product/practicing-the-kings-economy-online-course/>
- *Practicing the King's Economy: Honoring Jesus in How We Work, Earn, Spend, Save, and Give* by Michael Rhodes, Robby Holt, and Brian Fikkert (Baker Books 2018)
- *Restoring At-Risk Communities: Doing It Together & Doing It Right* by John M. Perkins (Baker Books 1996)
- *Serving with Eyes Wide Open: Doing Short-Term Missions With Cultural Intelligence* by David A. Livermore (Baker Books 2012)
- Tips on strategies for gathering neighborhood input:
<https://www.epa.gov/international-cooperation/public-participation-guide-tools-generate-and-obtain-public-input>
- *To Live in Peace: Biblical Faith and the Changing Inner City* by Mark Gornik (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. 2002)
- *Toxic Charity: How Churches and Charities Hurt Those They Help, And How to Reverse It* by Bob Lupton (HarperOne 2012)
- *Walking with the Poor: Principles and Practices of Transformational Development* by Bryant L Myers (Orbis 2011)
- *When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty Without Hurting the Poor . . . and Yourself* by Corbett and Fikkert (Moody 2014)

KEY AREAS OF GOSPEL-CENTERED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

WHOLE HEARTS

“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” And He said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.” Matthew 22:36-40

As we serve in community development, it is important that we keep first things first: the Gospel-centered nature of our mission. As we seek to serve communities in both word and deed, it is first important that we have a firm grasp on what the Gospel is.

What is the Gospel?: The Purpose of the Mission

“God creates a beautiful world and calls humanity to serve as His image-bearers, a community of priest-kings who protect and develop His creation for His glory. Unfortunately, Adam and Eve sin against God, which results in human beings’ loss of vocation as priest-kings, puts them under Satan’s dominion, and distorts every square inch of the creation. But God does not abandon His handiwork. Through His life, death and resurrection, Jesus Christ becomes our substitute, overcoming sin, death, and the Devil, ascending to the right hand of the Father as our holy and loving Lord. From there He reigns—right now—over a kingdom that is bringing shalom by transforming the present cosmos into a new one. The community of people who have saving faith in Christ—the true church—are rescued from the kingdom of darkness, immediately become new creatures in Christ, are declared righteous by reason of our union with Him, and serve as a community of restored priest-kings. When Christ returns, His kingdom will be completely consummated, and the true church will be restored to full human flourishing, continuing to serve as a community of fully-embodied, restored priest-kings in the new creation.”

Excerpt from *Becoming Whole: Why the Opposite of Poverty isn’t the American Dream* by Brian Fikkert and Kelly M. Kopic (Moody 2019), pp. 201-202.

Prayer: The Power of the Mission

BIG PICTURE: Establishing prayer groups with local Christians living and serving within the community can be a powerful way to see and experience where God is already at work in the community. Going on prayer walks together throughout the neighborhood to pray over homes, businesses, and the community can focus your awareness and center your prayer on the people you seek to serve. After all, nothing can be accomplished apart from the Spirit and power of God. As stated by EM Bounds: “Little prayer, little power; much prayer, much power.”

I put myself wholly into Thy hands: put me to what Thou wilt, rank me with whom Thou wilt; put me to doing, put me to suffering, let me be employed for Thee, or laid aside for Thee, or trodden under foot for Thee; let me be full, let me be empty, let me have all things, let me have nothing, I freely, and heartily resign all to Thy pleasure and disposal.

- John Wesley

KEY PRINCIPLES:

- Prayer is our **greatest tool** in serving our marginalized neighbors, and must be a **prioritized** and **strategic** effort.
- Prayer **humbles us** before God and before man.
- Without the spirit of God, there is no power. We cannot accomplish anything apart from the **power** and **presence** of God.
- A spirit of **unity, humility, & love** should be promoted between churches, even of different traditions.

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS: Who is already living or working in the community who are followers of Jesus? How can you reach out to them? Ask them how you can pray for them. Ask if you can meet together to pray over the community. As you work with people from other denominations in prayer groups, it may be wise to keep in mind a saying by Rupertus Meldenius: “In essentials **unity**, in non-essentials **liberty**, in all things **charity**.”

PRACTICAL EXAMPLES:

- Get quiet before God. Give him your full attention. Open your Bible. Go through your Bible and ask God to show you Scriptures related to GCCD and his heart for people to be whole and to know him. Ask him to show you his heart for the poor and for your city.
- Ask a friend or family member to join you in prayer for the community regularly.
- Hang pictures or Scriptures in your house or work space that will remind you to pray for your community.

-
- Keep a list of prayers. Ask others how you can pray for them and add it to the prayer list.
 - Start a diverse weekly prayer group that meets to pray over the community.
 - Organize a prayer walk through the community with other local churches, parachurch groups, and civil servants.

RESOURCE ESSENTIALS:

- *Acts 29 Blueprint for the House of Prayer: Engaging Your City Through Strategic Prayer (Teach Us to Pray Series)* by Dr. Terry Teykl (Prayer Point Press 1999)
- *Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire: What Happens When God's Spirit Invades the Hearts of His People* by Jim Cymbala (Zondervan 2003)
- Global Prayer Digest Frontier Ventures: <http://www.globalprayerdigest.org/>
- *How to Pray: The Best of John Wesley on Prayer* by John Wesley (Barbour Publishing 2008)
- *Operation World: The Definitive Prayer Guide to Every Nation* by Jason Mandryk (IVP Books 2010)
- *Prayer: How Praying Together Shapes the Church* by John Onwuchekwa (Crossway 2019)
- *Prayer Revolution: Rebuilding Church and City Through Prayer* by John Smed (Moody Publishers 2020)
- *Praying God's Word: Breaking Free from Spiritual Strongholds* by Beth Moore (B&H Books 2018)
- *Touch the World through Prayer* by Wesley Duewel (Zondervan 1986)
- *When God's People Pray* by Jim Cymbala (Zondervan 2007)

Evangelism & Discipleship: The Delight of the Mission

BIG PICTURE: As we build relationships with individuals and work in marginalized communities, we do so as *Gospel* people, or people of *the Good News*. Wherever we go, we will have opportunities to speak about or tangibly demonstrate the hope of the Gospel. Discipleship happens when we bring people along with us as we follow Jesus. We often over-complicate these things.

As you grow in GCCD while seeking God in his Word, in prayer, and in centering your work on the Gospel, you will become more fluent in the Gospel in daily life. The best way to start evangelism is to: start. Talk about Jesus. Talk about what He means to you. Talk about how He has changed your life. Ask God for opportunities, keep your eyes open for them, and He will graciously give them to you!

KEY PRINCIPLES:

- **Recognize** that *we are not Jesus* and that God has already been at work in this community long before we arrived. We simply get the delight of humbly joining him in this work.
- **Know** deep down in your bones that each person you come into contact with is highly valued by the Creator and needs to hear the hope of the Gospel.
- **Seize** opportunities to speak about Jesus and the Gospel.
- **Be patient & prayerful**, knowing that the work is long-term and that nothing can be accomplished apart from the Spirit of God.

A personal story from Amber: *We never did door-to-door evangelism in our neighborhood. But, God opened up doors for us to display the Gospel in tangible ways & then share the Gospel with words. For instance, we had a youth group working to restore a house one weekend. A neighborhood man was walking by the house, when all of the sudden two men began to beat him with bricks & a bat. Immediately, some adults ran over to assist the man. I remember sitting on the ground beside him as we waited for the ambulance, taking his hand, & helping care for some of his bloody wounds. As we talked, he told us his name was Ron. We parted ways as the EMTs began worked on his wounds. (You can imagine this was a fun incident to explain to the youth group's parents afterward!)*

The next day, I was driving in the neighborhood praying for Ron, then I saw him walking down the street! We talked for a while. He said: "Why did you guys help me? I'm not nobody. You guys must be Gospel people." I said: "That's a good way to describe us." I was able to briefly share a word with him about how much God loves him. There wasn't a "neat & clean" evangelism script, but we were able to care for someone in word & deed. Those types of occurrences were frequent when we asked God in prayer. He is more passionate about evangelism & discipleship that we could possibly be!

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS: Learn how to become fluent in speaking the Gospel into daily life. This does not mean we want to “preach at” people. Often in marginalized communities, there are “evangelists” from all kinds of religions and sects that go door-to-door to preach and condemn. Marginalized communities can be skeptical as they have been frequent victims of door-to-door preaching or half day “church serve days” where rich people come into the community to do yard work, take selfies, preach a Scripture, and then head back to their luxury homes. Gospel fluency takes time. At first, rather than speaking, it takes more listening to others and to God, such as: *How can I pray for you? What would the Good News be to this person?*

PRACTICAL EXAMPLES:

- A Blueprint for Urban Discipleship by Paul J Pastor with Dhati Lewis in Atlanta
<https://outreachmagazine.com/features/discipleship/28864-atlanta-blueprint-urban-discipleship.html>
- Discovery Bible Study Method for studying the Bible simply in a small group:
<https://www.dbsguide.org/#panel1>

RESOURCE ESSENTIALS:

- *Among Wolves: Disciple-Making in the City* by Dhati Lewis (B&H Books 2017)
- Course (Online & Free): Evangelism in a Skeptical World: TGC by Sam Chan
<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/course/evangelism-skeptical-world/#introduction>
- *Evangelism as Exiles: Life on Mission as Strangers in our Own Land* by Elliot Clark (The Gospel Coalition 2019)
- *Evangelism in a Skeptical World: How to Make the Unbelievable News about Jesus More Believable* by Sam Chan (Zondervan Academic 2018)
- *Evangelism is More than Words* - Bob Lupton
- *Forgotten Ways: Reactivating Apostolic Movements* by Alan Hirsch Brazos Press 2016)
- Podcast: *Help! I'm Not Ready to Share My Faith* by Carson, McLaughlin, & Smethurst
- Podcast: *How Your Church Can Grow in Evangelistic Effectiveness* by Hansen & Raymond
<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/podcasts/tgc-podcast/church-can-grow-evangelistic-effectiveness/>
- *Urban Apologetics: Restoring Black Dignity with the Gospel* by Eric Mason (Zondervan 2021)
- *Urban Evangelism* from Lausanne by Dr. Greenway
<https://www.lausanne.org/content/urban-evangelism>

- *Video: How Evangelism Works in a Post-Christian Culture* by Joshua Ryan Butler
<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/video/evangelism-works-post-christian-culture/>

The Local Church: The Vehicle of the Mission

BIG PICTURE: The local church has a vital role to play in the mission of God to restore communities for his glory. God has chosen his people as the vehicle of his mission for restoration and reconciliation. As such, we are not called to shelter ourselves from the outside world.

Just as Christ entered the world in the flesh (John 1), He sends us into the world as his hands and feet, to share his Gospel and extend his kingdom in the earth. As is described in *Becoming Whole* by Fikkert and Kopic:

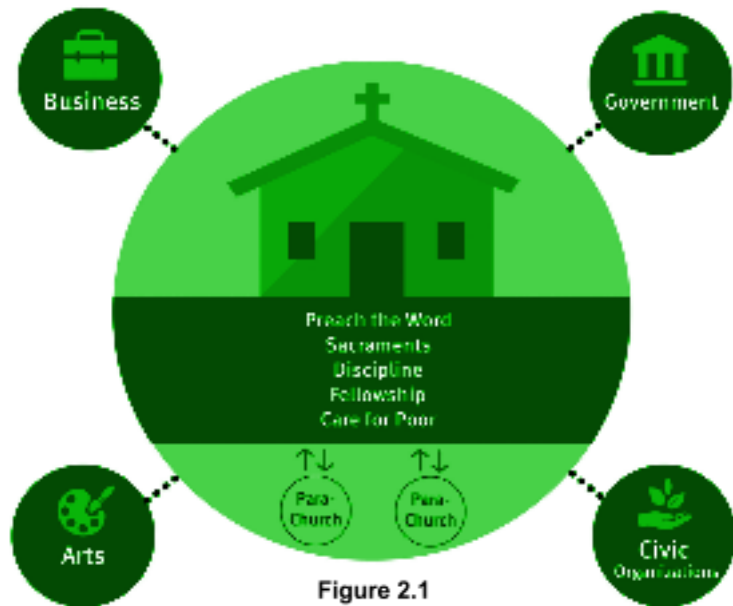


Figure 2.1

The Church, Para-Church, and Larger Society

“First, there are some things the Bible indicates that the church should do directly: preach the Word, administer the sacraments, exercise discipline, engage in fellowship, and care for the poor, especially poor believers (Gal. 2:10). When the church engages in these activities, it directly ministers holistically to the people in its midst.

“Second, some believers are called to be involved in parachurch ministries, which explicitly seek to help the church fulfill its mission by undertaking tasks that are beyond the capacity of the local church...

“Third, some believers are called to serve as priest-kings in institutions that are not parachurch ministries in that they are not engaged in explicitly Christian ministry (such as government, business, the arts, and civic organizations). While these institutions are not rooted in the local church, Christ is the Creator, Sustainer, and Reconciler of all things, including these institutions, so Christians must work in them as well, faithfully seeking to use words and deeds that bear witness to the present and future reign of Christ as much as possible (Matt. 5:16; Col. 1:15–20).”

(Excerpts & figure from pages 35-36 of *A Field Guide to Becoming Whole: Principles for Poverty Alleviation Ministries* by Fikkert and Kopic)

KEY PRINCIPLES:

- **Unity** with other churches and parachurch organizations keeps efforts Kingdom-focused.
- Understand that the **secular jobs** of those in the Church are actually **sacred callings**.
- Instead of grasping for control, partner churches (from outside of the community) should seek to **empower** and **resource** local churches (that exist within the community).

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS:

GCCD work is daunting and often the needs require property development, paid staff to stand in the gaps, new or different schools, clinics, etc beyond the scope of typical local church operations. With that in mind, there are many strategies and possible funding sources for local churches to consider.

Paternalism

the system, principle, or practice of managing or governing individuals, businesses, nations, etc., in the manner of a father dealing benevolently and often intrusively with his children

-From dictionary.com

There is also a tangible tension to consider between local resident control and wealthy suburban churches with accomplished volunteers. The risk of **paternalism** is high.

Equitable and just GCCD empowers residents within the neighborhoods and raises up its leaders. It doesn't hand a community a set of solutions brought by outsiders. It's like the old saying goes: **Don't do for me without me**. Therefore, residents should not simply have a conciliatory seat at the table, but real decision-making power. Equitable GCCD leads to dignifying and mutual solutions in programs and projects that are direct results of years of relationships and both formal and informal community input.

In summation, local churches are to approach GCCD with humility. These tensions described above will always require a relinquishment of power. Our committee cannot offer solutions, but only say: trust God in the process as you listen to the community.

