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THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MISSIONS LINK THROUGH SPIRITUAL INTERACTIONS BETWEEN AN INNER-CITY CONGREGATION AND RESIDENTS OF UNIVERSITY HOMES PUBLIC HOUSING COMMUNITY

By

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A Doctoral Dissertation
submitted to the faculties of the schools of the
Atlanta Theological Association
in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of
Doctor of Ministry
at
Interdenominational Theological Center
Atlanta, Georgia
1997
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ABSTRACT

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MISSIONS LINK THROUGH SPIRITUAL INTERACTIONS BETWEEN AN INNER-CITY CONGREGATION AND RESIDENTS OF UNIVERSITY HOMES PUBLIC HOUSING COMMUNITY

by
James "Chico" Fincher
July, 1997
197 Pages

This paper documents the activities of the leadership team of Central United Methodist Church (CUMC) in its outreach mission to University Homes. University Homes is a public-owned housing project located in the heart of the Atlanta University Center community.

The primary methodology was the corporate use of an intercessory prayer book, *Forty Days for Five People* by G. Ross Freeman.

The thesis is that spirituality consisting of contemplation and prayer with a foundation of Christian Education are significant tools of empowerment -- especially for persons with no previous history of mission outreach -- which allow Christians to become committed and involved in order to undertake a coordinated effort of missions to poor and underprivileged persons living in public housing. Also, church leaders and other laity in an affluent middle class church with no previous history of mission involvement with public housing can be equipped spiritually through the vehicle of prayer to undertake a vital mission project. Therefore, the church will begin impacting its community by adhering to its mission statement
to impact the community by inviting children, youth and adults to Christ.

The leaders were challenged to spend time reflecting and praying for designated people of the community. After this phase, these persons voluntarily visited those for whom they had been interceding in order to openly communicate what the Spirit of God had revealed to the leadership, and to lay a foundation in order to build meaningful relationships.

This project will focus on the dynamics and praxis of the local church's attempt to participate in vital missions in a public housing project, and the role of the associate pastor as mediator/facilitator between the public housing community and the church.

The purpose of this study is to examine the reasons inner-city churches have problems engaging in missions to local public housing residents. This project will also present a model with specific alternatives for inner-city churches to become better neighbors in missions to their local communities.

Chapter I outlines the overall purpose for the study, presenting the ministry setting and the associate pastor's role in developing strategies for missions praxis. Chapter II focuses on the project in action and the phases of this outreach ministry. Chapter III recounts the history of missions, highlights the relationship of the black church to its community, and reviews the literature on urban mission models for inner-city churches. Chapter IV provides insight into the implications of this project through discussions of spirituality and Christian Education. Chapter V concludes with evaluations, project summary, and reflections.
DEDICATION

To the very special lady in my life, known as Mrs. F., and my six children: Robin, Ieda, Tamara, Craig, Bernard, and Metrecia, who steadfastly believed in me when I wasn’t sure of myself, and gave of their time and finances to help make this project a reality. It was through my loving wife that I was introduced to the prayer journal which was such a vital part of this successful mission.

J."C." F.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A special thanks is in order to the members of my Doctor of Ministry Committee: Dr. Marsha S. Haney, Dr. Jonathan Jackson, and Dr. Edith Thomas, who gave me a worthy challenge. I also thank Dr. Steve Rasor and the ITC faculty and staff for their assistance and support.

To my Central family and Dr. Rodney T. Smothers, who supported and encouraged me every step of the way, you are greatly appreciated. I especially thank the 72's who interacted with persons in the community with such a sweet spirit, and made missions meaningful for Central and the new friends we made at University Homes. A special thanks to all residents of University Homes who opened their hearts and homes to us.

Lastly, thanks to the efforts of Madge D. Owens and Leishea M. Johnson, who typed and edited with such fervor.

To all of you, ‘thanks a million.’
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INTRODUCTION

Spirituality is the key that seems to open doors to successful mission involvement in the public housing community. As far as the church is concerned, getting people involved by prayer, fasting, and seeking the will of God, has proved to be a very powerful instrument. The value of spirituality and prayer is not to be underestimated. As this study will demonstrate, the primary component of effecting mission involvement is prayer.

This study reveals that one of the primary desires expressed by the housing tenants is to know that someone continually prays and intercedes to God on their behalf. Secondly, the assurance that the church sends individuals willing to intervene through personal contact. The spiritual nature of the personal contacts give assurance that these interactions are from the heart and inspired by the Spirit of God. The level of contact does not matter. Phone calls, written correspondence, personal visits, or intercession through prayer are all well received.

An important lesson learned was the power of expectancy through prayer. Whenever two entities -- such as the church and residents of a housing community -- are praying for each other through planned, organized ritual, the affect is mind boggling and staggering. There was an intense level of expectancy and anticipation that far exceeded anything I personally could have ever anticipated when the two parties came together face to face.

It seems that every barrier, fear, and concern whether about safety, acceptance, or
worry became a non-entity because the Lord had prepared the way. According to the testimonies of all participants, the barriers were broken down between class, economics, education, as well as from social, theological, psychological, and philosophical perspectives. The Holy Spirit had prepared both parties to receive one another.

Consequently, it is my conclusion that dedicated people in small groups from churches, regardless of location, can make a significant impact in and on the lives of persons living in their adjacent community. Whenever the motif is caring and sharing, and the mission emphasis is Spirit-led specifically utilizing prayer and fasting, people can build trust levels that supersede the perceived risk and mythological fears built up through complacency and non-involvement in the lives of the poor.

Unfortunately, for many communities there is a seldom crossed gulf: an often unapproachable gulf that is not as much physical in nature as it is spiritual. This gulf often exists between the so-called affluent, middle class, inner-city churches and the surrounding lower class neighbors, often called the community. Whether the rift is precipitated by physical barriers, classism, economics, social status, or educational background; there is a discernable absence of concrete communication, bonding, trust, and common missions between the church and the community. One of the reasons this gulf exists is because the affluent are fearful of the public housing community, and the public housing community feels alienated and unaccepted.

It is vital as well as necessary that the church find linkages and methods of bridging the gap separating these two communities. These efforts will be the force that becomes a transforming agent in the lives of both the congregation of the church and the housing
communities in which these churches are located.

The social mission of the local church has a biblical foundation, set forth by the ministry of Jesus Christ for its response to the poor and oppressed in every community. The public housing community seems a fitting arena for comprehensive ministry. It is vital for the church to reach out through its discipleship and teaching ministry to public housing communities. In these congested living situations, persons are considered most easily endangered of losing their souls in the dangerous climate of domination and manipulation prevalent in today’s society. The biblical mandate of bringing hope to a disadvantaged community empowers its citizens to participate in the vision of the larger global community and raise its quality of life through a commitment to human redevelopment.

Regardless of the setting in which these two entities (church and community) reside, in the opinion of this writer, the lack of cooperative effort seems constant, and the gulf appears to be getting wider. If the role of the church is to transform lives, bring hope through Jesus Christ, and bridge the gap of disunity, there is a need for a new type of spiritual intervention based ministry.

If the church is to remain a dominant force -- maintaining its historical influence in the black community -- then it must refrain from falling into the trap of isolating persons in most urgent need of support and assistance. This socioeconomic based ideology of the traditional black church and its status conscious dynamic is in need of drastic reform. A mending must take place between the community and the church. This reintegration is essential to the continued success and growth, not only of the church, but of the people as well: and is a major challenge to the status quo which exists in the institutional black church.
This project entitled "The Development of a Missions Link Through Spiritual Interactions Between an Inner-City Congregation and Residents of University Homes Public Housing Community" focuses on the dynamics and praxis of the participation of Central United Methodist Church in initiating missions in a nearby low-income neighborhood housing project. The role of the associate pastor as mediator/facilitator between the public housing community and the church is also explored as a vital secondary component of this study.

Two conditions will be explored. First, there is a certain diversity in class or economics, belief systems, and values between citizens of the local housing project and the members of the local church. Secondly, we often find that the oppressive living conditions of public housing filled with social degradation and seemingly political injustice, are standard public policy and administration practices by persons in authority. These intolerable conditions present many questions concerning the role of the black church in its community. One might ask the questions, "how is it possible for a middle class United Methodist Church to establish communications and an ongoing dialogue with persons in a local public housing community," especially if the purpose is to fulfill its mission of "positively influencing the community by inviting children, youth, and adults to God?" This comprehensive study will answer this question.
CHAPTER 1

THE PROJECT ISSUE

The Ministry Setting

The ministry setting for this project is Central United Methodist Church (CUMC) which is located in the heart of the Atlanta University Center (AUC) and the Vine City Community. The church was founded in 1867, and was organized as Clark Chapel. The first edifice was constructed in the shape of the cross and painted red. For many years, it was known as “The Little Red Cross.” In 1874, after considerable growth, Clark Chapel began sharing the facility of Lloyd Street Church, a white Methodist congregation. This was an event in itself, because it was one of the earliest attempts in Atlanta of multiracial worship services.1 Although the whites had services in the morning and the blacks in the evening, this structure occupied an historic site in downtown Atlanta on Central Avenue (presently, the site of the Underground parking deck). Eventually, the whites moved out because of declining membership and the changing nature of the community. In 1928, this site on Central Avenue was sold, and Central Church moved to its present site, debt free. This set the stage for CUMC being called the “mother church for black Methodism in Atlanta.”2 Clark College (now Clark Atlanta University) began in the basement of what was called “The Little Red


2 Ibid., 36.
Cross” and is now known as Central United Methodist Church.³

Today, this local church is one block south of the Georgia Dome, and within three blocks of downtown Atlanta, in close proximity with Atlanta City and Georgia State governments. Even though the church is centrally located in the center of downtown and the Vine City neighborhood, CUMC is not considered a neighborhood church, because most of the members commute from 12 to 20 miles, 25% Northwest Atlanta, 14 % Atlanta, 17.1 % Dekalb County, 10% Cobb County, 8% Clayton County, and 26% other. The congregation is majority African-American and composed of upper middle class highly professional people including business and political leaders, college professors, doctors, lawyers, and judges.⁴

The Vine City community is composed of large numbers of unemployed, displaced, and underemployed African-Americans. A 1993 study by Dr. Rodney T. Smothers entitled “Strategies For Change: Decision Making In An Urban African-American Congregation” revealed some deplorable economic conditions. The median household income in Vine City was $4,758.⁵

The Atlanta University community, on the other hand, has approximately 53% of its residents earning less than $10,000. This study shows some 2,700 public housing units, and approximately 9,000 students attending the AUC schools. A majority of all the homes are rental properties, with only 8.8% of the homes being occupied by the homeowner in Vine City. Approximately 84% of homes in the AUC neighborhood are being occupied as rental

³ Ibid., 35.

⁴ Central United Methodist Church Membership Records.

⁵ Smothers, “Strategies for Change,” 34.
property. The area consists of a vast number of transients, thus, the stability of the neighborhood is constantly in question, and is in vital need of a progressive, inclusive ministry.  

The immediate neighborhood of CUMC includes the Morris Brown College dormitory towers and Friendship Towers, a senior citizens residence. Across the street on the south side are two Baptist Churches. One block east is a CME Church immediately adjacent to the church parking lot. There are two modern apartment complexes on adjacent corners, north and southeast respectively. University Homes Atlanta Housing Authority Apartments are three blocks southwest of the church.

CUMC is considered a “Word” church by its membership, with heavy emphasis on education, scriptural literacy, and discipleship. It has a dual nature because it is considered a family church with 70-plus members with over 50 years of membership. Their families and children’s families include a vibrant, charismatic young adult core group and a moderate number of middle-aged adults. To serve the duality of its congregation, two Sunday services are offered each week -- with the conservative group at the second service. The predominant, scripturally mature attend the first service at 7:45 a.m.

Organizationally, CUMC operates by guidelines of the United Methodist Book of Discipline, according to the governing body, which is an Episcopal System of Order.  

\[\text{\textsuperscript{6}} \text{ Ibid.}\]

\[\text{\textsuperscript{7}} \text{ United Methodist Church, Book of Resolutions (Nashville, TN: The University Church Publishing House, 1979).} \]
Basis of the Study

I initially became interested in why (whether because of traditions, apathy, fears or other dynamics) CUMC had no significant mission outreach to the neighboring public housing community. The existing ministry consisted of a food pantry open three hours on Mondays and Wednesdays. Although the food pantry provided a “quick fix,” few of the actual recipients came from nearby housing developments. The intent of this project was to present a process by which Central began mission outreach to University Homes, a public housing project in the Atlanta University Center.

Some of the conditions associated with public housing exist because the family unit is disrupted due to agency regulations. Fathers are forced out of the home due to the fact that public assistance dollars are only available to single mothers. The Department of Family and Children Services and other agencies discourage male participation in the family unit. Consequently, the female head of the household is placed in a tenuous position. Usually, very little support comes from husbands or fathers of her dependant children. Statistically, only 19% of fathers continue to pay alimony after 3 years.  

Black women, many of whom work in service areas, have a difficult time supporting their families. These low income families, according to the 1990 Census of the University Homes population, had 3,512 persons for whom poverty status was determined; 2,157 persons below poverty level -- a total of 61.4 percent below poverty level. The median household income is $5,912; public assistance income is $2,867; and retirement income is

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$4,971.\textsuperscript{9}

Personal interviews with many of the residents in these communities reveal expressions of alarm concerning the high use of drugs and alcohol which causes some of the living conditions to be intolerable. In these communities many persons use drugs and alcohol to dull themselves to the conditions under which they live. The black female finds herself powerless because others determine her family’s destiny. Since so many agencies tell her what to do, she is locked in for fear of loosing benefits. The children, on the other hand, usually are slow learners and are exposed to conditions that label them as under achievers according to a study by Fisher.\textsuperscript{10}

Children of low-income families are likely to experience illness more often than their counterparts who are not living in poverty. Marian Wright Edelman, president of the Children’s Defense Fund based in Washington, D. C. states:

Poverty affects children in many ways .... Physically poor children are more likely to be sickly at birth because of inadequate or no prenatal care given to the mother .... Children of the poor suffer more frequently from almost every form of childhood deficiency including infant mortality, gross malnutrition, recurrent and untreated health problems, psychological and physical stress, child abuse, and learning disabilities.\textsuperscript{11}

These are only a few of the physical and emotional problems faced by children in low-income families. Parents do not have the income needed to provide for the quality health care that adolescent life requires. Many parents are among the working poor, and do not earn

\textsuperscript{9} U. S. Census, 1990.


\textsuperscript{11} Ibid.
the income to meet the needs of their families. However, if they fall within a certain economic classification, they are disqualified from federal assistance, such as food stamps or Medicaid. They have extremely low earning potential and their employment “offers them little or no opportunity for advancement, beyond federally mandated increases in the minimum wage.”

If they are part time workers, they have no benefits, and are always “vulnerable to cut backs in hours and layoffs.”

According to Millie Hawk Daniel, author of “The Suffering Children,” many children in these situations:

... come from homes where they are being raised by a single parent, usually the mother, who is on welfare or working at a low paying job .... The kids come to school with no pre-school experience, and frequently end up in classrooms with less experienced teachers or permanent substitutes because more experienced teachers have transferred to better schools.

The intent of this project is to present the findings that moved Central’s leadership team from apathetic non-involvement in local missions to a spirited, hands-on, involved, congregation with a new and meaningful outlook at missions as the work of God they now shared. The dynamics of this project, hopefully, may assist other churches in urban areas in developing meaningful evangelistic and mission outreach ministry -- especially those churches in close proximity to public housing projects, or other areas often deemed unfit or unworthy by the church, of the church’s time or ministry.

\[12\] Ibid.

\[13\] Ibid.

\[14\] Millie Hawk Daniel, “The Suffering Children” (General Board of Global Ministries, United Methodist Church, Missions and Cultivation Department, June 1988), 38.
Goals and Objectives

One major goal is to minimize the effect that class or status issues have as deterrents to mission involvement by CUMC’s members. In some instances one finds that being called a church member gives a person a sense of a certain status, while not being a part of a church may send an entirely different message and may result in a sense of a loss of status. What happens when those without status encounter those with status in one-on-one situations is one of the gray areas. Our goal is to break down status walls through prayer and mission evangelism. How do we break down barriers to communication and establish meaningful dialogue whereby both the members of CUMC and members of University Homes affirm each other?

It appears that sometimes the local church withdraws itself from its immediate community as though the community did not exist. This evident separation between the church and its neighbors, in addition to being seen as “uppity,” forms barriers which block communication and may be due to economic barriers and disparate income levels. Other class distinctions such as living conditions and misconceptions concerning the characters of public housing residents are evident. Most are unfairly stereotyped and labeled as being alcoholic, drug addicted, and possessing lower moral values, when in reality many are believers in Christ and seek to build relationships with the local churches. One of the problems to overcome, therefore, is attempting to gain a genuine commitment by the church to local missions, especially in underprivileged and depressed areas. It is hoped that healing of the communities may be the result. Ultimately, how do we overcome the barriers to communication and effective dialogue with residents of public housing?
One of the most difficult obstacles to overcome will be the problem of getting consensus to change the way we do missions. Just to affect change will be a major Herculean task. This study seeks answers to the age old question “We have always done it like this, Why must we change?”

Trying to convince church members to begin a new paradigm and break tradition is one of the major stumbling blocks to many a well-meaning project. When faced with the question, “if the plan is good, why change,” we will find guidance through mission sources. However, this particular problem seems to be much more critical for groups that try to adopt change in faith entities. One noted expert made this very plain. According to Anthony J. Gittins, “Why does change have such threatening and negative connotations for people of faith? Is it because our faith is weak, because we cling to the idea of changeless truth and a changeless universe and have even made for ourselves an image of a changeless God?”

Hopefully, we can learn from the biblical example of the rewards of change from Simon Peter who decided to go fishing two days after the crucifixion, fished all night, and caught nothing. But Jesus gave him the opportunity to experience a ministry of change. When the Master appeared, He asked Peter to make a major change and fish on the other side. This demonstrated a major break with tradition—yet, a most successful one.

Another dynamic which could be problematic is how we address the attitudes of Christians who are uncomfortable relating to poor people. These potential participants demonstrate attitudes which have been “boxed in” to the comfort and privacy of non-

involvement, selfishness, prejudice, and most of all fear. If we get involved with missions we must expose who we really are, including our vulnerability. Being “boxed in” to comfort levels also means certain attitudes concerning mission involvement will surface. Some of these feelings and attitudes may include the following: we don’t want anyone else in our space; everything is okay, why should we reach out; we may be hurt or harmed; we don’t need to dirty our hands with those people; let someone else or another church do this work.

One of the major goals of this study is how to help a congregation understand the basic thrust of missions. Church members must first be willing to go into the harvest and allow the Holy Spirit to prepare them for the labor. Therefore, prayer is a vital part of the thrust of missions.\textsuperscript{16}

Jesus is our example in every case. On one journey he traveled in a hostile area, but took time to attend to a cry for help when confronted by lepers according to Luke 17:11. Jesus talked to the most unlikely people and asked penetrating questions about them and their beliefs as He did with the Samaritan woman at the well in John 4. He did not hesitate to engage sinners, tax collectors, prostitutes, or those accused of adultery, but intentionally offered Himself to persons thrust upon him as stated in Mark 7:24 and John 12:12.

His ministry was replete with many examples, too numerous to list. It was Jesus’ mission to be involved in the lives of those on the margins of life. If we are able to instill some of the fervor of missions in our congregation then they may experience the witness of Jesus Christ. This assurance opens the way to committed missions. For in allowing missions

\textsuperscript{16} Ibid.
we allow ourselves to touch the untouchables. We may just touch Jesus anew and grow spiritually.

**Definition of Terms**

In order to put this project into perspective, there were several terms which had to be defined. These terms are key elements in providing clarity in regard to this study. Following is a listing of these terms in the context in which they are used in the dissertation project.

**Active** - is the level of learning that explores how persons act on an issue and how they learn by doing.

**Affective** - is the level of learning that explores how persons feel about issues within themselves, others, and God.

**Black Congregation** - is inclusive of the major black denominations which include African Methodist Episcopal, African Methodist Episcopal Zion, National Baptist Convention U.S.A., National Baptist Convention of America, National Primitive Baptist, Progressive National Baptist Convention, Church of God in Christ (C.O.G.I.C.), and the United Methodist Church, a predominantly white denomination with a significant number of African-American members.

**Boldness** - A pattern of rising above one’s fears and apprehensions in demonstrated acts.

**Centering** - is the act of focusing on the divine while blocking out other voices.

**Central United Methodist Church’s Mission** - refers to the mission of “positively influencing the community by inviting children, youth, and adults to God through Jesus Christ.”

**Classes** - Classes in the black community evolve out of differences in skin color and in areas of education, occupation, and income. Also, in a secondary nature, family background and location of residence, church and other organizational memberships. The upper classes seem to have deeper involvement in many churches, more so than the lower classes which are low wage earners with job instability and subjected to poor living conditions.

**Communication** - is the relationship which occurs whenever there is a meeting of meaning between two or more persons and takes place beyond the level of mere words.

**True Communication** - “Dialogue which must take place beyond the level of words. This is an authentic experience which is shared not only on a proverbial level but also on a post
Community - means that the Christian community is not just about life together nor individualism, but persons living in the way of Christ.

Contemplative - means the act of deliberate quiet, and meditative rest a devotion of time for God with the express purpose of seeking divine direction.

Dialogue - is the address and response between persons in which there is a flow between them in spite of the obstacles that would normally block the relationship.

Discipleship - is an act of obedience, not a confession of faith. It is an attachment to the person of Christ. This act calls for one to follow Jesus by total surrender.

Economics (Cooperative) - is based on the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services as it relates to the African-American community and the diverse levels on which they collectively participate and interact.

Service Evangelism - means reaching out to others in Christian love, identifying with them, caring for them, listening to them, and sharing one’s faith with them in such a way that they will freely respond and want to commit themselves to trust, love, and obey God as a disciple of Jesus Christ and a member of his servant community which is the church.

Goals - are aims or a set of purposes.

Hope - is that which brings faith into the realm of thought and life through God’s promise and faithfulness. Also to bring to fulness what God has promised.

Inner personal - is a Christian educational approach to discovering the insights, emotions, and attitudes of the individual toward issues.

Interpersonal - is a Christian educational approach to discovering how persons react to issues in small groups.

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**Inner group** - applies to the same actions stated above within larger group settings.

**Intercession** - is prayer on behalf of others and their needs or welfare, and salvation.

**Laity** - are the dominant members of the body of the church who are not ordained clergy, but are among those gifted for service and missions.

**Local Church** - for the purposes of this dissertation, refers specifically to the black church because of its unique relationship, historically to the black family.

**Middle Class** - refers to persons who own a home, attend elite colleges, hold professional jobs, and travel on expensive vacations.

**Mission Dei** - is Evangelism as related to the Mission of God. The act of building relationships for the express purpose of leading persons into a salvation relationship with Christ.

**Mission** - pertains to the activity of God toward salvation. It relates to God's revelation as the one who loves the world.

**Missions** - refers to the participation and relation building ventures of Christians as they share the liberating message of Jesus Christ. Missions are little missionary ventures of the church which corresponds to the time, places, and needs.

**Paradigm** - is a set of deeply held rules and regulations surrounding the way people think, see and do things and how they reason to continue the things they do in the same way.

**Partnerships** - are the formation of teams of two to three persons who will pray, visit, and evangelize together.

**Poor** - denotes that one or more of the basic needs are not met; persons move a lot, have erratic employment, are often school dropouts, homelessness is common.

**Poverty** - is a human rights violation and injustice that wounds and produces shame and causes persons to feel as non-persons because of the lack of means to meet basic needs for survival.

**Powerlessness** - exists when persons receive public assistance, but can not spend the money they receive as they deem appropriate; and their homes are open to inspections at any time, or the rent can be raised on a moments notice.

**Prayer** - is communication consisting of praise and Thanksgiving, confessions, and supplications, and listening on behalf of humankind toward the Divine. Prayer is
communication between human beings and the Divine.

**Public Housing** - is government sponsored housing that subsidizes rent according to the proportion of earned income of tenants usually located in inner-city urban neighborhoods.

**Response** - Positive behavior and acceptance to a call of missions involvement/ activity.

**Shared Praxis** - is an approach to ministry in which there is a cooperative effort between ministerial staff (myself) and the laity as colleagues in missions to the community.

**Spirituality** - is the disciplined focus on humility, prayer, and seeking God for direction in which we are empowered so that our souls and hearts are warm toward our brothers and sisters.

**Votive** - describes a level of learning that is concerned with the values of one's experience, faith commitments, and ultimate concerns through reflecting, meditation, dialogue, and prayer.

**Working Class** - usually describes those who had no college, rent home, and work on hourly wage skilled or trade union jobs. Only the basic needs are met.

