



"I am the door." - Jesus

St. Jerome Chapel, Taos Pueblo
New Mexico, Scott Myers, 2009

Presbyterian Urban And Immigrant Ministry Network

of Heartland Presbytery

Our Mission—To empower and encourage congregations in ministries of justice and hope.

Our Vision—We are active, vibrant, alert congregations alive in Jesus Christ, creating ministries of unconditional love as we celebrate the gifts and respond to the needs of urban and immigrant communities.

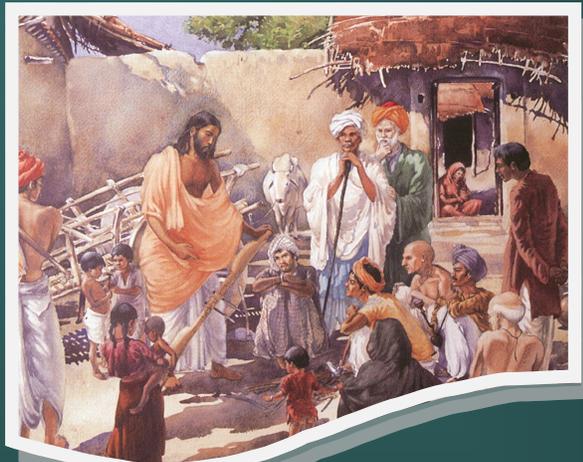


SERVANT CHRIST bronze

JIMILU Mason, sculptor @ 1987

CHRIST HOUSE, WASHINGTON, DC

Life size sculpture in front of clinic for homeless



*"Come unto me, all you who are weary
and are carrying heavy burdens and I will
give you rest."*

"Victory to Christ" by Frank Wesley, India
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Stories from the Presbyterian Urban and Immigrant Ministry Network

"I Love to Tell the Story of Jesus and his love!"

The Haitian Christian Fellowship has been very blessed by the help of the funds from the Urban Network. From helping to grow the church with small to large scale activities and gatherings to serving as an emergency fund during time of devastation, the funds from the Urban Network have blessed the ministry. For example, a church member recently got laid off from her job and lost all unemployment benefits. Because of this, her and her young daughter could not afford the rent on her apartment and ceased to keep up with utility bills. By the grace



Haitian Fellowship Pastor Olain Francois and his family



Haitian Christian Fellowship Choir

of God, the church was able to step in to help her to get back on her feet. First Haitian Christian Fellowship sincerely thanks The Urban Network.

Grandview Park Presbyterian

has been an adventurous pioneer in outreach to its Spanish-speaking community. Their commitment to bi-lingual worship has created fertile ground for the development of new Hispanic leadership. Each worship service is experienced in both Spanish and English. Carmen Flores, a native of Ecuador, serves as interpreter, administrative assistant, Bible study



Rev. Rick Behrens and Youth Works project

and Healthy Cooking

teacher as well as serving as a deacon in the congregation. Carmen is currently enrolled in the CLP program at Dubuque Seminary. GP's community outreach includes the Learning Center Tutoring Program and the Summer Kid's Club and Day Camp. In addition, GP has begun an organization called AQUI, which is working on housing and community ministries. AQUI was instrumental in GP becoming the host site for Youth Works. Over the last two summers over 1200 young people have come to live in the church and work in the neighborhood.



"Bike Repair Day" at Grandview Park



Interfaith Native American-Christian service at Westport

Westport Presbyterian Church's ministry of love in the urban core of Kansas City requires picking up Jesus's cross every day and carrying it with faith and joy. For many, many years now, our creative and compassionate ministries have been sustained by a veteran pastor who gives at least half his income to the church every year, year after year; his wife, a neurologist, who gives half her income to the church and much more to other causes, including the Camp, Wooster College (her alma mater)

and Presbyterian Disaster Assistance--not to mention an educator, business woman, several widows, a nurse, computer analyst, artist and several others who tithe money and time all the time. This is the true, unvarnished reality of how we keep the Presbyterian mission and Christian cause alive in a poor, at-risk community in the city. Still, just as Jesus needed Simon of Cyrene to help him carry his cross, we need the help we receive from Heartland Presbytery in carrying the cross.