PRACTICAL EXAMPLES:

Examples of GCCD church/community partnership efforts along the spectrum of neighborhood/outside partnerships include:

- Chicago, IL - Lawndale CDC (<https://lcdc.net/>)

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- S. Atlanta, GA - FCS Urban Strategies (<https://www.fcsministries.org/>)
 - Mendenhall, MS - Voices of Calvary Ministries (<http://vocm.org/>)
 - Memphis, TN - Christ UMC (<https://www.christchurchmemphis.org/>) / Binghamton CDC (bdcmemphis.org) & Service Over Self (sosmemphis.org)
 - Nashville, TN - Brentwood UMC (<https://bumc.net/>) / Harvest Hands CDC (<https://www.harvesthandscdc.com/>)
 - Birmingham, AL - Christ Church Birmingham (<https://www.christchurchbham.com/>) and the East Lake Initiative (<https://www.eastlakeinitiative.com/>)
 - Charlotte, NC - Myers Park Presbyterian Church (<https://myersparkpres.org/>) / CrossRoads (<https://crossroadscorporation.org/>)
 - St. Luke UMC Orlando Circles <http://www.st.lukes.org/serve-2/circles/>

RESOURCE ESSENTIALS:

- *Becoming Whole: Why the Opposite of Poverty isn't the American Dream* by Brian Fikkert and Kelly M. Kopic (Moody 2019)
- *Center Church: Doing Balanced, Gospel-Centered Ministry in Your City* by Timothy J. Keller (Zondervan 2012)
- *Churches that make a Difference: Reaching Your Community with Good News and Good Works* by Ronald J. Sider/Philip N. Olson/ Heidi HollandUnruh
- *The Color of Church: A Biblical and Practical Paradigm for Multiracial Churches* by Rodney M. Woo (B&H Publishing 2009)
- *The Externally Focused Church* by Rick Rusaw/ Eric Swanson (Group 2004)
- *A Field Guide to Becoming Whole: Principles for Poverty Alleviation Ministries* by Brian Fikkert and Kelly M. Kopic (Moody 2019)
- [Gentry-Church](#) by Bob Lupton
- *Making Your Partnership Work : A Guide for Ministry Leaders* by Daniel Rickett (Winepress Publishing 2002)
- *A New Kind of Big: How Churches of any Size Can Partner to Transform Communities* by Chip Sweeney (Baker Books 2011)
- *People of the Dream: Multiracial Congregations in the US* by Michael O. Emerson (Princeton University Press 2006)
- *Theirs Is the Kingdom: Celebrating the Gospel in Urban America* by Robert D. Lupton (HarperOne 2011)

FLOURISHING HOMES & BLOCKS

Restoring Houses & Properties

BIG PICTURE: The hopelessness of abandoned and blighted neighborhood properties catalyzes crime and motivates residents with capacity to flee, leaving behind vulnerable neighbors and spawning the downward spiral of a community. A significant opportunity exists to use a tipping point strategy in targeted areas to purchase the worst properties, to place an economic floor in the market, to rehab salvageable houses (which can be construction job training) and to work with residents toward their Godly rental or in home ownership programs. A key to success is the aggressive early property purchase so that the

GCCD organization can have great influence on the ultimate low-income beneficiary residents, building the proper balance of income mix to promote strength and health, while limiting speculative gentrification. The renovated properties can provide wonderful opportunities for reneighboring families (teachers, medical, GCCD staff, and job training graduates) to put down roots, provide positive models, provide economic support, and build neighbor relationships.

KEY PRINCIPLES:

- **Long-term** strategy that seeks to serve, and not displace, the poor while supporting mixed income families, often developed there, and that provide critical economic support for a healthy community
- **New renters and homeowners** are also critical to offsetting the Broken Window effect associated with blighted, abandoned properties, and central to crime reduction
- **Community input process** that allows long-time residents to have a stake in the planning & outcomes of revitalization

All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

- 2 Corinthians 5:18-20

- **Mentoring**, a homeownership program, and/or financial literacy assistance is important in helping families successfully move into homeownership as they make payments on the property

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS: Many churches have started with restoring one house, but many have chosen to establish separate 501c3 organizations that can have a focused mission and strategy for development. Churches may also choose to partner with an established organization that has a holistic and long-term approach to communities. It is recommended that your team consult a *pro bono* real estate professional and lawyer within your church to help guide you as you navigate this new area of ministry.

PRACTICAL EXAMPLES:

- **Robert Lupton’s East Lake Community Rebuild and Focused Community Strategies** in Atlanta, Georgia: holistic approach to development of neighborhoods, not just betterment that can have adverse effects, such as displacement of the poor
- **Binghampton Development Corporation** (BDCmemphis.org)
- **Master Planning / Charrette Community Processes:** The respect of asking neighborhood residents to provide determinant input into local zoning, development, and investment decisions seems obvious, but experience suggests is so often ignored or only

A personal story from Robert Montague: I learned about reconciliation from Dr. Perkins. But I didn’t know what it would mean to my life. *The evening news flashed live coverage of the apartment fire of our first nearly renovated units. It was the drug dealers’ parting shot in our battle to resolve the worst violent blight on the neighborhood, to redeem “Bologna Land” into “Hope Senior Community”. But, God’s faithful warriors turned out before sunrise. The contractor worked all night & a wealthy church member quietly put a \$100,000 check in my pocket.*

Not long after, the neighborhood seniors started moving in to stake their claim. Annie moved in & slept on a blanket on the floor. Mr. Parks moved in with his wife just before he entered hospice. The Millers escaped an abusive situation. 90 year old Mr. Miller wore his security guard badge & “had my back”. Bozo used his bus money to put down a deposit which began our friendship & early morning coffee routine. All of the units filled up, & residents were patient as we fixed problems. We came to know people & formed deep friendships. We hosted Mr. Parks’ viewing, hosted Mrs. Miller’s going home party, & walked with Bozo through his cancer battle. I cried with Bozo at the VA hospital & shared our love as brothers in his last shivering moments. His sister honored our friendship by inviting me to preach at his funeral, one of the greatest honors of my life. Dr. Perkins taught me reconciliation, but the seniors defined it by adopting me into their Hope Community. Theirs is the Kingdom & they are my heroes.

given token attention. An established GCCD organization is well suited to provide a relational bridge between professionals and the community. A well-designed and documented community input process can yield a strong and impactful plan that short-term or outside interests cannot easily coopt.

- **The East Lake Initiative** in Birmingham, AL (<https://www.eastlakeinitiative.com/>): By acquiring distressed properties and renovating them to be quality homes we are able to offer tenants safe and secure housing options. Residents enter into a mentoring relationship that prepares them to be homeowners.
- **Volunteer property surveys** - A census of abandoned/blighted structures, graffiti, active drug/gang activity, broken windows, available for sale, need of removal. These provide invaluable information for real estate investments, home repair assistance (Service Over Self - sosmemphis.org), and code/law enforcement.
- **Purpose Built Communities** - (purposebuiltcommunities.org)

RESOURCE ESSENTIALS:

- *Restoring At-Risk Communities: Doing It Together & Doing It Right* by John M. Perkins (Baker Books 1996)
- *Compassion, Justice, & the Christian Life* by Robert Lupton (Regal 2007)
- *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference* by Malcolm Gladwell (BackBay Books 2002), specifically chapter four on the Broken Window Theory
- *The Power of Asset Mapping* by Luther K. Snow (Alban Institute 2004)

Notes on Funding

Partner churches are often filled with professionals who do not find a natural way to serve in mission but are very willing to provide support to the GCCD effort with development, legal, property management, etc. Such partners are critical to navigating the local and federal financing sources required in larger housing developments. In addition, metropolitan areas often have a community development industry or trade association that often provides access to experienced advice, joint funding applications, training and capacity building initiatives.

Housing development funding is a long and challenging task often involving multiple sources and navigating the complexities of government tax credit, housing agencies, and property tax abatement initiatives. Many of these also require a demonstrated experience of effective development that can only come with time. The following are options in use today:

- High net worth (individuals or groups) guaranteeing loans backed by their assets on account.
- State Housing Development Agency - they often require 2-3 years of demonstrated experience in housing development.
- Wealthier church partnerships for funding, professional services (legal, accounting, architecture, construction, etc.) and for access to key business and political leaders. These relationships can provide incredible leverage, but come at great risk of paternalistic management.
- Government incentives can be used to stimulate economic and real estate development. These public resources can reduce future property tax liability or subsidize investments in infrastructure, affordable housing and other capital projects, as well as investment into businesses. A few examples include Tax Increment Financing, Payment In Lieu Of Taxes, and a variety of Tax Credits (New Markets Tax Credit, Low Income Housing Tax Credit, Community Investment Tax Credit).

Other resources could include the following:

- The **HUD Housing Counseling Program** is a critical resource for training and certifying housing counselors that are an essential element of preparing new homeowners and helping them secure mortgages.
(https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/housing/sfh/hcc/hcc_home)
- A host of resources and tools for **Asset Mapping** can be found at the Asset-Based Community Development Institute at DePaul University:
<https://resources.depaul.edu/abcd-institute/Pages/default.aspx>

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- A tool for mapping the assets of your church can be found here on the **Chalmers Center's website**:
https://chalmers.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Church_Asset_Mapping.pdf
 - *[Hard Lessons](#)* by Bob Lupton

Intentional Neighboring

BIG PICTURE: The Gospel of John opens with a passage about Jesus Emmanuel coming in the flesh, or *incarnate*. Just like the One we follow, God’s people are not called to serve the poor from a distance by “throwing money at the problem of poverty”. Instead, we are called to get up close and personal with those on the margins. This may mean that some people from your local church or GCCD group consider moving into the community. Intentional neighboring, whether relocating neighbors or existing neighbors, is about living with intentionality in the neighborhood to listen, to learn, and to humbly serve. Partnering with intentional neighbors within the body of Christ can foster a sense of community and synergy that sparks community restoration.

KEY PRINCIPLES:

- To truly begin to understand the community that is served, **relocation** into the neighborhood may be necessary for some from the local church.
- An **attitude of humility** is essential to forming relationships with those who live around you.
- **Staying connected** with a local church is imperative. It can become difficult to maintain your sense of spiritual community when you are living a different cultural experience, but having brothers and sisters alongside you is vital to your spiritual health.
- **Intentionally engage** the community.

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS: Uprooting your life is tough. Moving into a new place can be jarring in all ways: spiritually, physically, emotionally, mentally, and culturally. But there is no way to gain better perspective on those you serve than living among them. Better than any course on GCCD that could be offered, living with those you serve is an *education* full stop. As you learn more about the real root problems faced by the community, you will be able to work toward more fitting solutions.

Safety issues can be a concern when living in under-resourced communities. These risks should be weighed before making a commitment.

Engagement in your community will look different for each person. If you don't know where to start, take up a hobby outside, sit on your front porch, or go for prayer walks. Making yourself available to God and to others will open up doors of opportunity and allow you to meet your neighbors.

PRACTICAL EXAMPLES:

- Existing or new neighbors living with intentionality where they are “motivated by their Christian faith and their commitment to reconciliation, restoration, and redistribution.” A great example is from **Focused Community Strategies** (<https://www.fcsministries.org/fcs-ministries/blog/what-does-intentional-neighbor-mean>)
- **Neighborhood Cookouts** - A grill on the street or in a vacant (but freshly mowed) lot with a Saturday lunch is a great way to pull neighbors out of their houses to meet and share, and can build into discussions that can lead to micro neighborhood organizations enabling residents to set priorities, improve their area, and claim a voice in the process.
- **Neighborhood Newspaper or social media group**- A community newspaper or official social media group can fight unproductive rumour mills, provide credible outlets for information, and connect GCCD organizations to residents. Often community or business publications (often owned or managed by members of related churches) have downtime that can be accessed to print the paper on newsprint (which seems to impact how it is viewed). Delivery is relatively easy with bulk mail all address services or by paying youth to deliver door to door. Families love to see school honor rolls, youth sports pictures, while they receive important church or neighborhood communications. Facebook groups or the Nextdoor app are also excellent ways to engage the neighbors and keep everyone engaged in processes.

RESOURCE ESSENTIALS:

- *The Gospel Comes with a House Key: Practicing Radically Ordinary Hospitality in Our Post-Christian World* by Rosaria Butterfield (Crossway 2018)
- Gospel Fluency by Jeff Vandersteldt on TGC at <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/course/gospel-fluency/#introduction>.
- Online Course from the Chalmers Center: Are You A Good Neighbor? <https://chalmers.org/product/are-you-a-good-neighbor/>
- *Where Would Jesus Live* by Melissa Huff (article) <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/where-would-jesus-live/>

Restoration Ministries: Drug, Alcohol, Human-trafficking, & Prison Ministries

BIG PICTURE: While there is a subcommittee focused on addiction and recovery, these issues can be strongholds in communities. We defer to the Addiction & Recovery Subcommittee, but we would like to add some practical examples below.

PRACTICAL EXAMPLES:

- **The WellHouse** in Birmingham, AL (the-wellhouse.org) Human-trafficking: “We are a 24-hour shelter offering immediate assistance to trafficked women who are rescued from anywhere in the United States. Entry requirements to programs, such as a state identification, proof of homelessness and a birth certificate, can undermine a woman’s access to an immediate, safe environment; therefore, these have been eliminated. We welcome victim survivors who desire help and who want to move toward becoming Overcomers!”
- **Kidz2Leaders** in Marietta, GA -<https://www.kidz2leaders.org/> - Kidz2Leaders provides stability, opportunity and a Christian community for children of inmates to break the cycle of incarceration.
- **reVision** in Houston, TX - <https://www.houstonrevision.org/> - reVision works to break the cycle of isolation among the most profoundly disconnected youth, most of whom are caught up in the juvenile justice system. By connecting one kid at a time to caring adults, positive peers and a program that works, we offer disconnected youth the opportunity to revision hopeful pathways.

THRIVING COMMUNITIES

Education: Working with Youth & Schools

BIG PICTURE: Working with schools, students, and kids in the neighborhood is a fun and practical way for volunteers to engage the community. It is also a great jumping off point for local churches, as kids are an avenue to working with their parents. Whether through tutoring, mentoring, childcare, summer camps, or community gatherings, there are many ways to engage young people in education and development. These initiatives can have a long-lasting impact on them... and you.

KEY PRINCIPLES:

- When working in schools, it is important to **engage the administration** and/or counselors to see where the greatest needs are. Ask them questions instead of providing them with your own solutions. The principles of *blueprint vs participatory approaches* is important in order for schools to have a voice and ownership in the process.
- Connecting schools with additional tangible or monetary **resources** can reinforce your commitment to the school. It is important to remember that, oftentimes, schools in under-resourced neighborhoods face many more issues than in affluent areas of town. You may assume that a school needs books, when in reality they need more resources for preventing their third graders from being recruited by gangs.
- When building mentoring relationships, it is important that **time and relationships** be central instead of gifts or extravagant experiences. The same principles that are employed with adults for chronic vs crisis situations should also be used with young people.
- Practical **child safety policies** should be put into place for anyone working with young people. Please refer to Safe Sanctuary or similar policies.

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS: When working with children and teens, it is important that volunteers are properly screened to ensure safety of young people. We recommend requiring background checks and following proper protocols in order to protect young people from possible harm. Reporting of suspected child abuse should be done immediately to the organization and, **most importantly, to the police.**

PRACTICAL EXAMPLES:

- **BDC Student Outreach:** supports the academic, physical and spiritual progression of students through life-on-life mentorship and discipleship. The BDC Student Outreach

team relationally engages elementary and middle school students through in-school support and after-school activities. Demonstrated faithfulness and consistency in relationships is a powerful influence, and time and again in the Binghampton community, we have seen that the presence of a role model and advocate (beyond a family member) improves outcomes for children. Through small group and one-on-one discipleship as well as larger group clubs and sports, full-time staff and volunteers cultivate a safe space for youth to interact and discover their God-given potential. Ultimately, we work to see the youth of Binghampton impact their community through the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

- **BDC Youth Employment Program:** Hard & soft skill training for neighborhood youth through a summer lawn care and discipleship program. Many youth are at the crucial place of deciding between meaningful economic opportunity and the less productive alternatives of gang involvement and other activities that may impede their future. This summer program offers youth the empowering opportunity to work and learn hard skills while providing additional financial literacy, life skill and mentorship/discipleship support.
- **Service Over Self (Memphis) or Blueprint (San Antonio)** - Summer home repair camps & SOS Builds - Youth construction on neighborhood improvement projects (sosomephris.org of blueprintministry.com). These organizations hire college students to lead high school and middle school students in home repair, most often re-roofing, in an under resourced neighborhood. The program includes intense discipleship and disciple-making with the summer college staff, the weekly campers, and the homeowners receiving services. Further, the summer staff often yields engaged candidates to staff post-college intern and full-time church and parachurch positions after graduation.
- **Memphis Gridiron Ministries** - Youth after-school football and discipleship - (<http://mgmfootball.org/>) Football offers a fun route to build positive relationships, support school education, and provide Bible training. This has proven effective at building interaction between urban and suburban youth, men and families around practices and league play.
- **Art programs:** These are secular programs that use art as a relationship builder. This can be a model for GCCD efforts. (Carpenter Art Garden <https://www.carpenterartgarden.com>)
- **Private Schools: Binghampton Christian Academy, Capstone Charter School Network, Restoration Academy** (Memphis, TN - <https://bcamemphis.org/>, <https://www.capstoneeducationgroup.org/>, Fairfield, AL - <https://www.restorationacademy.org/>)
- **Sex Education** - Many under-resourced schools do not have designated or additional funds to provide curriculum for sex education for middle school and high school students. Local health departments usually have these programs, but simply need someone to request for the program to come to the school. Coordinating a sex education program with counselors and administration may be a welcomed consideration.

