

Reach 4Them

What doth it profit, my brethren, though a
man say he hath faith, and have not works?
can faith save him?

-James 2:14

Building a Faith-Based Revolution for the Community

A sudden, radical, or complete change . . .

A Revolution

A **fundamental change** in the way of thinking about or visualizing
something: a *change of paradigm*

Activity or movement designed to effect fundamental changes in the
socioeconomic situation

A Build Neighborhoods Manual

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REACH⁴Them

This is about reaching out to the people where they live, struggle, succeed, but often fail. Asking the church to take a step into community development is scary; however, it is right where the Lord wants us to be.

3

Section 1

Introduction

An explanation of how we are called to become involved in community development.

8

Section 2

Community Development

Community development from the perspective of a Christian

10

Section 3

Community Development Model

Our model of what Christian community development looks like.

13

Section 4

Building the Coalition

How putting together a coalition the right way can pay off.

17

Section 5

Start-up

So where does one start?

19

Section 6

Assessment

Understanding what and who you have to work with.

22

Section 7

Organizing

The neighborhood needs to have structure and capacity for your efforts to work.



Introduction

A sudden, radical, or complete change . . . A Revolution

A **fundamental change** in the way of thinking about or visualizing something: a *change of paradigm*

Activity or movement designed to effect fundamental changes in the *socioeconomic* situation

Fundamental Change Required

The original paradigm or model our community is based upon money, greed, individuality, and personal achievement. The model below shifts the focus to more community and biblical values. Faith Based Community Development starts with a revolution; a change in the paradigm we use to structure our efforts.

Revolution

A Change in Paradigm . . .

Biblical **Walk the Walk** John 3:16 **Positive Change** Livable **God First**

Talk the Talk **Jesus** Neighbors **Business** For The People **Upward** Equality

A Revolution

Help One Another Fair Play **For God so loved the world** Forward

Housing **Christian** Good Works **Home Ownership** Compassion

Economic Development Community **Amenities** Building **Finance** Art



Introduction

An informative manual designed to attract Christians
to the field of faith-based community development

Reach4Them is a informative manual designed to attract Christians to the field of faith-based community development. Starting with three important passages from the New Testament, Reach4Them then introduces community development. The Reach4Them model demonstrates how sustainable community development can be realized by taking a comprehensive approach.

Working With the Lost

The role of churches in Reach4Them would be directly in line with the directions provided by the bible. The process would put members of the church in the middle of the lost population where they need to be. The church could proclaim their identity throughout the whole process without having to be torn between wanting to lead people to Jesus while trying not to appear too much like the church.

When approaching a neighborhood, the basic message to the people is “you don’t have to live like this”. Information and solutions for the problems they face are offered. If someone really has something to offer them, they will want to hear it. The same is true regarding their personal needs. Imagine offering a seminar on “Raising Teenagers in Difficult Times” and clearly put on the flyers the church as the organizer of the event.

With the church leading the entire process, they can be clear on their identity and mission. The partnership potential is extremely great, both with churches but also with church-operated nonprofits.

Our Reasons

As Christians, why would we get involved in community development?

As members of the this modern civilization, we are inundated with our careers, family responsibilities, and a host of other tasks tugging on our available time each day. We read the bible and we hear the calls from the pulpit about leading the

Christian life; yet our lives do not change. When it comes to sermons on missions or ministries, we sink back and realize our failure to act in this arena. We Christians are a resilient bunch and quickly point out there are others better suited and with more time on their hands. God is really calling other people to do this sort of work. After all, the pews of the church are quite comfortable when thinking of the effort it would take to get involved in something like a mission or ministry.

A Calling

Are we called to carry out missions on behalf of the Lord? Deep down, we know we are. In our day-to-day life, there are so many other “callings” bombarding our minds. Parenting, career, recreation, friendship, hobbies, and other activities make legitimate demands on our time. Any of these can be neglected and suppressed by an individual; however, most of them well-up within us and demand attention after being forgotten. Our Christianity will make similar demands if we just open the door a little. Unfortunately, we have a habit of keeping our faith in a nice neat compartment where we control it.

Community Development

We live each day in the world around us, seeing the good and the bad of society. It is easy to surround ourselves with the good and declaring the bad to be someone else’s problem. There are others who have stepped forward and found out more about what the problem is and how to address it. Community Development has not been known as a Christian activity, although some of the best efforts have come from churches getting involved in their community. But why shouldn’t community development be a Christian dominated activity? Of all the actions we could take on behalf of the Lord, community development is right up there with practicing medicine, street ministries, or leading a congregation.

Providing safe affordable housing to not just the homeless, but all people makes sense. Training people to compete in the job market and addressing their medical needs sounds like what the Lord would want us to spend our time on. Turning a



Introduction

Continued

neighborhood around so the people have hope allows the world to see what Christians are capable of. Setting these examples will show the world what Christianity is all about.

Compassion

There are social and economic needs in this world not being met. The world tells us it is better to not look at those in need and convince ourselves the poor and the needy have brought it upon themselves. As you get to know the people involved, you realize it is not so simple. The people are real and have a past, present, and a future. We cannot fix the past; however we can address their present. If we put effort into it, we can also effect their future. But only if we act with compassion and if we make changes to the paradigm.