**To Witness Transformation** - describes the noted change in lives of persons working together (for the good of the community). This may be precipitated when the mission is one of caring, listening with openness; providing opportunities for new visions, and through rendering loving service.
CHAPTER II

OUTREACH COMPONENT

Ministry Issue

One of the major obstacles that seemingly has strangled this particular congregation and kept it immobile toward missions has been a tradition of maintenance rather than mission. The history of mission has basically been performed two primary ways: first, missions of an inward nature to members of the congregation; and secondly, outward missions through giving. Even though there are many community programs, only a few CUMC members participate in local missions. Historically, the primary means of mission has been through monetary gifts to various United Methodist agencies. Additionally, there has been substantial charitable and monetary support which has been allocated to one or more missionaries outside the United States.

CUMC has a sense of the need for missions but only a very small percentage (15%) of the congregation takes part in mission outreach through personal activity. We wanted to discover if it was possible to develop a thought process in the leaders of the congregation that it is vital for the church to undertake mission activity, especially local missions.

The first phase consisted of increasing spirituality through prayer which became the key element in building assurance and courage among CUMC’s leadership team. Christian education and the shared praxis approach propelled CUMC into the second phase of the
project which enlightened the church on strategies which assist with closing the class barrier that exists between a middle class Christian church and supposedly lower class unchurched tenants of public housing. The perception of CUMC is that the public housing facility acts as an inhibitor to success of this project. The “shared praxis” model of Christian education was used as the primary modus operandi, along with various methods of spirituality to involve and connect the two entities—the church and public housing.

The motivation for this project evolved from the dialogue between Yahweh and Isaiah in Isaiah 6 when Yahweh asks Isaiah the question: “Who shall I send?” Isaiah answers God’s call by saying, “Send me, Lord.” For CUMC the burning passion has been to identify persons for missions by asking the questions: who can I send and who will go for us? Who will go to build relationships? Who will go to tell the Good News? Who will carry the Gospel message as a mission outreach to the lower class and economically oppressed and bond with perceived lower class neighbors?

How do we form a new paradigm in a church community through its discipleship ministry, whereby prayer/spirituality in small groups build a coalition of hope and spiritual growth in public housing communities? Specifically, how can members of Central United Methodist Church through discipleship and training cross the various barriers that separate persons in University Homes? Another way of asking the same question is: What mechanisms are needed for the Outreach Ministry of Central United Methodist Church to build better community relationships and close the gulf between the church and community? The lack of viable missions is a major problem for the church. It is through mission outreach that people of the community are reached and given hope (the Gospel message). Therefore, the problem
is significant if the church is considered a vehicle of hope through its missions, but has no missions. Without missions, many persons will be left without hope or a sense of belonging through interaction and sharing with the church. When those who live in the community of the low-rent housing projects are neglected and are not recipients of hope or the outreach of the church, a chasm develops. If the church allows vital ministry missions to lapse, it may form deep sociological wounds. These wounds cause residents of the housing projects to feel neglected and, thus, distrust the church. The church also will suffer with wounds of alienation inflicted by the public housing community.

One of the historical realities of the Atlanta University Center community, of which CUMC and University Homes are a part, is the tendency in which persons move out of the inner-city, but retain membership in the inner-city church. This may be due to multiple reasons: upward job mobility, economic gains, higher levels of academic attainment, changes in social status, etc. However, because of family ties many have retained membership in CUMC, an inner-city church.

Consequently, the persons who comprise the majority of the CUMC congregation are members of other geographic areas setting up three different communities between the residency of the congregants of the church, the physical location of the church, and the people living in public housing. Historically, few public housing residents have visited, attended, or joined CUMC. In personal interviews many of these persons feel displaced, alienated, and without hope of belonging to a church -- or at least without hope of being accepted in the church. The church must reach out to these persons.

Whether these persons are justified by these feelings or not is questionable. These are
persons who feel out of place and have a need to belong. Many are recipients of welfare, food stamps, and unemployment. Many are unemployable and are living on other kinds of public assistance. They feel especially estranged since the church has not reached out to them, and since the prosperous have moved out of the community.

There is an apparent gulf between the church and public housing community due to a lack of communication. This is evident even though the church is in close proximity to public housing like University Homes because few, if any, of these residents belong to any church.

The present ministry issue may exist because the church is still relying on old paradigms, which have historically caused them to forget the value of mission outreach. The church was still a part of the community before they acted like “leap frogs,” bypassing this vital area of ministry to go outside the area (for whatever reason).\(^1\) The problem when deciding to do vital ministry beyond, but not including the adjacent neighborhoods, is that the church sets in motion several unanswered questions. First, should the church begin ministry in its natural setting or local adjacent community? Secondly, or should it continue its “dancing with dinosaurs kind of ministry in a hostile and hurting world” and only do what they have been doing -- or do we look for new paradigms?\(^2\) The latter ministerial approach, “dancing with dinosaurs kind of ministry,” is characterized by staying with traditional methods, or what we have always done—keeping ourselves in our own building and sending


\(^2\) Ibid.
monetary donations instead of committing people to physically provide outreach in areas outside of our comfort zones.  

The danger, as stated by Easum in his book, is whenever the church has acted out the “dancing with dinosaurs” theory they bypass all the hurting, unchurched people around them, while spending much time and energy looking for some place else to do ministry. They “leap frog” over the community to a safe haven of non-involvement. The gulf widens, forcing ministry in a hostile world. Therefore, ministry and relations become foreign to both communities.

The church must become the extended family for the community, not just for believers, but for all humanity and minister to the welfare of the individuals in the community so that the whole community starts its recovery process. The black church is perhaps the only institution that can have an effect of hope and wholeness in a black housing community because of its historic role and the issues the black church has in common with its people.

When this is not happening, both church and community are put at odds with each other. The local community is at odds because it thinks that the church doesn’t care, and the church because it feels impotent and unable to carry out viable ministry in the nearby community. The black church has to look at its role and effect in the black community. Whatever model is needed to bridge the gulf and bring hope both to its congregation and to those in the surrounding community should be utilized in promoting positive coexistence and

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3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid.
growth through related missions and cooperative ventures.

The church should never be hampered in its ministry because the members feel impotent and have a sense of not being able to reach out and minister to the surrounding community. This sense of belonging to community is expressed by C. Eric Lincoln, indicating that the best model of the black church is in theory the "ethnic community prophetic model" which gives its members a sense of identity and community interest.\(^6\)

Prior to this study, community interest was in fact a myth at CUMC in relation to University Homes. The desire, in fact, was underlying, but actual praxis was missing. The church will always feel a sense of inadequacy until it finds a way to minister in its primary community. The community will not reach its potential until it believes it can relate to the church and realize that the responsibility of the black church is to bring together and act as a forum for common cause, through accommodation, moderation, and even protest.

Motivation for this dissertation project was the desire to seek ways to bridge the gap between the two communities: the church community and the housing project. "The black church as the 'cultural womb' of the black community provided hope, assurance, and a sense of group identification."\(^7\) Our mandate as disciples in ministry is to develop some discipling process in order to empower members of the congregation of CUMC to take part in vital ministry with the residents of University Homes. Without some ministry effort between the church and the housing community, the church will be hampered and incomplete in its

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discipleship. But through a sense of determination, the black church, community, and family have survived and will continue to form coalitions of hope. The black church must keep this tradition of ministry and cooperation with the public housing in its surrounding community.

Therefore, I feel my servant/teacher model of ministry will be enhanced by developing strategies and learning ways to bridge the gulf and move between the worlds: the church world and the world of the housing community. Further, this will enable me to continue developing ministry teams for community outreach through discipleship training for home cell groups. This will be especially useful for those who feel that they are outcasts and oppressed because many of the churches have excluded them in their own communities.

The church, as part of the community, must do its share. In Pastoral Counseling and Spiritual Values: A Black Point of View, Wimberly defines corporate as meaning that the care of the individual is the function of the whole community, rather than the function of a person of designated skills, such as a pastor. A concept of unity from African roots is based upon relationship to the whole community, including nature. Madhubuti points out that “a child must be born, named, initiated, married -- which are all the functions of the community -- before he or she can be thought of as a complete person.”

8 Ibid.


Mission Strategy

This dissertation documents one strategy of an inner-city United Methodist church’s attempt to implement its mission statement literally: “to positively influence the community by inviting children, youth, and adults to come to Jesus Christ.”

The strategy was to begin to pray for forty days utilizing a prayer book entitled *Forty Days of Prayer for Five People* by G. Ross Freeman.\(^{11}\) Specific prayers were offered for persons who lived in the community, who had been previously identified at the beginning of the project.

In order to inspire our church community to undertake such a task, there were two major considerations. First, it would be necessary for some type of empowerment of individuals to be involved to build up courage and give assurance. Also, since this would be the first mission project for most of CUMC’s elected leaders, we believed a certain type of spirituality would be necessary. For such a task it was imperative that the facilitator was spiritually prepared. The spiritual preparation was determined to be forty days of specific intercessory prayer as the key element of empowerment. Secondly, there was the uncertainty or the stigma associated with some of the areas of this community, because a vital part of this community to be influenced or impacted was the community of University Homes, a public housing project.

After the facilitator was prepared, it was determined that the elected leaders of CUMC should be invited to participate in the intercessory prayers as a form of preparation.

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before going into the community. All who participated became convicted and convinced of
the power of prayer, and were willing and ready to undertake a shared praxis approach of
involvement toward CUMC’s mission and ministry in the public housing community.

Each of the CUMC leaders had been influenced by previous Christian educational
studies. The thesis, therefore, is that church leaders and other laity in an affluent middle class
church with no previous history of mission involvement with lower socio-economic status and
those living in public housing can be equipped spiritually through the vehicle of prayer to
undertake a mission project and begin impacting the community by adhering to CUMC’s
mission statement “to impact the community by inviting children, youth and adults to Christ.”

One particular incident sparked my interest through the behavior and response of
members of the Evangelism Committee. While visiting the University Homes Community I
received word there was a new family that wanted a church to hold Bible Study and prayer
in their home. This happened to be the only family I have met in University Homes in which
the husband and wife were living together with children in the home. This was an exciting
invitation so I approached the Evangelism Committee and asked members to accompany me
to the projects at the designated time and date. To my surprise, all members of the committee,
some twenty to thirty members gave some excuse as to why they could not find time to have
prayer or Bible study in the housing projects. The behaviors and the response to a mission call
bothered me and I began to try to find reasons for the various responses and look for ways
to alter attitudes, behaviors, and responses to attempting missions in a possible hostile arena
with stigmas attached.

CUMC, an historically significant black church, had been in the community since
1928. Yet, two blocks away in the public housing project, people did not know the church existed. Of course there are persons in various missions around the city. However, the immediate community was not being impacted, and lacked in viable missions by members of CUMC.

Since this CUMC had such a heavy emphasis on training leaders through Christian Education, I wondered why so few of the leadership team was involved in hands-on missions in the local community. There were so many opportunities, yet the response and attitudes towards missions was nil and void. It was amazing so few persons were involved in mission outreach to the two public housing projects in the community. Both of these were within walking distance of the sanctuary. It seemed no one was aware or seemed to care to minister to these poor people, many who had no church home and no real relationship with Christ as Lord and Savior. Within a few hundred yards the harvest was ripe, but the laborers were few. However, this apathy was not unique to CUMC for many of the other churches in the community also seemed to overlook the housing project as a ministry opportunity for missions.

Finally, we discovered whether this CUMC leadership team, as representatives, have the “love of neighbors” in their spirit empowering them to willingly go in missions for the Lord in University Homes. These leaders possess the love of neighbor thanks be to God!

**Project Description**

The week of November 25 - 30, 1996 was the beginning of serious reflection on how to implement a mission project to University Homes with persons who had no previous experience of personal witnessing or door-to-door evangelism. As I meditated on the best
methods, I thought about my role as one who would have to prepare the way. How could I best follow in the shoes of John the Baptist and be a facilitator of this much needed mission project, and literally prepare the way for the church to get started? The combination of questions about the link between spirituality, Christian Education, and missions offered only one choice, and that was to start with spiritually based prayer. As I considered the solid Christian Education foundation of most of our leaders, this seemed reasonable. Almost ninety-five percent of the elected leaders of CUMC had participated in one or more of the Christian Education classes previously offered. These classes range from a minimum of eight weeks to three-year-long courses.

The central focus, therefore, was prayer as the prime motivating force that would move us toward our goal. My initial preparation was to visit the Secretary of the University Homes Tenant Association, and after much persuasion, obtained the names of forty-three women who were residents of the community. A great majority had attended one or more recent Tenant Association meetings. The rationale was that if the women came to the association meetings, this demonstrated that they were at least concerned with what was going on in their community. I had previously been exposed to the prayer booklet entitled *Forty Days of Prayer for Five People* with specific guidelines for each of the forty days.

On December 1, 1996, I began to fast two days each week and pray daily by name for all forty-three of the women on the list, expanding the format to pray for forty-three people by name instead of five. During this forty-day period, I increased the number of names by including names of designated leaders of CUMC. Most of these names came from the Charge Conference Report. Daily, I would add names of certain of the leaders from the Charge
Conference Booklet (see Appendix C). After twenty-one days, I was moved by the Holy Spirit. It was heavily impressed upon my heart to reach out and contact all of the women at University Homes in some tangible, but meaningful way. This turned out to be a real blessing and a centerpiece of spiritual communication, which culminated in my sending all of the women on the prayer list Christmas greetings. I sent Christmas cards with my personal business card including a handwritten note to each with a different expression of how I was praying on behalf of each of them and would love to meet them some day. I was led to plant a seed of expectancy and anticipation that one day these forty-three women would meet the Pastor who was praying for their spiritual growth and family needs.

On Tuesday, December 3, there was supposed to be a special election at University Homes. I attended the meeting, however, made no verbal comments. On Tuesday, December 13th, day twelve, was the regularly scheduled Tenant Association meeting. I attended and sat in the back speaking to a few of the residents while trying to put names with faces, remaining silent without identifying myself.

On day twenty-four, at the Christmas Eve service I invited some of the other prayer warriors and leaders to join me in praying for selected residents of University Homes. In the CUMC congregation, prayer warriors are persons who are sincerely dedicated to prayer and fasting in order to seek God’s positive intervention in their lives. Initially, seven leaders were given five names each to pray for with minimal explanations. However, each was told they would be contacted later with further explanations.

After inviting the CUMC leaders to join in prayer, I visited some of the women in University Homes and gave them the prayer book and asked them to pray for our leaders.
The overall project involves eight to ten women tenants of University Homes, each praying for five of the leaders listed in the Charge Conference Report, and twenty to twenty-five of the fifty leaders each praying for the women residents of University Homes.

Over the course of the remainder of December, 1996 and into January, 1997 each week I approached several leaders and asked them to participate by receiving one of the prayer journals with the names and addresses of the five women listed in the front cover of the journal. The leaders were asked to keep a journal, if possible, and record impressions, feelings, and thoughts periodically. Many had previous experience during their various Christian Education classes at CUMC. Over the period of forty days, I received numerous verbal reports of enlightenment, improved family prayer time, new understanding of attitudes regarding prayer, more awareness of spirituality, and more assurance of God’s presence in prayer. Most expressed wonder and awe about what the prayer book had meant to their quiet time before the Lord. The most amazing experience was the effect the prayers had on the leaders themselves. This was expressed as gaining new knowledge of oneself by the power of the Spirit through prayer. As they earnestly began to seek the presence of God through prayers for others they came to a fuller understanding of their own spiritual journey. During the forty days certain of the leaders approached me and asked if it was alright to contact the women before the forty days were finished. I suggested that whatever the Spirit led them to do, they should do it. Some of the leaders were beginning to feel they knew the women and would talk about them using only the first names. It seemed as if the Holy Spirit was making the women known to them.

After giving out the prayer books, all of the leaders were invited to a leadership
training event where they would be given further information regarding the project. On January 4th, 1997 eighty-five persons consisting of chairpersons and members of their communities formerly (committees), gathered for a leadership training event to take another look at the vision and mission statements; and to authenticate them through new guidelines determined by the leadership team. Ten to twelve computers were set up with five to seven persons at each responding to a set of questions that would ultimately set the church’s vision and mission for 1997. The data was then tabulated by a computerized system (see Appendix A).

The ideology behind the leadership involvement was to allow the leadership team itself to determine the real vision and mission of CUMC within the local community. This information was put into a format that would guide us in implementing our goal toward our mission and vision. The vision determined at the leadership conference related well with the vision and mission previously stated:

◆ To model ourselves after the example of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ in service and education.
◆ To impact the community by inviting children, youth and adults to Jesus Christ. A significant set of values were determined by which we would gauge the undertaking of their mission. Jesus would do what we are doing.
◆ To educate for effective ministry. We desire a lasting effect on our church, families, community and the world.
◆ Utilize valid ways to express love for God and persons in need.
◆ Employ spiritual and professional integrity.
◆ The church wide focus for 1997 in one word was Evangelism.

Stated Goals for 1997:

◆ Pray daily for guidance in evangelism
◆ Become an example to teach and lead people to Jesus Christ
◆ Build relationships with one another.
The second leadership training event was scheduled for Thursday, January 17, 1997. I wrote letters, drafted a proposal of this project and mailed copies to twenty-two members of the leadership team who were given the prayer books. A copy is attached in the appendix. I also forwarded different cover letters and included the same proposal to nineteen leaders who had not received the prayers books. A total of forty-one leaders were contacted and asked to participate in the orientation sessions. On January 18th, at the leadership training, approximately thirty-five members of Central’s leadership team attended and participated. Twenty-seven leaders agreed to take part in the project which consisted of orientations and information about University Homes. A copy of the orientation is included in the appendix.

The group was challenged to select a time in which we could physically go into the community and begin to build relationships that would begin moving us toward missions. The consensus of the group was that we would all meet after the 10:45 a.m. service on Super Bowl Sunday for orientation. I challenged the group to seriously pray about their involvement because the time and effort would be a faith move.

January 25th, 1:00 p.m. in the Dotson Ogletree Fellowship Hall of CUMC was a historic and momentous occasion. The orientation began as I read two Old Testament passages (Isaiah 6:1-7; Isaiah 61:1-7) followed by prayer for sending the saints on missions for God. This was followed with a challenge of who will go for God and who would be sent from CUMC. From the moment the questions were posed, it seemed that the Spirit of God surrounded the room and a sweet hush fell on everyone there. We all knew that all of us would be answering the call of God and everyone said “send me Lord.” The Spirit was so high and convicting that an orientation was not needed. Everyone was ready to go into the
community. However, I proceeded to discuss five statistics and data from the 1990 Census of Population and Housing pertaining to University Homes. These included educational, labor force, occupation, industry, income poverty status, and other selected characteristics. This was followed by a brief history of my involvement in University Homes and my desire to impact the community.

I explained the threefold process of Christian Education, missions, and spirituality as the best possible means for attempting to fulfill the stated mission as determined by the leadership team. Then I explained for the first time, that part of the leadership team previously had information with names and addresses of persons living in University Homes. Others would be asked to pair up with them later when we visited the various homes. All participants were given a set of handouts explaining ways to carry on conversations, questions to ask, and maps of the street layout of University Homes. Copies are in the appendix. Next, we took time to answer questions and concerns about the nature of our task. Several expressed concerns about possible security and were given all assurances. A total of thirty persons including my wife, myself, and a young child were present. Twelve persons had been given the prayer book to pray for five persons for forty days.

With names and addresses of women from University Homes, the leaders were asked to come forward and invite others to voluntarily come forth and join as a team with one of the persons who had the prayer book. This was to be a voluntary initiative. All persons came forth and ten teams were formed, seven teams with three persons and three teams with two persons. Three persons had to leave because of prior commitments, so the total was twenty-seven persons ready to go and visit homes of the women for whom we had been praying.
On January 26, following the CUMC 10:45 a.m. worship service, the group of leaders who committed to go on the mission project met in the Fellowship Hall. As we circled for prayer everyone agreed that the presence of the Holy Spirit was overwhelming. Each person in the circle was moved to tears because finally after 130 years, CUMC was going to witness, evangelize, and build relationships with its neighboring public housing community. This leadership team had caught the vision and was getting ready to make it plain, and implement the mission of positively impacting the community for Christ. One member, Adrienne Harris reminded us of our Christian Education component of studying the scriptures for similar groups. The Spirit led her to Luke 10: 1-9, which suggested a name for the group. This group was named the “72’s” with the anticipation of getting others to join the first twenty-seven. Later, we were reminded that we had 72 if the number 27 is reversed. This brought much joy to the group as we were dispatched on our mission project of building relationships and establishing contact for future ministry.

We drove to the community with instructions to return to CUMC between 2:30 and 3:00 p.m. At 3:00 p.m., everyone met back at the church and shared in a fellowship meal, which I prepared. As we sat around the tables, we asked each person to share their experience with the persons on each team who had joined, allowing one of the prayer book recipients to speak first in order to get a gauge of the move of the Spirit. We recorded all of the comments and twenty-five persons shared testimonies with such excitement and joy of the Lord that after two and a half hours we were not through. One team came very late and shared the tremendous ministry God had afforded while they were there. All ten groups made contacts with at least one person on their prayer list and were invited into the homes. All ten groups
prayed with and for the people, and were asked to put other things on their list. Numerous concerns were raised but the amazing thing was that all were welcomed with open arms and many residents said they were waiting on that church that was praying for them. One minor miracle seemed to happen to each group. One called on five families. However, in every case, only one was home. Each one felt this was the house that God had prepared for them to visit. Each team said it was meant to be that particular household that they visited.

The stories varied from suspense to surprise at the reception from men, women and children. Even on the streets they were welcomed and no one experienced any fear or trepidation. Several of the testimonies are listed in the appendix. Two stories stand out. One in which one of the members entered a home of a family whose fifteen-year-old had a ten month old baby. A tremendous bond was built in one particular home because this member of CUMC had experienced the same dynamic in her life with a young lady of similar age and a child with the same name. Her willingness to share her testimony opened a vital door of ministry that day. At yet another home, an eleven-year-old had witnessed a drug related shooting the night before and stated that her mother was an addict and asked how could we help and could she come to our church. They have been coming three Sundays in a row as I write this text. Most established contact in such a way that all felt future contact was possible and necessary. There was one reported conversion of a fifty-eight-year-old man who wanted to know how he could serve Jesus and confessed Jesus as Lord and Savior.

A possible incident was avoided when it appeared that a teen youth had kept his hand under his shirt as though he had a weapon. One of our street smart leaders was able to defuse the situation. We were blessed that the young man did not in fact have a weapon and that the
man in the CUMC group recognized his posture as a “defensive mechanism” because, as he said, “I’ve been there myself.”

**Leadership Orientation**

The training method or methodology of this project began with the corporate use of an Intercessory prayer book entitled *Forty Days of Prayer for Five People*. A group from the CUMC leadership team was invited to spend some special time growing spiritually; by meditating, reflecting, and praying. The object of the prayer time was to prepare themselves spiritually to undertake the mission outreach endeavor to University Homes, a public housing project in the community.

The specific project target group was forty-three poor women who are residents of the University Homes public housing project. Prior to initiating the ministry we allowed forty days of preparation -- first by the researcher then by selected members of the CUMC leadership team. The selected members totaled forty-one elected leaders of the various work areas and committees designated for the 1997 Charge Conference year.

The orientation consisted of intense study, meditation, and prayer for forty days. After the orientation members began to apply their spiritual training by visiting persons for whom they had been praying. The leadership team participated in both prayer discussions and visitation in a shared praxis learning environment.

The project was composed of several distinct phases including:

1. **Orientation Phase** (Consisting of sharing my personal involvement with University Homes)
2. **Preparation Phase**
3. **Visitation Phase**
4. **Follow-up or Evaluation Phase**
5. **Future Projections Phase.**

Through a devotional session of prayer, Bible study, and meditation we explored one of our first goals of the **Orientation Phase**, which was to examine and state how our own past has influenced our understanding of missions and outreach to persons in underprivileged and impoverishes conditions. During this time we discussed our thoughts and feelings connected with taking part in a mission outreach project in University Homes.

The opening hour consisted of an orientation session which focused on a review of the mission and vision statement adopted by members of CUMC. The focal point of this session became the praxis of missions in our local community as it related to our mission statement. An awareness/analysis model of Christian Education for commitment and involvement was used to determine what the mission statement means to the participants.

I gave a synopsis of my personal involvement, concerns, and evaluation of the community of University Homes. The participants were provided with demographic information pertaining to University Homes. The major emphasis of this session included a discussion of the preparation of members for visitation in the public housing project. The time was also used to recruit more members.