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- **Teach One Lead One:** Mentoring Today's Youth - <https://t1l1.org/> - *Teach One to Lead One* provides educators throughout the nation with constructive mentoring programs for students in grades K-12. Our programs focus on nurturing and instilling universal principles essential to adequately move students forward in their personal and professional lives. Students graduate *Teach One to Lead One* with a firm understanding of communicative skills and character attributes that lead to success as they move from childhood to young adulthood. T1L1 offers churches proven ways to build key relationships with local schools and impact students' lives by teaching Biblical principles in a way that schools can accept.
 - **Kids Hope USA:** <https://kidshopeusa.org/> - An expanding national network of public school-church partnerships that provide inspiring mentor relationships for students. One child, one mentor, one hour, together. Too many students stand just one close adult relationship away from thriving in school and in life. This gap hinders education; loneliness obstructs learning. Yet every church's most abundant resource is people. We provide structure, training, support, and resources designed for use in public schools by churches to give kids what they need most—hope and love from a mentor.
 - **Pizza nights:** Get intentional neighbors to invite kids from the block for a pizza night regularly on the front porch or inside the home. Make sure that appropriate precautions are taken to ensure child safety (such as no adult being alone with a child or children).
 - **Moving in the Spirit:** An Atlanta-based program that seeks to transform the lives of young people through dance (<http://www.movinginthespirit.org/>)
 - **Avenue of Life** in Kansas City, MO - <https://www.avenueoflife.org/> - The Avenue Youth House. Breaking the cycle of poverty through Community Development. Central to our mission is our commitment to equip and mobilize the community. Our goal is to facilitate the journey from hand-outs (emergency relief) in crisis, to hand-ups (individual betterment) for those ready to rise above their circumstances, to hand-offs (community development) to indigenous leaders of a transformed community.

RESOURCE ESSENTIALS:

- **Article: Background Checks: The Importance of Screening Volunteers**
<https://www.mentoring.org/program-resources/mentor-resources-and-publications/background-checks/>
- **Article: Mission with Children at Risk from Lausanne:**
<https://www.lausanne.org/content/lop/mission-children-risk-lop-66>
- **Article: Supporting & Inspiring Native Youth**
<https://www.mentoring.org/program-resources/mentor-resources-and-publications/supporting-and-inspiring-native-youth/>

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- **Youth Leader Development:** <https://www.soulmemphis.org/mission-index-impact> SOUL, through various channels, seeks to recruit potential outreach workers and place them in urban ministries throughout Memphis. SOUL resources ministries through providing funding to Christian organizations that are called to expand their reach in the city. SOUL trains workers, through a two year curriculum covering the basic tenets of outreach, evangelism, discipleship, and educational programming, as well as other culturally relevant topics.
 - Director Training through **Kids Hope USA** <https://kidshopeusa.org/training-events/>
 - Emmanuel Gospel Center article on **Mentoring Urban Youth** <https://www.egc.org/blog-2/2017/6/6/urban-youth-mentoring>
 - *The Kindness of Strangers: Adult Mentors, Urban Youth, and the New Voluntarism* by Marc Freedman (Cambridge University Press 1999)
 - *Manhood Restored: How the Gospel Makes Men Whole* by Eric Mason (B&H Books 2013)
 - *The Miracles of Mentoring: How to Encourage and Lead Future Generations* by Thomas Dortch Jr. and The 100 Black Men of America, Inc. (Broadway Books 2001)

Economic Development

BIG PICTURE: Economic development is an expansive subject. For our purposes, we will narrow the subject to *community* economic development (CED) which focuses on the economic health of a defined neighborhood. While there are many factors that contribute to the overall economic health of a community (safety, education, nutrition, health care, employment opportunities to name a few), there are a few measurable criteria that directly relate to economic development.

Jobs, job training, and job placement: Nothing is more fundamental to empowering disadvantaged communities to emerge from poverty than decently paying jobs. Entry-level, minimum wage employment may be useful to teach young people job-readiness skills but a livable wage is essential for thriving. Preparation for the world of work can (and should) begin early when children are forming life patterns. Youth programs can be shaped to reinforce a healthy work ethic, responsibility, integrity, and even basic money management. Unhealthy work habits, once established, are troublesome to unlearn.

Job creation: Nonprofits are great at creating work opportunities, especially when it relates to service in the community. Summer jobs programs, clerking at a thrift store, mowing lawns – such are important ways to instill a work ethic while building relationships and earning some spending money. But for the most part, true economic development takes place in a community when for-profit businesses decide to operate there. A supermarket, a branch bank, a home construction business – such are wealth-generating enterprises that create legitimate employment as well as needed services in the community. Christian business people who sit in our pew on Sunday often have the very skills, connections, and capital required to initiate these much-needed businesses. They are better equipped to do effective community economic development ministry than the high-touch volunteers who lead with their hearts.

Do no harm: Any ministry activity, no matter how compassionate or well-motivated, that erodes a work ethic, fosters dependency, or encourages entitlement must be viewed as unhelpful and ultimately dis-empowering. Healthy exchange when both giver and recipient bring something of value to the negotiating table promotes mutuality and enhances human dignity.

KEY PRINCIPLES:

- **Recognize** that the most **important input** is from the individual or community that is served.
- Assess **assets** in the individual and community. ABCD Strategy described in *When Helping Hurts* by Corbett & Fikkert is helpful in this key area.
- Keep **long-term** progress in mind with **small, reachable goals** as steps to get there.

- The goal is not to pursue the “American Dream” of personal prosperity: the goal is to serve others.
- Work is not a necessary evil we engage in to generate income; properly understood, work is a way of worshipping God, serving our neighbors, and affirming personal value and dignity. We can view our work as a part of the mission of God, whether we work in the kitchen of a fast food restaurant or work in the C suite. (See resources below on Business as Mission)
- Financial literacy is a stepping stone to economic freedom to wealth creation.

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS: You cannot “subsidize” the entire neighborhood in either short-term or long-term scenarios. Jobs creation and jobs training are vital to sustainable community growth. GCCD can be a tipping point catalyst, but not the whole story.

Many marginalized and under-resourced communities are cash-based economies. Financial life stresses can impair relationships or trust with banking institutions. Therefore, a critical starting point is basic financial literacy programs designed to inform and build (or rebuild) critical skills and relationships.

Money-lending stores are a plague in under-resourced communities that profit off of placing the poor in extreme debt with exorbitant interest rates. Education is important in combating this evil, but growing up in material poverty can affect decision-making and beliefs about money that cannot be simply solved with an educational lesson.

PRACTICAL EXAMPLES:

- **Circles USA in Orlando, FL & Lagrange, GA** - (<https://www.circlesusa.org/>): gathers middle-income and high-income volunteers to support families in poverty. Surrounded by people who have landed jobs, negotiated a lease, or managed credit card debt, for example, people experiencing poverty are more equipped to achieve long-term financial stability.
- **Advance Memphis** <http://advancememphis.org/programs/>: Empowers members of our community to recognize their skills and value as unique and gifted individuals—children of a Father who created all of us to find joy and meaning in work. Each program is a stepping stone towards financial independence in the areas of getting ready to work, working, managing money, and entrepreneurship & small business start-up.
- **Revenue-supported job training** - A discipleship, life skill, and job training programs can find meaningful revenue support through house resale or service contracts. (bdcmemphis.org for construction & its Business Hub) & (<https://www.lifeline2success.org/> for lawn care and litter pickup services with ex-offenders).

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- **“Greatest Gift” Christmas Store** - Fortunately, the dignity-stripping impact of drive-by drop-offs of holiday meals or Christmas toys are becoming more widely acknowledged. However, Christmas offers a unique time to foster hope & give families the gift of dignity by allowing parents to purchase donated gifts at token / affordable prices (which can pay for neighborhood staffing). Then, the parents are making selections and providing, feeling empowered and reinforcing the parent-child relationship. Donors will engage to purchase toys with their families in teaching moments either at stores or online. Cash donations can help the staff make last minute purchases to fill gaps in age/interest supply.
 - **Oasis of Home - Used Appliance and Home Furnishings Store** - (<https://oohmemphis.com/outreaches/appliance-home>) - Oasis Appliance & Home Furnishings is a non-profit secondhand store that accepts donations & sells quality appliances, furniture, & other home furnishings to the public at a fraction of retail price. In the process, the store provides job training and employment to neighborhood residents.
 - **Automotive Training Center:** <https://www.automotivetrainingcenter.org/> The Automotive Training Center is a program in Atlanta, Georgia that provides young men with technical training so that they may obtain entry-level employment in the automotive repair industry. The majority of our students are at-risk and drawn from low-income neighborhoods where unemployment and high school drop-out rates are both high. ATC was founded on the principle that all of its students have untapped potential that has not developed because of their specific life circumstances. ATC gives its students opportunities to grow the technical and entrepreneurial skills they already possess.
 - **IRS VITA Preparation Services** - The IRS provides training, certification and free software tools for GCCD staff and volunteers to provide free tax return preparation for low and moderate income families. (<https://www.irs.gov/individuals/irs-tax-volunteers>) Spending a half hour helping families navigate complexities and ending up with a refund is an incredible trust and relation builder, especially after compounding over several years.

RESOURCE ESSENTIALS:

- BridgeBuilders: <https://bridgebuilders.org/what-we-do> Through BridgeBuilders’ Engage initiative, ministry associates & volunteers engage our Adopt-A-Block, Hoop Church, & outreach programs to serve the community alongside residents.
- *Business as Mission: A Comprehensive Guide to Theory and Practice* by C. Neal Johnson (IVP Academic 2009)
- Business As Mission Website: <https://businessasmission.com/>
- The Chalmers Center: www.chalmers.org
- Faith and Finances <https://chalmers.org/faith-finances/> Christ-centered training way to help people in poverty overcome financial challenges

- **Faith Driven Entrepreneur:** (website and podcast)
<https://www.faithdrivenentrepreneur.org/> The Faith Driven Entrepreneur is an informal initiative formed from the experiences of a few dozen of us that are committed to our faith, and who believe that God uses entrepreneurs to bring about His Kingdom here on earth. Our mission is to help entrepreneurs who are hard at work on the trail.
- The Federal Reserve: *Building Wealth - A Beginner's Guide to Securing Your Financial Future* - <https://www.dallasfed.org/-/media/microsites/cd/wealth/index.html>
- *A Framework for Understanding Poverty - A Cognitive Approach* by Dr. Ruby Payne (aha! Process 2018)
- Jobs for Life: <https://www.jobsforlife.org/> JFL addresses root causes of unemployment, underemployment, & disengagement with work by uniting churches, businesses, & organizations & facilitating positive transformation within lives & communities.
- Local banks: banks are required to do neighborhood outreach, teach financial literacy, and have other programs that may be useful for the community.
- *The Missional Entrepreneur: Principles and Practices for Business as Mission* by Mark L. Russell (New Hope Publishers 2010)
- Online Course: Practicing the King's Economy
<https://chalmers.org/product/practicing-the-kings-economy-online-course/>
- Partners Worldwide: <https://www.partnersworldwide.org/> Business is the most effective way to fight poverty. Around the world, we partner with locally-led organizations to support business growth and job creation so that people may be equipped to lift themselves—and their families and communities—out of poverty for good.
- PDF: *Franchising the Kingdom* by Bob Lupton
- *The Poor Will Be Glad: Joining the Revolution to Lift the World Out of Poverty* by Peter Greer (ReadHowYouWant 2012), focus on international ministry & poverty.
- *Practicing the King's Economy: Honoring Jesus in How We Work, Earn, Spend, Save, and Give* by Michael Rhodes, Robby Holt, and Brian Fikkert (Baker Books 2018)
- *The Social Entrepreneur* by the Asbury Project (Seedbed Publishing 2015)
- *When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty Without Hurting the Poor . . . and Yourself* by Brian Fikkert and Steve Corbett (Moody Publishers 2014)
- Work Life Training <https://chalmers.org/work-life-training/> The Chalmers Center trains churches and ministries in *Work Life*, a biblically integrated job preparedness curriculum designed specifically for people from backgrounds of generational poverty.
- Dave Ramsey resources, such as 7 Baby Steps
<https://www.daveramsey.com/dave-ramsey-7-baby-steps?snid=footer.getstarted.babysteps>

JUST SYSTEMS & ACCESS FOR ALL

Learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow's cause. Isaiah 1:17

Racial Reconciliation

BIG PICTURE: While there is a subcommittee committed specifically to racial reconciliation, this topic plays a pivotal role in communities across our country and the world. We will list out below some key recommendations, but will defer to the subcommittee on racial reconciliation.

KEY PRINCIPLES:

- Be willing to **listen deeply** to the experiences of others.
- As you partner with those of other races, **value** and **respond** to their priorities.
- Do **research** on the facts & experiences of people who look different than you.
- **Live among** people who look different than you.
- Explore the Bible to see what God has to say about **justice**, **race**, and **reconciliation**.
- Be **humble!**

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS: If you are new to the discussion on racial tensions, please be quick to listen and slow to speak. Take significant time to learn from various recommended resources and listen to real human experiences.

PRACTICAL EXAMPLES:

- Gather a group together to **pray** for racial conciliation in your community.
- **Ask** others about their life experiences.

As the only Native American clergy person in the Dakotas Conference, I've had many pastors tell me what they are doing for "my people". They are "doing" for people like me, without me being involved except as a recipient. It's an "I'm going to do good things for you without your input" mentality. Instead, we want people to walk beside us & give us the skills we need to get out of the incessant poverty of the Reservation system, so we can stop being dependent on the others.

I've seen the results of this forced help. Dependency breeds a loss of hope. People turn to alcohol, drugs, & promiscuity to deal with the hopelessness of poverty. Fear, gang affiliation, & even suicide become a reality within the Native community. My own brother committed suicide after becoming an alcoholic & drug addict & feeling that taking his own life was the only option to remove his pain. I wish people didn't "help" the marginalized as an outlet for feeling better about themselves, but sought to empower the marginalized to learn how to better their own lives & to move from hopelessness towards real hope & a brighter future.

-from Mark Britton

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- **Amplify the voices** of those in your ministry who are persons of color or who come from marginalized groups.
 - **Coffee with a Cop** - A community-organized program geared at building bridges between the police and the communities they serve. Residents are invited to a local restaurant or community gathering location to engage in conversation with members of the police department. It allows residents to voice their concerns and learn more about their community while fostering positive relationships between the police and the community.
 - **OneRace:** <http://oneracemovement.com/> Through prayer and fasting, relationship and collaboration, OneRace exists to displace the spirit of racism and release a movement of racial reconciliation. God desires a young adult movement that will counter the tide of racial division in our city & nation. “And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth...” – Acts 17:26
 - **Dignity Serves:** <https://polisinstitute.org/2014/06/dignityserves/> Polis’ Dignity Serves is a paradigm-shifting, deeply impactful experience that teaches how to both serve and be served with dignity in every aspect of life. Since 2008, it has helped thousands of people serve others more effectively, using interactive exercises and real-world examples to help participants apply key principles to their personal lives and to the programs that they take part in.
 - **The New City Network:** <https://thenewcitynetwork.org/> The New City Network is a coalition of churches and ministries that are marked by the following characteristics: urban, cross-cultural, including the poor, joyful worship, and sound, biblical preaching.