In the book of James, a very strong argument is made for Christians to take action. When reading James 2:14-24, a struggle is unleashed in the body of the Christian. The heart immediately embraces the concept, knowing the truth contained within. The brain revolts, producing one excuse after another to dismiss the verse as something intended for others. How amazing is it Jesus saw into our most private of thoughts two thousand years ago.

As people, we are paralyzed by fear more than we would ever admit. Fear of failure, what our friends will think, and what we may have to give up in order to follow what the Word says we should be doing grips our body and conscience.

Many of us struggle with just the faith part of our Christianity and never really reach a point where we do the good works asked of us by the Lord; yet we know we should. We all have opportunities to do good works during the course of our lives by helping someone we know or even a stranger as long as it doesn't require much effort. But what about really putting forward some effort? What might we accomplish for the Lord's Kingdom if we really made the effort?

Jesus was born into a world full of sin and human suffering. Living his life as a testimony to the Father, he spoke the Gospel and completed great works to attract the attention of the people. He furthermore instructed his disciples to do the same. They in turn, have asked us to follow their teachings in how we live our lives.

Making our community better is an excellent way to walk in the footsteps of Jesus. To walk among the lost and show them the light while setting an example of the Christian way of life is what the Lord has called us to do.

James 2:14-24

¹⁴What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?

¹⁵If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food,

¹⁶And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?

¹⁷Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

¹⁸Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.

¹⁹Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

²⁰But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?

²¹Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?

²²Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?

²³And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.

²⁴Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.

1

Introduction

Continued

Christianity and Community Development

In Mathew 25, the Lord gave a parable designed to draw a response from the audience. The king thanked the people around him for taking care of him in his time of need. Knowing they had done none of these, they responded, "when did we do these things?"

The Lord used the response of the king to drive home his point about helping those in need. He told them whatever you do to the least of society, you are actually doing to the Lord. It works both ways in doing harm or providing assistance. In fact, doing nothing is not an option, for it would result in ignoring the Lord in his time of need.

The community is full of needs from widows and orphans, as called out in the Gospels, to families and individuals suffering from the ills of society. Society has woven a complex setting for God's people to dwell within, providing a multitude of issues woven together to attack the community.

A jobless situation leads to depression and neglect of family responsibilities. Lack of education leads to very few employment possibilities resulting in a life of criminal activity becoming attractive. The issues are complex and cannot be solved by a few government policies or spending programs.

It will take a united response from the Christian community to help the people in need. The Lord has directed us to share the gospel and help the needy. He wants us to be a shining example of his love to the world. Our world has been built on a foundation of quid pro quo, where we have to get something in return. Jesus never made his acts of kindness reliant on the subject coming to church or recognizing him as their savior. He let his goodness be a magnet to draw people to him to hear his word. Through his actions people discovered who he was and sought after him following the encounter.

We cannot practice a form of compassion reliant on only if the recipient comes to our church or denounces their sins. Community development is not a direct recruitment campaign, but an expression of our Christianity.

Mathew 25: 34-40

³⁴Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

³⁵For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:

³⁶Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

³⁷Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?

³⁸When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee?

³⁹Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

⁴⁰And 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.



Introduction

Continued

Compassion and Community Development

Compassion does not come from instruction or demand, but from the heart. Christians are called to compassion not simply because the Lord instructed us, but because of our love for the Lord. When you love someone, you embrace the thing they want. In a marriage, you learn about what your spouse wants over time and then you find yourself helping them achieve it.

The Lord lived a life of compassion while on earth and has provided examples and instruction of what this means. He showed genuine caring for the people in need he encountered. Jesus did not ask for anything in return before working miracle healings. He knew people would see his true character and join him for the times he sat down with small and large groups and explained what his father wanted.

Community development requires the same approach. The people have become weary of carpet baggers and snake oil salesman. They scrutinize everyone's offer, always looking for the true angle of the people they encounter.

Christians need to show the community they are here to help the needy without strings attached. We need to follow the same approach as Jesus, who was never shy about sharing the Word of God in the community. His love was never conditional to the people. Instead he showed them the love of God and spoke about what was required to earn salvation from the Father.

In community development, we must continue his work on earth. There are social ills keeping people from experiencing the life he intended. In our communities, there are nonbelievers, nonpracticing Christians, and devout Christians all being overpowered by crime, expensive housing, hunger, and many other issues.

The Church has an opportunity to walk the walk among the people who need help. Our neighborhoods need the righteous to walk upright and lead the way to a better community and personal salvation.

1 John 3:16-19

¹⁶Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

¹⁷But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

¹⁸My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.

¹⁹And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.



Community Development

To make a community whole again

Community development begins with the people and flows into topics such as housing, neighborhoods, jobs, and business. With educated, trained, and engaged people, a community can take advantage of opportunities and reach its full potential. In the absence of these factors, despair robs the community of their opportunities, leaving undesirable living conditions. Few, if any, escape these conditions allowing for a cycle of poverty to reign over the people of the community.

It doesn't have to be like this. The Lord Almighty did not intend for us to live like this at all. In the Bible, we hear the words "prosper and blessed" describing his intentions for us. How do we move from where we are to the one intended by our Lord? It starts with the word "effort". We must make effort to change our environment, but where do we start?