The opening session served as the orientation phase which included a devotional period with emphasis on the importance of prayer, meditation, and journaling. An in-depth Bible study of the scriptures focused on each person’s understanding of Christ’s mandate about missions, and Christ’s involvement with them in missions. In this study we explored three levels of involvement, utilizing McCullough’s Christian Education model consisting of the inner personal, interpersonal, and the inner group as methods to interest persons in the
tremendous task of our missions. McCullough’s *"Doing the Word"* model was used by Robert Talmadge in his attempt to lead an influential United Methodist Church in missions to the poor in Knoxville, Tennessee.\(^{12}\)

During the Bible study each person was asked to respond to several questions and relate their answers to various scriptures. This assisted them in answering how Christ reveals Himself to us at the various levels. Following is an example of the questions:

How does Christ reveal Himself to us on an inner personal level from Revelation 3:20?

How does Christ reveal Himself to us on an interpersonal level from Matthew 18:20?

How does Christ reveal himself to us on an inner group level from Matthew 25:31-46?

The **Preparation Phase** included assigning teams and groups for visitation; assigning of streets or target areas. We organized into teams of two or three persons. Participants were given important information to equip them for initial visits which included maps and street location assignments. The information packet also contained the goals of the project and sample questions which could be used as conversation starters.

Following preparation, CUMC leaders were challenged to consider the arduous task of recruiting other members who would benefit from the spiritual growth of this type of mission exposure. After this process the actual **Visitation Phase** began. Next came the **Follow-up or Evaluation Phase** during which time we discussed the strengths and weaknesses of the overall project. The evaluation provided insight into the future direction of the project which were examined in the **Future Projection Phase**.

The superseding factor in preparing persons for participating in this project was the role of prayer and fasting. This was vital in preparing and centering the participants, as well as equipping them with the spirituality needed in order to facilitate a meaningful mission effort.

The educational component of the project involved small groups in the CUMC mission project to University Homes public housing tenants by using a combination of learning systems, shared praxis, and shared approaches by Thomas Groome and Charles McCullough respectively. These methods utilize the individual (inner personal), small group (interpersonal), and the large groups (inner group) process as a way of moving beyond the cognitive level.\textsuperscript{13}

Recently, history supports the cognitive level of learning of persons from CUMC and some other United Methodist congregations concerning the need for local missions. However, the actual application of missions never seemed to go beyond the knowing level. This has historically been the end of involvement. The training sessions were intended to move members beyond the knowing level of local missions, to a deeper level which included knowing, believing, and conducting missions.

Responses to mission outreach must include discovery and engagement: discovery about the feelings, beliefs, and values of missions, and engagement of persons in the community and others of the church in small groups through the sharing and the doing of particular missions. The goal involved comprehension and commitment at all three levels of learning: the inner personal, interpersonal, and inner group levels. The shared praxis approach

\textsuperscript{13} Ibid.
afforded an opportunity for valuable learning about the deeper reasons persons are reluctant to participate in outreach ministry to poor and low income neighborhoods.

A portion of time in each session was spent examining the feelings of participants, and finding out what they learned or feel they gained from the experience. From our Christian Education model we followed McCullough's scheme to ascertain what members know, what they think, how they feel, how and what they value, and how they will act on the challenge set before them as they created a new paradigm of ministry for CUMC praxis of missions. In McCullough's strategy these three approaches to issues correspond to what sociologists call levels of learning. According to sociologists and scholars such as Aristotle, Paulo Freire, T. H. Grome, Hegel, and Kark Marx these approaches and levels of learning are geared toward praxis and education for social change. This project focused on the praxis of missions through Christian Education. Sociologists have named these expressions as cognitive, affective, votive, and active.

Spiritual training and preparation was the key ingredient in motivating leaders to take part in a mass visitation effort to build relationships between the poor residents of University Homes and the CUMC congregation. This method of initial orientation and spiritual conditioning proved most successful in this study.

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14 Ibid.
CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Historical Philosophies of Missions

One of the questions that must be answered in any serious mission outreach is how much of the effort is grounded in love of neighbors.

Love of neighbor is the key to this mission endeavor. When the principle of love of neighbor is firmly established in the hearts and minds of a congregation or mission team, the agenda becomes more solidified and brings a sense of unity to the forefront of missions. Hidden agendas and misunderstandings concerning the validity of individual programs will not block missions, because the focus is not on anyone’s particular agenda. The focus is on the love of neighbor and sharing with those for whom the mission activity is aimed. Therefore, the love of neighbor principle is one method of undergirding the mission with a sense of serving and caring more about others than one does for self interest. The love of neighbor principle is the example which epitomizes the love of Christ, who was the ultimate servant and lover of neighbors.

Our challenge in missions is to find those willing to take part in missions by loving their neighbors and being willing to serve in missions as unto Jesus who gave us a great commission based on love of neighbor. Love of neighbors demonstrates the spiritual power and is the catalyst necessary to propel Christians to begin in missions.
From a historical perspective the church that informs us of most about the entity of love in missions is the Eastern Church of the 11th Century.

A major key to mission activity of the Eastern Church according to Bosch had been persons experiencing the love of God inwardly and expressing and relating that love to others. The Church has had profound differences in the ways it relates the meaning and doing of missions.¹

From available literature we have come to understand that mission, as far back as 1054 during the reign of the Eastern Orthodox Church, was founded on the love of God. John 3:16 states “For God so loved the world that God gave his only begotten son that whosoever believeth in Him would not perish but have everlasting life.” Bosch explains the implications of this love stating, “God is Love and God’s love manifest itself in kenosis that is the ‘inner voluntary’ self denial which makes room to receive and embrace the other to whom one turns.”² Similarly the mission project of the leaders of Central Church was a voluntary act in which the leaders denied themselves and through the inner kenosis activity of God, were enabled to embrace those persons for whom they had prayed. They were equally received by those for whom they had prayed. Therefore, the kenosis activity of God allowed both groups to turn toward each other without fear, but with the love of God as assurance that God is Mission Dei was happening even in University Homes.

The Normative Literature reveals that God ordained an ageless process of giving


² Ibid.
hope to the lowly and oppressed. This is manifested in the life, work, death, and resurrection, of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The vital mission for the church as recorded by Luke 4:18 states: "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor; He hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised."

If speaking a word of hope is required, then the church must find a way, through individual members, to speak to those who feel a lack of hope. But if this remains solely on us or in our name, without developing some process of giving hope in the name of Christ, then the people in the community will remain in darkness. Likewise, the church will remain in darkness trying to bring forth the light.³

Therefore, turning to the literature, we are reminded that the church can move from estrangement to reconciliation as witnesses and by facing the challenge of doing ministry. This is vital and necessary for our communities surrounding the black church. We are reminded by Cain Hope Felder in Troubling Biblical Waters, that the time as prophetic households of God for the black church, is now. The black church must struggle with methods to present the church and discern how the church can become a healing station, a balm in Gilead, and act as an agent of mercy, while being centers of hope in the black community for those who cry out and are wanting to belong.⁴

In its essence, this is called transformation. The focus of this ministry project was to


evaluate and implement procedures to transform both the lives of the CUMC members (who participate in this coalition of hope) and those persons of University Homes. Both members of CUMC and University Homes experienced hope and the transforming power of God through cooperative sharing. This mission action, by its very nature, gave the members of CUMC the impetus and the courage to be involved in the black church community.

There will be no poor among you in both the old and new covenants. God gives guidance to the care of persons in need in the books of The Law. The poor and oppressed people were protected in God’s plan as succinctly stated in Deuteronomy 15:4-5, 7-8, 10-11:

Deuteronomy 15

4 Save when there shall be no poor among you; for the Lord shall greatly bless thee in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance to possess it:
5 Only if thou carefully hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all these commandments which I command thee this day.
7 If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother:
8 But thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth.
10 Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him: because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto.
11 For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land.

In the Gospel account by Matthew 25:35-40, Jesus gives clear hope to all who wonder and are concerned whether to be in missions to the poor.

Matthew 25

35 For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:
36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye
came unto me.
37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? Or thirsty, and gave thee drink?
38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? Or naked, and clothed thee?
39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?
40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

The mission dynamic of meeting needs has its literal beginning in the New Testament Church. From the book of Acts 4:32, 34, 35 we read:

32 Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common.
34 There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold.
35 They laid it at the apostles’ feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

The church has always and must always care for the poor whether they are homeless or live in housing projects with assistance or not. Many are still poor and the church is the Lord’s representative wherever there are poor among them. For these reasons the contemporary church has a mandate to go into those areas like University Homes whenever possible and be in missions with those most in need.

One of the driving forces for even attempting a mission effort in a public housing project was to give ample opportunity for our leadership team to experience the inclusiveness of mission and evangelism. It was felt that being in mission with the residents of the housing project would offer us a way to embrace those whom we called poor and oppressed. If we were to be inclusive, we knew the poor must be the number one priority for the message of our Lord in Luke 4:18 which was stirring in our souls. How could we as a church reject those whom our Lord loved so much? University Homes became our mission field where our Lord
would set the captives free. The captives were not the tenants of University Homes, but the members of Central United Methodist Church. Our members were being freed to take good news and see the living Mission of the Savior taking place within themselves for lo He was with us and the captives were set free by the Mission Dei of Luke 4:18.

Our example of course was the Savior whose Mission was definitely one of inclusiveness as He embraced the poor, lame, widows, tax collectors, sinners, Jews, Samaritans, outcasts, lepers, gentiles and all who were oppressed. Therefore, we were compelled to go to the least and lost and possibly the last in today’s society, many of whom live in University Homes. We learned that our mission effort was not only one of inclusiveness, but was one of loving and forgiving and participating with those who may even have harmed or wronged us. We learned that mission really is God’s idea and we were amazed that God chose us to be in missions to help fulfill God’s Mission for our church and for God’s glory.

For the black middle class church facing the question of crossing class lines, there is a great struggle. Inwardly, we do not want to go back and be reminded where we have come from. It is also important to note that for many people in the church it is not about “going back” but going to a poor community for the first time. To cross that line of doing missions in poor black communities is frightening because of our own value system. The question phrased in the language of the ghetto, “Who me, you gotta be out of your mind to go back to that place of the poor [sic].” Even scripture reminds us how difficult it is to minister to the poor, especially if our attitudes and hearts are not willing to be surrendered totally to the Mission of God. Reading the narrative of the rich young ruler Mark 10:17-23. We see the
challenge made by Jesus in verse 21: “You lack one thing, go sell what you own, and give to the poor and you will have treasure in Heaven. Then come and follow me.” Here we see the struggle of the young man as he was told he must give his goods to the poor and follow Christ. Like many of us, the things we value often keep us from participating with Christ in vital mission with the poor. Richard Schaul states: “We value ourselves because we have more than others, are better than others, have climbed higher than others. We feel good about ourselves to the extent that there are people below us... competition with others is built into our whole value system.”

Richard Schaul, *Heralds of a New Reformation*, prefaced by Paul Lehmann tells us it is the values which prevent people from being in missions with the poor. It is these values that prevent persons from struggling and connecting with the cry of the needy. Schaul reports on the struggle of those who are in missions in Latin American countries. Schaul states: “Priest, nuns and others, after being face to face with the poor felt themselves compelled to make certain decisions about how they were going to live and work. These decisions created new situations for them in which their values and lifestyle had to be re-examined.”

**Missiology**

The local church must move from malaise to confidence if it is to have a viable mission outreach to its adjacent community. There is a crisis pertaining to missions which affects the whole church not just the black middle class. Following is a summary of six reasons recorded

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6 Ibid.
by Bosch:

1. The advance of science and technology which has sped up the process of secularization
2. The western civilization is becoming more dechristianized
3. The world can no longer be divided into Christian and non Christian due to multiple migration of other faiths
4. The western culture suffers from guilt due to past subjugation of other faiths
5. The decision between rich and poor in which the rich are considered Christian
6. New theologies are on the horizon; liberation, black, third world, processes that no longer follow western patterns.7

Another reason there is a danger of trying to merge persons of such diverse backgrounds into an arena of fruitful missions is a tendency of falling into the ethical and sociological trap of them and us. From a missiological view point Bosch states:

The danger of all this of course is that the church may consider the missions for the poor rather than missions with the poor which might lead to a condescending attitude. But rather that we lead our churches to realize the church needs the missions to the poor as much as the poor needs the church.8

It is this idea we tried to emphasize to the leaders of CUMC. We prayed they would see the mandatory call for our hearts being made right towards poor people, or we would never cross that point of class separating. But if we could surrender our wills and heart to God then we could form a bridge of solidarity, to bond in mission with the families of University Homes.

The Mission and Missions

It becomes vital that the whole church but especially the local church regain its rightful relationships with the Mission (Mission Dei) and missions as mandated by the Holy


8 Ibid., 436.
Scriptures. This Mission according to Bosch is: “God’s self revelation as the one who loves the world, God’s involvement in and with the world, the nature and activity of God which embraces both the church and the world and in which the church is privileged to participate.”

Since Mission is God’s activity, missions are the various forms at certain times meeting certain needs in particular places.

Therefore, in the opinion of Bosch, missions are little missionary ventures of the church that corresponds to the time places and needs. In summary mission is defined as the participation of Christians in the liberating message of good news found in Jesus Christ through the love of God incarnated in His Only Begotten Son and our Savior Jesus Christ the Lord of Glory.

A United Methodist View of Missions to the Poor

The Christian faith mandates us to recognize and respond to the value of each human person. Our task as the church is to minister to the needs of all persons and to insure for them a caring community where all may be nurtured in a dignified and loving manner. This mandate is to be seen not as a burden, but as an opportunity. We are called to participate in the creative redemptive work of God. Jesus who provides our example said; “the spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach the good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captive and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.” (Luke 4:18).

Christians who take their commission seriously will accept the challenge to become responsive to the needs of families for external support systems. God has given each person an element of sacredness by the very nature of having been born into the world. The blessing carries the need for a commitment by families, church, and community to help enable persons to live life in the fullness that Jesus proclaimed.

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9 Ibid., 436.

10 Ibid.

It is through mission activity of ministering to the needs of the people that the local church and the corporate body will be able to carry the good news that God is present for all people. However, we must remember if the poor are excluded because of their status or lower living conditions the church will never completely fulfill the Mission Dei (The Mission of God).

It was imperative that this project attempted to involve CUMC in the Mission of God and in the visions venture related to this particular congregation which for this project was being in mission with the poor residents of University Homes. It is our belief that whenever the mission is founded upon the proclamation of the good news, then a vital part of the mission of the church, which encompasses evangelism will promote the church toward fulfilling its reason for being -- and that is for missions. Leslie Newbign reminds us: “The church is the mission which means it is illegitimate to talk about one without the other. Furthermore the home base of the church is everywhere which means every Christian Community is in a missionary situation.”

The essential teaching for this project was that the church must exist for missions and to try to build within the congregation the importance of the local church being “God’s missionary people in a local context.” If the church catches this vision maybe it will relate better to Bruner’s statement “The church exists by missions as fire exists by burning.”

12 Bosch, Transforming Mission, 370.

13 Charles Van Engen, God’s Missionary People Rethinking the Purpose of the Local Church (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1991), 27.

14 Ibid.
Missions to the Poor

This project was an effort to begin meaningful missions with the poor, in a public housing project. The targeted audience was black women and their families. Two questions are to be considered. First, why hasn’t the church been more involved and why should the church get more involved in missions with the poor; specifically those on public assistance living in public housing?

One who helps us understand both questions as to their vital and necessary function of missions to the poor by the church is Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. who wrote:

Yes, I see the church as the Body of Christ, but oh! How we have blemished and scarred that body through social neglect and through fear of being nonconformists. There was a time when the church was very powerful in the time when the early Christians rejoiced at being deemed worthy to suffer for what they believed. In those days the church was not merely a thermometer that recorded the ideas and principles of popular opinion; it was a thermostat that transformed the most of society. Whenever the Christians entered a town the people in power became disturbed and immediately sought to convict the Christians for “disturbers of the people” and “outside agitators,” but the Christians pressed on, in the conviction that they were “a colony of heaven,” called to obey God rather than man. Small in number they were big in commitment. They God-intoxicated to be “astronomically intimidated” by their effort and example they brought an end to such ancient evils as infanticide and gladiatorial contest. Things are different now. So often the contemporary church in America is a weak, ineffectual voice with an uncertain sound. So often it is an arch defender of the status quo. Far from being disturbed by the presence of the church, the power structure of the average community is consoled by the church’s silent and often even vocal-sanctions of things as they are . . . . if today’s church does not recapture the sacrificial spirit of the early church, it will lose its authenticity, forfeit the loyalty of millions and be dismissed as an irrelevant social club with no meaning for the twentieth century.  

These words were written by Civil Rights Leader Martin Luther King, Jr. in 1963 as a part of the “Letters from a Birmingham Jail.” They were written in response to the clergy

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of the day who condemned the non-violent direct action struggle of the Civil Rights Movement. Even though more than thirty years have passed, these words are timely for the church today and still encourages the church to take the gauntlet of missions to the poor.

John Alexander Fisher’s commentary on this letter from his doctoral thesis states that King responded to clergy criticism:

By reminding the clergy that the church has a mission to participate with the poor and oppressed in their struggle for justice. For King the mission of the church was always a mission of liberation. Although King’s voice is silent today, the mission of the church remains the same and the leadership within the church has the responsibility of reminding Christians that the mission of the church calls them to participate with the poor and the powerless in their struggle for justice. The authenticity of the church as the people of God and relationship to God is manifested through its activities. The work that the church does must be that of continuing the ongoing work of Jesus. Thus, the church is the living organism through which Christ continues his work. The church is his hands, His feet and His voice in the world. In one sense the members of the church are the means through which Christ continues to act on behalf of the poor and helpless.¹⁶

Trying diligently to understand the reluctance of the church to hear the cry of those who live in housing projects with lower incomes bordering on poverty may be answered by Ronald Goetz:

Could it be that the reason we are so cold of heart in the face of the outcry of the poor, both here and abroad, is that we are not free. That we are so enslaved to our liberties, pleasures, possessions, and status of this world we cannot contemplate life without these things?¹⁷

As Ronald Goetz explains, the freedom of Americans is often the freedom not to be responsible to and for the needs of others -- but only maintain responsibility for our own

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¹⁷ Ronald Goetz, Standing With the Poor: Theological Reflection on Economic Reality (Cleveland, Ohio: The Pilgrim Press, 1992), 77.
selfish desires. Spirituality, contemplation, and prayer are the instruments of self denial in which persons are guided to become more aware and sensitive to the needs of others. Maybe Goetz is saying that Americans are not free to love. For love really is the key for the church to reach across class lines and touch the lives of the poor.\footnote{Ibid.}

Merton reiterates this call for the church’s mission of love saying “there is no way under the sun to make a man worthy of love except by loving him as soon as he realizes himself loved. If he is not so weak that he can no longer bear to be loved -- he will feel himself instantly becoming worthy of love.”\footnote{Thomas Merton, \textit{Disputed Questions} (New York: Farrar, Straus, Cudahy, 1960), 125.} The question remains can the church make the poor and lowly feel worthy of love? By building relationships, praying, interceding, seeking the face of God, dialogue through visiting, and sharing; the church will begin as the leaders of CUMC began, to love their neighbors as themselves -- and through such sharing give the glory of God to the least of these.

We should be able to share in missions with the least of these in an equitable way because according to Merton, culture is created equal. Therefore, how we relate to persons in our culture should be equitable. However, in this society middle class values are the norm by which everyone is measured. “We value cotton over polyester, croissants over donuts, lawyers over secretaries, queen’s English over black English, no accent over Southern drawl, and a BA Degree over an apprenticeship trade.”\footnote{Ibid.} Sometimes we as the church forget and measure people -- rather than love people. This project was intended to help our members
and leadership team put our measuring rods down and love people by participating in missions with them. This project accomplished its goal.

**Review of Empirical Literature**

While searching the psychological literature certain clues on changing attitudes, behavior, and response became evident. Of course, the success of this project depended on the behaviors, attitudes, and response of the leadership team to the new mission outreach to University Homes. The psychological view of stimulus and response was significant and informative, and similar to that recorded in a study of relationship to behavior according to Thorndike. Thorndike records three laws of learning which can be summarized. The three laws of learning were developed by Thorndike while studying trial and error approaches to cats. Since CUMC's forte is Christian Education, these laws would seem appropriate. The three laws by Thorndike are:

1. **The Law of Readiness:** A behavior response is more apt to be made when the organism is "ready in an emotional or attitudinal sense."

2. **The Law of Exercise:** Exercise or repetition will strengthen the connection between a stimulus and a response.

3. **The Law of Effect:** If a behavior is followed by a pleasing experience it is more likely to be repeated. A response followed by a dissatisfying state will be weakened.\(^\text{21}\)

These laws have no place for the supernatural intervention of the Holy Spirit. However, they do give some insight into possible mechanics and the power of repetition even

as it relates to prayer and spirituality. The response to the exercise of spirituality is supported, in my estimation, by these laws of behavior psychology. In the list of laws one factor of making one ready is through repetition. Continuously praying forty days for the same individuals should more than make one ready; especially when they are seeking the face of God on behalf of another.

We gain further insight through a Yale Study by Hovland and others reported by C.H. Snelling on changing attitudes. It was found that incentives offered by the teacher or facilitator were very significant toward attitude.

1) The characteristic of the communicator or teacher (if the source of the opinion or information were to be trusted, the content might be trusted as well).

2) The setting or context in which the communication occurs (even then reception of the communication by others in the social setting will influence the tendency toward acceptance or non acceptance).

3) The content of the communication itself (arguments facts, reasons, appeals, and other material in which the learner might tend to agree or at least understand and therefore become convinced).²²

Much of this was in operation without our knowledge of the sociological or psychological disciplines. However, we concurred with the ideology.

It was our hope that as these leaders would come to know and trust my leadership and the information and assurance of their safety, they would willingly consider the changes in previous attitudes. More than anticipated, the Spirit of God through all of this had made them ready to answer the question asked of Isaiah 6: Who will go? For me, all said, send me.

Researching sociological literature we find coalitions of hope, often through a

cooperative model of using Christian Education and discipleship in community. For many communities, giving hope is one of the primary expectations of the black church. Through a cooperative model, the church, community, and "the minister become the change agent." Combined with spiritually, the church helps through the minister to change conditions on three spheres; economically, politically, and socially.

Without hope a community is lifeless and may wonder whether hope cheats or blesses. How could it do so for it is itself the happiness of the present. It pronounces the poor blessed, receives the wary and heavy laden, the humbled and the wronged, the hungry and dying . . . expectations make life good, thus, hope goes on its way through the midst of happiness and pain, because in the promises of God it can see a future also for the transient, the dying and the dead. That is why it can be said that living without hope is like no longer living.²³

According to the psychological literature, we find that the development and growth of black Americans has always been hampered because of depressed living conditions and often housing projects like University Homes. Residents of University Homes require the church to address the spiritual growth and provide for the needs of the whole person. It is probable that home cell groups based in the church may be able to impact and give hope amidst the awesome conditions that usually accompany living in an old, dilapidated, public housing project.²⁴

Pertaining to Operational Literature, Wallace Smith, Associate Professor of Pastoral Theology at Eastern Baptist Seminary reminds us of the role of the church with regard to the development of the black family, suggesting that the families will never be stabilized unless the church gets involved in all areas of impoverishment as extended families. This is in line


²⁴ Ibid.
with this ministry project of missions of cooperative groups between the church and the community.\textsuperscript{25}

Religious education literature informs us that our heritage and our hope is deeply ingrained in the effect of the church on Christian Education in the black community. The black church, especially in the United Methodist tradition, has sought radical adjustment to meet the challenge of education in the black community. We are reminded of the challenge and the development needed from a contextual approach;

The black church must plan, purpose, and underscore the pressing need for the construction of an education philosophy, methodology, and curricula . . . for black people . . . sensitive to the kinds of goals and purposes that speak to the black condition and are consistent with black understanding of the Gospel.\textsuperscript{26}

This may lead to transformation and closing of the gulf for ministry between the various public housing communities and the churches.

\textsuperscript{25} Wallace C. Smith, \textit{The Church in the Life of the Black Family} (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1987), 94.

CHAPTER IV

PROJECT IMPLICATIONS

Role of a Christian Education

The Christian Education ministry at CUMC is that ministry that undergirds all other ministries. It has been balanced, integrative, and comprehensive. The Christian Education emphasis is supported by a five-fold system of newly formed communities consisting of worship, teaching, nurturing, service, and evangelism and other support groups.

Persons from each of these areas were invited to participate in the mission outreach project to University Homes. Christian Education has been the forum through which many of these leaders have been discipled. The courses include long term classes such as Disciple I and Disciple II (thirty-four and thirty-two weeks respectfully). These courses were developed by the United Methodist Church.

In addition to these, several studies developed by the Baptist Sunday School Board are included in the Christian Education curriculum -- namely Masterlife, Prayer Life, Experiencing God, and The Mind of Christ. These studies range from fourteen months to twelve weeks.