RESOURCE ESSENTIALS:

- *Advocates: The Narrow Path to Racial Reconciliation* by Dhati Lewis (B&H Books 2019)
- *Be the Bridge: Pursuing God's Heart for Racial Reconciliation* by Latasha Morrison (WaterBrook 2019)
- *A Beginner's Guide to Crossing Cultures: Making Friends in a Multicultural World* by Patty Lane (Intervarsity Press 2002)
- *The Color of Compromise: The Truth about the American Church's Complicity in Racism* by Jemar Tisby (Zondervan 2019)
- *Cross Cultural Partnerships: Navigating the Complexities of Money and Missions* by Mary T. Lederleitner (Intervarsity Press 2010)
- *Cultural Intelligence: Improving Your CQ to Engage Our Multicultural World* by David A. Livermore (Baker Publishing 2009)
- *How to Fight Racism: Courageous Christianity and the Journey Toward Racial Justice* by Jemar Tisby (Zondervan 2021)
- *Insider Outsider: My Journey as a Stranger in White Evangelicalism and My Hope for Us All* by Bryan Loritts (Zondervan 2018)

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- *One Blood: Parting Words to the Church on Race and Love* by John Perkins (Moody Publishers 2018)
 - *Oneness Embraced: Reconciliation, The Kingdom, and How We Grow Stronger Together* by Tony Evans (Moody Publishers 2011)
 - *Woke Church: An Urgent Call for Christians in America to Confront Racism and Injustice* by Eric Mason (Moody 2018)

Access to Food

BIG PICTURE: Food insecurity is a prevalent problem in under-resourced neighborhoods. Oftentimes, lack of access to healthy and affordable foods creates a food desert for large portions of developed cities. To address these insecurities, it is important to ask whether the needs are chronic or crisis. Unless there has been a catastrophic event like a tornado or hurricane, most needs in marginalized communities are chronic. As such, these issues must be engaged strategically. Depending on the needs, there are many ways to foster greater food security: community gardens, teaching cooking and growing classes, seed swaps, food co-ops, chain grocery store engagement, civic engagement, private business and government investment, and more.

KEY PRINCIPLES:

- A **long-term strategy** is important for long-term results.
- **Assess** what factors are causing lack of food access. Lack of transportation or other factors can be a hindrance to food access.
- **Start small.** Going too big too early could prove to be unsustainable.
- **Gather input** from neighbors, community leaders, and the local business community.

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS: As described by Bob Lupton: “We began with handing out sandwiches under a highway overpass. We learned from that and stair-stepped to a food co-op and eventually to an actual food store, Carver Market, which has created healthy food access for the community. The next step would be for a for-profit supermarket to open in the neighborhood.” Start small and work your way closer to what the community wants and needs.

Cooking education, gardening education, small home gardens, seed saving, seed swapping, and large community gardens are all great ways to increase access to resources and knowledge for healthier food. Larger initiatives should gather professionals from the Church, residents, local business people, local non-profits, local leaders, and other stakeholders to think through viable options for growth that can be owned and supported from within the community.

PRACTICAL EXAMPLES:

- **Carver Market** in Atlanta, GA
<https://www.fcsministries.org/blog/category/Urban+Perspectives> from handing out sandwiches to food co-op to actual food store (access to healthy food) and next step would be a for-profit supermarket

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- **Food Security for America:** <https://foodsecurityforamerica.org/> We create communities across America called **Food Security Groups** where struggling families can have their need for nutritious food met, learn about nutrition and healthy lifestyles, and receive the support of friends – friends on whom they can lean when times get tough and celebrate the joys of life.
 - **Urban Recipe:** <https://urbanrecipe.org/> Partnering with our members and supporters in creating food security, building community, and providing a platform for personal development while affirming dignity.
 - **Bonton Farms:** <https://bontonfarms.org/> We're driven by the mission to restore lives, create jobs and ignite hope in a once forgotten and neglected neighborhood with some of the most marginalized people. "Investing in the **soil** yields healthy plants; Investing in the **soul** yields healthy people."
 - **United Against Poverty:** unitedagainstopoverty.org Serving those in poverty by providing crisis care, case management, transformative education, food and household subsidy, employment training and active referrals to other collaborative social service providers.

RESOURCE ESSENTIALS:

- *The Community Gardening Handbook: The Guide to Organizing, Planting, and Caring for a Community Garden (Hobby Farms)* by Ben Raskin (CompanionHouse Books 2017)
- *Community Gardens (Urban Gardening and Farming for Teens)* by Susan Burns Chong (Rosen Classroom 2014)
- Food Security for America Training: <https://foodsecurityforamerica.org/what-we-do/>
- *The Great Courses' How to Grow Anything: Food Gardening for Everyone* video series. Check your local library's online resources

Access to Healthcare

BIG PICTURE: Accessible and affordable healthcare can be a heavy burden on the poor. Even transportation to get help can be difficult to manage. While creating a health clinic might not be within your abilities, the church can be creative with helping address healthcare issues in the community.

KEY PRINCIPLES:

- **Connect resources** from local colleges or free clinics to the community by reaching out to the healthcare and education communities. Oftentimes, these organizations may be able to offer free health screenings in the community.
- **Look inward** to the medical professionals in your church who may be able to volunteer their time or expertise.
- **Mental health** is just as important as physical health. Counselors and other mental health professionals can be vital to GCCD programs and may be able to assist with one-on-one counseling, group meetings, or educational classes.

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS: While your church or GCCD organization may not have resources to launch a fully-staffed health clinic, you may be able to think of other creative ways to assist with healthcare. Start small.

PRACTICAL EXAMPLES:

- **Christ Community Health Services** - Federally-funded, Christian healthcare provider to the uninsured in Memphis' marginalized neighborhoods. (<https://www.christcommunityhealth.org/>)
- **Church Health Center - CHC** is donor-funded with a significant volunteer-provider base that serves low-income working families. (<https://churchhealth.org/>)
- **Christ Health Center in Woodlawn, Birmingham, AL** (<https://christhealthcenter.org/>): We are committed to the physical, mental and spiritual health and well-being of each of our patients. More than simply seeing the sick made well, at Christ Health Center we strive to see the well made whole and to see each patient living life abundantly. Our patients have access to the very best in primary care, dental services and professional counseling as well as medication therapy management through our on-site pharmacy. We accept all forms of insurance, including Medicare and Medicaid, and offer a generous sliding scale fee-for-service option to our self-pay patients.
- **Good Samaritan Health Care:** <https://goodsamcobb.org/> Good Sam will be obedient to the Great Commandment and operate as a Christian ministry that serves the working poor of our community by providing quality primary and preventative medical and dental

services to those who might otherwise go without the care they need. This will be done at an affordable cost, providing families with a medical home upon which they can depend. As Jesus did in His ministry, we will address our patient's spiritual needs as well as their basic human needs.

- **Lawndale Christian Health Center** (Chicago) <https://lawndale.org> Providing primary health care services for the health center's neighboring communities. Each year our staff of over 400 achieve that mission by providing over 192,000 visits of care. However, over time we have learned that our mission means different things to different people. The Collective at Cumberland: <http://www.thecollectiveac.org/> Cumberland Counseling Services
- **Lifespring Community Health:** <https://www.lifespringcommunityhealth.org/> A Chattanooga pediatric clinic with exemplary medical staff and innovative services that embraces the whole child serves their family and transforms the health of our community.

RESOURCE ESSENTIALS:

- **Christ Community Health Fellowship:** <https://www.cchf.org/> Christian Community Health Fellowship is a community of Christian healthcare professionals who are committed to living out the gospel through healthcare among the poor.
- *Just Medicine: A Cure for Racial Inequality in American Health Care* by Dayna Bowen Matthew (NYU Press 2015)
- *The American maternal mortality crisis: The role of racism and bias* by Sharon Worcester: <https://www.mdedge.com/obgyn/article/221705/obstetrics/american-maternal-mortality-crisis-role-racism-and-bias?fbclid=IwAR0Ht-t06MrtyBasx2dISV-Ful7KD8gGXzYMnygg8hxm4Jrq8pAD7I4I>

Mercy Ministries

BIG PICTURE: Mercy ministries are important and helpful for making an initial connection or addressing a crisis situation. However, these initiatives should be approached with caution. Sometimes mercy ministries make us feel good, but it is not about you and how you feel. Long-term development is more sustainable and more helpful to individuals and communities.

Know When to Apply Relief, Rehabilitation, and Development.

Think about the following two people: a homeless person standing on a street corner and a person whose house has just been destroyed by a tsunami. On the surface the two people are the same: they both lack adequate shelter. But the underlying conditions are quite different, aren't they? The homeless person on the street corner is in a chronic state of poverty, while the victim of the tsunami is experiencing homelessness due to an immediate crisis. And because the underlying conditions are different, the church's response should be different.

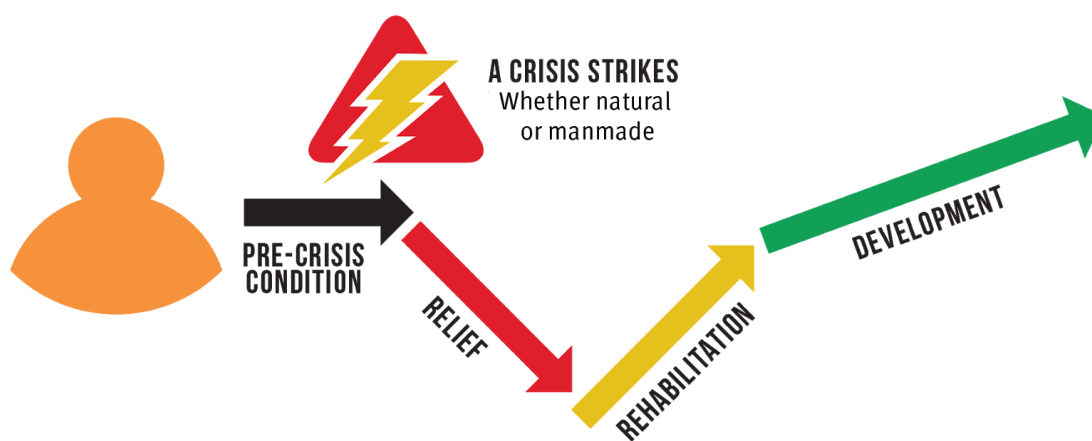
As depicted in the figure below, there are three broad categories of poverty alleviation, and the one we should use depends upon the underlying cause of the poverty:

- **Relief**, which is often called “mercy ministry,” is the urgent and temporary provision of emergency aid to reduce immediate suffering from a natural or man-made crisis. In relief work, a provider does things “to” or “for” recipients to “stop the bleeding.” The parable of the Good Samaritan is an example of relief work.
- **Rehabilitation** is an effort to restore people back to the positive features of their pre-crisis condition after the initial bleeding has stopped. Rehabilitation starts to move from “*doing to*” or “*doing for*” to “*doing with*,” as people are now able to start contributing to their own recovery as the crisis is over.
- **Development** is walking with people across time in ways that move all the people involved--both the “helpers” and the “helped”--to achieving higher levels of human flourishing than they've experienced before. Development avoids “*doing to or for*” and focuses on “*doing with*.”

Note that not every individual will need to go through all three phases. Most poor people are in a chronic state of poverty; they are not in a crisis, and they are not helpless. So they are capable of contributing to their own improvement. As a result, most poor people need development, not relief or rehabilitation. The biggest mistake that churches make in poverty alleviation is doing relief in situations that call for development, a mistake that can do considerable harm by creating unhealthy dependencies.. So it is crucial that we diagnose the situation correctly..

This section adapted from “Not All Poverty is Created Equal,” Chapter 4 in *When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty without Hurting the Poor...and Yourself* (Moody Publishers 2012), pp. 99-116, by Corbett and Fikkert.

Relief, Rehabilitation, and Development



Adapted from Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert, *When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty Without Hurting the Poor...and Yourself*, 2012 (Chicago: Moody Publishers), 100. Used by permission of the Chalmers Center.

KEY PRINCIPLES:

- Throughout this document, Bob Lupton and Brian Fikkert have provided many resources for us to consider in regard to development strategies. Please refer back to these **resources**, especially **articles** in the opening of this material.
- Mercy ministry is the **entry point**. Don't get stuck here!
- Don't do for people what **they can do for themselves**.
- Making the right **diagnosis** is key to addressing the issue in a way that is sustainable long-term.
- Start by focusing on people's **assets**, not on their **needs**.
- GCCD is **decades-long** work, **not days-long** work. Long-term commitment to God-given dignity affirming relationships is critical to this work.

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS:

There are instances where crisis needs should be met through mercy ministries, but the Church must also keep in mind “food for the soul.” For instance when serving a meal, instead of forming an assembly line where the Church is separated from those being served, maybe some individuals can sit one-on-one and care for people’s souls.

PRACTICAL EXAMPLES:

- **GIFT (God-in Faith Tonight) Worship-** Faith United Methodist Church, Williston, North Dakota was started during Advent of 2013 as a means of feeding the homeless population of the Bakken Oil Field area and also giving the people a way to worship God at the same time. Volunteers run the program that includes a meal prepared by the people of Faith UMC and then a short worship service presented by a pastor or lay person, including a sermon and communion once each month. The volunteers sit and eat with the people who come to the meal and get to know them as friends. Partnered with Out in Faith Ministry, it also gives out Bibles, clothing and hygiene items, and Christmas gifts each Christmas.
- **RITI - Room in the Inn:** offers homeless clients a room and meals at night. Volunteers provide the meals, set up the rooms, shower schedules, feed, and generally love on the clients. This service provides short-term relief to acute situations and should be combined with efforts to provide semi-permanent homeless housing, case management, and developmental initiatives.
- **Love In the Name of Christ:** <https://www.loveinc.org/> Mobilizing local churches to transform lives and communities In the Name of Christ.

Turkey Toss: a story on what NOT to do:

The infamous “turkey man or family” shows up at holidays, usually Thanksgiving or Christmas, to drop off a frozen turkey after work, offers a well wish, and departs the neighborhood before the sun goes down concerned for his/their family. The “Christmas class” is its cousin. The class makes a shopping run, buying an excessive amount of gifts, pulls up in front of their assigned client’s home and fills the living room with their view of Christmas. They too move quickly to exit the neighborhood before the sun goes down. Both assuaging guilt while literally stripping any shred of dignity from the parents, and particularly the fathers, with a show that tells the children that their parents cannot provide for them with a once in a lifetime interaction that does not build one shred of relationship and provides no real evidence of the sacrificial love of Jesus. I did it. Please don’t. There are better alternatives.

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- **Peoria Rescue Ministries:** <https://www.peoriarescue.org/> Peoria Rescue Ministries is a gospel-centered ministry of mercy that responds to the needs of the homeless & hurting of our community while sharing the hope for new life.

RESOURCE ESSENTIALS:

- *A Framework for Understanding Poverty* by Dr. Ruby K. Payne (aha! Process 2005)
- *Helping without Hurting in Benevolence*, a book by Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert (Moody 2015) and an online course at the Chalmers Center <https://chalmers.org/product/hwh-benevolence-course/>
- *Ministries of Mercy: The Call of the Jericho Road* by Timothy Keller (P&R Publishing 1997)
- “Not All Poverty is Created Equal,” Chapter 4 in *When Helping Hurts* by Brian Fikkert and Steve Corbett (Moody 2012), Expanded Edition, pp. 98-116.

FAILURE LESSONS

Every one of our GCCD team (including seasoned practitioners, authors, pastors, residents) have examples in our journeys about failures. Wrong ideas, poor execution, cultural missteps, or Satan's attacks may result in failures. But take heart! Hear King David's encouragement to remember the Lord's benefits - His presence, His power, His Love, and His Grace. Sin is not found in sincere attempts that fail, but in not reaching out to those in the margin, not entering into their trials, or not sharing your bestowed gifts.

So... GO!