Start With the People

We start with the people; this is where Jesus always put his effort. He wanted to reach the lost and lead them to everlasting life. The Lord came to earth and died on the cross to provide a way for us to reach Heaven. During his time on earth, he was very clear and direct about the role we would play in the process. As Christians, we are to gather the lost sheep and lead them to his word and they will be given the opportunity to follow the path he has provided.

As we look out in our community we see deterioration, lack of maintenance, and a general breakdown in the appearance of our streets. If we look deeper, we see the people who live in the community and we find a level of despair more troubling than the physical conditions. Some of the residents are Christians, while others are not; however both are struggling to survive in the conditions of the community. The Lord instructed us to love our neighbor as we would love the Lord. What we do to the least of his people, we do unto him.

Unconditional Approach

Loving thy neighbor is not a conditional act. The Bible does not say to love those who follow his teachings, nor does it say to show love to those who are interested in his word. The Lord desires us to be living examples of Christianity with the intention of attracting the lost. As Christians, we need to show the people of the world Jesus is the answer to the problems they face.

The topic of community development is very broad and when you finally get a handle on it, you see you are really talking about most things in your life. Where you live, shop, work, and play is your community. When a community does not offer an adequate option in any of these categories, it creates unhappiness. When multiple categories are not being addressed in a community, then one becomes restless and thinks about moving.

Failing to address these shortcomings and moving away can have a wide range of undesirable effects for the individual's community and for the region. The foremost is only the people with the means to relocate will escape the situation. They will pay a steep price to move when all the costs are added up. This will leave only people with low amounts of resources and knowledge to address the needs of the community. Once this occurs on a large scale, the community will see other categories start to fail such as education funding, shopping opportunities, and declining city services. Communities rely on residents from all spectrums of income and cannot survive very well if one is removed.

Righting the Ship

Community development tries to right the ship which has become unbalanced due to changes in the population and amenities. Imagine the largest employer in a city has shut its doors. This has huge community development ramifications as some people move away, others draw unemployment, and the community no longer has the company's payroll being spent in their stores, on mortgages, or for services.



Community Development

To make a community whole again

Continued

Many communities suffered in the past from a movement called “white flight”. As the number of minorities in a community increased, the Caucasian population became afraid of what was happening and left to nearby suburbs which were attracting the higher incomes of the region. Furthermore, there was a flight of minority families who felt the same way and also had the resources to move. This removed a certain income group from the community resulting in a loss of spending in the community.

There are answers to these situations such as redeveloping distressed properties, providing employment training, building affordable safe housing, and other steps. Resources to implement these responses are limited and they are often not coordinated within the community. There is a need to increase resources and provide better coordination of everyone’s effort. A comprehensive approach is required.

The Role of Christians

The role of increasing resources and providing coordination is an excellent role for Christians and churches to play. Using our Christian values and Biblical insights to how God wants our society to live, we can help right the ship. Within each congregation is a wealth of skill, knowledge, and experience to be tapped by a faith-based community development effort. All of these assets were given to us by our Lord and community development is an activity where we can finally use our gifts to further the mission started by Jesus over 2,000 years ago.

3

Community Development Model

A comprehensive model of our community





Community Development Model

A comprehensive model of our community

Our Goals

What we are trying to achieve at each level of the model

There are four different levels of the community we are trying to address: Individuals, Households, Neighborhoods, and Community.

Individuals

Our goals for individuals are to achieve the following:

- **Education**

Lack of education is a leading factor in the urban ills facing our community. Without a good education, people will not be in a position to take advantage of opportunities they will encounter in their life. We want to encourage people to seek education, increase education options, and try to remove any barriers keeping them from education.

- **Skills**

Lack of skills within neighborhoods is similar to lack of education. There are large numbers of our population who are lacking basic life skills which causes fundamental breakdowns in how they live. These skills include cooking, home repair, and similar skills many others take for granted.

- **Employment**

To be a productive member of society, adults and young adults need to be employed. Individuals need encouragement and assistance to find employment. They may lack basic job skills and knowledge.

- **Biblical Understanding**

The lives of many people within neighborhoods are overwhelmed in a world of sin and lack direction on how to improve their lives. Individuals should have a biblical understanding of how to live their lives. They should be led to accept Jesus as their savior.

Households

Our goals for households are to achieve the following:

- **A Peace Filled House**

For people to reach their full potential and to focus on what is important, they need to have a peace filled house. Often homes are full of strife, improper activities, and distracting behavior. A Christian home is a peace filled home.

- **Families Pursuing a Christian Way of Life**

To bring order to the home, the head of the family must lead the household to experience a Christian way of life. Positive examples must be present if the family is expected to “right the ship” and achieve their personal and family goals.

- **Economic Stability**

The finances of the household have to be addressed. Increasing income, controlling spending, and addressing debt can lead to a better life for the household.

- **Safe and Livable Housing Conditions**

The conditions of the home must be safe and livable. There are families living in poor and un-maintained housing. This environment can lead to depression and lack of motivation.

"The righteous is concerned for the rights of the poor; the wicked does not understand such concern."