Over the past three years I have taught and facilitated all of these educational offerings to more thoroughly prepare our leaders to reach and meet the needs of the community through some type of evangelistic mission effort.
The philosophical scheme of Christian Education that has undergirded this project has a threefold nature, not unlike the one proposed by the Talbot School of Theology at Biola University. It is a realist model which examines criteria as it pertains to one’s goals. It also looks closely at the goals and determines whether people are growing in the various spiritual fruit being produced. From these criteria one is able to gain a better understanding of motivations, attitudes, and values.¹

The philosophical scheme from Talbot is very similar to Perkins School of Theology of Southern Methodist University. In summary of Professor of Christian Education Dick Murray’s thoughts, Christian Education focuses on teaching the Bible as a priority by both lay persons and pastors which helps build spiritual leaders who reproduce spiritual fruit through ministry.² In this philosophical scheme, as in the one at Talbot, attitudes and involvement are enhanced by allowing the small group process to develop through Christian Education. As small groups study the scriptures, members of the congregation are encouraged through spirituality, prayer, and Bible study to seek spiritual, emotional, and intellectual needs as they share through deep involvement with each other. This involvement can stimulate active responses to mission outreach, as does the Talbot model.

Once the CUMC leadership team developed and centered on the primary focus for the church which is Christian Education, we began to re-evaluate how our vision, mission, attitudes, motivations and values could be in line with the focus of Christian Education.

² Dick Murray, Teaching the Bible to Adults and Youth (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993), 59.
Utilizing this philosophical scheme of our goals, values, and motivations, the leadership team determined that Christian Education would be the determining factor, and established the criteria for all persons elected to any leadership position at CUMC. All church leaders must enroll in one of the Christian Education offerings.

It was from that pool of names of leaders, to which invitations were sent inviting them to participate in the project of mission to University Homes (See Appendix C). The inclusive list was comprised of names of leaders from all areas of ministry of CUMC who had enrolled in one or more of the Christian Education courses of CUMC.

One might wonder why Christian Education is so important to mission projects. Reuben H. Brooks writes:

Teachers should accept the challenge to instruct others for missions, but the teacher should beware: to teach about missions is convicting; it will lead to soul searching and cravings within the heart to be completely surrendered to God’s passion for the world. It is risky to teach about missions because one will have to practice it . . . . Mission instruction informs listeners with the facets the Holy Spirit will use to fulfill His plan for individuals.³

All of these challenges and more were met by the teacher and participants through the total surrender. I believe the Holy Spirit revealed a plan that our leaders followed and Christian Education proved vital in this mission effort. The first Christian Education vehicle of this project was of course teaching on prayer. If the local church is to be in partnership in missions we must teach and inform about the vital necessity of intercessory prayer. According to I Timothy 2:1 “First of all, then I admonish and urge that petitions, prayers, intercessions and Thanksgiving be offered on behalf of all men.” Furthermore, Brooks writes,

³ Ibid.
"Teach a partnership of intercessory prayer each day. One can preach the gospel in Brazil, Japan, and to others of the world. It can be done from a living room chair. One may travel to those places by means of intercessory prayer."⁴

The mission effort for this project was primarily one of Christian Education, teaching and participating in intercessory prayer for residents of University Homes. The key was to teach the leaders the real importance of a partnership in corporate worship and the power of prayer through intercession.

We learned from the Talbot Christian Education philosophy related to us by Brooks, who indicated that at its essence the church is to be a movement of prayer, worship and intercession. "It is the heart, when that dies the fervor goes."⁵ To highlight the importance of the principles of mission curriculum Brooks writes "The first and greatest lesson in educating people for missions is to teach the prominence of prayer. Missions is God's work, it is carried out primarily on ones knees."⁶

Once the leaders learned the art of intercession and the joy that came from it, I believe they had proven to themselves that God knew they depended on God. Their weakness became God's power through them and because in the learning and the doing of prayer one enters into the heavenly realm and in learning the art of intercession. Brooks reminds us that then and only then can one unleash "the forces of Heaven."⁷

⁴ Ibid., 351.
⁵ Ibid., 353.
⁶ Ibid., 353.
⁷ Ibid., 346.
A lasting memorial and fitting challenge to any Christian Education ministry comes from Brooks. To teach the art of intercession successfully in behalf of . . . unsaved friends . . . local and world outreach ministries is perhaps the greatest triumph a teacher could ever attain. This accomplishment comes from one’s own concept of God.\(^8\)

I believe the focus of Christian Education has demonstrated why outreach ministry undergirds all other ministries especially the mission effort undertaken by the leadership team of CUMC.

**Spirituality**

Spirituality must consist of one action and two Beings. The action must be an encounter between a Divine and human interaction. Through the experience of this project, we believe our team of leaders had the essence of spirituality opened to them through a Divine encounter. Even though most of the early behaviorist believed otherwise.

In a study of the works of Karl Marx, August Compte, Herbert Spencer, and B.F. Skinner, Morton Kelsey wrote these behavioral thinkers believed “Human beings were only atoms and thus the idea of a spiritual reality and a divine human encounter became absurd.”\(^9\) This study proved to our leaders that the reality of a divine encounter does take place through the effort of contemplative prayer.

Abraham Joshua Heschel put it another way which gives credence to spirituality and adds tremendous insight to the process of spirituality.

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\(^8\) Ibid., 346.

The most significant basis for meeting of men of different religious traditions is the level of fear and trembling of humility and contrition in our individual moments of faith as we seek God through prayer and contemplation. Are mere waves in the endless ocean of mainlands reaching out for God where all in formulations and articulations appear as understatements, where our souls are swept away by the awareness of the urgency of answering God's commandment, while stripped of pretension and conceit, we sense the tragic insufficiency of human faith.\(^{10}\)

This project allowed our leadership team to move off our island and meet some of God's people, sons and daughters in University Homes. God helped us to become the active church in the community. We stood together with the community. Herschel says the church in the community in which it has separated itself must find out "what divides us and what unites us." One thing Heschel suggests is that "we seek to worship God of the Hebrew Scripture . . . . There are movements when we all stand together."\(^{11}\) If we follow this advice our commitment will become a movement.

From this study we learned that one of the emotions that keeps persons from reaching out across religious difference and class lines is fear. Perhaps it is the fear of the unknown, or fears of being misinterpreted. Whatever the fear, it has been a force one must reckon with, especially when going from positions of comfort of non-involvement to one of total involvement in an environment like a public housing project. From the search of the literature I find that one of the best vehicles for overcoming fears of difference is the expectations that one receives when they have had the reality of a Divine encounter. We are reminded in scripture God often meets us in places that are unexpected as God met Moses in Exodus 3:1-4, 12:

\(^{10}\) Ibid.

\(^{11}\) Ibid.
1 Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, [even] to Horeb.
2 And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush [was] not consumed.
3 And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.
4 And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said Moses, Moses. And he said, Here [am] I.
12 And He said, Certainly I will be with thee; and this [shall be] a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain.

Sometimes the tensions and fears can overcome us. However, if we proceed and believe we will experience what Eric Sharp wrote, "we are moving into a void . . . expecting to meet God who has preceded us and has been preparing people within the context of their own culture and convictions."\(^1\)

Certainly this became a reality as each of the twenty-seven persons involved in the project witnessed to the fact that God preceded and prepared the residents of University Homes in their own special culture for the various encounters that took place. In spite of our fears, God had already removed the barriers. God’s Spirit is constantly at work in ways that pass human understanding Proverbs 3:3-5:

3 Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart.

4 So shalt thou find favor and good understanding in the sight of God and man.

5 Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

Sharp reminds us that we do not have God in our pockets so to speak and do not just “take

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God" to others. He accompanies us and also comes toward us. We are not the "haves standing over the have nots."\(^{13}\) We are all recipients of the same mercy sharing the same mystery.

Our commitment at CUMC is Christian Education and that commitment demands a response. Our leaders responded through the efforts of this project and we are teaching one another as we expand from twenty-seven to seventy-two; and then inspire the whole church to seek missions and share the vision. Through corporate effort may our souls be opened to witness the Good News to the world and to our own collective communities.

There is a mandate in the **Normative Literature** Matthew 25: 31-46 about the process of missions to the poor or less fortunate as being missions unto Christ. For Christ said that when we do unto the least of these, we do unto Him.

Therefore, the same type of mandate is present during the spiritual act of prayer and intercession. Through spirituality our souls and hearts become warm for our brothers and sisters in need. This was a revelation that formed within us and did form within the "72's" as they sought the Lord in prayer on behalf of the selected residents of University Homes.

Thomas Merton stated, "I must learn that my fellow man just as he is whether he is my friend or my enemy, my brother or a stranger from the other side of the world, whether he is wise or foolish; no matter what may be his limitations, is Christ."\(^{14}\)

CUMC could no longer remain an island in the Atlanta University Center community.

\(^{13}\) Ibid., 24.

This project was an effort to inspire our leadership team to move beyond fear and traditions. We understood we must first be centered in the life of prayer, contemplation, and seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

We were praying for the Holy Spirit to be the driving force to send us out to do mission in an area, though only three blocks away, was tantamount to a hostile foreign land for most of our leadership team. Some feared the outcome of facing persons of different backgrounds, different religious beliefs, even ethnic and definitely different class distinctions. Our only hope was that the Holy Spirit would empower us with the foundations of Christian Education for missions. We hoped that this form of spirituality of seeking God first would grow a seed of faith through the reality of a divine encounter that God was with us and would lead us through this reality of spiritual formation. We felt our leaders would come to trust the Mission of God as our mission to be sent by the Holy Spirit and through submission and obedience the CUMC mission would begin to be fulfilled.

What we were trying to accomplish through our seeking the Holy Spirit was to find the connecting point for guidance in prayer that would open our hearts for the persons of University Homes. Some asked could spirituality be a way to connect if we sought Christ in such a way, and was it possible to so unite ourselves? Merton assures us that we can, as he expounded on the spiritual life of a Christian. If Christians find it difficult to accept persons different from themselves Merton would challenge them to consider that “they need to unite themselves with the Spirit of Christ.” “Christian faith is not some kind of ‘radio electric eye’ used to examine consciences but rather the needle by which we draw the thread of charity
through our neighbors' soul and our own soul and sew ourselves together in one Christ."\textsuperscript{15}

It is the essence of spirituality that we seek Christ through the Holy Spirit. Finding Christ, we are then empowered to go to dreaded places like public housing projects. As Hinson reminds us, "it is the ubiquity of Christ which motivates openness to others." This pertains to the Christian life and especially the contemplative life.\textsuperscript{16}

Merton reinforced the idea of contemplation for he decided this type of spirituality "is a continual discovery of Christ in new and unexpected places."\textsuperscript{17} For us, these discoveries are sometimes most profitable when you find Christ in something you had tended to overlook and even despise. Then the awakening is purer and its effect more keen because Christ was so close at hand and you neglected Him.\textsuperscript{18}

One of the fondest and joyous moments of the "72's" as they visited some of the residents was that they found Christ in unexpected places; in the love of a teen mother and young grandmother who hoped that through them their children and grandchildren would have an opportunity to find the Christ of salvation.

One of the challenges and also one of the fulfilling moments in our spiritual lives was when we spent time contemplating and seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit -- then when we got up, went out and responded to the spirit. The "72's" responded whole heartedly to


\textsuperscript{17} Thomas Merton, \textit{The Sign of Jonas} (London: Hollis and Carter, 1953), 275.

\textsuperscript{18} Ibid.
the power of the Holy Spirit.

In my opinion, the church must respond after contemplation, hearing from the Spirit, fasting, and prayer. The “72’s” responded. This response is as it should be. It is the commitment needed for churches in our community to cross ecumenical lines and help our members respond to the leading of the Spirit. The implications are clear, if we respond.

Douglas Steere has defined the response according to the manner in which Quakers understand prayer through contemplation and spirituality.

A truly functional ecumenism wants to witness to the world how much God cares, and if this means stopping a war; or trying to learn how to share more equitably the worlds material resources; or meeting an emergency human need or joining the poor; or sending brotherly teachers and companions to live and share with those in another area. ¹⁹

There must be a response to spirituality in order to make a difference. We must put down our prejudices, fears, lackadaisical excuses of non-involvement to meet the needs through the missions God has ordained for the church. In some small way CUMC has responded to the leading of the Holy Spirit and may be on its way to a continual response of teaching others through our Christian Education program. According to Steere: “Teaching one another how to meditate or how to pray, or how to kindle corporate adoration or how to grow in the life of devotion, or how to use the lives of past saints and heros is to rekindle our commitment.”²⁰

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²⁰ Ibid.
Our commitment was rekindled because we responded to spirituality. As a result of this response, our souls opened and we were willing to witness to our community. We will soon be prepared to witness the good news of the Gospel in our natural environment and to the world.

Ultimately, we find the real power of intercession which happens after we have humbled ourselves and accepted Christ as Lord.

Morton Kelsey writes from *The Other Side of Silence: A Guide to Christian Meditation*:

Once we have found the reality of such a Lord it becomes important to share Him with those we love and with those who seem to need Him most. Intercession is one real way of helping others find His love and power in their own way . . . . Thus, intercession becomes a powerful instrument of God to use through us. Bringing others into the presence of the risen, victorious, loving Christ can be a very special vocation for some people . . . and it is needed by all of us to keep our meditative life from becoming too self-centered and introspective.21

Finally, the reason for silence is a way to “discover the way inward.” And this way says Kelsey is to be silent enough to hear, first, the deepest needs of ones own heart, and then the prompting of the creative spirit in whatever directions it may indicate.22

**Questions and Problems**

What are the dynamics that must be overcome when trying to break traditions of a 130 year old church? Some of these traditions developed from fear, apathy, lack of concern, no sustained involvement with lower class neighbors, and a general complacency toward


22 Ibid., 93.
missions in University Homes. How does one go about overcoming apathy towards missions in the community? What is needed to inspire personal involvement? How could we help the leadership team understand that missions is more than sending money for a cause?

One question to consider is how to involve clergy or designated laity in a joint effort of leadership in missions and evangelism; and how to empower them to begin implementing the mission statement of the church. The mission statement for CUMC is: to positively influence (for impact) the community by bringing children youth and adults to Jesus Christ. Incidentally this community is in close proximity to a public housing project called University Homes. How do we impact University Homes?

The stigma associated with Atlanta’s Public Housing Projects acts as a deterrent to viable missions by the majority of churches in the community and surrounding the projects. This is due to high crime rate coupled with heavy drug activity, sporadic shootings, and other social ills that seem to plague the neighborhood. Just the thought of 8,000 persons (90% women head of household) and rampant teen pregnancy presents a problem for middle class United Methodist Church folk, especially when called upon to influence and impact the community through their personal mission involvement.

The historical record of CUMC revealed limited mission activity in the public housing community during the sixty-eight years the church has been in its present location. Could middle class United Methodist Church members be spiritually empowered to break down the walls of apathy, fear, disgust, and complacency to undertake a bold mission thrust to visit, witness, and evangelize the University Homes community?

How could an inner-city middle class United Methodist church break down the walls
of complacency? What were the possibilities that Christian Education with an emphasis on spirituality and prayer could empower the congregations leadership team to begin the process, and become proactive toward local missions? One of the problems that faces this congregation is that one of the prime mission complexes in the local community is a public housing project.

As mentioned earlier, the stigma that surrounds University Homes, or that of any public housing complex in Atlanta, can be quite frightening to its middle class church going neighbors. How do we overcome fears, traditions, and lack of interest in missions to the poor? How do we become more focused on our Christian mission and mandate to positively influence the community? This can be achieved by bringing children, youth, and adults to Jesus Christ as Lord. This is the mission statement of Central United Methodist Church. The focus of this paper is to diagram and detail the methodology in which CUMC began a mission outreach to University Homes Public Housing Project, and began a new paradigm of missions after 130 years of existence.

Our beginning hypothesis was with proper preparation through discipleship, Christian Education, and the discipline of prayer, persons could be empowered to undertake mission activities. We also believed they would gain a sense of the presence of the Holy Spirit and would be more willing to branch out and tear down traditional walls and follow the commands of Christ as given in the great commission. Our hypothesis was verified. Furthermore, we believed as individuals grew spiritually, they would exchange fears for faith.

Therefore, if we can properly train our leadership team through prayer, spirituality, and Christian Education these persons can be empowered to be personally involved with
missions. The spiritual disciple must have an intense prayer life. This, I believe is the key to opening the door of a complacent congregation.

“If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.” The message in 2 Chronicles 7:14 is still the driving force to those who need the power of God to insure them that missions are available to reach the poor and the lost for God through ministry.

The goal of this project was to empower CUMC Leadership Team to begin a mission thrust through visitation and evangelism to the neighboring public housing project called University Homes. Through this mission effort we intend to openly communicate the Gospel message that will allow us to build some lasting relationships between the church and the community.

We realized the impact of Christian Education on our members. Christian Education enabled our members to gain understanding of the foundation of ministry and missions. Once understanding is in place, then members can be more spiritually prepared for missions through the discipline of prayer. This will provide an opportunity for the Spirit to open the door of the hearts and the door of community to do mission work and build relationships that lead people to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

Our goals to motivate and empower the leadership team of CUMC to become involved and begin mission to the tenants of University Homes were most successful.
CHAPTER V
SUMMARY AND FINDINGS

Evaluations

The method of evaluation employed for this project was a questionnaire consisting of thirteen questions. Twenty-seven evaluations were sent. Presently, most of them have been received. Several in-depth leadership team evaluations are located in Appendix C. Following are the excerpts which comprise a general consensus of responses which were received for each of the questions.

Question 1
Do you feel this project was a valid way to begin a mission effort and impact a community?

All of the participants gave a resounding yes to question number one, stating this was very significant to begin the mission effort, because of the comfort and strength they each gained along the way.

Question 2
Will you evaluate your experience of finally meeting the people for whom you have prayed for?

This set the stage for the rest of the questions. All but one of the participants expressed the joy and excitement that God was moving, and indicated they felt they were in some way responsible for the spiritual life of persons. It was a highlight for all of them.
Question 3

Would you evaluate the orientation and information sessions in which the teams were selected? Was it informative, enlightened, spiritual, challenging, etc.?

Proved the worth of the orientation. The information sessions received rave reviews. One person said it could have been more detailed but, “in hind sight it was far better.” Most felt the session was very informative and challenging. One person said “It was perfect for me and gave me renewed assurance. I was truly moved by Isaiah (who shall I send), but I was comfortable that God would lead me.”

Question 4

How valuable was the experience of quiet time, of reflecting and interceding as instruments of preparation for the mission?

When asked to evaluate the forty days of quiet time and prayer all of the participants shared the deep inner rewards of spiritual growth and readiness. It gave them time to let the Holy Spirit help them prepare for God’s Mission. Another said, “perhaps the most beautiful time of all was the discipline of daily preparation; I saw a decrease in fear and increase in confidence; we were feeling a part of a greater community.”

Question 5

How has your attitude changed toward persons in public housing before and after the visitation and would you be willing to repeat this effort in another mission effort?

Everyone expressed some improved awareness about poor people. All participants were willing to repeat the effort, which is a good sign for missions at Central United Methodist Church.
Question 6

What difference did the prayer book guidelines make in your attitude towards persons living in University Homes?

The Prayer Book helped set the stage. It helped me see others as loved of God. Although it did not change my attitude, it did prepare me. Most gave good reports on praying for specific needs. They were not so certain about attitude changes toward University Home residents, but it did bring humility and gratefulness for their station in life.

Question 7

As you reflect on the things learned and experienced doing this project, what new insights or revelations have you received about the following?

a. The poor people who live in public housing  
b. Yourself  
c. God  
d. Central Leadership Team (72's)  
e. Mission Outreach

All participants responded in a positive fashion on the learning experience and insights they gained towards poor people. The responses were uplifting for they too are spiritual, their needs are great; they are God’s people also; they need encouragement and many are Christians. Reflecting on things learned, most felt they are now capable of doing missions with God’s help; I can be an instrument of God or I could be living there as well. Responding to the Leadership Team (the 72's) the comments were: It is a great concept, powerful, holy boldness, excitement, each can minister in a unique way. On mission outreach and need, necessity and vital to keep at all, keep showing concern, must have commitment and willingness. Mission outreach is not limited or exclusive. I recognize that God is calling us to witness.
Question 8

Before the project started, what were your views concerning Central United Methodist Church’s mission outreach to the poor?

Views of CUMC mission outreach before the project was a consensus of not really being understood, or was for someone else to do. It will be difficult to maintain. We helped many people but they had to come to the church. I felt many of these persons were being overlooked. I thought it was all financial and limited.

Question 9

What do you see as a major reason churches have difficulty doing missions in housing projects?

Fear was the essential reason persons felt more missions were not undertaken by the Church. Other comments: hopelessness, distance to the plight of the poor, churches caught up in internal problems, mission is hard and requires a lot of dedication and determination; the unknown brings uneasiness to the spirit; socioeconomics is a barrier,

Question 10

Did you experience any change in your life during this period which you would think could be attributed to the overall project?

On the experience of change in their lives this was the consensus as most said it created compassion which brought about a change. My view was really changed about public housing. This project forced me to focus on needs other than mine.

Question 11

How did you feel about the team concept?

Very good, and special. It allowed me to feel good about others and the team work could
not be beat. Well done concept was very good.

Question 12

How do you rate our mission effort? Please circle one.

Excellent     Average     Above Average     Inadequate

The mission rating was divided in several categories. 1 = inadequate, 2 = average, 3 = good, 4 excellent; the overall rating was above average.

Question 13

How do you feel about the risk before and after the visitation?

The risk factor was minimized tremendously because of the team effort. Safety was less of an issue. Visitation eliminated my fear; not concern but cautious before but not after. I am less apprehensive.

Conclusions

After spending nearly four years with the CUMC congregation and wondering would they ever catch the spirit of missions, a spirit caused them to reach out and witness and nurture their neighbors in the immediate neighborhood, including University Homes Public Housing Project.

I can now say unequivocally that CUMC has started a new paradigm of missions and ministry to its neighbors. Second, prayer and spirituality are still the link of empowering people for missions. Third, Christian Education and discipleship based on the study of scripture convicts and convinces persons through changed lives to get involved in service to the Lord. Fourth, there is a heightened sense of urgency to win individuals for Christ. Once people’s fears and questions are calmed by spending time with the Master in prayer. Fifth,
any person willing to take the time to allow God to minister to them through prayer and fasting and significant study of the Word of God will have a testimony to share about God’s goodness to them. Sixth, this project proves leaders can be empowered when they know how much we as pastors care about them, their growth, and their ministry. Seventh, the Holy Spirit is the enabling entity that moves and leads people to do vital ministry and missions that bring hope and healing. Eighth, our leadership team proved that communication/dialogue is greatly enhanced when we are bold enough to remember to operate on scriptural principles. One theological and one sociological principle stand out from Luke 9:23. We read if any man will be my disciple, and come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me.

As a result of this project, several recommendations were identified to address long and short term goals in the University Homes community related to men, youth, ecumenical involvement, role of associate pastor, continuous ministry involvement, ministry of the church in the public housing community, and significance of evangelism.

There is an absence of men in the familial structure in University Homes. In order to develop some kind of outreach to involve the men in University Homes, it appears that the best way is to begin an active street ministry. This may be used as an instrument to listen to the felt needs and build relationships of trust. Then other Christian men can get involved in some of their wholesome activities and become insiders. This is the crucial point, because many in the University Homes community see outsiders as antagonistic or against them. Outsiders are generally distrusted.

The key to reaching youth needs is two-fold. Persons who commit to working with youth should be dependable and keep their promises. Their presence and participation in
youth activities has to be constant and not sporadic. The second way to meet youth needs is to expose the youth from public housing to activities with youth from the churches, and allow real Christian bonding to occur.

Ecumenical involvement must have leadership from the pastoral perspective with messages from the pulpit that present the urgent mission the church has in this important ministry. The role of the associate pastor should be one of spiritual guide, facilitator, and liaison of mission outreach between the two communities.

In order to insure continuous ministry involvement persons from both youth and adult areas, who have been exposed and are committed to this ministry, should be assigned by ministerial staff to coordinate the ministry efforts between the church and the housing community through the “72's.”

Ministry of the church in the public housing community must be one that is not afraid to venture outside the walls of the church. Setting up tent meetings in the neighborhood and house to house Bible study is recommended. The significance of evangelism is of primary importance, for through an evangelistic mission lost souls can be saved and sinners offered entrance into the Kingdom of God.

From a sociological communicative perspective, we are to understand from the *Miracle of Dialogue* that in us there is something that wants to give.