This compilation is intended to raise awareness, to share values, and to reduce missteps, but "right" is often defined by your community, your neighbors, and your unique environment. Communicate, build a vision, lean on the body of Christ, and attempt as many good ideas as possible. Start small and don't be afraid to change course as you learn. Celebrate the deep learning that can only come from good, but failed, attempts. Then, build resources around the ones where the Holy Spirit is moving! And, share what you have learned with others. For in the trying, the persevering, and in the failures, you will find your "well done".

For more on failure lessons, read [*Failing with God*](#) by Bob Lupton.

APPENDIX 1: Asking the Right Questions about Serving

By Bob Lupton

Planning a mission trip or service project? Want to make sure you are helping rather than hurting? The following questions will help you determine whether your service will be transformative or toxic.

Whose needs are you serving? You want this to be a meaningful experience for your group. But if most of your planning energy is being invested in ensuring that the event will be “a life-changing experience” for your members, this may be a clue that it is more about serving your group than serving the poor. This is a particularly difficult question for mission pastors and youth leaders since they are hired to minister primarily to church members. A well organized, spiritually-motivated, hands-on mission trip can be very satisfying to volunteers and yield moving accounts for back-home reporting. It is doubtful, however, that a “what-works best-for-us” approach will have transformative impact among those on the receiving end who are expected to accommodate to the schedules and preferences of their resourced visitors.

Is the proposed activity meeting a real need? An African woman recently told us that as a child she never understood why Americans loved to paint so much. In preparation for the Americans’ arrival in her rural village her classmates were instructed to deface the school building with mud and stones so their guests would have something to paint. Her entire school building was repainted five times in the four years she was a student there. Extreme example? Perhaps. But unfortunately it is representative of the make-work projects often created to make compassionate volunteers feel good about serving. If a project is truly important to those being served, they will be first investors in that effort with their own leadership, labor and resources.

Is the proposed mission a top priority? A group recently returning from Haiti recounted their experience of seeing mothers carrying infants wrapped in dirty rags and newspapers. Moved with compassion, the mission group purchased blankets and distributed them to the mothers. The following day the blankets appeared in the shops along the street, sold by the mothers to local merchants. Discovering the babies still swaddled in filth, the missionaries were highly incensed – until it was explained to them that the mothers sold the blankets to buy food for their babies. Food, not blankets, was the higher priority. To determine the true hierarchy of need, enough time must be spent among the needy to understand the daily survival pressures they face. Repairing an inner-city widow’s rotting porch may not be as important as getting her water turned back on. Adapting our mission to the priorities of the poor is key to redemptive service.

Are the poor capable of doing this for themselves? The poor are weakened when well-meaning people deprive them of the incentives and rewards of their own hard-won

achievements by doing for them what they have the capacity to do for themselves. As one leader of a micro-lending ministry in Nicaragua lamented when describing the effects of US church partnerships, “They are turning my people into beggars.” Why get a loan to build their own church, the peasants reason, when the Americans will do it for them? Predictable by-products of such service include increased dependency, erosion of work ethic, and loss of dignity. Conversely, indigenous capacity-building is encouraged by joint efforts like co-investing, micro-lending and reciprocal partnerships.

How will you measure success? Typically churches evaluate their service projects and mission trips by the number of volunteers involved, the activities performed, and the impact on participating members. Less attention is paid to the results on the receiving end of charity. If, however, preserving the dignity and self-esteem of recipients is important to you, then you will want to assess the amount of mutual collaboration, leadership sharing and reciprocity structured into your event. If your goal is to actually empower those you serve, you will focus less on volunteer activities and more on measurable longer-term outcomes such as leadership development, increased self-sufficiency, and educational and economic advancement.

Is it cost-effective? The money one campus ministry spent on a spring break mission trip painting an orphanage in Honduras was enough to hire two unemployed local painters, two full-time teachers, and supply new uniforms for every child in the school. The cost of most mission trips is out of all proportion to the return on investment (ROI) when comparing it against the actual value of the service being performed. The billions spent annually on such junkets might be justified as a legitimate cost of spiritual development for church members but it lacks integrity if billed as effective mission strategy. Wise stewardship requires thoughtful assessment of the cost-effectiveness of mission investments.

A few suggestions to avoid mission toxicity. Mission projects can be genuinely redemptive. The best ones are joint ventures with mature, indigenous ministries that understand both the culture and healthy cross-cultural partnering. A few reality-tested principles provide a “code of conduct” to guide invited volunteer guests toward sensitive, mutually transforming relationships:

- Never do for others what they can do for themselves (teach a man to fish).
- Limit one-way giving to emergencies (most needs are chronic, not crisis).
- Employment, lending, investing are best (use grants sparingly as incentives).
- Subordinate self-interests to the interests of the poor (is this for our good or theirs?).
- Listen to what is not being said (many needs are not immediately voiced).
- Above all, do no harm.

APPENDIX 2: Principles for Helpers

By Bob Lupton

Hippocrates (460 -377 B.C.), the father of modern medicine, recognized the power of the healing profession to effect great good as well as its potential to do much harm. The oath that he instituted, a pledge taken by doctors to this day, established ethical standards for physician conduct which included: patient confidentiality, referral for specialized treatment, sharing of medical knowledge, and valuing prevention above cure. The Hippocratic Oath requires that physicians be personal and caring, put the interests of patients first in medical decisions, strive always to preserve life and never play God by taking life. And above all, do no harm.

For centuries the Hippocratic Oath has served the medical profession well and countless millions of patients. It has guided physicians toward astounding medical breakthroughs as well as constrained them from endangering patient welfare by risking questionable treatments. Perhaps a similar type of code would be useful to those who wish to serve the poor. We know that helping can certainly be for better or worse. Like when a misdiagnosed ailment will lead to improper (even harmful) treatment, so wrongly given assistance may well prolong or even worsen the plight of the needy. Good intentions and kindhearted spirits, while commendable, are insufficient guarantees of positive outcomes. Unexamined service that risks leaving the served worse off than if they had been left alone is irresponsible if not unethical. Guiding principles are needed.

The following is an attempt to articulate a few such fundamentals to guide would-be helpers toward effective care-giving. These guidelines are drawn from the collective wisdom and experience of veteran servants who have spent good portions of their lives living and serving among the less-fortunate in a variety of cultures. The list is hardly exhaustive, and each item requires far more unpacking than this writing permits. Just as the Hippocratic Oath has for centuries provoked vigorous and sometimes heated debate among physicians and has required repeated modification to remain contemporary, even so should these “Principles for Helpers” stimulate healthy discussion and adaptation appropriate for the particular setting.

1. **Is the need crisis or chronic?** Triage may be the appropriate intervention in an emergency situation but it is hardly the strategy for a continuing need. The victims of a devastating tsunami need immediate medical, shelter, essential supplies and hoards of volunteers. Over time, however, survivors need expert consultation, a practical plan and a combination of grants and loans to help them rebuild their destroyed community. A similar distinction should be applied to those who utilize our food pantries and clothes closets as well as to those we serve on our mission trips. If their situation is a matter of life or death, then immediate action must be taken to “stop the bleeding”; otherwise a

plan for helping them rebuilding their lives is more appropriate. Just as a physician, before prescribing treatment, performs a diagnostic “physical” to determine the severity of an ailment, so must helpers take the time to discriminate between imminent life-threatening situations and chronic poverty needs. (Note: what may seem at first like a crisis to helpers may in fact be a chronic reality for the poor).

2. **Investing is better than lending.** Making money with the poor is the ultimate method of sharing resources (including expertise, connections, energy). It empowers them economically and strengthens their hand through authentic partnerships. Investing implies an ownership stake. While a loan places the responsibility for repayment primarily upon the borrower, investing in a venture requires a higher level of involvement, more due diligence, more personal commitment, and perhaps greater risk. An investor has an expectation of higher potential returns than a lender. To invest well with those with limited access to capital, whether in a welfare mom’s dream of a catering business or in a well project with peasant villagers, good investment requires a sound business plan, reasoned risk/reward ratio, adequate controls and accountability. The investor has a stake in the sustainability and profitability of the venture.
3. **Lending is better than giving** – While giving may seem like the kind and Christian thing to do, it often ends up undermining the very relationship a helper is attempting to build. Any one who has served among the poor for any length of time will recognize the following progression:

give once and you elicit appreciation;
give twice and you create anticipation;
give three times and you create expectation;
give four times and it becomes entitlement;
give five times and you establish dependency.

Lending, on the other hand, establishes a mutually beneficial relationship characterized by responsibility, accountability, and respect. It is a legitimate exchange that requires the lender to be responsible for assessing the risk while leaving the dignity of the borrower intact. Lending, done well, builds mutual trust and respect.

4. **Exchange is better than giving.** One-way charity erodes human dignity. It subtly implies that the recipient has nothing of value the giver desires in return. No one wants to be pitied as a charity case. Thus, a thrift store affords more dignity than a free clothes closet, and a food coop more than a free food pantry. To the extent the poor are enabled to participate in (preferably have ownership in) the systems intended to serve them, to that extent their self-worth is enhanced. The fair exchange of labor for goods and services is

an honorable and responsible practice (though admittedly not as easy as give-away programs).

5. **Never do for others what they can do for themselves.** The goal of helping is empowerment. Personal responsibility is essential for social, emotional and spiritual well being. To do for others what they have the capacity to do for themselves is to dis-empower them. Welfare, as many failed government programs have demonstrated, promotes dependency and a sense of entitlement. The outcome is no different when religious or charitable organizations provide it. The struggle for self-sufficiency is, like the butterfly struggling to emerge from its cocoon, an essential strength-building process that should not be short-circuited by “compassionate” intervention. The effective helper can be a cheerleader, an encourager, a coach, a connector, but never a caretaker who assumes responsibility that the “helpee” is capable of shouldering.
6. **Sustainability is a litmus test.** When our service project is over and we return home, are those we have served empowered to sustain what we have started? If these initiatives require our on-going funding, staffing, and volunteer participation to keep them going, they are more likely dependency-producing rather than empowering. Thus, building a home or digging a well for people who do not have the training and/or resources to maintain these assets does not empower them. It may feel very good for the moment and relieve an immediate need but it does not develop capacity. The defining question is: how can we serve so as to enable the poor to become self-sustaining?
7. **Consider unintended consequences.** Every change has consequences. Church growth may cause traffic congestion; screw-top wine bottles puts cork producers out of work; successful sheep breeding may lead to overgrazing. While we cannot foresee all the potential consequences of our service, we should at least make some attempt to predict their impact. Are we luring indigenous ministers away from their pastoral duties to become our tour-guides and schedule coordinators for our mission trips? Are we diminishing the entrepreneurial spirit in a culture by offering our free services, gifts and grants? Are we supporting irresponsible lifestyles by indiscriminate giving from our clothes closets and food pantries? Before we embark on a mission venture we should conduct an “impact study” to consider how our good deeds might have consequences we never intended. As Hippocrates admonished: above all do no harm
8. **Listen to what is not being said.** A good physician learns to listen to what his patient is not saying. Perhaps out of embarrassment or fear, a patient may not disclose important data needed to correctly treat a condition. The doctor must look for clues, piece together fragments of information, use his diagnostic tools and intuition to arrive at an accurate diagnosis. The poor we serve may be quite reluctant to reveal “the whole story” to

would-be helpers for a host of reasons – fear of judgment, fear of losing support, not wanting to appear unappreciative, intimidation. It would be very difficult, for instance, for a pastor in a poor Guatemalan village to tell a supporting church in the States that it would be a far better use of their money to help him create jobs for the men in his village than to spend it on plane fare to send 30 unskilled volunteers to come and do construction work for them. Likewise, a single mother trying to clothe her children may be hesitant to tell the clothes closet volunteers that their hours of operation make it difficult for working parents to shop there. Like good physicians, effective helpers must learn to observe, ask questions, use their intuition, and hear what is not being said.

AN OATH FOR HELPERS

The effectiveness of our efforts to empower the poor could be significantly enhanced if, prior to launch, would-be helpers would take the following pledge:

1. I will never do for others what they have (or could have) the capacity to do for themselves.
2. I will limit my one-way giving to emergency situations and seek always to find ways and means for legitimate exchange.
3. I will seek ways to empower the poor through hiring, lending and investing and use grants sparingly as incentives that reinforce achievements.
4. I will put the interests of the poor above my own (or organizational) self-interest even when it may be costly.
5. I will take time to listen and carefully assess both expressed and unspoken needs so that my actions will ultimately strengthen rather than weaken the hand of those I would serve.
6. Above all, to the best of my ability, I will do no harm.

For additional discussion material on effective service among the poor see *Compassion, Justice and the Christian Life – Rethinking Ministry to the Poor* by Robert Lupton, Regal 2007.

APPENDIX 3: Sustainable Change & The Human Heart

Excerpt from pages 60-62 of Becoming Whole: Why the Opposite of Poverty isn't the American Dream by Brian Fikkert and Kelly M. Kapic:

...on a recent trip to an African country, I visited the local office of a major, global Christian relief and development organization. This organization has a strong reputation, and it appeared to me that the leadership and staff in this country office were hardworking and dedicated. But when I asked the director if I could visit some of the low-income communities where his organization was working, his face fell, and he replied:

I could take you to many villages and towns that have our organization's sign on their entrance, indicating that we have been working there. Unfortunately, there is no evidence that we have ever done anything. We started projects in these places, but after we left, the communities didn't maintain them. The people's hearts weren't right. All the other organizations working in our country have had similar experiences. It's impossible to sustain anything.[i]

Unfortunately, this organization's experiences are far from unique. One of the most aggravating problems in poverty alleviation is the lack of sustainability of many interventions. Organizations go into a village and drill wells, build clinics, and start schools. Things seem to be going well, but after the organization leaves, it's not long before the wells, clinics, and schools stop functioning. What's going on?

As pictured in Figure 2.2, the organization's projects often amount to injecting a new institution into the local community, which changes the systems in that culture. One of the key factors of the long-run sustainability of this new institution is the extent to which it fits with the story of change, systems, formative practices, and personhoods of the community. Just as the human body sometimes rejects an organ transplant if it doesn't match the rest of the body, communities sometimes reject interventions that don't fit with the rest of their cultures.



Figure 2.2

Injecting Interventions from the Outside

Adapted from Brian Fikkert & Michael Rhodes, "Homo Economicus vs. Homo Imago Dei", Journal of Markets & Morality, Vol. 20, #1, p. 106.

For example, if a community believes that sickness is due to evil spirits that must be appeased through various rituals and sacrifices, then it's unlikely that a clinic based on Western medical practices will have enough customers to be financially sustainable. Thus, once the donor money is gone, the clinic will have to close.

What is the solution? I once asked the former head of a major Christian relief and development organization what he had learned in his decades of experience in the field of poverty alleviation. Consistent with the model depicted in Figure 2.2, he said,

At the foundation of a community are human beings, and the fulcrum of the human being is the human heart. Unfortunately, we keep on trying short-cuts. We rush in with all sorts of buildings and programs, but unless the people's hearts are properly oriented, we are just building on sinking sand. There simply are no short-cuts. There is no other way. The human heart is the foundation of the community, and we need to address the human heart before we do anything else.[ii]

The matter of the heart is the heart of the matter.

[i] Private conversation with Brian in August 2016.

[ii] Private conversation with Brian circa 2003.

APPENDIX 4: Scriptural Foundation

The GCCD team began this process by identifying scriptural themes and verses from our journeys and experiences that would underpin the values, relationships, and programs summarized in this report. While no means a comprehensive anthology, we end by sharing these treasured promises, warnings, and illuminated character of God, His Beloved Son our Savior, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, our Comfort and Counselor. Blessings!