-Proverbs 29:7

3

Community Development Model

A comprehensive model of our community

Continued

Neighborhoods

Our goals for the neighborhood are to achieve the following:

- **Residents Active in Managing Their Neighborhoods**

Our neighborhoods cannot run themselves anymore and there is no one better to manage them than the people who live there. Most of us see problems in our own neighborhood and expect someone else will take care of it. We have to educate and encourage neighbors to see themselves as the person who will “take care of it”.

- **Biblical Relationships Between Neighbors**

In many cases, the relationships between neighbors is simply non-existent. In some cases past events and encounters have led to bad relationships. The Bible speaks in many passages about how we should treat our neighbor. If we follow the instructions and their intent, we will have a friendlier and more attractive neighborhood. Relationships are what will ultimately keep people from moving out of their neighborhoods.

- **Safe Streets Where People Can Live in Harmony**

Using crime watch techniques in addition to the other approaches described here, neighbors can make their streets safe. The fear of crime and violence can keep people from focusing on the things they need to do to improve their life and their Christianity.

- **Available Shopping and Services Required by the Residents**

For neighborhoods to be successful, they need to have a basic level of shopping and services in or near their neighborhood. People expect to have access to restaurants, convenience stores and similar facilities. Often, commercial space is either vacant or the use is unrelated to the needs of the neighbors. Efforts should be made to correct this.

"He who is gracious to a poor man lends to the Lord, And he will repay him for his good deed."

- Proverbs 19:17

Community

The goals for the community are to achieve the following:

- **Relationships between neighbors and businesses**

This concept is largely unheard of in the world. Customers often complain about the products or service and sometimes they let store owners know what they would like to see offered. What doesn't happen is communication about the health of the neighborhood. The business owner/manager has much to lose if the neighborhood deteriorates. They also have the possibility of capitalizing on the rebirth of the neighborhood. Building relationships between businesses and the residents brings more insight and resources to the table on behalf of the neighborhood.

- **Economic Opportunities for all Residents in the Community**

A strong force working against the neighborhood is the lack of opportunities for the residents. Sometimes there are opportunities, but they don't match up to the whole population of the community. Efforts should be made to ensure there are a variety of opportunities for all people of the spectrum. Not every person has a college education and not everyone is skilled with using their hands. Some opportunities will require training and education and these need to be made available to the neighborhood.

- **Community Pride**

For everyone's effort to be successful, the neighborhood needs to have neighborhood pride. Although the bible warns about being prideful, having pride in your community is not what it meant. Community Pride means people believe their community is a great place to live. It also means the neighbors must take care of it and set their standards high.

- **Healthy Businesses Providing Services, Products, and Employment**

Struggling neighborhood businesses are everywhere. When their struggle is visible to the consumer, the business is avoided. People would rather take their business to a well-maintained, modern business. The image and strength of local businesses are important issues to the community. Steps should be taken to make sure the business have access to resources and information to allow them to prosper. A healthy neighborhood business is good for the neighborhood.



Building the Coalition

You Can't do This Alone

The Reach4Them approach calls for one or more churches in a target area to work together. They are further supplemented by involvement by outside churches and nonprofits.

Inside Churches

Inside churches are defined by their location in or adjacent to the targeted neighborhood. Typically the financial resources of the target area churches are limited; however they have so much more to bring to the table. Their physical location provides meeting space and direct access to the neighborhood. Their community ties can create a positive reaction by the neighbors in the area. Their staff should also be very familiar with the neighborhood and history, making them very valuable to the effort.

Outside Churches

Outside churches are defined by their location well away from the targeted neighborhood who feel called to have an impact on a challenged neighborhood. Outside churches are often blessed with larger congregations and more access to finances than most of the target area churches. They also have access to a larger pool of talent in the members of their congregation; however this often has not been utilized or realized. Some are simply moved to action by a call from God. One difficult challenge for these churches is identifying an ideal setting to perform outreach and service. The benefit of working with a coalition of churches already on location in an area of need cannot be overstated.

The largest obstacle an outside church faces is their need for identity. They will struggle with the idea of just having a supporting role within the target area. If steps are not taken, the names of the local churches will be much more pronounced. Normally, this should not be a concern for a church, but a long term project can produce resentment within the body of the church if not addressed properly. The best step the coalition can take to prevent this is to create a joint identity for the

overall project. Partner organizations can be listed on all materials, minimizing the loss of identity.

Nonprofits

Nonprofits are legal entities who engage in activities to help individuals or the community at large. Their missions often follow the same goals a ministry might have such as operating a food pantry or assisting people with housing. Some nonprofits have religious origins while others are simply a response to a need. Churches will need to include nonprofits regardless of the nature of their organization, as long as the activities do not go against the belief of the churches involved. The simple reason is a nonprofit takes a great amount of effort and money to get started and can be more nimble in addressing an issue than a large collaborative effort. Nonprofits can bring additional resources to the table such as government or foundation funding.

The Ideal Arrangement

Ideally, the coalition of churches would consist of one to three churches within the target area, with one or two outside churches as participating members. Nonprofits should also be in part of the coalition. They may be a local nonprofit in the neighborhood or one with a larger focus.