Our self-concern not only sets us apart from our brother, but also makes it difficult for us to communicate with them or to hear their cry in behalf of our own ontological concerns. In some ways our search for affirmation and reassurance separates and alienates us from the very areas with whom we are trying to communicate. When we break down our
ontological concern, we break down the walls that separate the church from the world. We have learned the horror of separation from lack of communication. In this research it was found that communication through meaningful dialogue is described as:

The separation between the world and the Church also calls for the ministry of dialogue. The Church sometimes withdraws from the world, refuses to communicate with it, and treats it as an enemy rather than as the place of its life and mission. An all too prevailing attitude among church people is that the Church has much to say to the world but that the world has nothing to say that the Church should hear. When the Church is preoccupied with its own concerns and oblivious to the world, its communication becomes monological and not equal to the task of telling men the Good News. The true concern of religion is not religion, but life. The gift of God in Christ is not for the Church but for all men, and the Church is sent not to itself but to the world. The responsibility of the Church is to speak dialogically with each generation and thus meet the needs of men.1

Finally, the CUMC leadership team was inspired to meet many needs in the University Homes. Because they showed how much they loved, cared and prayed for God’s guidance the key to mission for CUMC and possibly for the church must be adhered to 2 Chronicles 7:14: “If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.”

A final observation or question -- How do we gain boldness? This study proves prayer works and God is good to God’s promises to those who seek God’s face. Even passive churches will become bold witnesses if they will pray for God to intervene in their lives and the lives of those in their community and then respond, go out and demonstrate the love of God so that our works live up to our faith.

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The Spirit and the time for CUMC was Kairos time and the project will continue to be mission oriented to the poor and needy of our community. Because now our leaders are bold and yes they are free from the trappings of tradition which previously kept them from fulfilling missions.

Before this project started many of our leaders did not feel they were bold enough to accept the challenge of this project. But this study has proved that God is good to God’s promises and God has promised boldness to those who desire to be God’s witnesses. Prior to this mission project the CUMC leadership team was passive in respect to evangelism and missions, but through the discipline of spirituality this passive church became a bolder witness of the love and power of Almighty God. We can say unequivocally that our leaders sought the Lord in diligent prayer with humility. They found love to share and share they did with the tenants of University Homes. We found that one aim of spirituality was finding the love of God in a different way than we had expected. E. Glenn Hinson speaks of the contemplative tradition of both Quakers and Monks: “The aim of both is love of God, who is love, and in the discovery of that love, union with others, first those around us, but then in an ever-widening circle the whole of human kind and indeed the whole of creation.”

We found that even a passive church can become mission oriented and actively involved in evangelism. Furthermore, if pastors and leaders are seeking God to intervene in the lives of those in their community and respond by demonstrating faith by their works, we believe the Spirit and love of God becomes more experiential. Also, the people are more

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hopeful and expectant of the promises of God’s intervention as scriptures teach us through 2 Chronicles 7:14.

We believe the University Homes project will lead to other mission oriented endeavors because the leadership team is becoming bold and saying, yes. Their echo is one of freedom of the trappings that have kept us bound and locked into inward maintenance ministry. This study helped us understand that freedom leads to boldness in ministry.

Hinson tells us when one seeks the way of boldness one must turn to two men of history who lived lives of contemplation. One was a Quaker the other a Benedictine Monk. These two were Douglas S. Steere and Thomas Merton respectively.3 Although there have been others in history who have ventured the avenue of boldness to unknown places, the two are quoted often in this document. E. Glenn Hinson writes of them: “They have piped and we have danced to the new song. They have been free spirits who dare to go on before the rest of us who could not yet venture into unknown places.”4 Speaking about their freedom, Hinson writes:

It is really their sense of freedom and openness to the unknown that supply the main clue to the question we are asking how do we explain their boldness? The answer surely lies in great part to the contemplative element at the very center of the traditions that nurtured both Steere and Merton, or, better said, in the love of those that take this route may experience at the center.5

Like Merton and Steere, the 72’s experienced a new love at the center of their being.

For each of them the aim of contemplation was to discover the love of God and

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid.
discovering that love leads to love for others. The final observation and probably the most important one for Central United Methodist Church was the love it found and the love shared by the leaders with some who didn’t know anyone cared. Thanks be to God who is a Spirit, and those who worship God in spirit and truth can be God’s witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, and throughout the world. May we approach the rest of the world with love.

**Reflections**

If we can get people to understand the true nature of missions, they will undertake some type of mission activity because of how missions relate to Christ. If we help people deal with their own inhibitions about missions, they will be better prepared to undertake missions. Missions will not happen until we incorporate prayer as the underlying force.

As we reflected on the overwhelming success of this project, we found that it is possible for members of Central United Methodist Church to positively impact residents of the University Homes Housing Project. We realized that those citizens, although many are poor by census standards and some are uneducated, share a rich spiritual need to have a strong relationship with Jesus Christ. Our team realized that the barriers in our community were there, because we as the church community for years had failed to live up to our mission in ministry and leadership. Therefore, the neighborhood citizens were left with feelings of isolation, alienation, and inferiority. This mission project enabled us to change the feelings of some from not belonging and exclusion to inclusiveness and self-worth with a true sense of belonging to the household of faith. This was the most powerful mission work accomplished.

Another gratifying accomplishment of this project was the total transformation of the
hearts and minds of our leadership team. Witnessing this evolution was a spirit-filled experience. To see persons who had initially expressed reservations about the undertaking do a 360-degree turn and become eager to do more in the University Homes community was truly a blessing. To see our leaders become receptive of including these residents in our spiritual community and recognize our oneness, proves that this model can be successful in any Godly environment. I feel there is no better example of oneness in the Body of Christ.

We can cross class lines and learn innovative ways of productive communication. With careful spiritual training and orientation we can learn how to effectively share our faith. We can learn to be better, more concerned listeners -- and in doing so, we become better, more supportive and loving neighbors.

One of my roles as a teacher/pastor was to create an atmosphere filled with the presence of the Spirit. Therefore, persons would feel needed, warmed and made ready to follow the Spirit’s leading into a viable mission. It was necessary to be a learner to participate and a servant leader to encourage them that our mission project was right and in the will of God. I tried to create a sense of awe that God would choose us to go with the Spirit and learn from the Spirit. Most of all I encouraged the leaders to find out what the Spirit would have them to do. After forty days of preparation they returned with a new sense of their response to the Mission Dei and the call to missions in our community in particular.

Part of my role was to help our leaders listen and understand the culture of the project which was vital to Christian Education. An old cliche reminds us, “fish do not see the water nor the birds the air.” Often, we do not recognize the culture of these two blocks from us, and because we have not listened or looked, we behave indifferently and even criticize those who
live in public housing. Empowering our leaders to open their eyes and hearts to their own people was a major Christian Education coup. We triumphed, fortunately, because the environment of learning has been firmly established at Central United Methodist Church, and the leadership recognizes that the Christian Education environment for learning is a biblical world view.
APPENDIXES
INTRODUCTION

On January 4th 1997, 85 persons consisting of chairpersons and members of their communities (committees) gathered for a leadership training event to re-evaluate the vision and mission statements and to authenticate them through new guidelines determined by the leadership. Twelve to fifteen computers were set up with six to eight persons at each responding to a set of questions that would ultimately reaffirm the church's vision and missions set for 1997. The data was then tabulated by a computerized system. This was the second tabulation in six months, the first results to occur in appendix. The ideology behind the leadership involvement was to allow the new leadership team itself to determine the real vision and missions of Central United Methodist Church and to note the attitudes. This information was put into a format that would guide us in implementing our goal toward our missions and vision. The mission determined at the leadership conference related well with the vision:

To model ourselves after the example of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in service and education.

The mission as previously stated: To impact the community by inviting children, youth and adults to Jesus Christ. A significant set of values were determined by which we would gauge the undertaking of their mission:

Jesus would do what we do.

We educate for effective ministry.

We desire a lasting effect on our church, families, community and the world.

A brief overview of the results support the major assumptions which were the motivating factors for this project. We were introduced to the SWOT analysis which is an acrostic. The letters stand for the following: \( S = \text{strengths}, \ W = \text{weakness}, \ O = \text{opportunities}, \ T = \text{threats} \).
In view of the leadership team, these factors were deemed the primary needs for this congregation to fulfill the missions and move toward the church's vision. The assumption of this project was that Christian Education and spirituality were the major strengths for activating any major missions endeavor. Page 8 of strategy results by leaders rank them #1 and #2. Similarly the leaders confirmed the weaknesses assumed by this project which included the fears of involvement. Pages 11 and 12 list the weakness of our congregation that basically explains why no major involvement in missions outreach has been successful. The graphs on pages 57 through 62 are numerical indications of how the leadership team rated Christian Education missions and evangelism respectively.
APPENDIX A

Hudson Strategic Group

Central United Methodist Church Strategy Workshops

Analysis & Raw Data Report

DISCLAIMER

The misspelling in this document is due to direct input by participants from computer terminals and is copied as is at no fault of the writer of this dissertation.

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Central United Methodist Church

Strategy Workshops

Analysis & Raw Data Report

Henry Whitlow
Joe Hudson

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Summary of Document

This document represents the information generated Church Members during the strategic action planning workshop in June.

Our approach was to take advantage of the existing understanding of the current environment, and use it to generate action items aimed at its success. Additionally we wanted to identify the inhibitors which could potentially stand in the way of success.

The first part of the document is focused on the success actions. These actions were generated by the entire team and represent the collective thinking of the group as to what will lead to success for Central. The comments of the participants are those made during the meeting to clarify or amplify the action item.

The second section is an extensive analysis on how priorities are set within the success items, decision criteria was developed, prioritized, and applied by voting within the group. There are rankings which show how each of the action items ranked in importance to various points of view. Included in this analysis are two qualitative criteria, difficulty and willingness to complete. The team rated each to the success action on these criteria as well.

Once the priorities are set using the combined criteria rating, the group created potential teams by identifying the links between the action items and the various roles within the company. This link analysis is summarized in a matrix, and detailed in a listing of each action followed by the potential players to work on it - the person or entity with the greatest link could be viewed as the lead for the team with those with additional high scores being potential teammates.
What Is Success

Success is defined by achieving the things the Church wants for itself. The Decision Criteria represent a means of being able to recognize success if it should happen.

However It is always useful to first take an assessment of the current environment to give the participants a common understanding of how things exits now.

A popular means of doing a quick situational analysis is called **SWOT Analysis**.

**Strengths** - Those things about the Organization which represent value and should be preserves and built upon.

**Weaknesses** - Those things which are required but need improvement

**Opportunities** - New developments or changes which offer the organization a chance to enhance its value

**Threats** - New or emerging developments / changes which challenge the organization - short term or long term.
SWOT Analysis - For Central

WHAT ARE OUR STRENGTHS

1. education
2. spiritual awareness
3. Christian Education Ministry
4. DIVERSITY
5. Christian education
6. ministerial staff

BENEVOLLENCE MINISTRY

diversity of gifts in the ministers
7. Desire for Growth and Movement
8. LOTS OF DIVERSE GIFTS
9. YEP
10. communication

11. FINANCIALLY VAILABLE CONGREGATION
12. Children’s Ministry
13. GOOD LEADERSHIP
14. WORSHIP
15. MUSIC
16. teaching ministry
17. desire to excel
18. members who are committed to be disciples for Christ into the community
19. centrally located to reach and impact the world for Christ
20. discipleship training

so many members have educational opportunities
entrul United Methodist Church

Strategy Development Workshops

10. POPULATION GROWTH OF AUC

11. CLOSINESS TO AU CENTER

12. UMC CONNECTION

We need to find out how we can better utilize the "connection" to assist in funding the ministry.

13. Change of Community and surroundings

14. chance to impact whole families; give personal touch

15. Utilization of new building for community benefit not just Central's

16. provide facilities to outside groups to make CUMC a community focus

17. 21st century lifestyles vs. 19th century thinking and actions

18. making disciples

19. spiritual growth

20. Growing staff for growth

21. new outreach ministries

new building and disciple training help expand

22. ecumenical network available

churches in neighborhood see needs and can coordinate resources

23. New growth and changes in demography in immediate community

24. evangelism in the AUC

25. continuation of colleges in area

26. Day care facilities during the week

27. WORKING WITH LOCAL CHURCHRES

28. new facilities provide for more community service and involvement

29. IMPACT ON MORE YOUTH

30. deliver parenting skills workshops

31. WORKING WITH ELDERLY PEOPLE

32. solid programs for AIDS and substance abuse

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if too many persons of diverse backgrounds come in, it may in some persons' thinking, perhaps subconscious dilute fellowship

20. Dues/Tithes must continue to increase

21. unwillingness to incorporate new worship styles and methods delivery

22. government regulations

23. expansion of commercialization businesses and housing may overtake area and create problems

24. social transformations (alternate values)

25. CHILDREN MARKINNG UP BOOKS AND ENVELOPES

26. diminishing faith within and without the church.

27. projects seeming overwhelming

28. LACK OF METHODICAL PLANNING

29. our own hidden self-denial about fears of social ills

30. procrastination

Prioritize Decision Criteria
What is Success . . .

Items Sorted By Rank Sum (Descending)

1. Maximize Membership Involvement In The Church's Mission
2. Identify The Needs Of The Targeted Group(S)
3. Train Leaders For Mission
4. Utilize Community Resources
5. Market And Promote What We Offer

Coefficient of Concordance: 0.73 (1.00 Most Agreement)
2. Taking Discipleship Out Into The Community

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<td>This Will Produce Lasting</td>
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<td>This Effort Will Reflect</td>
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<td>6.86</td>
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<td>Is It Easy To Do? (1=V)</td>
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<td>12. Mission</td>
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<td>2. Council On Ministries</td>
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<td>6. Un teachable Spirit</td>
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<td>7. Lack Of Member Interest</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Lack Of Faith</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. Vehicles For Members To Identify Gifts And To Utilize Them</td>
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| Time Frame                   | It's Hard, But We Will do It = 6-12 Mo |

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WHAT THREATS OPPOSE US

Date: 06/24/1996

1. new trials

2. VIOLENCE

3. Not being on one accord (God centered)
   The ministry team must all have the SAME focus. We can not afford to have members in the congregation "taking sides". The UMC is broad enough for diverse theologies.

4. JEALOUSY

5. RIVALS

6. DEALING WITH PROVERTY AND PERSON DIFFERANT FROM US
   Amen. We must be able to see Christ in everyone. Not just males who fit a certain mode. Persons we least expect are the best examples of Christ.

7. FEAR
   so many persons are afraid of being crime victims after dark and even in daytime

8. COMPLACENCY

9. TRADITION

10. NOT SEEKING HOLY SPIRITS GUIDANCE

11. NOT ACCEPTING THE VISON AND MISSION

12. Allowing fear of change to immobilize us

13. Not capitalizing on change surrounding us

14. Persons who disagree but who are unwilling to help plan.

15. governmental impediments

16. inflexible "old school" thinking, reacting in fear vs. embracing new

17. incompatible real estate development in the community

18. family cliques who hog authority: will not allow new participants

19. losing sense of unity within congregation
Central United Methodist Church

Strategy Development Workshops

Most Supported Idea/Action (1 => 8)

Most Supported Idea/Action (9 => 16)
APPENDIX B

Forty Days of Prayer for Five Persons
By G. Ross Freeman

The following book has been reproduced as is. All wording, punctuation, and spacing is exactly as it appears in the book. Permission to reproduce the book Forty Days of Prayer for Five Persons was granted by the author G. Ross Freeman in a letter dated January 23, 1997, which is also attached.

Select pages of the dissertation writer’s personal journal (including insights, experiences, and reflections) are attached at the end of the Forty Days.
January 23, 1997

Rev. James E. Fincher
Associate Pastor
Central United Methodist Church
501-7 Mitchell Street, S.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30314-4723

Dear Brother Fincher:

I am pleased to give you and the Central United Methodist Church permission to reproduce the *Forty Days of Prayer for Five Persons* in whatever quantity it takes to meet your needs.

I remember the Saturday we spent at the Children's Home in Decatur planning work for United Methodist Men with appreciation.

And you know, of course, how indebted I am to your senior minister for his work on *The Wesleyan Christian Advocate Board of Directors* and for his leadership on the Georgia United Methodist Communications Council.

Bless you for being a part of the intercessory prayer movement.

Sincerely,

G. Ross Freeman
Editor

This booklet was reproduced as is.
FORTY DAYS OF PRAYER FOR FIVE PERSONS
A Daily Guide: G. Ross Freeman, Editor
I FULFILLMENT OF LIFE

Day 1: OFFER PRAYERS OF FAITH FOR THE FIVE

As you begin this pilgrimage of prayer, select a quiet place where you can be alone. Get comfortable. Relax. Be assured that God is waiting for you to join Him in love and concern for each of the Five.

Prayer offered in faith will save ... The Lord will raise him ... and any sins he may have committed will be forgiven. A good man’s prayer is powerful and effective.” James 5:15-16 (NEB)

On this pilgrimage of prayer, you will be joining others in intercessory petition that the lives of hundreds and even thousands may be influenced and changed, but “if you do not ask with faith, do not expect the Lord to give you any solid answers.” Faith is the crucial ingredient for a successful outcome to your pilgrimage. Faith waves created by your belief will have far-reaching results. Your life as well as the lives of those for whom you pray will be blessed.

Pray for each person on your list. Lift them up to God beseeching Him to remove any sin that is causing their brokenness and to make them whole again. Knowing God’s yearning for the lost, pray that they may be forgiven their transgressions, saved and filled again. Close with a strong affirmation.

Paul wrote to young Timothy, “I urge that petitions, prayers, intercessions, and Thanksgiving be offered for all (persons) ... such prayer is right and approved by God our Savior, whose will it is that all should find salvation ...” - I Timothy 2:1,3-4 (NEB) - Mrs. Ida C. Mintz, North Carolina
FULFILLMENT OF LIFE

Day 2: OFFER PRAYERS OF PRAISE FOR THE FIVE

Get comfortable. Realize that you are in The Presence, receiving special attention, as you join God in love and concern for each of the Five.

“I thank my God whenever I think of you; and when I pray for you all, my prayers are always joyful ...” Philippians 1:3-5 (NEB).

Paul gave thanks every time he thought of the Christians in Philippi. His prayers were full of joy and praise not only for what they were but also for what they were intended to be. God created each of the Five. He had a beautiful plan in mind when He consented for them to be born.

Thank Him for that plan, and pray that He will use this forty days of prayer to create a desire for life within the Five. You may be the only person to ever praise God for them. If you happen to know each of them, you can praise God for the good memories, for the strengths, for such faith as they have. If you do not know the Five, you can praise God for their creation, for the potential for good He has placed in each of their lives, and for what they will become in His will.

Paul wrote to young Timothy, “I urge that petitions, prayers, intercessions, and Thanksgiving be offered for all (persons) ... such prayer is right, and approved by God our Savior, whose will it is that all ... should find salvation ...” - I Timothy 2:1,3-4 (NEB) - Fred W. Bailey, Alabama

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FULFILLMENT OF LIFE

Day 3: OFFER PRAYERS THAT THE FIVE MAY FIND JOY IN THEIR FAMILIES

Get comfortable. Realize that you are in The Presence, receiving special attention, as you join God in love and concern for each of the Five.

“I am reminded of the sincerity of your faith, a faith which was alive in Lois your grandmother and Eunice your mother before you, and which, I am confident, lives in you also. That is why I now remind you to stir into flame the gift of God which is within you.” - II Timothy 1:5-6 (NEB)

The family is the important unit of society as well as the Kingdom of God. Relationships here have more to do with the quality of our lives and our eternal destiny than we are aware. Living faith is transmitted from one generation to another. With such a heritage, Timothy could be used mightily of God. Each member of the family has a special gift and a special contribution to make to other members of the family.

Pray therefore for the family of each of the Five that God will give peace, financial adequacy, love for one another, and a desire to do His will. Pray that each member of the Five families may also feel their need of God.

Paul wrote to young Timothy, “I urge that petitions, prayers, intercessions, and Thanksgiving be offered for all (persons) ... such prayer is right and approved by God our Savior, whose will it is that all ... should find salvation ...” - I Timothy 2:1,3-4 (NEB) - Israel L. Rucker, Georgia
FULFILLMENT OF LIFE

Day 4: OFFER PRAYER THAT THE FIVE FIND FULFILLMENT IN VOCATION

Get comfortable. Realize that you are in The Presence, receiving special attention, as you join God in love and concern for each of the Five.

“I urge that petitions, prayers, intercessions and Thanksgiving be offered for all men;” - I Timothy 2:1

“... the fire will test the worth of each person’s work if it stands he will be rewarded ...”

- I Corinthians 3:14-15

“Commit to the Lord all that you do, and your plans will be fulfilled.” - Proverbs 16:3 (NEB)

What a person does to make a living is important to God. Here one spends most of his or her waking time and energy. What is done can be a blessing or a curse. It is possible for one’s vocation to be a ministry. One can find fulfillment if it is done for the glory of God. Paul urged in I Timothy for Christians to pray for all men, the Corinthians to remember that the worth of our work is to be tested, and in Proverbs we are encouraged to commit all that we do to God so that our work may be established.

As you pray for each of the Five, envision them being used of God at work. Pray that He will guide them in considering whether their work will stand the test, grant them satisfaction and a sense of usefulness in how he or she earns a living. For the youth, pray that God will lead him or her into a useful vocation where they can glorify Him.

Jesus “spoke to them in a parable to show that they should keep on praying and never lose heart.” Luke 18:1 (NEB) - Alan Weatherly, Alabama
FULFILLMENT OF LIFE

Day 5: OFFER A PRAYER THAT THE FIVE MAY COME TO INSIGHT

Get comfortable. Become aware of the presence of God within you and about you. Prepare yourself with expectation to receive some new truth from the scripture you are about to read.

“And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, to the Glory and praise of God.” - Philippians 1:9-11 (RSV)

Acknowledge that in our separation and alienation from God we are incomplete, broken and blind to the deep spiritual truths and principles of life which lead to wholeness, freedom and right living. Remember that without awareness of God’s love and truth we seek false solutions to problems. The basic root of our problems is rebellion against God and therefore against life.

Visualize your five persons. See them seated in the presence of Christ as you would have imagined those who gathered around Him as He gave His Sermon on the Mount. Imagine Him speaking to each one concerning the deep needs of their lives. Calling each person by name, verbalize softly to the Lord specific needs or problems which you may know about. After a moment of silence, give thanks to the Lord for the help, love and new insights He is bringing to each one of the five.

Jesus “spoke to them in a parable to show that they should keep on praying and never lose heart.” Luke 18:1 (NEB) - Jarrell Lillard, Georgia
II SET THEM FREE

Day 6: PRAY THAT EACH OF THE FIVE MAY BE FILLED WITH GRATITUDE

In a quiet place pray for each one, rejoice that he/she is and that you have this opportunity to join your life with theirs in concern and love.

“Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partners of the inheritance of the saints in the light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.” - Colossians 1:12-13 (KJ)

The Apostle Paul prayed that there might be a well spring of deep appreciation springing forth in all persons thanking God continuously for His grace and deliverance; His preparation of them to meet all that life presents with fortitude and joy. Even as the first century Christians we stand in need of this awareness of God’s greatness and compassion, of recovering a sense of wonder and praise.

Pray for the five persons committed to your care and love during these forty days. For five days you have prayed that God would touch them, release them from the servitude of earthly powers and enticements so that they might become more pleasing to God, bearing fruit in active goodness. Claim His promises for them; believe that it is so.

Christ said, “Is there a man among you who will offer his son a stone when he asks for bread, or a snake when he asks for fish? If you then, bad as you are, know how to give your children what is good for them, how much more will your heavenly Father give good things to those who ask him.” - Matthew 7:9-11 (NEB) - James W. Turner, Virginia
SET THEM FREE

Day 7: PRAY THAT THE FIVE MIGHT SAY “YES” TO GOD’S LIFE AND LOVE

Allow yourself to realize that you are in the Presence of God, receiving His special attention. as you join Him in love and concern. You are asking God to set the Five free from whatever hinders their salvation.

Jesus said, “My Father’s will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life... He who believes in me has everlasting life. I am the bread of life to the world.” - John 6:40, 47, 48, 33.

Full, abundant life comes from God through Jesus. Sometimes we know this as fact, but we act as though life comes from our actions. We do not create it; we receive it. Life comes from our relationship with the Creator of Life. This is hard for many of us to accept. People want “rules,” “creeds” and “steps to success.” Jesus offers instead a life-giving relationship. “No” closes the doors to life. When one says “Yes” to God. “Yes” to life, “Yes” to the way of love, the doors of spiritual opportunity open wide.

As you pray today for the Five make the prayer specific. Pray that each one may become positive in response to life-opportunities. Imagine them in your mind as opening up to a loving relationship with Christ and thereby saying “Yes” to life and love. Close by thanking God that He wants the Five to have an abundant life of love.

Paul wrote to the Ephesians, I kneel in prayer to the Father ... that out of the treasures of his glory, he may grant you strength and power through his spirit in your inner being...” - Ephesians 3:14-17 (NEB) - David Brazelton, Florida
SET THEM FREE

Day 8: PRAY THAT THE FIVE MAY BE RELEASED FROM GUILT

Get comfortable. Realize that you are in The Presence, receiving special attention. as you ask God to set the Five free from guilt.