Rev. Scott Myers teaches children in Peace Quest



NEEMA church members worship in Swahili and English languages

Neema Community

Church is an immigrant church that is composed of people from mostly Eastern Africa. We worship in both Swahili and English. This church has

grown from a group of 8 people in to a fellowship, and now has received a charter from the Presbytery on June 18th, 2011. We reach and help people to settle down when they move here to go to school and work. This has been so successful such that any one who comes from abroad and more so from Africa have a place they call home. We are witnesses of what God can do with a few committed people even when far from home. We also are able to comfort those who lose their loved ones when they are very far from home. We are God's missionary people, called by God to be sent out, doing business until Jesus comes.



Rev. David Nzioka (with his wife Dorothy) leads NEEMA

Two children, a brother and sister, faithfully attended this year's Summer Amigos program at **Argentine Presbyterian**. Lupe and Miguel seemed thrilled at the opportunity to be with us. It wasn't until near the end of the two weeks that their mother told us how grateful she was for the program. Her family lives in a housing project and she shared with us that she doesn't let the children play outside when they are home because it's too dangerous. She thanked us for a safe place where they could be with other children and participate in the many activities we offered, including playing outside .



Under Rev. Donna Chavez's leadership, Argentine's *Summer Amigos* program has become an exciting, meaningful neighborhood outreach ministry in Kansas City, Kansas.

Arabic Presbyterian Fellowship is a spiritual and social ministry to the Arabic - speaking people in Kansas City. It is a religious and social ministry under the supervision of the Heartland Presbytery (PCUSA). Arabic Presbyterian Fellowship services Arabs who live in Kansas City's metropolitan area by providing worship services for all ages, pastoral care, social activities and services. The fellowship assists new immigrants and refugees from the Middle East. We believe our group can provide outreach by using their mother language (Arabic). Our meetings occur every Saturday at 7:00 pm, which provide weekly Christian worship. Children's ministry provides education materials for the children. On Saturday April 3rd, 2011 we sponsored a concert by a Lebanese singer, Lydia Shadeed, which saw an attendance of 100 people from our neighboring communities. We look forward to reaching new families and incorporating them into the worship and work of the church. We desire to grow spiritually, expand our services and extend our social services for new families.



Student Pastor Amgad Bestawrous(right—holding his son) leads the Arabic Presbyterian Fellowship

Connected in the Spirit at Covenant Presbyterian Church

A year ago our organist and choir director, Osric Reavis III thought it would be a good idea to enhance our worship service with a drummer—a new idea for our middle of the road Presbyterian Church. We host the Eddie Baker School of Music of Swope Parkway Renaissance/Upper Room, an afterschool and summer reading enhancement program. One drum teacher, Sam Johnson, Jr. offered



Vacation Bible School at Covenant

to play for us on Sundays. He and Osric complement each other's talents. I can't imagine our worship service without either Osric or Sam. But it doesn't stop there. Sam had a vision of feeding his fellow musicians, and he's President of The Elder Statesmen of Kansas City Jazz. With the recent economic downturn, gigs are hard to come by. Many musicians are having hard times. Through a partnership with Southeast Caring Communities Neighborhood Resource Center we believed musicians could be fed from Covenant. Dona Stephenson

committed to partnering with us to help feed the musicians. Needing an added source of food we contacted Christine Germann of Village Presbyterian Church's food pantry. She loves jazz and was excited about working with the musicians. She took a proposal to the church's Food Pantry Board of Directors. Result? A bi-monthly pantry for musicians that feeds an average of 50 families per week! We live out the commandments of Christ to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, provide drink for the thirsty and visit the sick and imprisoned.