The coalition could start by completing an inventory of the existing ministries of the target area churches and identify how they can be strengthened through funding, volunteers, training, and staff. A gaps analysis would also be performed to understand what are the additional needs of the community. The coalition could then identify new services and programs the coalition may provide. Using the results of a skills/desire inventory of all participating congregations, the coalition will create and maintain these new efforts.



Building the Coalition: An Overview

You can't do it alone

Continued

The staff and volunteers need to establish good working and spiritual relationships with each other to reduce possible conflicts of personalities or their organizations. Any significant operation will require dedicated staff. The effort could be organized as a separate nonprofit, and fundraising could be an additional activity by the congregations.



Start-Up

The Beginning Activities

The first stage of the Reach4Them Process is designed to identify and approach potential coalition members. It also explores relationships with neighborhood/community leaders.

Church Partner Identification

To have a coalition, there needs to be more than simply one church. There will be more work than one entity can handle so partners should be recruited into the coalition. Most neighborhoods have a number of churches within its boundaries. Many churches are new start-ups who face many challenges just to operate on a weekly basis. Other churches are long established churches suffering from a reducing church body. They too are struggling on a weekly basis as they try to do more with less.

It would be easy to dismiss these churches as not having the capacity or willingness to get involved in a large undertaking like Reach4Them. Honestly, this effort may be exactly what they need to attract more attendance, so don't count them out!

In most cities, there are larger churches located in the prosperous areas of the community. They have a lot of positive things going for them yet they still have their challenges. Although there are needs in the affluent parts of a community, pastors often recognize the real need is not in their immediate vicinity. They often have limited ministries attempting to reach the needs of the challenged and may lack the full support of the church body and sometimes leadership.

Both groups of churches need each other; they just don't see how they can come together. Reach4Them attempts to provide answers to some of the hurdles facing a coalition of churches while showing how they can attain church-led efforts most only dream about. To accomplish the mission, church leaders will have to overcome past experiences, false assumptions, and their personal desires to grow their church. Reach4Them is designed to complete the work Jesus asked us to do and in return

growth of individual churches will happen naturally. If everyone looks at the people involved as possible additions to their own church it will lead to division and failure of the effort.

Create a List

Start by creating a list of all the churches with locations within the neighborhood. Although the boundaries of the neighborhood will be set later in the process by the coalition, one can easily imagine what the lines may look like. Use the Internet to gather the basic contact information. If the lead pastor's name is not available, have someone call the church and find out his or her name and title.

For churches located outside of the target area, think about what large congregations come to mind. Create a list of about four to five churches you think may be interested in this type of outreach and ministry. In the end, your effort may only have one to three outside churches as partners in the coalition. Your list should have a few more to allow for those who are uninterested.

Church Relationship Building

The best place to start is to approach the churches in the targeted neighborhood. A simple call to the pastor or a personal impromptu visit to introduce yourself will get things going. Your opening message is also simple, "I am the pastor of such and such church and I am concerned about the neighborhood that surrounds us. I wonder if you would have time to sit down over coffee and share your thoughts about the needs of the neighborhood and our mission as Christians." For meeting with outside churches, the opening line could be "I am the pastor of such and such church and I would like to meet with you to discuss your outreach ministries". Additional conversations could center around their level of desire to work in the challenged areas of the community. If they sound interested, then more specifics can be discussed. If they show no interest, you probably have the wrong church partner; move on to the next.

5

Start-Up

The Beginning Activities

Continued

Conversations are easy to have about the neighborhood so use these to build relationships with the other church leaders. With different churches coming together there is sure to be differences in how things are thought of or approached. To be successful, everyone will need to relax a little. Differences of opinions are what keeps Christians separated. God isn't into the whole dividing lines thing and wants us to work together to fulfill his commands regarding leading the lost to Heaven.

Through these conversations, the interest level of the neighborhood clergy can be determined. Hopefully, there will be at least two or three showing interest in building a coalition to engage the surrounding neighborhood. At the end of each conversation, let them know you will be contacting them to attend a meeting with other ministers who want to work on this idea.

Initial Meeting

What is needed now is a meeting where some sharing of ideas, discovery, and mutual understanding can take place. A brief presentation should be made about the main concepts of Reach4Them. At this point, it is important to gather comments from the ministers rather than roll out a predetermined battle plan. Reach4Them is not a cookbook style manual where the user simply follows a set of defined instructions. It will, however, lead the coalition down a path towards logical steps towards community development. This process leaves a great amount open for debate and decisions.

Meeting Content

The following are some components to the initial meeting with the pastors:

- What do we think this could look like if we are successful?
- Who else should be involved?

For those who continue to want to be a part of the forming coalition, each one should evaluate their current ministries in the following way:

- What is the name of each ministry?
- What topic does it address?
- How many people are served?
- What is the reasonable capacity of the ministry at the present time?

The purpose of this is to combine the lists of all involved churches to see what is currently available. It really doesn't matter how small the effort is now, but rather how important it could be to the community. The coalition should understand what the capacity of each effort is and look how difficult it would be to expand if demand increases.