LOVE GOD & LOVE PEOPLE

- Jeremiah 29:4-7
- Matthew 22:36-40
- Leviticus 23:22
- Galatians 5:14
- 1 John 3:17
- James 2:14-18
- Acts 4:32-35

THE GOOD NEWS / GOSPEL

- Isaiah 9:6-7
- Luke 4:16-21
- Luke 4:43
- Col. 1:15-20
- Romans 10:14-15
- 1 Cor 15: 1-8
- Matt 28:19-20a
- Luke 19:10
- Revelation 21:1-5

GOD'S HEART FOR THE POOR

- Deuteronomy 15:7
- Job 5:15-16
- Luke 4:17-19
- Proverbs 19:17
- Luke 6:20-21
- Luke 14:13-14
- James 2:5

JUSTICE & RECONCILIATION

- Amos 5:24
- Deuteronomy 16:20
- Job 34:17-19
- Micah 6:8
- Isaiah 58:6-12
- Isaiah 1:17
- Proverbs 31:8-9I
- 2nd Cor. 5:18-20

INCARNATIONAL ROOT OF THE CHURCH - WITH PEOPLE

- John 1:14
- 2 Corinthians 8:9
- 1 Corinthians 9:22-23
- Philippians 2:5-11
- 1 Peter 2:9
- Revelation 5:10
- Matthew 25
- Matthew 8:20

SIN, INJUSTICE, & OUR ADVERSARY

Opposition of our adversary (SATAN)

- 1 Peter 5:8-9
- Ephesians 6:11-16

Personal failing/Sin (SELF)

- Romans 3:23
- Ephesians 2:1-2
- 1 John 1:8
- Galatians 5:19-21
- James 4:17
- 1 John 3:17

Structural injustice (WORLD)

- Jeremiah 22:3-5
- Isaiah 1:17
- Ecclesiastes 5:8
- Proverbs 29:27
- Isaiah 58:1-10

HIS CALL TO US AND HIS POWER TO STORM THE GATES OF HELL TAKING LIGHT INTO DARKNESS

- Matthew 16:17-19

APPENDIX 5: New Hope for Languishing Lands

By Bob Lupton

The face of missions is on the verge of a dramatic change. For centuries mission work was primarily about saving souls and planting churches. A “sea change” took place when Muhammad Yunus introduced micro-lending into the under-developed world, opening the way for the mission industry to begin addressing physical poverty. Another “sea change” is now upon us, one that promises to eclipse micro-enterprise in both scale and impact. Impact Investing is a new wave of philanthropy that is introducing substantial investment capital into wealth-producing small-medium enterprises (SME) as well as larger scale community enhancing businesses. In 2015 assets deployed in impact related investments totaled \$60 billion. That number is forecasted to grow to between \$600 billion and \$3 trillion over the next 10 years. This triple bottom line approach to investing in for-profit business creation has the capacity to elevate struggling communities – and entire regions – from surviving to thriving.

The following is a brief description of the traditional single-issue mission approach (**SIM**) (such as **church planting, well-drilling, orphanages, etc.**) as compared to the budding paradigm of holistic **community economic development (CED)** that has the capacity to transform entire communities. Though perhaps over-generalized, it does highlight the distinctive differences between two very different approaches to serving the poor.

Single-issue Mission (SIM) (such as micro-loans or health clinics) focuses on the needs of individuals and/or individual families. It measures success by the impact of specific programs on the target population (ie: number of loans placed, number of wells drilled, number of patients treated).

Community Economic Development (CED) focuses on the well-being of the entire community and measures success by improvements to the whole community. CED gathers baseline data on the existing state-of-the-community, establishes with the community priorities for growth, identifies community assets and capacities, connects the community to external resources, and measures progress on the overall vitality and growth of the community. (Index for Thriving Communities)

SIM leads with meeting an obvious need. SIM is most often service oriented, addresses pressing needs, but does little to strengthen the local economy. Those who engage in micro-lending (small business loans to peasants) do enable micro-entrepreneurs to survive at a

somewhat higher economic level but seldom do micro-loans lead to wealth-creating enterprises (SME). Micro-lending enables people to survive but not thrive.

CED leads with economic initiatives. The creation of profitable Small-Medium Enterprises (SME) requires scale (multiple employees) and thus leads to wealth creation in a community. They increase the “missing middle” – the skilled management class that is virtually non-existent in under-developed countries. SME also spawns ancillary businesses that improve the economic life of the surrounding community. SME leads to thriving, not merely surviving.

SIM usually begins with a specific need and specializes in a particular issue (medical, water, evangelism). These programs may over time expand into related issues but seldom make the shift to sustainable economic enterprise. While they improve certain aspects of life, their programs remain dependent upon external support.

CED is holistic (concerned about all the needs of the community) but leads with economic development. CED believes that stable employment and higher wages are essential if a community is to thrive. CED attracts outside capital to launch economic enterprises with the goal of establishing self-sustaining businesses. Impact investors can expect a decent return with a triple bottom line (economic, social, spiritual).

SIM utilizes large numbers of willing (though not necessarily skilled) volunteers to assist in meeting needs. Seldom do volunteers add economic value to the community (some actually undercut local businesses and craftsmen). Volunteer groups provide substantial income for the SIM, though often the work volunteers perform is “make work” and could be better accomplished by indigenous residents.

CED recruits volunteers with specific skills essential to the accomplishment of the mission. Programs draw upon business leaders with professional experience and provide a broad platform for strategic volunteer involvement, particularly as it relates to business development.

SIM can be dependency-producing. Because they rely upon a constant infusion of outside staff, volunteer and financial support, the development of local resident capacities is often neglected. Some programs establish orphanages and schools but rarely provide marketable skill development that enables graduates to prosper in the local economy.

CED provides training platforms and marketable skill development in business settings for local workforce. CED is committed to indigenous leadership development that leads to self-sustaining enterprises which are not ultimately dependent upon outside support. Teaching residents to fish is only the beginning; owning the pond is key to a flourishing community.

SIM tends to be competitive and often works in isolation from other (competing)

organizations. Marketing a single-issue mission as the most needed, most effective, and most transformative solution to poverty, positions it as a competitor to other poverty programs. Though this may be an effective fund raising method, it does feed into the competitive nature of the SIM industry.

CED requires collaborative relationships with a broad range of organizations (even government) because their mission is holistic. CED involves the community in multifaceted strategic planning (roads to access markets, electricity for homes, water systems for crop irrigation). Because community transformation is a complex undertaking, it is necessary to establish collaborative partnerships with organizations who can be complementary contributors to a range of community goals.

SIM may unintentionally fracture the Body of Christ. Church planting efforts recruit members from the community and from other churches (competitive model that fragments people of faith). SIM is often church affiliated (or theologically aligned) with an implicit agenda to promote their brand of faith.

CED encourages churches working together in the community (cooperative model) to promote unity of body of Christ. CED embraces the whole community regardless of faith orientation and views everyone as a neighbor worthy of love. CED may sponsor community chaplains, Young Life, or other spiritual activities but do not identify themselves with one particular church.

APPENDIX 6: Charity Rules

By Bob Lupton

Matt was volunteering at the church's food pantry. He was in-between jobs. He was living with his parents until something opened up. No panic, just mild anxiety until he landed suitable work. But this stretch of unemployment did raise his level of sensitivity to the needs of others. The least he could do was offer some of his idle time to help people much worse off than himself.

His assigned task for the day was to carry food boxes from the pantry out to the recipients' cars in the parking lot. It was gratifying work, helping people in need – especially when they smiled and expressed their appreciation. Some of the recipients seemed to know more about the system than he did, taking the initiative to fill their own boxes with the approved allocation of food, then carrying their own provisions out to their cars. They obviously knew the staff and regular volunteers, some of whom they greeted by name. Others, however, appeared to be a bit embarrassed and avoided eye-contact with Matt. Almost everyone thanked him, however, as he carried their boxes out to the parking lot and placed them into their vehicles.

On food distribution Tuesday the parking lot had a very different appearance from that way it looked on Sundays. Smoke-belching vans with bald tires, tired cars with missing hub caps, pick-ups with loud rusted-out mufflers – today's visitors were obviously surviving on the margins. It felt good to Matt to be extending kindness to people so obviously in need – very satisfying. Until... until one of the recipients he was helping led the way to a late model Lexus parked a comfortable distance away from the other well-worn vehicles. As they approached the car, the owner, a well-dressed middle-age woman, removed a remote key from her purse and popped open the trunk. She was polite enough, Justin thought as he placed the box into her trunk, but she hardly seemed like a person in need of a free handout.

The incident troubled Matt. He tried to dismiss it from his mind. Probably an isolated case. Maybe the lady had problems that he didn't know about. But then it happened again. A man in a nearly new Mustang GT convertible drove up and came into the food pantry. He was well dressed and sported an expensive watch. Matt could hardly restrain himself from confronting the man as he lugged a full box of food to the convertible and deposited it on the rear seat (leather upholstery, no less!).

“How do you keep people from abusing the system?” Matt asked the pantry director when the last customer had left and most of the shelves were bare. “It's an honor system,” the director responded. “If people say they have a need for food we take them at their word.” Matt wondered what need the Lexus and Mustang owners claimed to have. Somehow the system didn't seem all that honorable to him. Oh well, didn't Jesus say we should give to anyone who asks? And the church was doing this in Jesus' name. So it must be OK, Matt told himself.

But why did it continue to bother him? Shouldn't there be some form of accountability? He finally decided to look it up in the Bible and see if that's what Scripture really said. Sure enough, there it was, plain as day, in Matthew's gospel, right there among all the other Kingdom teachings in the sermon on the mount. Nothing about responsible giving, nothing about setting limits, nothing about avoiding dependency. Just simple, straight-forward instructions to give, with no strings attached. "Give to anyone who asks." Well, his church had it right. Apparently.

It was on a Sunday morning several months later during the 11 o'clock worship service that this free food issue surfaced once again in Matt's mind. The scripture reading from John's gospel was the story of Jesus feeding the 5000. The miracle of providing abundant free food for the large crowd seemed to confirm the church's pantry policy of giving free food for anyone with an out-stretched hand. But John's account of what happened the following day – the day after the mass feeding – is what arrested Matt's attention. Word had spread rapidly about the over-abundance of free food Jesus had provided, and folks from all over the region flooded in to get their share. Rumors circulated that this Jesus might actually be the long awaited messiah who would provide a permanent supply of food for everyone – like Moses did for 40 years in the wilderness. But day two turned out to be a colossal disappointment. No more free food, Jesus announced. Only spiritual food, for those who were spiritually hungry. The crowd was obviously displeased. They argued, grumbled and, when it was apparent that no food was forthcoming, reluctantly dispersed. For the handful of close followers that remained, the lesson was clear: a free feeding program is not an optimal method for proclaiming His Kingdom.

Matt couldn't help wondering if the church's food pantry crowd would continue to come if spiritual food was the only hand-out being offered. He doubted it. And at that moment the issue that had been confusing him for months came clear in his mind: free food (free anything) indiscriminately distributed, diminishes dignity, encourages dependency, and invites greed. Jesus had cut off these undesirable consequences before they had a chance to become a habit. But wasn't the church's food pantry actually perpetuating these very things? The faces of folks Matt had assisted played through his memory – the embarrassment of the first-time visitors, the entitlement of regular recipients, the greed of abusers of the system. Surely there must be a better way to extend compassion.

Matt had never worn a WWJD wrist band but at this moment it seemed like an important question – what would Jesus do? More digging into the Gospels. Yes, Jesus did treat the crowds to a feast on one, maybe two, occasions but He certainly didn't make a practice of it. His compassion was expressed more often in personal, hands-on ways, like touching sick and blind and crippled and diseased (even dead!) people and restoring their health. And He explained what His Kingdom was like by telling lots of colorful illustrations. He seemed to value fellowship a great deal – sharing meals with all sorts of interesting people and spending quality time with His close

friends. And children – He enjoyed children. What would it look like, Matt wondered, if the church modelled its compassion ministries after Jesus' example?

A health clinic maybe? Shared meals? Story-time for children so their mom's could have a morning out? An occasional party or feast? What about measuring compassion by the level of **healthy** relationships established between church folk and the people they serve? Of course, changes like this would require Herculean effort... and expense... and time... and lots of personal involvement in people's lives. Probably best to stick with the food pantry.

Thanks anyway, Matt.

APPENDIX 7: On Changing an Institution

By Bob Lupton

The church was justifiably proud of its community food pantry. It had grown over the years from a closet in the church basement to a spacious, well-run distribution center with its own separate building adjacent to the church. It looked more like a small grocery store than a “pantry” with rows of neatly stocked shelves, bins for fresh produce, even a cooler for perishables. A state-of-the-art computer system kept track of inventory, recorded donor contributions, monitored distributions and the recipients who received them, and maintained good financial records. Because it was so well run, local grocery stores and bakeries felt good about donating their surplus and outdated food. Other churches contributed as well.

It was still called “the pantry,” the quaint name left over from its meager beginnings when occasional bags of food were given out by the pastor. But it had evolved into a full-fledged food distribution operation run more like a business than a basement charity. It had a full-time director, a part-time bookkeeper and several dozen regular volunteers. It was now open four days a week and served growing numbers of needy beneficiaries that streamed in from all over the county. School counselors and agency caseworkers referred clients needing emergency assistance. The “pantry” had become widely known as an important player in the city’s social safety-net. As I said, the church was justifiably proud of the ministry of its community food pantry.

Then one day a church member handed the pastor a book – Toxic Charity! It made the case that give-away programs hurt the poor more than they helped, that a crisis response to a chronic need creates dependency, that doing for others what they have the capacity to do for themselves destroys a work ethic. Needless to say, it was a very disturbing read. It called into question the validity of their best community ministry. If it were true, that give-away programs are hurtful, the entire structure of the “pantry” would have to be dismantled. And not just the “pantry” – much of their service outreach and mission trips would have to be revamped as well! This is not the kind of disruption a busy pastor needs.

What to do? Dismiss the book and hope it doesn’t get circulated among the membership? Build a biblical argument to discredit and neutralize the premise of the book? Admit that every ministry has its flaws but that’s no reason to stop doing it? Or...

Perish the thought of changing the entire ministry paradigm. How could you tell all your volunteers that their countless hours of selfless service were unhelpful, even hurtful? How would you inform all the generous donors that the food they provided had harmful effects? What would

you say to the families and agencies who count on your service? No, there is no way a pastor is going to do that. The fallout would be disastrous. But...

Isn't community service to be about helping the needy, not just making church members feel good? And if, as that darn book says, the way the church is doing service actually harms those they are attempting to help, then the program is clearly self-serving. Not intentionally, but in reality it may be more about the church's self-interest than about those being served. Yes, *Toxic Charity* was indeed a very disturbing read.

If the church is going to have integrity, it cannot bury its head in the sand and assume that all is well – not after the alarm has sounded. Leaders must at least take an honest look at the outcomes of its charity. Is there really unintended harm being done? A few discrete, non-disruptive interviews with “pantry” workers might give some clues. Questions like: how often do you see the same people in the food lines? And how many reports do you get back from recipients that the free food has helped them over a temporary tough spot? And does the “pantry” seem to encourage trusting relationships or do we have to be on guard against abuse of the system? A few questions like this will provide a bit of insight into whether the program is actually empowering recipients or fostering unhealthy dependency. Reassuring answers may put the issue to rest. Or...

Or they may raise more questions. Questions like: Why are there so few anecdotal success stories? Or why are recipients not becoming involved in the life of the church? Or why do the “pantry” workers seem somewhat defensive about the inquiries? Probe a little deeper and it may become apparent that, as that book claims, the whole well-run, give-away program reeks with hidden toxicities – dependency, deception, dignity-depreciation. That's when the real problem arises – how to fix a ministry that most folk don't think is broken?

Changing an institution that is heavily vested in “the way we have always done it” is a major challenge, especially for a pastor whose job it is to keep that institution growing and keep the members reasonably happy. The last thing a leader wants is to stir up divisive controversy that could alienate good and faithful members. But a spiritual leader must also have integrity. So if it becomes apparent that change is necessary to ensure responsible care for the poor, there is no alternative but to act. But how?