"If we confess our sins, he is just, and may be trusted to forgive our sins and cleanse us form every kind of wrong." - I John 1:9 (NEB)

God is more anxious to forgive and cleanse and restore us to the family than we are to seek forgiveness. Often we drift into complacency about our sinful condition. Nevertheless we carry the load of guilt for the wrong we have done. Guilt is a heavy burden. None can run the race of life successfully until it has been lifted. Those whom you love and for whom you are interceding need to be delivered.

As you pray, hold before God the request that each of the Five may be forgiven and cleansed. Feel the anguish of their guilt. Remember how Moses prayed for the children of Israel when they sinned in the wilderness of their wandering. "If thou wilt forgive them, forgive; but if not, blot out my own name. I pray, from the book which thou has written." (Exodus 32:32 NEB) What if you are the only human mediator these persons have? Don’t fail them. Claim God’s forgiving, restoring power in the lives of each one. Direct warm thoughts of love toward them and expect God to work the miracle of transformation in their lives.

Paul wrote the Galatians, "You were called to be free, only do not turn your freedom into license for your lower nature." - Galatians 5:13 (NEB) - Susan Ruby Lamb, Tennessee
SET THEM FREE

Day 9: PRAY FOR THE INNER HEALING OF THE FIVE

Get comfortable. Realize that you are in the Presence. Sense that you are receiving special attention as you join God in yearning for the Five to be set free from bitterness, bad memories, and a wrong spirit.

"Now there was a man in the synagogue possessed by an unclean spirit ... Jesus rebuked him: ‘Be silent,’ he said, ‘and come out of him.’ And the unclean spirit threw the man into convulsions and with a loud cry left him. They were all dumfounded and began to ask one another, ‘What is this? ... when he gives orders, even the unclean spirits submit.’"-Mark 1:23-27 (NEB)

Many experiences leave bad scars on our psyches. Memories of bad things done to us warp our attitudes toward life and God. Persons are often twisted and torn by circumstances until life is wretched, the spirit negative, habits destructive. God wants to clean all of this out. He wants to heal the spirit, heal the memory, heal the failure. Even the unclean spirits submit to Him.

Pray for each of the Five. Hold them up symbolically to the command of Christ. Ask him to order the evil out of their lives, to release them from destructive habits, to free them from the past. Ask him to continue until they are thoroughly cleansed. Then thank him for his power and control over evil.

Paul wrote the Galatians, "You were called to be free, only do not turn your freedom into license for your lower nature.”-Galatians 5:13 (NEB)- G. Ross Freeman, Georgia
SET THEM FREE

Day 10: PRAY FOR THE A Wakening OF LOVE IN THE FIVE

Get comfortable. Realize that you are in The Presence of outpouring love, receiving special attention, joining God in love and concern for the Five.

"Love is patient; love is kind and envies no one. Love is never boastful nor conceited, nor rude; never selfish, not quick to take offense. Love keeps no score of wrongs; does not gloat over other men's sins, but delights in the truth. There is nothing love cannot face; there is no limit to its faith, its hope, its endurance." - I Corinthians 1:3-4 (NEB)

"And this is my prayer, that your love may grow ever richer..."- Philippians 1:9 (NEB)

Love can beget love. The only limit is our willingness to receive and to give it. Your love, reaching out on wings of prayer, has a redeeming quality. You are able to love because God first loved you. The Five, though they are not yet aware of it, are responding to the waves of love you are sending them. They are beginning to internalize the qualities of love so beautifully expressed by Paul. Such love can begin awakening in each of them now. Believe it for them as you pray.

As you pray for each of the Five individually, recognize that the seeds of love have already been planted in them by experiences of the past. See these seeds awakening to life. Ask the spirit to awaken divine love. Envision each one becoming a person of love.

Jesus "spoke to them in a parable to show that they should keep on praying and never lose heart."- Luke 18:1 (NEB) - Grace Dickerson, Mississippi
DAWN OF DESIRE

PRAY FOR THE AWAKENING OF PRAYER FOR THE FIVE

Get comfortable. Join God in yearning for the Five to awaken to the opportunity of prayer.

We do not even know how we ought to pray, but through our inarticulate groans the Spirit himself is pleading for us, and God who searches our innermost being knows what the spirit means.” - Romans 8:26-27 (NEB)

There is a need and a desire deep in the soul of every person for prayer. It was planted there by God. The Five for whom you are praying may not even be aware that they need communion and conversation with God. Those who are aware may feel unworthy or inadequate to pray. Here the Holy Spirit helps. He makes intercession for us.

Today as you become the representative before God for each of the Five for whom you have responsibility, pray that they may awaken anew to the need for prayer and begin cooperating with the Holy Spirit as He intercedes for them. Envision their soul awakening to a life of prayer.

Jesus “spoke to them in a parable to show that they should keep on praying and never lose heart.” - Luke 18:1 (NEB)

“Our fight is not against human foes, but against cosmic powers ... against the superhuman forces of evil.” - Ephesians 6:12 (NEB) - John Carmichael, Alabama
IV FIND A COMMUNITY OF BELIEVERS

Day 16: PRAY THAT THE FIVE MAY BEGIN TO SEE CHRIST AS THE WAY OF LIFE

Get comfortable. Remember that some are so blinded that they cannot see Christ as the way of life. You probably were like that yourself, so you can understand the difficulty that the Five have in seeing Him.

“My deepest desire and my prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved.” - Romans 10:1-4

The Five for whom you are praying may have high moral standards and admirable character. Still they are in need of grace. This grace is found in Jesus Christ. No person lives fully and abundantly until they come to Jesus Christ and acknowledge him as Lord. Paul agonized over the lack of fulfillment in his countrymen who were burdened by a law they could not keep. They needed Christ. So do the Five who are your special responsibility. They can best find Him in a community of believers.

As you pray, thank God for the good qualities in each of the Five. See them, however, as incomplete. Something is missing. Note that the missing part is God-shaped. Life can be complete for them only when that space too is filled. Pray that they may come to understand that Christ is the way to wholeness, completion, salvation. Envision each of them kneeling before Jesus and acknowledging Him as Lord. See Him accepting their adoration and worship.

“But God, rich in mercy, brought us to life in Christ ...” - Galatians 2:5 (NEB) - Earle Temple, Alabama
FIND A COMMUNITY OF BELIEVERS

Day 17: PRAY THAT THE FIVE MAY RECEIVE WISDOM AND SPIRITUAL UNDERSTANDING

Get comfortable. Affirm that you are in the Presence, receiving special attention, as you join God in love and concern for the Five.

“For this cause we also...do not cease to pray for you and to pray that you might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may walk worthy of the Lord...being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.”—Colossians 1:9-10 (NEB)

God desires for each of His children to have wisdom and spiritual understanding. Wisdom, in the Biblical sense, is the ability to handle everyday problems so they do not frustrate or destroy. James advised those of us who need wisdom to ask of God. Most human conflict and failure grows out of a lack of this wisdom.

The deeper need is for spiritual understanding. Spiritual understanding enables us to move into the new dimension. The Five who are your special responsibility, no less than others, need someone praying that they shall walk worthy and be fruitful in all kinds of works.

Jesus “spoke to them in a parable to show that they should keep on praying and never lose heart.”—Luke 18:1 (NEB)

“But God, rich in mercy, brought us to life in Christ.”—Galatians 2:5 (NEB)—S. Harry Russell, Florida
FIND A COMMUNITY OF BELIEVERS

Day 18: PRAY THAT THE FIVE MAY ENCOUNTER PERSONS OF FAITH

Get comfortable. You are about to engage the holy work of praying for the Five who are assigned as your responsibility. Allow yourself to realize that you are in the Presence, receiving special attention, as you join in God’s love and concern for the Five.

“Once again Jesus addressed the people: “I am the light of the world. No follower of mine shall wander in the dark; he shall have the light of life.” -John 8:12 (NEB)

“I pray that your inward eyes may be illumined so that you may know what is the hope to which he calls you...”-Ephesians 1:18 (NEB)

God uses people to reveal Himself to those who are away from Him. Frequently they become his angels ministering to those whom He would bless. The hope which holds His children can be communicated even to those who are not living in the light.

Pray that each of the Five who have been assigned to you may come in contact with persons who are walking in the light of God’s love, whose eyes have been illumined, and whose hope is in God. Visualize them encountering such a person and responding to the light within them.

“But God, rich in mercy, brought us to life in Christ...”-Galatians 2:5 (NEB)- Frank D. McClendon, Alabama
FIND A COMMUNITY OF BELIEVERS

Day 19: PRAY THAT THE FIVE MAY SEE THE GREATNESS OF GOD'S POWER AT WORK IN BELIEVERS

Get comfortable. Realize that you are in the Presence, receiving special attention, as you join God in Love and concern for the Five.

"I pray that your inward eyes may be illumined so that you may know... how vast are the resources of his power to us who trust in him."—Ephesians 1:19 (NEB)

It requires more power to release a soul to life than it does to heal a body. God's power is able to resurrect a dead spirit and give life to the awakened soul. What awesome power! Moreover the vast resources of His power is open to-available to-those who believe. Some take advantage of this availability. What a difference it makes in the quality of their lives and the inward victory they have regardless of outward circumstances.

As you pray for the Five, ask that their inward eyes may be open to see the difference God-power makes in believers. Call upon Him to use that power to transform the Five. See each one coming to life in Him. Imagine them shaking off the shackles of the dead soul - what Paul called "the body of death" - and standing erect in response to the power of God. Trust God, believe for them, to begin His miracle-working power to raise them to life.

"But God, rich in mercy, brought us to life in Christ..."—Galatians 2:5 (NEB)—J. Robert Parks, Tennessee
Day 20: PRAY FOR THE FIVE TO COME INTO FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD’S PEOPLE

Get comfortable. Realize that you are in the Presence. Sense that you are receiving special attention as you join God in love and concern for the Five.

“Some three thousand were added to their number that day. They met constantly to hear the apostles teach, and to share the common life, to break bread, and to pray. A sense of awe was everywhere...”-Acts 2:41-43 (NEB)

We tend to become like those with whom we associate. One of the first steps in influencing persons to faith in Christ is to get them into fellowship with members of the family of God. The Five who are your responsibility need the support which comes from being with persons of faith.

Pray that God will stir the godly memory of each of the Five. Somewhere in their past they saw Christians and were influenced by them. They have felt the divine presence at work with others. He can bring these memories to the surface of their awareness. Then pray for some doors to be opened for them to have contact with and enter into the fellowship of believers. Begin to see, in your faith’s eye, each of the Five approaching and being warmly welcomed into the fellowship even as he or she makes tentative steps toward returning to the family of God. Pray, believing that it will happen.

“But God, rich in mercy, brought us to life in Christ...” -Galatians 2:5 (NEB)- Ernest D. Page, North Carolina
ENTER INTO LIFE

Day 21: PRAY FOR THE FIVE TO COME TO WHOLENESS IN CHRIST

Get comfortable. Realize that you are in the Presence. Sense that you are receiving special attention as you join God in love and concern for the Five. You are praying for them to enter life.

"...in him you have been brought to completion. Every power and authority in the universe is subject to him."—Colossians 2:10-11 (NEB)

The well-rounded person. The complete person. The total person. These are ideals held before the human family by philosophers. What many fail to see is that no person can be whole until he or she is reunited with God. As Augustine reminds us, we were made by God and for God and our souls are restless until they rest in God. God only wants our best. Our best is wholeness. Wholeness is found only in Christ. That’s what salvation is.

As you pray for the Five, see each one of them as incomplete. Something vital is missing. Visualize them frantically searching for the missing part. Then see Christ standing in the shadows reaching toward them the missing part. They are so preoccupied with their own frenzied efforts to find it that they neither hear nor see Him. Now pray for them to stop looking “everywhere” and look to God. Imagine them seeing Him, reaching for the missing part, and smiling as they realize completion. Thank Him for what He is doing.

“May our Lord Jesus Christ, who has shown us such love and given us such bright hopes, encourage and fortify you...”—2 Thessalonians 2:16-17 (NEB)—Ervin Gentry, Kentucky
Day 22: PRAY FOR THE FIVE TO BECOME AWARE OF LIFE IN THE SPIRIT

Get comfortable. Realize that you are in the Presence. Sense that you are receiving special attention as you join God in wanting the Five to enter into life.

“Those who live on the level of their lower nature have their outlook formed by it and that spells death; but those who live on the level of the Spirit have the spiritual outlook and that’s life.” - Romans 8:5-7 (NEB)

There is a whole dimension of life beyond the physical - what Paul calls, in different Epistles, the flesh or worldliness or the lower nature. It is the spiritual realm. Most of us spend our days as slaves to “what is seen” and never become aware of the splendor of “what is not seen.” Those who are obedient to the demands of the lower nature can only know sickness and decline and death. But those who are led by the Spirit of Christ will discover a victory which leads to life.

Bring each one of the Five with you to God. See them rising above the physical and becoming conscious of the spiritual forces hovering over them, attempting to attract their attention to the higher life. See them responding to the upward pull of the Holy Spirit as they open to Him.

“May our Lord Jesus, who has shown us such love and given us such bright hopes, encourage and fortify you...” - 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17 (NEB) - Betty Williams, North Carolina
ENTER INTO LIFE

Day 23: PRAY FOR THE FIVE TO BELIEVE ENOUGH TO ENTER

Get comfortable. Realize that you are in the Presence. Sense that you are receiving special attention as you join God in love and concern for the Five. How God wants them to enter into life.

"Unbelief...prevented their entering."-Hebrews 3:9 (NEB)

The desire to improve ourselves, to move to something better, is almost universal. The children of Israel wandered in the wilderness looking for the promised land. When finally they saw it from the mountain, they were afraid. Spies were sent out to investigate. Ten of the twelve returned with a negative report. They were discouraged. They forgot the power behind them when they saw the difficulties before them. So they returned to wilderness wandering.

The Five for whom you are praying want the better way which God has provided. They may have glimpsed the promise of a higher life with God. Over and over they resolved to enter, but never followed through. So they continue living in the wilderness. Pray for each of the Five to enter a Christly tomorrow.

Physically surround yourself with the cards listing the names of the Five. Reach out, pull each name to you one at a time, as a symbol of their "entering" the promised land of a Christian life.

Jesus "spoke to them in a parable to show that they should keep on praying and never lose heart."-Luke 18:1 (NEB)- Freddie L. Wheeler, Georgia
ENTER INTO LIFE

Day 24: PRAY THAT THE FIVE BECOME FAITHFUL DISCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST

Get comfortable. Realize that you are in The Presence. Sense the smiles of God because you have joined Him in love and concern for the Five. You have done a good thing.

“Do not be afraid of the suffering to come...only be faithful... and I will give you...”

Revelation 2:10 (NEB)

Salvation is always a gift from God. It cannot be earned or deserved. Once we have received it, tasted of its grace, we are eager to be faithful disciples of Jesus Christ. We want to please Him, trust Him, and obey Him. A disciple is a student, a learner. A faithful disciple is a student, a learner who has been captured by the spirit of his Master and who will live for His glory. That is what we desire for ourselves and for the Five.

Feel deeply the situation of the Five. Thank God for what He has revealed about each one and for the victories He is providing them. Pray that each may sense the presence of God and open their minds to positive power and promises. Pray that they might rest the total weight of all their problems and anxieties and future upon Him. See them standing in victory, freed and delivered and rejoicing. Claim that for them.

“May our Lord Jesus Christ, who has shown us such love and given us such bright hopes, encourage and fortify you...”-2Thessalonians 2:16-17 (NEB)- R.L. Freeman, Tennessee
ENTER INTO LIFE

Day 25: PRAY THAT THE FIVE MAY GROW IN GRACE AND KNOWLEDGE OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

Get comfortable. Realize that you are in the Presence of the Holy Spirit, one of whose functions is to cause you to grow. Sense that you are receiving special attention because you join God in love and concern for the Five.

“But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”—2 Peter 3:18 (NEB)

Whatever is alive is growing. When faith is alive, it grows. When the soul is alive, it grows. Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man (Luke 2:52). As you continue your pilgrimage of prayer for the Five, recognize that wherever they are now, they have the opportunity of growing toward spiritual maturity and in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We need a definite commitment of surrender—to read the Word, to hear Jesus say, “follow me.” We say yes to God in surrender. He can meet every need of our lives. Pray that you’ll be able to lead these persons into fellowship with the Lord.

As you pray for the Five, take time to visualize them starting the Christian journey, singing in the congregation. “I Surrender...All to Jesus I surrender,” and growing. Claim growth for them. Thank God for growth you are believing for them.

“May our Lord Jesus Christ, who has shown us such love and given us such bright hopes, encourage and fortify you...”—2 Thessalonians 2:16-17 (NEB) Sanford Brown, Georgia
VI  CLAIM GOD’S PROMISES

Day 26:  PRAY THAT THE FIVE MAY RECEIVE INSIGHT INTO GOD’S WILL

Get comfortable. God has made some wonderful promises to those who are faithful. Begin now to claim these promises for the Five.

“We ask God that you may receive from him...full insight into his will...”-Colossians 1:9 (NEB)

When persons understand the will of God for their lives, they see that it is desirable. God wants only what is best for us. He will do nothing to embarrass or hurt us. Only good comes from his hand. Even though our limited earth-bound vision cannot understand each provision he makes, when we look back from the other side, it will all be plain. Often we have to struggle to accept it. The prayer of Paul for the people of ancient Colossee was that they might “receive full insight into his will.” Then they would know.

As you pray for the Five, ask that each may receive insight into God’s will for their lives. Ask that he reveal to each one directly what He intended for them to be when He consented for them to be born. As you hold each of the Five before God, remember that heartaches and disappointments often cloud the clear view of the direction He wants them to take. Feel their burdens. Know the agony of their struggles with decisions. Ask that they may catch a glimpse of the assurance His will provides. Ask for His presence in their struggle.

Jesus “spoke to them in a parable to show that they should keep on praying and never lose heart.”-Luke 18:1 (NEB) - Loena Boling, Alabama
CLAIM GOD'S PROMISES

Day 27: PRAY THAT EACH OF THE FIVE MAY KNOW WHAT GOD PROMISES

Get comfortable. Realize that you are in the Presence of the Lord. Recall the promise of abundant life, and begin to claim it for the Five who are your responsibility.

"I pray that your inward eyes may be illumined so that you may know the wealth and glory of the share he offers you among his people in their heritage..." - Ephesians 1:18 (NEB)

Think of it. While we struggle here, God is offering us a share in the heritage of His people. What riches we deny ourselves when we refuse to return home to the family of God. The promises which you claim for your own are available to the Five. If only their eyes were opened, they too could see that God has provided strength for the journey, comfort for sorrow, forgiveness for sins and a presence for loneliness. All His promises are precious. He does not offer escape from heartache, but He offers to stand with us in sorrow. He does not offer release from the common ailments of the human family, but He offers us victory in spite of them. He does not offer to take us out of the world, but He offers us His presence to keep us in the world.

Pray for each of the Five to begin seeing what God is offering them, and pray that they may begin to desire a place among His people.

Jesus "spoke to them in a parable to show that they should keep on praying and never lose heart."-Luke 18:1 (NEB)- Julian L. Tucker, Georgia
CLAIM GOD’S PROMISES

Day 28: PRAY THAT THE FIVE MAY LIVE PLEASING TO HIM

Get comfortable. Realize that you are in the Presence. Sense that you are receiving special attention as you claim worthiness and goodness and knowledge of God for the Five.

“...so that your manner of life may be worthy of the Lord and entirely pleasing to him...and may bear fruit in active goodness...and grow in the knowledge of God.”-Colossians 1:10 (NEB)

God wants every person to live a life pleasing to him...to bear fruit in active goodness... and grow in the knowledge of Him. Paul was thanking God for the faith and love of the people of Colosse. They were growing. Their lives were worthy. They were producing. Some seem to think that it is God’s business to please us. They are wrong. We are to please God. Everyone has some faith - some larger than others. But it is their faith. And God deals with them at the point of their faith.

Spend some time thanking God for the faith of the Five. Ask that the Spirit help each one to live today in such a manner that God can be pleased. See them growing. See them producing fruit in active goodness. See them coming to a new knowledge of the way God works so that they can cooperate with His plans. Pray that the vision may become reality. Believe it. Expect a miracle.

Jesus “spoke to them in a parable to show that they should keep on praying and never lose heart.”-Luke 18:1 (NEB)- Charles L. Dennis, Georgia
CLAIM GOD’S PROMISES

Day 29: PRAY THAT THE FIVE MAY RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT

Get comfortable. Realize that you are in the Presence. The greatest gift which God can give the Five is Himself. Claim that gift for them.

“Then he breathed on them saying, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit?’ ”-John 20:22 (NEB)

“Friends, what are we to do? ‘Repent’, said Peter, ‘Repent and be baptized...in the name of Jesus...for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit...for the promise is to you.’ ”-Acts 2:38-39 (NEB)

The power to live for Christ comes from the Holy Spirit. Jesus said to the Apostles just before he left them, “Receive the Holy Spirit.” Peter said to the multitude on the Day of Pentecost, “You will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” It is a command and a promise. He is the Source of our life, our abundant life, our power to overcome, our power to witness, or power to minister. Without him indwelling us, we live on our lower level of existence and are at the mercy of the enemy. That is why Jesus instructed the Apostles to “tarry in Jerusalem” until they receive Him in fullness.

You are praying for the Five to have life in its fullest sense. Only as they receive the Holy Spirit is this possible. Therefore, pray for each of them to be open to Him, to receive Him, to realize His presence.

Jesus “spoke to them in a parable to show that they should keep on praying and never lose heart.”-Luke 18:1 (NEB)- Paul Bauer, Florida
CLAIM GOD’S PROMISES

Day 30: PRAY FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT TO CONTINUE HIS WORK IN THE FIVE

Get comfortable. Realize that you are in the Presence. The Holy Spirit brings life and victory. Jesus promised that He would come. Claim that promise for the Five.

“The apostles in Jerusalem now heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God. They sent off Peter and John, who went down there and prayed for the converts, asking that they might receive the Holy Spirit. Until then the Holy Spirit had not come on any of them.”- Acts 8:14-16 (NEB)

The Holy Spirit is God present with us, speaking to us of Christ, and urging us to life. He works with us before we are converted, in our salvation, and equips us for the full and radiant life in Christ. People in Samaria began to believe because of the preaching of Philip. The Church of Jerusalem sent Peter and John to establish them in the faith and experience. These two apostles prayed for them to receive the Holy Spirit in order to guarantee faithfulness and victory. God honored that prayer of intercession.

You are to pray now for the Five to receive the Holy Spirit. Already He is at work with them. Thank Him. Envision each of them becoming responsive to Him, opening their hearts to receive Him, listening as He begins to speak to them of Christ and the way to complete life for them. Hold each up to the healing, filling divine Presence.

Jesus “spoke to them in a parable to show that they should keep on praying and never lose heart.”-Luke 18:1- Ira Montgomery, Georgia
Day 31: PRAY THAT THE TRAITS WHICH ABIDE MAY GROW IN THE FIVE

Get comfortable. Realize that you are in the Presence. Sense that you are receiving special attention as you join God in love and concern for the Five. You too want them to grow in qualities which endure.

"In a word, there are three things which last forever: faith, hope, and love; but the greatest of them all is love."-I Corinthians 13:13 (NEB)

This life is so fragile and temporary. People, in their better moments, want to give their substance to something important and lasting. Here Paul’s insight reveals what abides. Our own spirit confirms it. A wounded world today needs to know that deliverance is found in the faith and hope and love which is present through the Holy Spirit. Individual lives can find permanence and growing satisfaction as they discover the reality of those three qualities for themselves.

As you pray for each of the Five, picture in your mind’s eye the Savior greeting them with a smile and outstretched arms. Gifts of faith and hope and love are in His hands. See them reaching for them, accepting them, and growing in them. Put the name of each of the Five in the following space and claim: “For God so loved (name) that He gave His only son if (name) believes in Him, (name) shall not die but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16)

"May he strengthen you in his glorious might and with ample power to meet whatever comes with fortitude, patience, and joy...”-Colossians 1:11-12 (NEB)- Donald E. Rankin, Kentucky
GROW IN GRACE

Day 32:  PRAY THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT MAY PRODUCE PEACE IN THE FIVE

Allow the comfortable presence of the almighty God to bring peace and serenity to you. Join others in seeking “peace upon the earth and good will to all mankind.”

The fruit of the Spirit is...Peace...”-Galatians 5:22 “Let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding.”-Romans 14:19 (RSV)

One of the most beautiful words in the Hebrew language is “SHALOM.” Shalom is both a greeting and a benediction, a salutation and a blessing. The root meaning is completeness, wholeness, or harmony. In the Bible SHALOM is used to describe the ideal state of living. It is not the absence of conflict. It is the essence of inward calm and serenity. Paul admonished the Christians of Rome, “to pursue what makes for peace and mutual upbuilding.” SHALOM is a fruit of the Spirit. It is not bestowed; it is grown. The seed is nurtured by the Spirit and cultivated through disquieting experiences.