Sometimes, a ministry is a good program, but suffers from under exposure or not being offered to the right audience. The coalition will need to determine how each ministry fits into a larger offering. There will definitely be areas where there are few or no existing ministries. Efforts will be required to start new programs once they have been identified. This initial effort is simply to give the coalition leaders an idea of what they have to work with.

Community Group Identification

Beyond the identified churches, there are existing neighborhood groups who are concerned with the same area of the community. They may be located within the neighborhood or provide services to the neighborhood. Community groups will range from crime watches to neighborhood groups. They can also be structured nonprofits serving low income residents in areas of food or housing.

A second brainstorming meeting with the coalition could involve members listing all the community groups they feel could be a resource to the effort. The level of involvement of these community groups will be determined by level of need within the neighborhood. For example, if the neighborhood doesn't have many vacant lots, then a nonprofit housing corporation focused on new construction may not need to be directly involved in the coalition. If the neighborhood has a very low income and there is a real concern about nutrition and available food, then the city's food pantry organization may be a very important partner in the effort.

The coalition should check with the city community development department to get additional names of organizations. They are often aware of neighborhood associations and nonprofits. They can be a great resource for group identification and contact information.

The coalition should invite representatives of all the groups to a meeting to discuss what could be done to improve the neighborhood target area. The meeting could consist of a very brief presentation of what the coalition is trying to accomplish and then ask each organization representative to briefly describe their organization,



Start-Up

The Beginning Activities

Continued

what they offer, and what interest they may have in working with the coalition to address the needs of the neighborhood. This may very well be the entire agenda of the meeting depending on how many representatives attend the meeting.

One-on-Ones

Prior to moving forward with plans for neighborhood revitalization, the coalition needs to understand each potential partner or service provider better. Follow-up appointments should be made with each representative to find out more about their organization, motives, and resources. The list should be divided up among the members of the coalition with two to three members attending a one-on-one meeting with the leader of the community groups.

It is at this stage real relationships are formed and a better understanding is gained by the members of the coalition. Notes should be taken so the coalition can meet and discuss what was learned from all the visits. With this information, the coalition should start to see how the community organizations could be organized to address the neighborhood. Furthermore, it should also start to highlight the needs not being addressed.

Reach4Them Workshops

Following this initial start-up effort, it would be a good time to have a workshop to clarify what the coalition is attempting to do and to educate interested parties on future activities. The workshops would be promoted to all the churches, nonprofits, and community leaders who were approached during the start-up.

Session 1: Identified Needs of the Community

A presentation of what is known about the neighborhood. A speaker from the city's community development department or a knowledgeable neighborhood leader could present some statistics and describe the conditions of the neighborhood. The audience should come away from the session with a better understanding of what is happening in the neighborhood and what might be needed.

Session 2: A Faith-Based Response

Based upon the needs of the neighborhood, the audience should hear what might be used to address these needs. Existing programs and efforts could be highlighted and discussion could be lead about how new efforts could come from the coalition. The facilitator should tie these responses to Biblical teachings and share how the

neighborhood residents will draw a connection between the actions of the coalition and the churches involved.

Session 3: Structure of the Coalition and its Partners

The facilitator will utilize a diagram showing three circles. The center circle will be labeled "Core Group". The next ring will be labeled "Coalition" while the last ring will be labeled "Support Services". Representatives from community groups and nonprofits could then place their organization name within the circle they feel they can make a commitment to. The end result is a coming together of various organizations to improve the neighborhood using the techniques and instructions of the Reach4Them approach.



Assessment

Taking a Look Inside and Out

The Reach4Them System requires an external and internal assessment. The coalition will need to be more accurate in understanding the neighborhood's needs and a better understanding of their own abilities.

Gathering of Data

Depending on the size of the neighborhood you are serving, the amount of information available will vary. If you are just looking at two blocks, then there is really is not specific information available to you. Available information will refer to a larger area and may not be representative of the small area you selected. Larger areas are more likely to match Census Tract boundaries. This makes Census information more pertinent to your neighborhood.

The US Census information has been drastically reduced in the 2010 Census. Past censuses gathered a great amount of detailed information that allowed a better understanding of the people who lived in neighborhoods. This makes the census results not as useful as it once was.

Don't be afraid to gather your own data such as number of stores in the neighborhood. If you think it is important, get out and count it yourself. Record the information and use it to describe the neighborhood.

The city may be able to help you count the number of single-family and apartments within the neighborhood. The community development department may also be able to help you know how many rental properties are in your neighborhood. One of the best sources of information regarding certain topics is the nonprofits who work in the arenas of housing, nutrition, and others. School Districts can also provide information about age, race, and income.

Internal Church Assessment

The variety and depth of skills sitting in the pews is mostly unfathomable. When a church looks at what is the potential for traditional ministries, most of the skills are

not applicable. When you broaden the topic to construction, finance, marketing, nutrition, management, and others the pews come alive with possibilities. These are just a few examples of how common skills found within the church can be used in community development.

- **Construction**

Home renovation projects for disabled, building affordable housing, teaching skills to job seekers

- **Finance**

Teaching personal finance to low-income families, securing financing for construction projects, establishing a community financial institution

- **Marketing**

The ideas and programs of the coalition's efforts need to be sold to the neighborhood. Flyers, public service announcements, brochures and other media could be used to build awareness and encourage people to participate.