Rev. Kirk Perucca (in Kenya here) leads Covenant



St. Paul Presbyterian

St. Paul has an active prison ministry and thanks to the Urban Immigrant Network we are able to assist some that are incarcerated and some that are returning to the community. A recent letter we received from an inmate asked if we could try to find his mother and/or his sister. He gave us names and a last phone number for his sister. He has not heard from any family member during his

incarceration. We have been able to assist him and plan to continue once he is released. The **Community Garden is our pride and joy**. Two Family Childcare Providers brought their children out to participate in our Santa Fe Area Community Garden Preschool Program. Planting has been staggered so that there is produce from early spring until late fall. No pesticides have been used in the garden; and classes have been conducted on composting, gardening techniques and crop rotation. We celebrated a one year anniversary for our garden in June of this year. With the help of Heartland Presbytery, we hope we can continue to serve the people in this community for another 90 years.



Through the Lord's leading, Hurricane Katrina brought Ralph Winslow to Kansas City and left him in the neighborhood surrounding **Linwood United Church (LUC)**. As the last refugee to receive government housing assistance, he still needed food and friendship. Winslow



Rev. Tamara Miller leads Linwood in ministries such as a Community Thanksgiving Dinner

turned to LUC's Food Pantry only for food, but with his giving spirit, he was soon a regular volunteer. Friendship and a sense of family was nurtured, and today Ralph Winslow is LUC's Outreach Program Coordinator. Using his culinary skills from New Orleans, he also prepares Wednesday Community Lunch for an increasing crowd, giving back by serving the Lord who, Winslow proudly proclaims, has exceedingly blessed him and continues to lead him.

At **Cherith Brook** we hope to create a space, where, as Peter Maurin says, "It is easier for people to be good." We hope all will learn to see Christ in the unexpected places and be transformed by him. Most people who come to here call us the Shower House because they come to get a shower. An exception is a woman named Denga. She never takes a shower at our place, yet she comes every day we are open. You know that Denga has arrived because you can smell her across the room. Often, our biggest hope is to be able to get Denga to shower. We know it can't be healthy for her not to shower and her odor has kept her from being welcome in many places. Still, our house is a place of hospitality, so Denga is welcome. We have come to see that it is essential to welcome her, because someday when we stand before the Throne, Jesus will say, "Didn't you know that when you kicked Denga out because of her smell, you were kicking me out?" But Jesus may also say "Didn't you know that the smiles, laughs, singing and dancing Denga did in your home, were expressions of my Joy?" Oh, God, give us eyes to see how you see, give us ears to hear your voice, and give us noses to know your holy odor."



A Refuge in the city's Northeast



Making Dinner with the Vulnerable

Angel in My Eye—A Personal Story

This is a personal story from the youth leader at **Bethel Presbyterian Church**, and the effect that PUIMN has had on our church and the lives of the youth at Bethel. The funds provided to Bethel have afforded many activities that draw children from all over our community. Many of these children have become regulars, participating and contributing in functions at our church. Thus many relationships have formed which have contributed to a close knit family atmosphere.

As Youth Leader I have become the unofficial head of this family. I hear all the scuttlebutt that travels in the youth circles. One youth in particular has been a favorite of mine and others—a young lady blessed with beauty, intelligence and a bubbly, infectious personality—truly the Angel that every church longs for. Being an ace student, her future looked bright, until she got caught up in a shoplifting incident. I'll never forget the day I found out. I could tell something was wrong, but experience told me that if I waited and played my cards right I would soon learn what the rumbling and whispers were all about.

I did find out that it was my star pupil, but not what had happened, and she wasn't talking. I didn't press the issue. She wanted me to know, I could tell, but she didn't have the courage to tell me herself. So with the urging of the other youth she consented, but only to the major points. She didn't want the whole story out and I didn't press. But as we stood at the back of the church on Sunday, she looked at me with grief and worry. I could sense the fear over what I might say to her. Searching for a reply that would make a difference, I asked God for help, and turned to face her. She looked at me with fear of a rebuke, I was towering over her frail and short frame, her eyebrows raised. I opened my mouth still not knowing what to say. And then I heard words that I think I shall never forget: "I don't think anything less of you than I did before."