Certainly not a frontal assault. Too much damage could be inflicted on the “compassion corps” by declaring their good works toxic. A much subtler change strategy is needed. Distributing copies of *Toxic Charity* to key leadership (perhaps covertly) will stimulate considerable discussion. Such conversations begin working the soil. Visiting a few innovative models – best practices – being implemented elsewhere by other ministries helps to move the discussion from critique to creativity. Encourage a few key leaders to attend the Christian Community

Development Association (CCDA.org) annual conference, a gathering of practitioner thought-leaders committed to assisting ministries to empower the poor. That will definitely till up some soil. It is not at all unlikely that, through a non-confrontational exploration process, interest in new methods of service will be kindled. A food co-op “buying club” model, a bartering system, a thrift store with deeply discounted basics – such ideas that have succeeded in other places can ignite the imagination, especially of entrepreneurial types.

Adding a new, complementary program is far less volatile than attempting to dismantle and replace an existing one. The “pantry” stays. At least for a time. But alongside it you may choose to offer recipients the option to join a “buying club” co-op in which members pay \$3 bi-weekly and receive back ten to twenty times that amount in groceries. Members, like share holders, have the pride of ownership, control of food selection, and accountability to each other. Dignity replaces beggary, belonging replaces impersonal food lines. Like one church discovered, as co-op membership increased food lines dwindled until eventually almost no free food was distributed. It’s one idea. The point is this: transition from “doing for” the poor to “doing with” them need not be disruptive or alienating. It begins with one decisive step in the right direction.

The “pantry” may continue to function for years to come but the shift to empowerment has begun. A door has been opened that allows church members and recipients alike to experience first-hand the differences between the pridelessness of one-way charity and the dignity of reciprocal exchange. Outcomes will eventually become obvious. Once empowerment principles take root and spread beyond the “pantry” to other areas of ministry – benevolence giving, service projects, mission trips – a paradigm of development will become the new norm.

APPENDIX 8: A Pastor's Dilemma

By Bob Lupton

Her title is “missions pastor.” Spiritual nurture is her assignment. Her specific job is to educate, motivate and mobilize church members to engage personally in mission. She weaves mission content into the Christian education curriculum and preaches it from the pulpit from time to time. She orchestrates the church’s mission conference, forms small group follow-up discussions, leads mission trips and coordinates service projects. She develops relationships with missionaries and pastors in remote mission fields, screens local non-profit ministries as suitable sources for volunteer involvement, and coordinates outreach and service programs. Her success is measured by the number of church members that become personally engaged in mission, and by the fulfillment they experience participating in these efforts. She fills an essential role in a growing, dynamic western church.

She knows what it takes to create meaningful service projects and mission trips for her members. Probably better than most. First and foremost, she knows, the experience must address a pressing need. It is not enough to simply do make-work. A worthwhile experience must accomplish real and lasting good. Maybe cleaning up a vacant city lot or painting a Honduran church might work for youth, but adults with a life’s worth of wisdom under their belt, need something of much greater significance. Like establishing a medical clinic for a disease-plagued region, or digging a well for a drought-stricken village.

Thus, the activities the missions pastor promotes must be life-changing, both for the people being served and the ones doing the serving. Of course, it is exceedingly rare for a one-day service project or a one week mission trip to deliver life-changing results, but volunteers must be made to understand that even their small investments will produce significant results. Painting a picture of the importance of service is an important part of the missions pastor’s duty.

This is not spin. This is a conviction. The missions pastor believes in her heart that one-day service projects and one-week mission trips really do make a difference. She believes that in the economy of God every act of kindness, no matter how small, has redemptive impact. Even when you cannot see the results. She teaches her parishioners this. And she is right, of course. God’s economy is different from man’s economy. The widow’s mite is more valuable than the wealthy man’s gold. In the Kingdom, the sacrifice of a Saturday or a week of selfless service has untold value. It is the missions pastor’s job – her calling – to affirm the compassionate motivation and genuine goodness of her people.

But she is caught in a tension. A number of tensions really. One is numbers. Numbers are important – number of volunteers, number of projects, number of mission trips, number of food

boxes distributed, number of ministries supported. Numbers are one of the criteria upon which her performance is evaluated. But quantity does not necessarily equal quality. A hoard of youth descending on an inner-city neighborhood for a clean-up day may not be as effective as a select group of high school students who tutor grade-schoolers for a semester. Both activities may be good but their impact is significantly different. Activities are not the same as outcomes. And, in many instances, smaller is better.

Another tension she lives in is competing agendas. Her charge is to “educate, motivate and mobilize church members to engage personally in mission.” This is not the same as elevating the poor out of poverty (which is what much service claims to be about). These two agendas – mobilizing members and elevating the poor – may converge in a well-conceived service project or mission trip. But the missions pastor’s first and foremost responsibility is the spiritual nurture of her people. Service is a means to an end. The temptation, the tendency, is to plan activities that suit the needs of the servers rather than address the deeper needs (and often more complex) of those being served. Thus, leading a week of summer vacation bible school in Guatemala is preferable to starting business enterprises that enable Guatemalan youth to emerge from poverty. Sometimes good becomes the enemy of best. The missions pastor must live in this tension.

Yet another tension is finances. Service is expensive – especially mission trips. Parents are usually supportive when their teenagers express compassionate interest in others. Money for mission adventures is relatively easy to raise. But raising money is not the problem. Return on investment (ROI) is. The missions pastor knows that the costs are high compared to the actual work being done – very high. She knows that there is no way to justify that kind of expenditure except as the cost of spiritual development for her own people. But that is not how the trip is being sold to missionaries and their generous supporters. It is billed as “spreading the Gospel” or “loving the unloved” or “rescuing the perishing” – none of which is completely truthful.

Perhaps the most troubling tension, however, is perpetuating a dishonesty for the sake of protecting the feelings of some of her most loyal members. She knows that her integrity is compromised when she applauds the service of volunteers, knowing all the while that their work may actually be doing as much (or more) harm as good. She sees quite clearly that the poor who get clothes from the church’s clothes closet and food from the food pantry are habitual “repeat customers.”

She knows in her heart that unhealthy dependencies have developed, that some recipients are using these benevolences to support destructive lifestyles. And she has witnessed first-hand similar outcomes among the poor of remote villages her mission-trip recruits have visited – how well-intended benevolence has fostered a culture of beggary and weakened the capacity for self-sufficiency. But how is she to convey this concern to the dedicated servants who give

selflessly of their time collecting and sorting clothes, boxing donated food, and distributing “necessities of life” to “the least of these” as acts of compassion and obedience to their Lord? Or to those who have given up weeks of their time and raised thousands of dollars to serve the poor in foreign lands? How can she tell them that their good and righteous efforts are doing harm? Does she continue to protect their feelings with half-truths or does she risk telling them the whole story?

A sensitive (and smart) missions pastor knows better than to launch a frontal assault. The damage could be far reaching, far beyond the wounded spirits of a few dedicated saints. She will find a more politically savvy means to enlighten her people. She will discuss the matter with her senior pastor and secure his support to initiate a discussion with her missions committee. She will introduce them to a book that has recently been recommended to her— one that has been stirring up a lot of discussion in churches of their denomination (*When Helping Hurts* or *Toxic Charity* will do just fine). She tells her leaders that she wants their church to stay on the cutting edge of missions. She leads them through a book study that surfaces all the issues that she has been quietly struggling with.

As her missions committee begins to grapple with these realities, she suggests to the chairman that it might be instructive to conduct an evaluation of current practices to determine the effectiveness of their outreach. Meanwhile she explores best practices of other churches that offer creative alternatives to hurtful outcomes of traditional charity. As candid discussions lead to questions about change, she has models to introduce and site visits to suggest. She knows the process will take time. She does not try to rush it. But it will be her gentle, persistent nudges (and those of her more progressive leaders) that will ultimately convert their missions program from toxic to transformative.

APPENDIX 9: The Gift of Trade

By Bpb Lupton

Economies are built on trade. From the earliest records of human life, exchange has been essential to survival. Hunters calculate the worth of a deer based on how much the meat, hide and antlers will bring from the village butcher, tanner and implement maker. Farmers toil in the fields in the hope of producing a harvest that will yield enough at the market to supply their families with adequate clothing and shelter. Quilters, long after their children are in bed, work by candlelight to fashion quilts they will barter for dishes and pottery to beautify their homes. Exchange is how communities and nations flourish.

Trade accelerates wealth geometrically. It builds upon the skills of its diverse participants. The carpenter's adeptness is enhanced by practice. He devises tools and processes to increase his productivity and quality. Demand for his furniture rises with his proficiency. The same is true of the blacksmith, and the baker and the seamstress. In this creative process of exchange, both talent and wealth increase.

An economically healthy community (and nation) employs all of its able-bodied workers. Some raise livestock, some mine coal, some teach children, some run hardware stores. And in this wonderfully complex process of exchange, everyone assumes a needed function. Everyone contributes. Boys deliver newspapers, girls babysit, seniors do mailings for the church. A healthy society is a working society.

Problems arise when some find no productive outlet for their labor. "Idle hands are the devil's workshop," grandma used to say. Unemployed young men hanging out on the street corner is an unhealthy sign. Welfare moms sitting on the stoop waiting for their check to arrive is equally unhealthy. Unhealthy for society, unhealthy for idle individuals. When one is unneeded in the workforce, self-worth takes a hit. Alternative sources of income and self-esteem are sought. Illicit economies begin to fester. Anti-social behavior increases. Life loses value. A culture of "expendables" turns destructive, to itself and to society.

Subsidizing inactivity is an unhealthy practice. Yes, people have to survive. But they will not thrive if they are induced by charity (public or private, government or religious) to be unproductive. Work, purposeful work, is what establishes one's place in society. In addition to providing legitimate income, work is what gives one purpose, what enables one to develop a skill, what earns one a positive reputation. It was, from the beginning, our primary God-assigned task. That which discourages meaningful work is hardly a kindness.

It becomes, then, the duty (the birthright) of God-honoring people to engage in purposeful work and to enable others to do the same. How inspiring it was to hear accounts of employees of

companies hit hard by the economic downturn who have elected to take reduced hours and wages in order to avoid lay-offs of fellow workers. Are there not similar stories yet to be told of churches that created jobs instead of benevolence vouchers for the unemployed who came to their doors for assistance? And business people who invested their time helping a struggling inner-city entrepreneur launch a successful catering business? And a Sunday school class who committed their weekly collection to employ a welfare mom at a thrift store in her community?

Heart-warming stories of charity that does not end with recipients engaged in meaningful exchange are emotional deceptions. Trade is God's design for healthy, interdependent community. It is a gift. As ancient Hebrew wisdom states: the highest form of charity is to anonymously provide a man employment; the lowest is to directly offer him aid.

APPENDIX 10: Franchising the Kingdom

By Bob Lupton

Franchising is a rather ingenious concept. Take a restaurant that has built a reputation for the best chicken sandwich in town. A flood of business motivates the owner to open another location which builds on the success of the first. The second restaurant does equally well and has the added advantage of a proven menu and a working business plan. The third is even easier and attracts investment capital. New openings accelerate as branding is standardized, operating procedures are refined and economies of scale boost profitability. The result is Chic-fil-A – a national chicken sandwich chain. It's the American way.

It's what churches have historically done. Create a unique doctrinal recipe, develop an appealing worship style, test the ecclesiastical market, brand it as God's "authentic" church, unveil an exciting growth vision, sell the vision to sincere members, roll out the replication strategy. We call it church planting. The result is a national denomination.

Is this too crass a comparison? Sit in on a meeting of denominational leaders and you will observe a distinct parallel between the institutional religious world and the corporate business world. At present there is a great deal of hand-wringing in both arenas. In the business sector there is much distress over shrinking profits, declining markets, scarcity of money. In the religious sector there is grave concern about aging membership, declining numbers, shrinking budgets. The solutions being explored are similar. Cut non-performing cost-centers, consolidate functions, hire consultants, re-brand, pursue new markets aggressively. Grow or die. Business is business, whether secular or religious.

Such strategies may be useful in growing businesses and churches. But what about the Kingdom of God? Can this elusive Kingdom be franchised? Churches like to position themselves as the official agents of this Kingdom. But being man-made institutions, they tend to circumscribe the Kingdom with their own doctrinal statements. This way it is easier to determine who's in and who's not. But can the Kingdom be measured by church membership? Can it be confined by theological systems or organizational structures?

Jesus, sidestepping the sacred protocol of the religious establishment, advanced the radical idea that his Father's Kingdom was more about purity of heart than purity of doctrine. He said that this Kingdom belonged to socially devalued people, to the unlearned poor and innocent children. Proof of membership had more to do with caring for a neighbor in need, or turning a cheek to an insulter, or giving a second coat to a coatless person, than being a conscientious Temple attendee. He described the behavior of Kingdom people as those who take little thought for tomorrow, who part easily with their possessions, who practice persistent forgiveness.

Now how do you franchise that? How do you quantify losing one's life to find it? Or greatness measured by inconspicuous servanthood? How do you calculate wealth gained by giving assets away? Or advertise anonymous benevolence? The Kingdom simply does not fit the franchise paradigm.

Herein lies a major difference between the institutional church and the Kingdom of God. Churches (as opposed to the Church universal) are the localized, organized clustering of Christ-followers. All groups have distinctive creeds and cultures, boundaries and budgets that allow them to compare and contrast themselves with each other. Churches, like all institutions, have an intrinsic imperative for self-preservation. An institution cannot give itself away. If it does, it will go out of existence. Thus numerical and monetary increase, not divestment, is viewed as a sign of God's favor. Competition becomes the accepted norm. Advertising supplants anonymity. It is the way of institutions.

Which is not to say that the institutional church and the Kingdom are incompatible. Of course not. It is essential for the Church universal to gather locally for worship and teaching and fellowship and service. Supernatural activities occur when the saints come together. How they organize themselves, fashion their creeds, make their decisions (i.e. "do church") is part of the excitement. The confusion comes when they declare these structures sacred. Sacred implies hallowed, worthy of devotion. When structures become sacred, organizational loyalty is but a short step away. Comparisons begin. Which organization is more sacred, more biblically correct, more doctrinally sound? You see where this takes us. That's why we have thousands of different kinds of churches, each promoting its brand as the best, each competing for its market share of Kingdom demographics. Forget the "new commandment" Christ gave His followers – the one about unity and laying down our lives for each other. We're too busy doing church!

APPENDIX 11: Evangelism is More Than Words

By Bob Lupton

I had done my best to explain to a church group the difference between serving and partnering. I had described how developing the poor requires an entirely different strategy from traditional service methods that “do for” those in need. I explained that when you do for people what they have the capacity to do for themselves you actually weaken rather than strengthen them. I gave practical examples of how lending and investing, how sharing technological knowledge and connecting isolated people with new markets, enabled whole villages to emerge from poverty. I told them that if we measured actual outcomes rather than merely activities we would have a much better gauge for the effectiveness of our missions.

Then it was Q & A time. “I see what you are saying about developing the poor,” the first pushback came, “but how do you bring the Gospel into this?” I understood the question. It came from the familiar evangelical premise that the most loving thing we can do for the poor (for anyone) is to share the Gospel with them. The soul is eternal while the body is only temporal. Eternal salvation, then, is the primary concern to God. Evangelism, not economic development, should be the primary task of missions. Right?

It was an honest question, one that deserved a reasoned response.

Four decades of living among marginalized people has expanded my early understanding of the Gospel. The Good News, I have come to believe, is about more than individual salvation. It includes personal salvation, to be sure, but it also involves the transformation of fragmented communities, of unjust institutions, of oppressive systems. The Gospel is Good News for the whole of creation. Even the environment. It is about Shalom, well-being, a prevailing peace.