- **Nutrition**

Educating people on good eating habits, running food pantry, starting organic gardens within the neighborhood

- **Management**

Community development doesn't just happen. There will be all types of management needed to make sure things are done and done well.

- **Others**

The list of possible skills needed is limitless. The coalition will have to determine what are the desired skills based on the perceived need.

6

Start-Up

The Beginning Activities

Continued

Survey

To accomplish this, the participating churches should ask parishioners to fill out a survey with questions asking about anticipated skills. Furthermore, the survey should indicate the level of their skill by utilizing a number scale. This will give coalition leaders an indication of peoples' capacity to undertake actions and programs. The survey will also require the participant to fill out their name and contact information so they can be contacted later.

Following the survey, the information should be entered into a spreadsheet or database program so it can be sorted. This will allow the coalition to identify for example, all the people with construction knowledge and then further sort by level of skill. With information like this, the coalition can decide whether to pursue a home construction project or an after school reading program. High scores can give an indication of the expected level of success in taking on an activity or program.

Asset Identification

There will be plenty of negative items to focus the coalition's attention on, but what about positives. Almost every neighborhood has some form of asset to build upon or to include in revitalization plans. Assets can be physical such as a library, bank, or store. They can also be intangible assets such as a good geographic location, within a city government's targeted area, or good police response area. The coalition is looking for anything positive they can expand, promote, or use to leverage resources with.

To begin with, the churches themselves are assets. The programs or ministries they offer are assets. Begin by listing these assets and a brief reason why they are an asset. Then think of government facilities in the neighborhood. What about businesses or the retail complexes they are in. Are there programs operating within the neighborhood people use and rely on to help them in their situation? Neighborhood leaders within the boundaries can also be considered assets.

This list needs to be shared with all the partner organizations. Everyone should review the list and write down ideas they have on how to utilize these assets as the coalition moves forward.

Coalition Building

Following all of the activity laid out in the process so far, the coalition should start to materialize. First, there should be a core of church leaders who see this as vital to their outreach efforts. This core group will form the nucleus of the coalition and invest major amounts of time and effort. For those church leaders who are not as committed yet interested, they will have the opportunity to be part of the coalition. Think of the core group as the executive committee and the other church leaders as board members.

It will be up to the group if they want to admit non-religious organizations into the coalition. This could be based upon the principles of the group or it could be decided based on the level of projected involvement. With the addition of non-religious organizations, the church-based members should not shy away from being bold about their mission, to bring people closer to Christ and the life he intended for us.

Starting up the Coalition

The core group should meet and plan out the first official meeting of the coalition. Core members and their staff will arrange the location, the agenda, notices, and refreshments. Some will want to start the discussion of bylaws and structure. Although some thought should be given to these concepts, it will be too early to get bogged down with these details. As time passes, the core group will have to make the first attempt at how the coalition and structure should be arranged. They will then present these to the group for their comments and voting.

Before jumping to the conclusion of forming a nonprofit, the group should first decide what type of activity they plan to engage in and whether it can be done under the name of the existing organizations. Consulting with other similar nonprofit organizations could help you determine if you want to pursue this. The majority of coalitions will need to and should approach an attorney once the group decides to form one.

Creating an Initial Plan

With the information they have gathered about the community, the coalition will need to create a general plan of what they want to do and who they want to be. The makers of the plans should realize as time goes by, new information will



Start-Up

The Beginning Activities

Continued

become available and the plan will change to meet the new demands. Coalitions need to have a basic plan so all members realize the direction they have agreed to pursue.

Coalition members should all read this manual so they can understand the process being followed. The plan should incorporate the activities Reach4Them describes in the coming chapters while being specific on how they will choose to address their neighborhood.

Every neighborhood and community varies in issues, assets, and complexities. Reach4Them cannot provide a cookbook approach to making your plan. Start with your discussions and put the big ideas down on paper. Let the coalition members read over them and make suggestions. The group should continue to do this until the majority of the group agrees with what you have decided.



Organizing

The Effort Starts within; Both the Neighborhood and Participating Organizations

The coalition will need to have the participation of the neighborhood to be successful. Although a basic plan has been developed in the previous stage, it will be altered as the coalition learns more about the needs of the community. In the Faith Builder model, new information will be gained as the coalition engages residents in meetings and events. The first step will be to search for neighbors who have an interest in getting involved. With a little bit of training, these recruited volunteers will become block captains on their street. They will lead the effort to connect the efforts of the coalition and the majority of the neighborhood.

With these connections in place, they will have a better understanding of what is needed. With continued discussion, the coalition should move towards formalizing their effort, either as a separate nonprofit or a memorandum of understanding between all the members. Faith Builder leaves it up to each coalition to determine what is required within their membership.

As the coalition becomes formalized, it needs to be publicized within their organizations. There will be plenty of work and opportunities for church members to grow in their Christian faith as they engage the community. The leaders of the coalition need to present the effort to their congregations in the way they think is best. Sermons, handouts, or separate meetings could be offered to the church's members. The main goal would be to make people aware and to start stirring their desire to fulfill the Lord's call to reach for the unsaved or the fallen Christians of the world.