Let your prayer for the Five be that the seed of peace may be planted in them. Imagine the Holy Spirit watering and nurturing the sprouting plant. Claim growth in the name of Jesus for each of the Five. Pray that SHALOM might come to them, that harmony will overcome discord, that tranquility will transplant turmoil.

Jesus said, “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”-John 14:27 (KJV)-

John W. Clotfelter, Alabama
GROW IN GRACE

Day 33: PRAY THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT MAY PRODUCE JOIN IN THE FIVE

Get comfortable. Realize that you are in the Presence. Sense that you are receiving special attention as you join God in love and concern for the Five. You too want them to know joy which the world cannot take away.

“The fruit of the Spirit is ... joy ...”-Galatians 5:22

“And may the God of hope fill you with all joy ... until by the power of the Holy Spirit, you overflow...”-Romans 15:13 (NEB)

One of the distinguishing characteristics of Christians in the early church and today is an unexplainable and inextinguishable joy. This inward bubble, this irrepressible sense of well-being has nothing to do with outward circumstances. Rather it is a habit of life for the Christians. Others see it and marvel. The world cannot give it and the world cannot take it away. It is the fruit produced by the Holy Spirit working with the person.

Pray that each of the Five may be so open to the Holy Spirit that He can begin to produce inward joy as a fruit of the relationship. See each of them growing in it. Claim the fruit for them. Ask that today an unexplained taste of it can be theirs.

“May he strengthen you in his glorious might with ample power to meet whatever comes with fortitude, patience and joy...”-Colossians 1:11-12 (NEB)- Claude E. Stanfield, Florida

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GROW IN GRACE

Day 34: PRAY THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT MAY PRODUCE SELF-CONTROL IN THE FIVE

Get comfortable. Realize that you are in the Presence of the Holy Spirit who produces the fruit of self-control. Sense that you are receiving special attention because you join God in love and concern for the Five.

“The fruit of the Spirit is ... self-control...” - Galatians 5:22 (NEB)

“He must not be overbearing or short-tempered; he must be no drinker, no brawler, no money-grabber, but hospitable, right-minded, temperate, just, devout, and self-controlled.”-Titus 1:7-9 (NEB)

Self-control is one of the four cardinal virtues listed by ancient theologians. It means disciplined, purposeful, controlled, balanced living. This is one of the fruits produced for the good of the self. The individual profits most from it. Yet self cannot be mastered, the wild-horse emotions cannot be controlled apart from the maturing quality produced by the Holy Spirit.

Since this is a fruit necessary for the development of the individual, ask God to help each of the Five to see its advantages. Then pray that the Holy Spirit will guide them into experiences and condition their response so that this God-like quality can begin to grow in them.

“May He strengthen you in his glorious might with ample power to meet whatever comes with fortitude, patience and joy...”-Colossians 1:11-12 (NEB) - Wendell E. Hurt, Kentucky
Day 35: PRAY THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT MAY PRODUCE PATIENCE

Get comfortable. Realize that you are in the Presence of the Holy Spirit who produces the fruit of patience.

"The fruit of the Spirit is...patience..." - Galatians 5:22 (NEB)

"Let us even exult in our present suffering, because we know that suffering trains us to endure, and endurance brings proof that we have withstood the test, and this proof is the ground of hope." - Romans 5:3-5 (NEB)

The nature of our Lord is patience. Consider how long He waits on each of us! He waits patiently for us to see, to hear, to believe, to come to Him. Think of Jesus--quiet, calm, serene--filled with anticipation of redemption and wholeness for the lives of those He met. According to Paul’s lesson, personal perseverance, despite tribulations, sustains each individual with inner strength that builds character to live their days with hope. This is another fruit which the Spirit produces in the receiver.

Pray for the Five to have experiences which can be nurtured by the Holy Spirit to produce the fruit of patience in all their relationships.

"May He strengthen you in his glorious might with ample power to meet whatever comes with fortitude, patience, and joy..." - Colossians 1:11-12 (NEB) - Robin Lee Fitch, Georgia

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VIII  CHRIST-LIKE QUALITIES

Day 36:  PRAY THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT MAY PRODUCE GOODNESS IN THE FIVE

Get comfortable. Realize that you are in the Presence of the Holy Spirit who produces the fruit of goodness.

"The fruit of the Spirit is ... goodness ..." - Galatians 5:22 (NEB)

"My friends I have no doubt in my own mind that you yourselves are full of goodness..." - Romans 15:14 (NEB)

God is goodness. God is the Source of all goodness. Goodness is God-ness. Jesus said, "There is only one who is good and that is God." (Luke 18:19) A good person is God-like. We are not naturally good. To the contrary, like Adam, the seed of rebellion is within us. Paul reminds us in Ephesians that we are His workmanship. Some, like the Romans to whom Paul was writing, realize it. See we become the complete and full creation of God.

Pray that each of the Five may respond to the gentle work of the Holy Spirit so that He can make them God-like, sharing His character, and growing in goodness. Pray that each person for whom you now have responsibility may be so open to the cultivating race of the Holy Spirit that they will realize that He wants to extend His goodness throughout creation.

"He prays hard for you all the times that you may stand fast, ripe in conviction, and wholly devoted to doing God’s will..."-Colossians 4:12 (NEB)- John W. Potts, Tennessee
CHRIST-LIKE QUALITIES

Day 37: PRAY THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT MAY PRODUCE KINDNESS IN THE FIVE

Get comfortable. Realize that you are in the Presence of the Holy Spirit who produces the fruit of kindness. Sense that you are receiving special attention because you join with God in love and concern for the Five.

“Then put on the garments that suit God’s chosen people, his own, his beloved: compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience.”—Colossians 3:12-13

“Be generous to one another, tender hearted, forgiving one another as God in Christ forgave you.”—Ephesians 4:32 (NEB)

What God requires He provides. Kindness includes friendliness, gentleness, generosity and sympathy. Someone has reminded us to be kind to every person we meet because he or she is having a hard day. So much it is needed. Yet it is not natural. Kindness is a fruit of the Spirit, the result of God working with us to create this quality.

Bring each of the Five before Him. Get a picture of God forgiving him or her for any unkind act he or she may have committed. Now see the forgiven person receiving garments of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience from the Father. Visualize each of the Five becoming generous and tenderhearted in dealing with others. Thank God for what this growing fruit of kindness can mean to those whom he or she influences.

“He prays hard for you all the times that you stand fast, ripe in conviction, and wholly devoted to doing God’s will...”—Colossians 4:12 (NEB) - Robert E. Sabo, Illinois
CHRIST-LIKE QUALITIES

Day 38: PRAY THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT MAY PRODUCE HUMILITY IN THE FIVE

Get comfortable. Realize that you are in the Presence of the Holy Spirit who produces the fruit of humility. Sense that you are receiving special attention because you join God in love and concern for the Five.

"The fruit of the Spirit is ...humility..."-Galatians 5:22 (NEB)

"All of you should wrap yourselves in the garment of humility towards each other, because God sets his face against the arrogant but favors the humble."-1 Peter 5:5

Humility comes only from one who is strong. The quality is not one of self-effacement, but one of knowing who we are. Again it is an attribute of God. The presence of the Holy Spirit within us produces fruit which is like Christ. As the fruits are grown, one by one, we become more and more like Him. And this is the purpose of the Spirit. Humility is not a gift of the Spirit. Rather it is fruit which we work to produce in cooperation with Him.

As you pray for the Five today, see each of them standing before God in wonder that He loves them. They stand taller and walk straighter because of that. Then imagine each one of them walking away, encountering other persons on the journey, and consider the ways they respond to the others because they have been in the Presence of the Eternal and are accepted by Him.

"He prays hard for you all the times that you may stand fast, ripe in conviction, and wholly devoted to doing God's will..."-Colossians 4:12 (NEB)-Ervin H. Mason, Jr., Kentucky
CHRIST-LIKE QUALITY

Day 39: PRAY THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT MAY PRODUCE FAITHFULNESS IN THE FIVE

Get comfortable. Realize that you are in the Presence of the Holy Spirit who produces the fruit of faithfulness. Sense that you are receiving special attention because you join God in love and concern for the Five.

“The fruit of the Spirit is ... faithfulness...”-Galatians 5:22 (NEB)

“There is nothing love cannot face; there is no limit to its faith, its hope, and its endurance.” - I Corinthians 13:7 (NEB)

Faithfulness is another characteristic of God. It means constancy. He can be depended upon. There is no changing. He is the same every day. This quality also needs to be cultivated in each of the Five. Try as they will, they cannot produce it unaided. Only the Holy Spirit, working with the raw material within them, can make them constant and unchanging like God.

By now you are beginning to feel that you know the Five. Pray that they may become faithful in their family relationships, in their dependability at work, and in their cultivation of the spiritual. See what this fruit of faithfulness can mean if it is cultivated in the Five for a decade. Claim it for them. Believe it for them.

“He prays hard for you all the times that you may stand fast, ripe in conviction, and wholly devoted to doing God’s will...”-Colossians 4:12 (NEB)- B. Harry Spurrier, Kentucky
CHRIST-LIKE QUALITIES

Day 40: PRAY THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT MAY PRODUCE LOVE IN THE FIVE

Get comfortable. Realize that you are in the Presence of the Holy Spirit who produces the fruit of love. You have been praying forty days for the Five. They will never be the same; neither will you.

“The fruit of the Spirit is love...”-Galatians 5:22

“Father I desire that these men, who are thy gift to me, may be with me where I am...so that the love thou hadst for me may be in them...”-John 17:24,26 (NEB)

Love is listed as both a “gift” of the spirit and as a “fruit” of the Spirit. Today we are thinking about the “fruit.” Fruits have to be cultivated. The fruit of love grows as we cultivate it, as we exercise it. It begins with God. It is, of course, the essence of His nature. And as the Holy Spirit works with us we become more and more like Him. That means we make a decision to be loving and discipline ourselves to do loving things. The Holy Spirit in response to our cultivation effort, will produce a harvest of love.

Recall what the love of God has done for you and how your ability to love others has grown. Pray for the Five that they may know the love of God and begin to reflect His loving nature in their relationships. Ask God to penetrate into the areas of their lives where hatred controls. Picture how the loving nature of God growing in them can transform their attitudes and relationships. Now claim that for them.

Jesus “spoke to them in a parable to show that they should keep on praying and never lose heart.” -Luke 18:1 (NEB)- J. Charles Boling, Alabama
Reflections  
March 7, 1997  
9:45 p.m.  

I received a call from Mrs. T., President of University Homes. I had a call the previous week on my beeper from her, but never had the opportunity to return it. However, this night I had time so I returned Mrs. T's call.  

Though I was extremely busy, her concerns were so draining emotionally for her that I listened for over two hours to a woman crying out for a listening ear. The wonder of this call is that Mrs. T. is one of the women from University Homes who prayed 40 days for the leaders of CUMC. I feel blessed that God opened University Homes for CUMC so that people feel they can (2½ hours later - March 8, early a.m. late night) call and we would be there with a listening ear and a caring heart. The project is still on-going because I believe God has established some spiritual relationships that will last.  

Thank you God for having me in place to hear the call and cry for help and prayer.
Reflections
March 8, 1997

Mrs. J. called to express her concern over some tough issues she is facing with both her daughters. The uncertainty of whereabouts of a granddaughter had really disturbed her. The other daughter was on drugs and for the last two weeks her health had been failing her.

Mrs. J. has lived in University Homes for six or more years and is very active in the community. However, she is going through tough times financially and needs guidance and prayer.

This second call in two nights from persons of University Homes gives me hope that presence and prayer helps build relations that are unexplainable. That these two women called and shared deep emotional needs reinforces my stance and my conviction that Central can really impact the residents of University Homes. Why? Because we care and because our people are becoming caring people and are willing to be servants through service and missions.
Saturday nine persons from leadership walked the streets of University Homes sharing and inviting everyone we saw to the Health Fair next week.

One notable event happened as we broke up into teams of 2's and 3's. We each took an area in which persons who had been on the prayer list resided. One beautiful moment of God's grace occurred as we sat outside to talk to a lady who was undergoing some extreme health problems. Mrs. James, another lady, joined us complaining about arthritis. As we sat around a third lady, an amputee in her wheel chair, came out and asked us to come into her home and pray for all of them. This was so fulfilling to hold a prayer meeting at 3:30 p.m. with persons from such diverse backgrounds. I felt the presence of the Lord, and the anointing of the Holy Ghost became real to everyone in that home. As the residents called on God for alcohol deliverance, a drug free environment and healing of all sorts; the moment was one of excitement, and a higher awareness of the Holy Ghost - mending of minds and spirits on a common front. My whole spirit, soul and body was in tune with those around us. Included was a husband who when the wife after looking into his eyes commanded him to come and get in the circle since he was so much under the influence of alcohol. When we finished praising and thanking God he hugged me and my team member from Central. It was a very humbling experience, but very rewarding as we realized that even in the midst of the worst scenario God still has some who know the power of prayer. With collective unity in prayer, we will continue to watch God bring healing to this community. To God be the glory! As I think back, this is the same block I first met on September 4, 1966.

God is good all the time.
Reflections
March 10, 1997

These are some thoughts pre and post project remembering September 4 the first major contact of a resident of University Homes.

March 7, 8, 9 another mission outreach were of contacts with persons living in University Homes. Reunion relates the first meeting with the same person 7 months later.
APPENDIX C

NOMINATIONS AND PERSONNEL

SELECTED LEADERSHIP TEAM EVALUATIONS
NOMINATIONS
AND
PERSONNEL
Church Conference
COUNCIL ON MINISTRIES (continued)

REPORT OF RESTRUCTURING OF THE TASK FORCE

Based on Ephesians 4:12 (...for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry...), the model emphasizes the dynamic relationship between a newly created commission on Education, which educates and equips the laity for ministry, and the Council on Ministries, which empowers and sends the laity into the world to perform various aspects of the work of Christian ministry and service.

The new model also emphasizes teamwork and the pivotal role of the clergy as the encouragers and facilitators of the ministry of the laity. Instead of operating independently, all work areas and committees, which are chaired by laypeople, are now organized under five broad ministry areas:

- **Worship** - corporate praise, Thanksgiving, prayer and celebration;
- **Teaching** - communication and proclamation of God’s Word;
- **Nurture** - caring for the needs of the congregation;
- **Service** - caring for the needs of the community and;
- **Evangelism** - leading people to Christ.

Each ministry area is coordinated by a lay/clergy team—one layperson and one clergy person— who work together and with the work area and committee chairs to develop and implement ministry partnerships and cooperative programs.

In recognition of the importance of effective communication in all aspects of ministry, the communication work area has been taken out of the Council on Ministries structure and elevated to its own administrative status.

We believe that the new model, inspired by the Holy Spirit, will help bring focus, energy and effectiveness to our overall mission: “To positively influence the community by inviting children, youth, and adults to God through Jesus Christ.”

Respectfully Submitted by: Adrienne Harris, Task Force Chair
Church Conference  
COUNCIL ON MINISTRIES  
REPORT OF THE COUNCIL ON MINISTRIES RESTRUCTURING TASK FORCE (continued)

Felicia Phillips, COM Chair (97)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Worship</th>
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<th>Service</th>
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<td>Men's Bible Study</td>
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<td>Church &amp; Society</td>
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<td>Class Leaders</td>
<td>Health &amp; Welfare</td>
<td>Missions</td>
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<td>Youth Ministry</td>
<td>Status of R. Of W</td>
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<td>Lay Speakers</td>
<td>Young Adults</td>
<td>Religion &amp; Race</td>
<td>UMW</td>
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<td>Book Table</td>
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<td>Wed. Night</td>
<td>Membership</td>
<td>Christian Unity</td>
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<td>Scouting</td>
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<td>Disciple</td>
<td>Singles</td>
<td>AARP</td>
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<td>Adults</td>
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Support Groups

- AIDS  
- Grief  
- Cancer  
- Recovery  
- Sadie Mays  
- Unemployment  
- Prison  
- Homeless  
- Summer Camp  
- AIDS Task Force  
- Campus Ministry  
- Roots (Adoption)
Report of the Committee on Nominations and Personnel
1997

COUNCIL ON MINISTRIES
Work Area Chairperson (continued)

Work Area Chairpersons

Christian Unity & Interreligious Concerns (1). Katrina Walker (97)
Church and Society (2). John Southall (96)
Evangelism (3). Barbaralaine North, Chair (95)
   * Membership (4). June Hollis (96)
   * Class Leaders (5). Marcia Walker (96)
(6). Horace Griffith (96)
Health and Welfare (7). Steen James/ (8).Rita Brown (96)
Higher Education and Campus Ministries (9). Don Chisholm (97)
Missions (10). Jeff Smith (97)
Religion and Race (11). Rosalyn Joseph (96)
Status & Role of Women (12). Lillie Middlebrooks (95)
Stewardship (13). Earnestine Linder (96)
Worship (14). Mary Scott (96)

Coordinators

Children's Ministries (15). Regina Beal Brown (97)
(16). Annette Jones (96)
Church School (17). Cedric Brooks (95)
Family Ministries (18). Donald & Yvonne Gaither (97)
Older Adult Ministries (19). Edith Thomas (95) exempt on DMin Comm.
(20). Mattie Briscoe (97)
Report of the Committee on Nominations and Personnel 1997

COUNCIL ON MINISTRIES
Coordinators (continued)

United Methodist Men TBA 1997
United Methodist Women (21). Barbara Hubbard (95)
Singles Ministries (22). Phyllis Rowan (96)
Young Adult Ministries (23). Landrum Davenport (97)
Youth Ministries (24). Joyce Smith (97)
(25). Corine Munroe Scott (97)
(26). Marion Linder (97)
(27). Vincent Scott (97)

Youth Member of the Council on Ministries
(28). Tabiatha Simon (95)

Young Adult Member on Council on Ministries
(29). E. Bernard Campbell (95)

NOMINATIONS AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Class of 1999</th>
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<tr>
<td>*</td>
<td>(30). David Carr</td>
<td>Cheryl A. Johnson</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(31). Kim Walker</td>
<td>Christopher Beal</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(32). Helen Hill</td>
<td>Lynn Thomas Smothers</td>
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* The class of 1999 nominated from the floor.

** Filling the unexpired term of Warren Colter

Respectfully Submitted: Lynn Thomas Smothers, Secretary
Pastor Smothers, Chair
Report of the Committee on Nominations and Personnel
1997

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Chairperson: Rod Frierson (97) (33)

Vice Chair: _________________________________
(Elected by Finance in '97)
Member by virtue of Elected Position:

Senior Pastor Chair, Council on Ministries Lay Delegate Chair, Trustees
Lay Leader Business Administrator Treasurer Financial Secretary
Chair, Stewardship Chair, Administrative Board

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE/AT-LARGE MEMBERS

Nelson Bond Issac Clark Horace Griffith Beverly Hargrove
Geneva Harris Harold Jordan Greg Leepow Ernestine Linder
Lillie Middlebrooks Hope Merritt Jr. James Thomas Maurice Thrash
Richard Wade Malcolm Walker Brenda Williams

COMMUNICATIONS

Fatimot Ladipo (34) Johnnie Storey (35)

COUNCIL ON MINISTRIES

Chairperson: Felicia Phillips (97) (36)

Vice Chair: _________________________________
(Elected by COM in '97)

Chairperson, Administrative Board
President, United Methodist Youth Council
President, United Methodist Men
Senior Lay Leader
President, United Methodist Women
Chair, Class Leaders

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# Report of the Committee on Nominations and Personnel

## 1997

### STAFF PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Class of 1999</th>
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<tr>
<td>Kim Anderson</td>
<td>Curtis James</td>
<td>(37). Curtis Bailey, Chair</td>
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<tr>
<td>Willace Magee</td>
<td>Laurie Johnson</td>
<td>(38). Linda Richardson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonita Swain</td>
<td>Hope Merritt Jr.</td>
<td>(39). Jackie Sykes</td>
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Doris Birch, Lay Delegate to Annual Conference

Vice Chair: __________________________

(Elected by SPRC in '97)

### BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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<th>Class of 1999</th>
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<tr>
<td>James T. Clements</td>
<td>Joe Amos</td>
<td>(40). Antonio Harrell</td>
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<tr>
<td>Celeste T. Daniel</td>
<td>Nelson Bond</td>
<td>(41). Maria Johnson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Donald Reed Sr.</td>
<td>Cynthia Wyatt</td>
<td>(42). Maurice Thrash, Chair</td>
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Vice Chair: __________________________

(Elected by Trustees in '97)

Franklin O'Neal Sr., Chair of the Board of Central Methodist Gardens

Beverly Hargrove III, Chair of Building Committee

Harold Jordan III, Co-Chair of Building Committee
Report of the Committee on Nominations and Personnel
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ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD

Chairperson: Joseph Hudson (97)
Vice Chair: 
(Elected by Ad. Board in 1997)
Members by virtue of Elected Position:

Senior Pastor, Ex officio
Business Administrator, Ex officio
Financial Secretary, Ex officio
Secretary of Membership/Program Support, Ex officio
Associate Lay Leaders
Chair, SPRC
Secretary, Nominations and Personnel
Chair, Council on Ministries
All Age Level Coordinators
Coordinator of Communications
President, United Methodist Youth Council
Youth Minister
Chair, Building Committee

Associate Pastor, Ex officio
Treasurer, Ex officio
Minister of Music, Ex officio
Senior Lay Leader
Chair, Trustees
Chair, Finance
Church Historian
All Work Area Chairpersons
Superintendent of Church School
President, United Methodist Men
President, United Methodist Women
Director of Christian Education

AT-LARGE

Phyllis Berry
Horace Griffith
Edith Hollis
Eleanor Proctor
Beverly Hargrove

Quays Chapman Reed
Horace Kemp
Jeannette Wilson
Jerome Taylor
Herman Brightharp

Carol Taylor
Armstead Salters
Stella Taylor
Edith Thomas

HONORARY MEMBERS OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD

Marie Dotson
Mozelle Robinson

Charles T. Rabb

Charles Foster

LAY LEADERS

Senior: Jackie Sykes (97) (43).
Associate:

LAY DELEGATES TO ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Doris Birch (96)   A. C. Robinson (96)   Joe Hudson (95)   Beverly Hargrove III (95)
Normarene C. Merritt

The prayer guide was a magnificent asset. I read it and encapsulated its contents. If I could not nutshell the idea, I read the cited scriptures and the notes in my Life Application Bible. If I still did not understand, I discussed the concept with others. I wrote in my own words what the guide advised for prayer for that day. Underneath and centered, I then wrote the names of all the people for whom I prayed that prayer that day. Although, I always started with “The Five”, oftentimes, my list would be quite lengthy. Sometimes, a family member, co-worker, or friend would be number 6 or 9 on my list.

I did not always use the prayer guide, but I almost always prayed for the five persons each day. With the one person I met, I began praying for other family members that I either met or learned of from the persons that I met. When I did not use the prayer guide (usually because I did not study and outline it) I asked God to pour out his grace and mercy on each of the five and provide for their corporal and spiritual needs in accordance with His riches in glory.

Below are suggestions for your consideration as this project progresses:

1. Establish church teams before assigning persons for missions. I did not, to my knowledge, have other persons praying for the same five people for whom I was praying. This will allow the Team Members to encourage, help, and support each other.

2. Assign each person no more than two people, preferably one. As you become involved with that person, you become involved with persons with whom they are involved. Five persons are just too many.

3. There needs to be several sessions of the church teams to work out challenges that arise. I definitely need some guidance from my experience and look eagerly for the opportunity to discuss some issues. This is why I say I will prayerfully consider repeating this.

Thank you for involving me in what has been a real blessing though frustrations were present also. You may use my name, I’ll be happy to discuss further if you like.
1) This project was a good way to begin a mission and to impact the community. I (Kim) am active in the community, but before this project I tended to do outreach without praying that the people I ministered to would develop a relationship with God. In past outreach efforts, I felt that the results would be more obvious if I taught people how to read or helped them think about the decisions they made and learn to make better ones. Even when I ministered to people through Bible study, I did not pray for their relationship with God. Not only did this project show me the importance of praying for that, but it showed me how to pray for that. And by having a group of people praying for the same thing, using the same method, I felt that I was part of a powerful community. I think ultimately that it is that sense of community, that sense of being led by God as a community that will ultimately have a positive impact on our surroundings.