There may be good reason why the Great Commission to “preach the Gospel to every nation” was preceded by the earlier (and much ignored) New Command “to love each other as I have loved you.” This prior command – Christ’s parting words on His last night with His disciples – would be the validating evidence of His divinity and the identifying mark of His followers. Without this visible demonstration of self-sacrificing unity, Christ’s deity as well as the authenticity of those who claim to follow Him would be questionable. This is more than rhetoric. Dis-unity actually eviscerates the power of the message. I see the Gospel undermined by aggressive evangelizers who blitz inner-city neighborhoods, collecting decision cards, never bothering to meet, even acknowledge, the saints who populate these very streets. I see affluent (naïve though very sincere) young people who fly into impoverished lands to “lead the lost to Christ” never imagining that God may be already powerfully at work among His destitute people. I see

how denominations set up competing congregations in the same villages that promote member loyalty by devaluing, even “un-christianizing,” other groups of believers. Evangelism that does not flow from the New Command may actually do more to thwart the purposes of the Kingdom than to advance it.

And so, my response to the inquirer? Step one: identify the saints – all the saints, not just those of my political persuasion or theological stripe – and discover how God is at work in their lives. What I will likely discover is that the body of Christ is already embedded within most cultures, badly broken perhaps, but clearly present. Pentecostals judging Baptists, Evangelicals de-christianizing Catholics, believers split along doctrinal and political fault lines. To plant a new church would fragment them all the more. The best Good News for a fractured society is the Great Command (*love God and neighbor*) championed by serious devotees to the New Command (*love each other*). The Great Commission (*proclamation*) is a predictable outcome, a by-product, not an end in itself. Skipping over the two bed-rock Commands on the way to fulfilling the Great Commission is like erecting houses without foundations.

Thus, Christian community development work begins where people are, with their felt needs, the issues of greatest concern to the whole village – like clean drinking water, for example. A well may be a real need but it could be quite expensive and very labor intensive. It would involve more than merely drilling a hole in the ground. An adequate aqueduct system to serve 250 homes scattered across many acres would require a pumping station, a water tower, thousands of meters of pipe. The community must decide if this indeed is their top priority. If it is, community development wisdom requires that local residents be first investors with cash, not just labor. That means fundraisers and family contributions. A water commission must be formed to manage both water flow and cash flow. A project management team must be assembled. There are trenches to dig, pipes to lay, materials to be stored and guarded, food to prepare. It is a project that requires the participation of every household who wishes to have fresh water flowing to their home. And, of course, nearly everyone does. In the process neighbors join hands across barriers that have divided them, perhaps for generations. Labels are set aside as needed talents are identified and put to use. Devout church-goers and neighbors with no expressed faith sweat together in the sweltering sun and take breaks together under the shade of mango trees. It is an important community development project that greatly improves the quality of life of the village, and increases the skills and leadership capacities of villagers. But it is more. It is a unifying effort that brings estranged believers into relationship with each other.

It happened just this way in rural Nicaragua. When villagers observed their neighbor Anita, a Catholic and outspoken member of the Sandinista socialist party, working closely with Don Blas, an elder Baptist pastor and loyal member of the conservative party, eyebrows raised.

Two saints, staunch political adversaries, separated by theologies that view the other as heretics, teamed up to bring water to their village – it was enough to stir curiosity in the conversations of their community. But when neighbors saw their relationship deepen and smiles and hugs of genuine affection exchange between the two, hearts were melted. “By this shall all men know that you are my disciples...” When the followers of Jesus set aside differences, even deeply held ones, to demonstrate care for their neighbors (like providing water), such behaviors become visible. “Father, make them one so that the world will know that you sent me...” When the followers of Jesus yield not only personal preferences but suspend deeply held convictions in deference to one another, a witness of powerful impact is unleashed.

And so to my questioner who asks “How do you bring the Gospel into this work?” I answer: begin with the fundamentals. The great command and the new command will take you where you need to go. As St. Francis of Assisi said, “Preach the gospel and use words when necessary.”

APPENDIX 12: Failing with God

By Bob Lupton

I enjoy it when business friends invite me to join them for coffee. Business deals fascinate me. I would probably be a serial entrepreneur if I hadn't received a calling to enter urban ministry. On one breakfast occasion, I was listening with much interest to a conversation between two friends – a fishing equipment manufacturer and an investor – as they discussed a new product idea that promised to make millions. There's money to be made in the angling industry if you can produce a lure that fish find irresistible. Fishermen know that bass love night crawlers. So did the owner of the manufacturing company. Plastic night crawlers were among his best sellers. The only problem is that when bass strike from the rear, they bite off the back end of the worm leaving a short stub and an empty hook for the fisherman to reel in. The solution, said the manufacturer with obvious excitement, is to mold in a second hook at the tail end of the worm. Then no matter where the bass hits the worm, a hook would be waiting. The idea was ingenious in its simplicity. K-Mart had already committed for a first order of five hundred thousand lures if they could be delivered in time for the coming fishing season. The investment was a good one, the business owner assured his potential investor.

It would be fairly easy to set up an automated mold that would infuse the plastic worm around the two hooks, the manufacturer explained. The challenge, however, was the time-consuming task of securely tying together the rear hook to the front hook at the precise distance apart for accurate insertion into the molding machine. This would require tedious hand work. Finding a contractor to tie a million fish hooks together in the next ninety days would take some concentrated research. They would probably have to go to China or Taiwan, he said.

"Why don't you do it right here in Atlanta," I blurted out without much forethought. It was the disturbing prospect of shipping jobs overseas when so many of my inner-city neighbors were unemployed that brought me out of my silence. "We could set up an operation in my neighborhood right away," I said with naïve confidence. It would take some trial runs to establish efficient tying techniques and production speed, but I assured them we could make an accurate bid and begin production within two weeks. And so began one of the most exciting, stimulating, energetic ventures I had ever embarked upon.

My neighbors were eager to work. I rented some vacant warehouse space, set up long rows of tables, and started taking applications. Applicants sat across the tables facing each other. Each had a spool of line, a pair of scissors, a pile of fish hooks and a "jig" with two slots to insert the hooks into. They practiced threading the hooks, tying a special non-slip knot, and transferring each two-hook harness onto a card that assured its accuracy. Not all the applicants had the manual dexterity for the work and did not make the cut. Those we hired were paid by the piece.

On the wall behind each worker was posted a large production sheet that tracked their hourly output. The competition was invigorating. Some with amazingly fast fingers tallied very generous paychecks. Needless to say, it was a very stimulating work environment.

In eight weeks our little operation had tied one million fish hooks together and delivered the contract ahead of schedule and under budget. The manufacturing company shipped out their initial order of double-hook night crawlers to K-Mart stores across the country. Our employees eagerly awaited for the re-orders to flood in. They waited. And waited.

But the re-orders never came. It seems that one important element in this venture had been overlooked. The lure, though very attractive to retailers and fisher-folk, had not been vetted with the end consumer – the fish! The bass were simply not interested in night crawlers that had hooks protruding from their tails. Amid much disappointment, we closed up shop.

I wish I could tell you that this fishing lure venture was my only ministry misfire. But alas, it is but one in a lengthy litany of failed schemes I have attempted over four decades of serving among the poor. There was the free clothes closet that turned into a grab-what-you-can feeding frenzy. And the toys-for-tots Christmas give-away that became a greedy entitlement program. And the chaos that my “jobs program” inflicted on some good-hearted friends when I sent them unruly urban teens to work in their businesses. The list goes on – a pallet manufacturing operation, a sewing company, a lawn-care service, to name a few – all created for the noble purpose of providing jobs for unemployed folk in my community. Once in a while a venture did flourish but, regrettably, most fizzled over time. If failures can be considered “learning experiences” then I am indeed a very learned man!

Somewhere along this roller-coaster journey, it became clear to me that the rightness of one’s motives does not ensure the success of one’s efforts. The 80% crash and burn rate for start-up businesses during their first 18 months (according to Forbes) appears to apply not only to the for-profit world but to ministry ventures as well. Just because we are diligently pursuing the will of God and seeking to “do justice and love mercy,” there are no guarantees that our self-sacrificing efforts will produce the outcomes we envision. *Different* outcomes perhaps. Outcomes like humility, or the relationships that are forged in adversity, or the deepening of faith when the bottom has dropped out.

In the end, God may be more interested in our faithfulness than in our successes.

APPENDIX 13: Gentry-Church

By Bob Lupton

The city is the new frontier of the western church. For five decades the church has withdrawn from the city, following the affluent exodus to the suburbs. Now, with the advent of gentrification, a younger generation of faith-motivated professionals is flooding back into the city. But few are joining the aging churches that still remain. Rather, they are experimenting with new forms of worship and spiritual community. Though the church-growth manuals have not yet been written for the church-of-the-urban-gentry, some promising patterns are beginning to emerge.

These gentry-churches, though sometimes spawned by larger “mother” churches or denominations, prefer not to identify themselves with denominational names. While they may not be overtly anti-denominational, they distance themselves from the traditional institutional church identity and loyalties. Their management style is participatory, preferring collegial leadership teams rather than top-down senior pastors. Their orthodoxy tends to be more open than the buttoned-down doctrines of their fore-parents. Their theology, like their music and rituals, is eclectic. They prefer dialogue to indoctrination, exploration over pedagogy.

To be nuevo-urban is to embrace diversity. And gentry-churches do – or attempt to. Race, alternative lifestyle, abortion, gender equality – those divisive issues that have splintered the institutional church – find a more charitable climate among the inclusive millennials. Believing that they have grown beyond the prejudices of their parents, the church of the Generation Y (born between 1982 and 2003) rejects judgmentalism as small-mindedness. Thus it is not at all uncommon to see a smattering of ethnic, class and cultural diversity in their midst.

Their architectural interests lean toward utilitarian rather than classical, choosing converted commercial space over steeple and spire. This becomes an unintentional benefit to the neighborhoods they gentrify. Rather than the institutional encroachment of the contemporary commuter church model that tears down blocks of houses for parking, the gentry-church brings new vitality to vacant or underutilized buildings that often have adequate parking. Like neighborhood churches of the past, gentry-churches aspire to become parish-centric. And even though their highly mobile membership may commute from considerable distances, they encourage members to relocate within their parish and become engaged as active neighbors.

There are several characteristics of the gentry-church that give it strategic importance (or at least strategic potential) to the work of the Kingdom in our rapidly urbanizing world. Their concern for mercy and justice, their focus on place, and their membership profile (educated, ambitious, confident, connected) uniquely position them to have a redemptive impact on gentrification. Gentrification, without an intentional corrective influence, will inevitably and unjustly displace

lower-income residents from the in-town neighborhoods that have been their homes for generations. The gentry-church has the capacity to ensure that the vulnerable have a voice and a permanent place in a reviving neighborhood. They can be shapers of history. They can lead the way to gentrification with justice.

But a highly capable membership doing Saturday service projects in their adopted neighborhood is not synonymous with doing justice – at least not the kind of justice required to redeem gentrification. Such service activities may fulfill the “love mercy” part of God’s command (as declared by the prophet Micah) but the “do justice” part will require intelligent, intentional, concentrated effort over a substantial amount of time. Bringing justice to gentrification is no small undertaking.

Ensuring that low-income neighbors have a permanent place in a reviving neighborhood calls forth a whole range of marketplace abilities not typically associated with either church planting or service projects. While a church-centric vision needs the winsome gifts of teaching, music, organizing, motivating and a handful of others useful to drawing and retaining members, a community-centric vision, on the other hand, considers the needs of all residents in the entire neighborhood – especially the vulnerable. Real estate knowledge, business acumen, legal expertise, architectural design, finance capabilities, political connections, community organizing – these are a few of the talents that under the lordship of Christ become the spiritual gifts needed to do justice in a gentrifying environment.

The gentry-church is the brightest hope the city has seen in more than a half century. It rides in on a tide of exciting new opportunity. Unlike past generations of privileged Christians who forgot essential Kingdom values, fled the city and forsook the poor, the gentry-church re-enters the city with a desire for community that embraces diversity. The peril, of course, is that this new Kingdom movement flows in a tide of privilege that knows nothing of sacrifice. Its affluent spiritual parents and grandparents mastered homogeneous church growth but forgot about community transformation. There is entrenched, church-centric history to break free from if the gentry-church is to be a redemptive history shaper. Will it be up to the challenge?

APPENDIX 14: Hard Lessons

By Bob Lupton

Katherine Grant was in the neighborhood less than a week when a rash of break-ins and rapes seized the community with terror. She had been very excited about moving into her new home, a restored Victorian located in Atlanta's historic Grant Park. But her enthusiasm was quickly overshadowed by grave concerns for her own safety. Instead of the creative joys of decorating and planting flowers, Katherine was consumed with urgency to install burglar bars, exterior lighting and an alarm system. She had expected to meet her neighbors at block parties and social events, not police-led crime watch meetings.

Katherine (Kitty, some of us call her) is the new executive director of our Charis Community Housing ministry. She understands community development - she has lived much of her life in cross-cultural settings and has extensive urban real estate experience. And she is not one to sit passively by as a victim. She met immediately with the precinct captain to discuss strategies for community cooperation in apprehending the perpetrators. It was teenage gang activity, the police informed her. They knew who three of the young thugs were and even where they lived - a couple blocks from Katherine on Grant Terrace. Grant Terrace... that had a vaguely familiar ring to it. Back in the office she pulled the files on houses Charis had built in the immediate area and to her dismay, many of the homes on Grant Terrace had indeed been built by Charis. She immediately ordered police reports on all the addresses on Grant Terrace and adjacent streets where Charis had built homes. The data that came back was deeply distressing. Much of the criminal activity and police incidents in recent years had been tracked back to Charis addresses. And one of the accused rapists police were now hunting was a Charis family member!

This harsh reality could not be farther from the original vision that inspired many caring volunteers to partner with Charis to construct these homes fifteen or more years ago. During those early days of our housing ministry, compassion for families in need of decent, affordable housing was the driving motivation behind our efforts. Building rows of modest homes on abandoned, tax-delinquent land seemed to benefit everyone - the neighborhood, the city's tax roles, and especially the new homeowners. We simply did not know then what time and troubling experience has taught us: concentrating low-cost housing in a low-income area **reinforces** rather than **relieves** the pathology of poverty. Now Katherine and her neighbors are reaping the bitter fruits of our flawed strategy.

Decisive, corrective action must now be undertaken. Families who are in violation of the law (which automatically places them in violation of their mortgage or lease agreement) must be evicted. These homes must be upgraded and sold to middle-income residents who embrace the

values of community improvement. Organizing efforts must be initiated to create block watches, streetscape improvements, and code enforcement. In short, we must re-create in the neighborhood around Grant Terrace a healthy, self-sustaining, mixed-income community that will support a positive quality of life and stimulate economic viability. Had we known two decades ago what we know now, this volatile and costly remediation work would never have been necessary.

Mixed-income community development is not some romantic notion dreamed up by soft-hearted liberals. It is pragmatic strategy grounded in hard economic and social reality. After four decades of failed social policies, our society has finally recognized that isolating people in poverty compounds is healthy neither for the poor nor for those who would avoid them. Thankfully, public housing policy has now shifted toward mixed-income development that affords the poor the quality-of-life standards and modeling benefits of upwardly mobile neighbors. Atlanta has emerged as HUD's flagship city, leading the way in successful public-private housing ventures. And under the leadership of our new mayor, we will doubtless soon enact "inclusionary zoning" ordinances to ensure that our workforce - our school teachers, secretaries, police and other essential workers - can live affordably in the city. Real estate developers on Atlanta's affluent north side will be challenged to squeeze a level of affordability into their high-end developments. To help make the numbers work the city is creating a toolkit of attractive incentives. However, the more difficult challenge may be in inducing market-rate development into the economically depressed areas on the south side of the city. The temptation, I am afraid, will be to build whole subdivisions of "affordable" (which is to say "low-income") housing on land that is still comparatively cheap, thus creating new pockets of poverty rather than wholesome mixed-income neighborhoods.

Take a lesson from Charis. Homeownership may be **essential** for healthy community life but it is not **sufficient**. It ensures neither pride nor upward mobility. Today's cluster of new, brightly painted, affordable bungalows may become tomorrow's crime infested ghetto. Isolating the affluent in posh neighborhoods may produce elitism but isolating the poor is a recipe for social disaster.