Whether a church is located inside the neighborhood or from a distant suburb, the pastor cannot afford to not have his or her church moving with them. If the membership is not actively engaged in the Reach4Them activities their interest in other endeavors will soon lead them away. This stage is just as critical as the later ones.

For nonprofits, the same is true for their board and employees. Simply sending the executive director to monthly coalition meetings will not lead to results. The director needs to take time to promote the concept at every level of their organization. Future activity will require the devotion of time and funds to make things happen in

the neighborhood. If everyone is not onboard, trouble will follow swiftly.

Workshops would be a good way to bring people together and learn about the Reach4Them model. This is an opportunity to bring the different congregations together and let them meet each other.

Street Meeting Outreach

The object of this activity is to find people who want to become involved in the improvement of their neighborhood. To accomplish this, the coalition will host a series of block meetings. These meetings will give residents a chance to come out and speak to representatives of the coalition about what is going on in their neighborhood.

The leaders of the coalition should designate a small temporary committee to organize the outreach. They will need to recruit volunteers from the church members to be involved in Individual Meetings and the Street Outreach activities.

Individual Meetings

The first step is to utilize contacts of the local churches to better understand what to expect. Small teams of coalition members should contact known residents in the neighborhood and simply sit down to talk with them. The interviewers should get to know them and start establishing a bond with them. They should only spend a little time talking about the effort and spend most of the time finding out about the person they are meeting with. The coalition members should come away with:

1. Knowledge about the person they met with
2. Better knowledge of what is happening within the neighborhood and the needs of the people
3. And a relationship with the person they met with

The people who engaged in this activity should meet with others who conducted interviews and those who will be participating in the street meeting outreach. They



Organizing

The Effort Starts Within; Both the Neighborhood and Participating Organizations

Continued

should each summarize what they discovered. This meeting will help prime everyone for the actual outreach activity they will all be engaged in.

Street Meetings

The Outreach Committee will need to arrange several locations throughout the neighborhood for the street meetings to happen. The most ideal location would be front yards of homes within the neighborhood. Parking lots, parks, and other open space areas are also useful. In all cases, the committee will need to secure permission to hold meetings at these locations.

Simple flyers will need to be prepared to attract neighborhood residents to the meetings. The basic message of the flyer is that there is a coalition of concerned churches working to improve the neighborhood. The coalition wants to get some ideas from the residents on what would they like to see in their neighborhood and what needs to be addressed. The flyer should be put out three to four nights ahead of the meeting. The flyers should be spread out one to three blocks around the meeting location.

For each meeting three to four volunteers should man each location. A small table should be set-up with some simple refreshments for residents. A nice touch would be to print up some t-shirts to promote the coalition and have the volunteers wear them to draw attention to them.

There is only one simple question to ask people as they approach: “What do you think about your neighborhood?” Volunteers should listen intently and take notes about what they hear. The volunteers should spend 90% of the time listening and 10% talking. The volunteers are gathering information and building relationships. To move forward, the neighbors will need to have a feeling of trust with the volunteers and staff of the coalition. This type of activity builds trust by showing the neighborhood residents the coalition cares about what they think and they are taking time to know them.

As they end the conversation they need to hand the person an information flyer about the Coalition and ask them to sign up to be on a notification list. This list will provide names of future volunteers to invite to events and trainings. If no one comes out, send some volunteers to knock on doors to invite people out. If nothing else, door knocking will peak resident’s curiosity. This is great for making people aware of the coalition.

Working with the List

An ideal situation is to have resident block captains on every street in the neighborhood. With this in place the coalition would have a strong connection to the actual neighborhood. Block captains can be used to relay information between the residents and the coalition leadership. Participation can be greatly increased in programs, events, and activities.

Recruiting and training block captains is a lot of work and can be a big undertaking. The rewards can far exceed the investment as more people get involved and connect with the effort. Involvement and communications will be one of the biggest obstacles for organizers of the efforts to overcome.

Later in this section, more information will be shared about inviting interested people to a Reach4Them workshop. This will let them know more about how the coalition expects to improve the neighborhood. It will be from this workshop, leaders are identified and recruited.

Block Captain Recruitment

Within the congregations of the churches located inside the neighborhood, there will be people who live close by. This group of people is your first source of block captain recruitment. They are prime candidates because they have a connection to one of the involved churches and have heard about the program as it developed. Congregation members who live in the neighborhood will usually have friendships and relationships with others on their street.

Church leaders should identify those who live within the neighborhood and bring them together for an information meeting to participate in the Coalition as block captains. They could be given a brief overview and told of upcoming training. If a neighborhood could start with five captains from the congregation, they would be well on their way.

After approaching members of the congregation, an invitation could be sent to the people who attended the street outreach meetings. Let them know there is an opportunity to get involved in their neighborhood and you are having training on how to be a block captain on their block. This training will be covered in the upcoming section titled “Reach4them Training”.



Organizing

The Effort Starts Within; Both the Neighborhood and Participating Organizations

Continued

[Reach4Them is a work in progress. At this point the process starts to match up to our other manual “Neighborhood Builder”. We will continue to expand on this over time]