The fear melted from her face, relief came next, and then a look that I can only explain as the 'knowing of acceptance'. I went on to explain that as Christians we couldn't conduct ourselves in this way but that I understood and would stand by her no matter what happened next. The Lord himself had put those words in my mouth. I couldn't let her or the others see me cry as I often have, recounting this story. I don't know who was affected most. I do know this though, even though my little Angel has had her share of struggles—no father and a mother who passed when she was just 4—she has continued her studious ways, never getting into trouble with the law again. And she has become one of the most genuine followers of Christ in our Church. I know she still has moral lapses; don't we all? Yet she has turned so many children to the Lord with Christian Music, which she listens to almost exclusively. She brings many with her to Church, faithfully attends Sunday School and adds to group conversations and our experiences with Christ. She speaks of the Lord boldly, is always ready to help, and can be relied on for almost any task, and she loves being a part of our family truly she has become an inspiration and an Angel to us all.

I don't know who was affected by this experience more, I suspect it was me, but I do know that it was a seminal moment in her life. She was changed. I certainly learned from this. We all gained from the fellowship of forgiveness and acceptance. I don't know if any of this would have been possible if not for the involvement that PUIMN has afforded us. Please know that these contributions are making real differences on behalf of the Kingdom of God, and these differences motivate us for more. Thank you for all that you do, and the opportunities we all enjoy.

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Food, fun & fellowship are key ingredients of NorthEastminster community barbecue.

NORTHEASTMINSTER

A BEACON OF CHRIST IN THE HEART OF THE CITY!

“Don’t you just love when they pray for you?” a Love Fund recipient said to another. **Northeastminster Presbyterian’s** Love Fund provides a few bus passes or a gas card to urban neighbors in need. More important, however, is the spiritual connection. An elder talks and prays with each person who comes for aid. Unexpectedly, the Love



NorthEastminster gets to know its neighbors Kansas City style --- over BBQ!

Fund prayers even changed the life of a thief. When it was robbed and the perpetrator caught, the church prayed for the man, John, every Sunday. In jail, he discovered Christ. Later, he came to a church/community barbecue and told his story. “Don’t stop praying for me,” he said. We don’t! And we also keep trying to be an answer prayers with a 25 years running food pantry that serves 150-200 people a month. New folks from the neighborhood join us regularly. These are primarily folks who have no history of church attendance, so our Pastor Eddie Tanon spends lots of time in “Bible 101” and in pastoral visitation Ministry in the neighborhood . This is very gratifying. However, if all joined and pledged, we would still be way short of meeting our budget.

ST. MARK UNION

“WE ARE MADE FOR EACH OTHER” —HOWARD THURMAN



Rev. James Fuller (left) leads St. Mark

St. Mark Union Church is a vital Christian presence in the urban core and is surrounded by three large housing developments serving lower income families. Urban Network funds advance St. Mark’s ability to witness and evangelize within these neighborhoods through its Pastor of Evangelism, thus creating a single Christian community. Our Outreach Ministry teaches people that in a faithful, personal relationship with Jesus Christ there is hope and power to overcome hopeless, desperate situations. The Pastor of Evangelism provides prayer, worship, communion, bible study, and fellowship through home and hospital visits—conducts Worship Service, teaches Sunday School and Wednesday night Bible Study.

Through the Upper Room, area children are able to attend a summer camp/reading program housed at St. Mark This summer, 79 children experienced the pride of knowing their reading scores improved by at least ten percentage points. More importantly, they had Christian role models as camp leaders who are members of St. Mark. It is our desire to continue to teach others the abundant life available to them through our Lord, Jesus Christ.