2) Derek and I only met one of our five, Lena James, and we only met with her once. It was a good experience. We saw that she was strong in her faith. We learned that not only were we praying for her but that she was praying for others. It reinforced this idea of being part of a circle of reaffirming faith. We were impressed by the fact that she seemed to be living according to God's word. She took care of her children in the neighborhood. She always found food for any person that might walk by and smell dinner cooking. She let her faith strengthen her. Even though one of her sons seemed to constantly lose his decade-long battle with drugs, she had left it in God's hands. She had come to the point where she would not let it weigh her down. It was an uplifting and positive experience. I felt that she was stronger in her faith than I was. I learned by listening to her.

It was also a good experience because it took me away from the stereotypical way people in government housing are characterized. People talk about statistics and forget about the human element. Sitting and talking to Lena about her children and about her granddaughter whom she is raising, I was reminded again of that humanness that we would prefer to forget. She could be my grandmother. Again, it reinforced the sense of community that seems so tenuous these days.

3) We did not attend the orientation or information sessions. Pastor Fincher stopped me one day and asked if I would like to participate. I did not really understand the scope of this project, but it sounded interesting so I agreed. He gave me a booklet and Derek and I started praying together. One unforeseen benefit: as part of this project Derek and I prayed together. Derek taking one day and I taking another. That is the first time we have prayed together. I also can not stress enough how enlightening the prayer booklet was, because I learned so much about how to pray.

4) Very valuable: together time with Derek, feeling a part of a greater community. See answers #2 and #3 above.
5) Please see #2. I really enjoyed this exercise. The discipline of praying for someone for forty days was an important experience and helped to strengthen my prayer life. I do not think that I would do it again, not any time soon at least. While the prayer was fine, I felt that I did not have enough time to visit my five. Both Derek and my weekends tend to be packed so visitation was not an easy thing to fit in. If I did the mission effort, I would like to do it right. Since I doubt that I would be able to visit, I would not take up the responsibility of being part of another mission effort.

6) I don't know that the prayer book guidelines made a difference in my attitudes towards University Home residents. It did however teach me how to pray to remedy my own shortcomings. The things that I was praying for them, were many times things that I myself needed to work on: prayers to remove sin, to praise God, to be faithful disciples of Christ, etc.

7) Not new insights, but reinforced perceptions
   a. The poor: We are part of the same community. Let us pray one for another that we both might be strengthened in the way that leads to life eternal.
   b. Yourself (Kim): The joy in prayer - which I did not know - especially intercessory prayer. The power of collective prayer.
   c. God: Reinforced the idea that God wants a loving relationship with us. He's not there setting up arbitrary rules for His amusement. He loves us and wants a relationship with us even though we do not always live by His commandments. It was interesting doing this project while we were taking Disciple I.
   d. Central Leadership Team: No new insights.
   e. Mission Outreach: That is vibrant, not just reaching out to people in far off places, but reaching out to neighborhoods right near us.

8) I did not know about CUMC outreach to the poor, beyond what was done with the food pantry.

9) They expect derivative resistance from the residents. I would think that it is easier to take the Gospel to people who know nothing about it (like people in other countries) than it is to take it to people who know something about it, but have chosen to believe that religion and spirituality are not for them.

10) Better prayer life. Quality prayer time with my husband.

11) The team concept is good because it reinforces the idea of community. Also, you feel more at ease in visitation because you know that it does not all depend on you.

12) Our mission effort was average.
13) Risk? That there is less risk in the daylight. We visited during the daytime. Also Lena talked about gunshots that could be heard at night. Not so much in University Homes, but in another housing development that she used to live in. That only reinforced the feeling that there is risk, particularly at night.
University Homes Project
by
Marion Linder

1. This project is most definitely a good and valid way to start a mission project to impact the residents of University Homes or any other such type community. The pre-selecting of persons made it easier for me as a participant to get involved. There was some uncertainty as to what to expect.

2. There was much apprehension subsequent to meeting the individuals. The initial event of praying daily for these persons made meeting them somewhat easier to face them. The faces did not agree with the mental images that I had conjured up while praying the prescribed prayers.

3. The front-end orientation was not as detailed as I would have liked was my first impression. But, in hind sight that was for the better. After having formed an image of the persons I was going to visit and finally seeing and interacting I had to reform my opinions. I believe that less secular preparation is best. This allows you to be more flexible and enables you to adapt to a person faster. Your spiritual foundation however should be very firm.

4. This portion was very good in that it allowed me to search my inner self and review things that had gone array in my life. You can not confront problems or situations of others without first dealing with your own.

5. No! I have always known that there are good, kind and decent persons living in the projects. These people are usually a mirror of the larger society. They only manifest themselves in a different mode - survival mode. I found that the youngest children are spontaneous, explorative, and inquisitive as any other children. As the children get older they shift into a survival mode. This goes on until they become older adults. I still see a large number of older adults that are caring and provide nurturing to the young in several situations. This mission has made me want to become active in the community. The only rough part is facing the rejection by certain elements of the residents. My first inclination was to say to several sullen individuals “I do not want to be in your dirty smelly home any more than you want me to be here.” That was a negative feeling to combat the negative attitudes given by some residents. (Wrong attitude I am sure, but I am human). On the other hand, I met individuals that were superb and the mutual respect and love flowed. Those individuals made the visits worth occurring. Actually I learned more from the exchange.

6. After actually meeting with the individuals there was a disconnect. The prayer book for me help set the stage for needs and concerns but, the prayers were very generic and lacked personality. As stated earlier, I used the prayers as self preparations.
7. (a) There are wide arrays of persons of all socio-economics living in the projects. Some are trapped and can not do any better, and others have resigned themselves to the situations and have made a decent and moral life for themselves and their families. (b) I still relate to people as they relate to me. I will usually make the first, second and third overture toward an individual, but will withdraw after repeated rejections. I must discard this attitude and be more tolerant when out working in mission and other situations. (c) God is omnipresent and resides everywhere. His intentions are not understood by me when I see and feel the negative vibes coming from the black male residents. (d) Missionary/evangelism work is not Central’s forte in life. There are persons in the congregation that have the kind of quirky personality to handle this type of activity. I must admit it was fun and it made some of the participants feel good and formed a bond. The question is will we keep the momentum going and not let this be another hot flash. (e) Churches are not new to these areas. It is a matter of where people put their priorities. These persons can get on buses or call cabs to go where ever they want to go but find all kinds of excuses for not going to church. However, we must continue to make the word available to this segment. I am a firm believer that persons raise themselves up through faith and a belief in a higher being. So the answer is yes, we must continue outreach and mission. But, not as bleeding heart wimps.

8. Central had met with some success through the Youth Enrichment Program. However, there was a natural bond because most of these youth came from Central Gardens. The church’s past reputation of elitism does not position it to be a neighborhood facility. A mission effort from a facility that does not blend into the community will have a difficult time making a go of outreach.

9. Mission is hard and must require lots of dedication and determination. You cannot spot go in and out. There must be consistency in the effort. Not many people take the time to get to know the residents and the dynamics of the area. Often we do not want to be reminded of the thin line that separates us from being in the same situation. We want quick fixes and do not want to spend the necessary time and effort to cultivate relationships. We are apprehensive about bringing the projects into our homes and lives. You cannot be successful by only going into the projects, but you must bring people out of the projects and into our lives and homes. That calls for a major commitment of time, resources and energy. How do you handle Pandora’s box once you open it up?

10. Yes. Writing these responses and reflecting over what I have experienced, I am finding that I am as much of a problem as those that I am trying to reach out to. It is easy to invite persons to come to church or go out to bring them to church. It is much harder to try to incorporate them into my life and possible social structure without treating them like cute puppies for the moment.
11. The team concept is okay when they are very small and the individuals in the team are very, very, very similar. You do not need to have too many different persons with different dynamics in the situation. When there are too many persons in a setting it is hard to get down to the interpersonal level. I am a maverick and prefer working near alone. A team is needed for safety and a second pair of eyes and ears. We should dub our efforts guerrilla outreach. I learned during my tours in Vietnam that a small team is very effective and can accomplish more than a large battalion any day in a combat.

12. Average.

13. I still have a healthy respect for the residents of the projects. I periodically do work in Thomasville and Englewood so I am not afraid of the residents and know how not to spook them. Many are in the control, substance industry and you should make sure you are not perceived to be there to squeal on their marketing efforts. However, having my wife and daughter present on the scene did add another dimension to the situation. Their safety appeared to be less of an issue after several visits.
UNIVERSITY HOMES PROJECT

1. Do you feel this project was a valid way to begin a mission effort and impact a community? Yes.

2. Will you evaluate your experience of finally meeting the people for whom you have prayed for? I received the names of the people the day before visiting them. Therefore, I did not have an opportunity to pray for several days for them prior to the visitation. However, my experience meeting only one person on my list was enjoyable and surprising.

3. Would you evaluate the orientation and information sessions in which the teams were selected? Was it informative, enlightening, spiritual, challenging, etc.? I felt that the orientation and information session was spiritual but challenging because I did not have any information concerning the five people our team was assigned to visit.

4. How valuable was the experience of quiet time, of reflecting and interceding as instruments of preparation for the mission? I did not have an opportunity to experience a time of preparation for the mission.

5. How has your attitude changed toward persons in public housing before and after the visitation and would you be willing to repeat this effort in another missions effort? My attitude about public housing before the vision was one of fear. I think that the fear was from not knowing what to expect. Also, the fear was probably because the only knowledge of public housing was based on violence as reported by the news media and television programs. However, I was pleasantly surprised that the people in the community were friendly. Also, the person my team visited with was very nice and receptive. I would be willing to repeat this effort in another missions effort.

6. What difference did the prayer book guidelines make in your attitude towards persons living in University Homes? Not applicable.

7. As you reflect on the things learned and experienced doing this project, what new insights or revelations have you received about the following?

   a. The poor people who live in public housing.
      I realized that the people were not as violent as I had imagined. They seemed to be very nice. Also, I realized that many of them have the same dreams and disappointments as people who do not live in public housing.

   b. Yourself
      I realized that I had never really given much thought about the people in public housing. I guess I have been so caught in my own 'world' that I took for granted that we all are just one or two pay checks away from where they are now.
c. **God**

d. **Central Leadership Team (72's)**
   Through this experience I realized that Central has some spiritually powerful people. I also realized that we do have the kind of loving and willing spirit that is needed for mission work.

e. **Mission Outreach**
   I realized that mission outreach can be rewarding. Also, it can make a big difference in other peoples lives. This assignment showed how just a few can touch many lives and how different this world would be if many more people reached out to others.

8. Before the project started, what were your views concerning Central United Methodist Church's mission outreach to the poor? My view concerning Central's mission outreach to the poor is that we helped many people but they had to come to Central for help. Central did not seem to go into the communities unless it was a church member.

9. What do you see as a major reason churches have difficulty doing missions in housing projects? I feel that the major reason that churches have difficulty doing missions in housing projects is due to fear of the unknown and stereotypes about the people in housing communities.

10. Did you experience any change in your life during this period which you would think could be attributed to the overall project? The project changed my views about the people in public housing in general.

11. How did you feel about the team concept? I thought it was a good idea not just from a safety standpoint, but it also allowed for a time of sharing.


   Excellent  Average  Above Average  Inadequate

13. How do you feel about the risk before and after the visitation? Before the visitation I was concerned about the risk but I trusted God to protect us. After the visitation I realized the risk that Pastor Fincher took in paving the way for us to be received by the people we visited. I was also thankful that everyone had a good experience and returned safely.
APPENDIX D

LETTERS TO LEADERSHIP TEAM

UNIVERSITY HOMES CORRESPONDENCE
MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 5, 1997
TO: The 72's
FROM: Pastor Fincher
SUBJECT: University Homes Project

Again, I want to thank you for helping us launch our mission effort to the University Homes community.

As you know, your participation was a vital part of my Doctor of Ministry project and I need your cooperation one more time. Every project must be evaluated by those who participated, and if possible would you take a few moments and fill out the enclosed questionnaire. In addition, some of you journaled and wrote about the experience of prayer, time, and sharing. If you would give me, in addition to the questionnaire, at least a one page synopsis about the experience or incidences.

Let me thank you again and as always I'm up against a time schedule for having my dissertation finished, so if you can get these back within a week, I would appreciate it very much.

If you wouldn't mind including your name in the dissertation, please sign and date the letters.
MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 13, 1997

TO: Leadership Team

FROM: Pastor Fincher

SUBJECT: University Home Project

I want to thank you personally for being a part of the leadership team of Central. Secondly, thank you for your participation and prayers for our Church and the impact we will make on our community this year. As you know, I am currently in the midst of my final project for the Doctor of Ministry Program. It is my sincere desire that you and many of the leaders of Central will join me in the completion of this project which centers around determining how to positively impact our community through Christian Education, Missions and Spirituality.

I would like to present a brief orientation of this project, Saturday, January 18, at 12 noon immediately following the leadership training. I pray that your schedule will allow you to spend about 45 minutes to explore some practical ways to positively impact our community.

Included is an abstract from my project proposal. Hopefully, I can count on you and thanks again.
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TO: Leadership Team

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SUBJECT: University Homes Project

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I would like to present a brief orientation of this project, Saturday, January 18, at 12 noon immediately following the leadership training. I pray that your schedule will allow you to spend about 45 minutes to explore some practical ways to positively impact our community.

Included is an abstract from my project proposal. Hopefully, I can count on you and thanks again.

I pray that those of you who are interceding for the women of University Homes and others will continue to daily fill the presence of the Lord in your prayers for these women. May your spiritual lives be enriched.

It is fitting if you could keep some kind of journal periodically about what you experience over these forty days for you are an essential and vital part of this project and thank you deeply. It’s okay to put me on the list (smiles).
March 3, 1997

TO: The 72

FROM: Pastor Fincher and Adrienne Harris
Evangelism Team Co-Facilitators

RE: “Spring Up For Life” at University Homes

Greeting in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

Thank you for your continued support of the University Homes evangelism project. We have began to establish some meaningful relationships with our brothers and sisters in that community, and we know that God will bless both them and us as we are obedient to his call to “go and make disciples.”

We invite you to join us at University Homes again this Saturday, March 8, as we help the Celebration of Life ministry team canvass the neighborhood to promote Central’s upcoming Walk-A-Thon and Health Awareness Fair. We will meet at the church at 3 p.m. and then pair up and visit our neighbors at University Homes and other communities in Vine City. We should return to the church by 4 p.m.

This is a great opportunity - not only to continue our friendships with the people we have already met in the area - but to make some new friends as well. We look forward to seeing you on Saturday.

* God bless.
January 23, 1997

James "Chico" Fincher  
Central United Methodist Church  
501-7 Mitchell Street, S.W.  
Atlanta, Georgia 30314-4723

Dear James "Chico",

On behalf of For Women Only at University/John Hope, I wish to extend a special Thank You! for your kindness and caring of our community, and invite you to continue your involvement.

On Saturday, February 15, 9:00 a.m. (during Black History Month and Arbor Day), we will celebrate and commemorate our heroes and she-roes by planting trees in their honor.

On Friday, March 28, 1 p.m.-5 p.m. University/John Hope and V-103 will host Opportunity Day! a day when registration for various opportunities will be made available for residents and youth. Please call us at 404-332-1529, if you wish to be a part of any of these events.

Once again, thank you for caring.

Sincerely,

Linda Davie  
 Resident Services, Atlanta Housing Authority  
University/John Hope Community
March 31, 1997

Pastor James "Chico" Fincher
Central United Methodist Church
501-7 Mitchell Street, S.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30314-4723

Dear Pastor Fincher:

A special Thank You! to you and Central United Methodist Church for your support and enthusiasm in For Women Only’s Employment/Training–OPPORTUNITY DAY held Friday, March 28. Because of you, over 300 residents were successful in making contact with available resources and opportunities.

For Women Only will be following the development of each of our residents with the hope of helping them make successful and long term matches. This is just the beginning of what we know will be winning and favorable outcomes!

We look forward to working with you, and keeping you informed of our progress.

Once again, thank you for caring and for always supporting our community.

Sincerely,

Linda Davie
Resident Services
City of Atlanta Housing Authority
University/John Hope Community
SAMPLE INTRODUCTION ENCOUNTER ILLUSTRATION

Hi _______________

I'm _______________

and this is

______________

and you are Mr. or Mrs. ____________________

We're members of Central United Methodist Church over on Mitchell and Northside Drive right across from Morris Brown College. We've been there 69 years, but some of us don't know our neighbors. So we're walking through the neighborhood for the next few weeks trying to get better acquainted with persons in this community. Hopefully, we can find ways to serve as better neighbors. Would you mind if we spend a few moments with you? Your name is ____________________

(either place ok)
QUESTIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS CONSIDERATION

1. How long have you lived in this neighborhood?
2. What prompted you to move here?
3. How long do you plan to stay?
4. Do you know any of your neighbors living here?
5. How often do you visit?
6. Do you like this area?
7. What do you need to know about people moving in next door in order to have a friendly relationship with them?
8. What concerns do you have?
9. If there is one thing you could change about our neighborhood what would it be?
10. Who else should we meet?
11. In what ways can the church help?
12. Would you be interested in church people holding prayer, or Bible study in your home with you and your neighbors?
13. Would you pray for us and our mission?
14. What are the major issues of interest throughout the neighborhood?
APPENDIX F

1990 U. S. CENSUS INFORMATION
UNIVERSITY HOMES
ATLANTA UNIVERSITY HOMES

SOURCE: U. S. CENSUS, 1990

175
**POVERTY STATUS IN 1989**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Below poverty level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All persons for whom poverty status is determined</td>
<td>3,512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persons 18 years and over</td>
<td>2,325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persons 65 years and over</td>
<td>406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Related children under 18 years</td>
<td>1,180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Related children under 5 years</td>
<td>652</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Related children 5 to 17 years</td>
<td>528</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unrelated individuals</td>
<td>719</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All families</td>
<td>993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female householder families</td>
<td>745</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WITH related children under 18 years</td>
<td>679</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WITH related children under 5 years</td>
<td>504</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERCENT BELOW POVERTY LEVEL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All persons</td>
<td>61.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persons 18 years and over</td>
<td>52.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persons 65 years and over</td>
<td>51.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Related children under 18 years</td>
<td>79.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Related children under 5 years</td>
<td>83.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Related children 5 to 17 years</td>
<td>75.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unrelated individuals</td>
<td>60.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All families</td>
<td>59.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WITH related children under 18 years</td>
<td>74.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WITH related children under 5 years</td>
<td>82.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female householder families</td>
<td>65.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WITH related children under 18 years</td>
<td>85.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WITH related children under 5 years</td>
<td>93.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Built</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1989 to March 1990</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Urban and Rural Residence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population Category</th>
<th>Population Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total population</td>
<td>7,011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban population</td>
<td>7,011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of total population</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural population</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of total population</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm population</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### School Enrollment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enrollment Category</th>
<th>Enrollment Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Persons 3 years and over enrolled in school</td>
<td>4,332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preprimary school</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary or high school</td>
<td>619</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent in private school</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>3,664</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### Educational Attainment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Attainment</th>
<th>Attendance Size</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Persons 25 years and over</td>
<td>1,865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 9th grade</td>
<td>339</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9th to 12th grade, no diploma</td>
<td>495</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school graduate</td>
<td>521</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college, no degree</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associates degree</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s degree</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate or professional degree</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent high school graduate or higher</td>
<td>55.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent bachelor’s degree or higher</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Residence in 1985

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Residence Category</th>
<th>Residence Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Persons 5 years and over</td>
<td>6,359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lived in same house</td>
<td>1,722</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lived in different house in U.S.</td>
<td>4,550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same State</td>
<td>1,757</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same county</td>
<td>1,217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Different county</td>
<td>540</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Different State</td>
<td>2,793</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lived abroad</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Disability of Civilian Noninstitutionalized Persons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disability Category</th>
<th>Disability Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Persons 16 to 64 years</td>
<td>5,423</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With a mobility or self-care limitation</td>
<td>335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With a mobility limitation</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With a self-care limitation</td>
<td>312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With a work disability</td>
<td>445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In labor force</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevented from working</td>
<td>263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persons 65 years and over</td>
<td>406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With a mobility or self-care limitation</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With a mobility limitation</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With a self-care limitation</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Children Ever Born per 1,000 Women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Birth Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women 15 to 24 years</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women 25 to 34 years</td>
<td>1,545</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women 35 to 44 years</td>
<td>1,713</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### INCOME IN 1989

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Range</th>
<th>Households</th>
<th>Families</th>
<th>Median Household Income (dollars)</th>
<th>Median Family Income (dollars)</th>
<th>Nonfamily Households</th>
<th>Median Nonfamily Household Income (dollars)</th>
<th>Per Capita Income (dollars)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than $5,000</td>
<td>669</td>
<td>445</td>
<td>5,912</td>
<td>5,884</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>5,853</td>
<td>4,674</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$5,000 to $9,999</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>188</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>145</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10,000 to $14,999</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>95</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>38</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$15,000 to $24,999</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>96</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>96</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$25,000 to $34,999</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>52</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$35,000 to $49,999</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>78</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000 to $74,999</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$75,000 to $99,999</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,000 to $149,999</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$150,000 or more</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### INCOME TYPE IN 1989

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Source</th>
<th>Households</th>
<th>With wage and salary income</th>
<th>Mean wage and salary income (dollars)</th>
<th>With nonfarm self-employment income</th>
<th>Mean nonfarm self-employment income (dollars)</th>
<th>With farm self-employment income</th>
<th>Mean farm self-employment income (dollars)</th>
<th>With Social Security income</th>
<th>Mean Social Security income (dollars)</th>
<th>With public assistance income</th>
<th>Mean public assistance income (dollars)</th>
<th>With retirement income</th>
<th>Mean retirement income (dollars)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,524</td>
<td>758</td>
<td>13,654</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>29,326</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>339</td>
<td>5,755</td>
<td>517</td>
<td>2,867</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>4,971</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### COMMUTING TO WORK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workers 16 years and over</td>
<td>1,697</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent drove alone</td>
<td>28.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent in carpools</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent using public transportation</td>
<td>23.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent using other means</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent walked or worked at home</td>
<td>36.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean travel time to work (minutes)</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### OCCUPATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employed persons 16 years and over</td>
<td>1,760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive, administrative, and managerial occupations</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional specialty occupations</td>
<td>244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technicians and related support occupations</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales occupations</td>
<td>226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative support occupations, including clerical</td>
<td>359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private household occupations</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protective service occupations</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service occupations, except protective and household</td>
<td>320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farming, forestry, and fishing occupations</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precision production, craft, and repair occupations</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machine operators, assemblers, and inspectors</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation and material moving occupations</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers, and laborers</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### INDUSTRY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employed person 16 years and over</td>
<td>1,760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, forestry, and fisheries</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing, nondurable goods</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing, durable goods</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications and other public utilities</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale trade</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail trade</td>
<td>262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance, insurance, and real estate</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business and repair services</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal services</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment, and recreation services</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health services</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational services</td>
<td>633</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other professional and related services</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public administration</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### CLASS OF WORKER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employed persons 16 years and over</td>
<td>1,760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private wage and salary workers</td>
<td>1,408</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government workers</td>
<td>292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local government workers</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State government workers</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal government workers</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-employed workers</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unpaid family workers</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancestry</td>
<td>Count</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welsh</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Indian (excluding Hispanic</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>origin groups)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yugoslavian</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other ancestries</td>
<td>5,865</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**LABOR FORCE STATUS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Persons 16 years and over</td>
<td>5,844</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In labor force</td>
<td>2,437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent in labor force</td>
<td>41.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civilian labor force</td>
<td>2,422</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>1,760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>662</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent unemployed</td>
<td>27.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armed Forces</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not in labor force</td>
<td>3,407</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Males 16 years and over         |       |
| In labor force                  | 2,418 |
| Percent in labor force          | 44.3  |
| Civilian labor force            | 1,062 |
| Employed                        | 818   |
| Unemployed                      | 244   |
| Percent unemployed              | 23.0  |
| Armed Forces                    | 8     |
| Not in labor force              | 1,348 |

| Females 16 years and over       |       |
| In labor force                  | 1,367 |
| Percent in labor force          | 39.9  |
| Civilian labor force            | 1,360 |
| Employed                        | 942   |
| Unemployed                      | 418   |
| Percent unemployed              | 30.7  |
| Armed Forces                    | 7     |
| Not in labor force              | 2,059 |

| Females 16 years and over       |       |
| With own children under 6 years| 3,426 |
| Percent in labor force          | 385   |
| With own children 6 to 17 years only | 197 |
| Percent in labor force          | 61.4  |

- Own children under 6 years in families and subfamilies: 651
- All parents present in household in labor force: 324
- Own children 6 to 17 years in families and subfamilies: 428
- All parents present in household in labor force: 200
- Persons 16 to 19 years: 2,004
- Not enrolled in school and not high school graduate: 36
- Employed or in Armed Forces: 0
- Unemployed: 21
- Not in labor force: 15
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