

HOLY BOLDNESS: PATHWAYS TO TRANSFORMATION 2009 - 2012

A UNITED METHODIST URBAN MINISTRY PLAN FOR MAKING DISCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST FOR THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE WORLD

Change is inevitable but transformation is optional. As The United Methodist Church, we have the opportunity to transform and energize urban churches and communities with *holy boldness*. The Holy Boldness: Pathways to Transformation Plan is the continuance and intensification of the National Urban Ministry Plan adopted at the 1996 General Conference and reaffirmed in 2004. It has been a dynamic tool for organizing and mobilizing people for urban transformation. The Plan recognizes that there are regional and local differences and invites churches and faith-based community organizations to develop local strategies to carry out the goals and objectives. The primary goal of the Plan is to provide a vision for the future: identify areas of focus and collaboration; to organize and mobilize resources; and equip leaders to carry out the Plan.

According to the "State of the World Population 2007" report, "in 2008, half of the world's population will be in urban areas." "Without proper planning, cities across the globe face the threat of overwhelming poverty, limited opportunities for youth, and religious extremism." It went on to say "Cities see poor people as a burden," "They should be seen as an asset." "Smaller cities, (of 500,000 and more), not major metropolises, will absorb the bulk of urban growth," the report said. Involving youth in the decisions and policies of growing cities is vital for dealing with issues of violence and poverty.

Ultimately, the Pathways to Transformation Plan will be effective if annual conferences, districts and especially, local churches and faith-based community organizations and agencies develop strategies and carry out the agreed-upon objectives and goals. It is also critical for the whole church (congregations in and outside urban areas, Annual Conferences and General Church agencies) to work in collaboration to support those working locally to transform urban congregations and the communities to meet the need of growing urban areas.

The priorities, objectives and goals identified for this Plan were determined through a national survey of laity, pastors, faith-based community organization staff, Annual Conference staff, seminary presidents and deans, and bishops. The Plan does not claim to meet every urban church and community need, but is a step toward organizing and mobilizing United Methodists to work locally on objectives and goals for church and community transformation.

The primary objectives are to accomplish the following:

1. Transforming existing congregations through training, coaching and mentoring.
2. Establishing new urban churches and faith communities.
3. Identifying and equipping urban pastors and laity.
4. Assisting Annual Conferences and districts in urban strategic planning.
5. Challenging and assisting urban congregations to transform the communities in which they reside.

The priorities which inform and guide these objectives are:

1. Urban theology and leadership development
2. Urban evangelism and congregational development
3. Living in community with the poor
4. Strengthening and developing multicultural relationships and congregations
5. Eradicating racism and other forms of oppression
6. Creating and developing urban/suburban collaboration and partnerships
7. Community economic development
8. Wholeness, healing and health

Urban transformation will require a collaborative effort by local churches working in cooperation with other denominations, community organizations, businesses, and governmental institutions. Collaboration will need to occur beyond the city limits by collaborating with exurbia churches which share similar challenges, and churches in suburban areas which have committed persons, resources and relational roots in urban neighborhoods, all of which strengthen ministry.

Collaboration will also need to occur at the national level. The National Urban Strategy Council, General Church agencies (Global Ministries, Church and Society, Discipleship, Higher Education and Ministry, Religion and Race, and Communications) teams will need to work together to identify common strategies that they can mutually accomplish. The national strategies should link with local strategies and needs. National collaboration must involve the ethnic ministry plans already adopted by our Church with a particular sensitivity to those who are poor.

And finally, national collaboration must also involve other ecumenical and inter-faith bodies and national urban resources.

General Church agencies, the National Urban Strategy Council, Jurisdictional networks, Annual Conferences, districts and especially, local churches are encouraged to take *authority and responsibility* in being *holy and bold* to accomplish the Objectives and Goals of the Plan. This will require local strategies and local ownership. With God's help, we can re-claim our cities for United Methodism and in the process, meet Christ on the streets walking with his people.

Urban Ministry Primary Objectives 2009 – 2012

The following objectives will be achieved through the collaboration of our general agencies, boards and commissions, and Annual Conferences and districts with a particular sensitivity to ethnic and indigenous populations as well as the poor within our midst.

1. Transform existing urban congregations through training, coaching and mentoring.
2. Establish new urban churches and faith communities.
3. Identify and develop urban pastors and laity.
4. Assist Annual Conferences and districts in urban strategic planning.
5. Challenge and assist urban congregations to transform the communities in which they reside.

Objective 1: Transform existing urban congregations through training, coaching and mentoring.

GOAL 1: Global Ministries Office of Urban Ministries in collaboration with the Desert Southwest Annual Conference will develop an urban

training module for congregations beginning the transformation journey.

Action Step 1: Develop “First Steps to a Transformed Congregation” curriculum:

1. Prayer
2. Worship
3. Dream: vision & mission
4. Change culture
5. Unleash laity and claim early successes

Action Step 2: Recruit, train and equip Module trainers

Timeframe: *By 2009*

Responsible Ministry/Agency: *Global Ministries, the office of Urban Ministries, the Desert Southwest Annual Conference*

Inputs: *Experienced urban practitioners, the National Urban Strategy Council*

GOAL 2: Provide Next Steps for congregations in the transformation process.

Action Step 1: Develop "Next Step Network" for urban pastors and laity within each of the urban jurisdictional networks.

- a. Will include specific training offered in 6 sessions over 2 years
- b. Will provide intentional network of support for urban church pastors (and laity)

Timeframe: *By 2009*

Responsible Ministry/Agency: *Office of Urban Ministries*

Inputs: *the five Jurisdictional Urban Networks, the National Urban Strategy Council*

Action Step 2: Develop a National Urban Academy Gathering for mentored congregations having completed the "First Steps" with a mentor.

Action Step 3: Continue the Annual Conference Urban Academies with "First Steps" curriculum used to initiate the Academy (see Goal 4).

Accountability: The Global Ministries Office of Urban Ministries will track:

- mentor/congregation
- relationships/efforts, and

- monitor effectiveness of the model
- receive feedback from mentors
- continually develop mentor training module
- exit ineffective mentors from "First Steps" module training

Justification: Book of Discipline Paragraphs 419, 421.1, 212, 213, 424.1, 424.4

Timeframe: 2009

Responsible Ministry/Agency: *Office of Urban Ministries, the National Urban Strategy Council*

Inputs: *Annual Conferences*

GOAL 3: Provide mentor/coach “First Steps” training annually for 25 new District Superintendents (whose district includes urban centers) and/or experienced/effective urban pastors and lay persons.

Action Step1: Collaborate with GBOD in developing and implementing a 1.5 hour introduction to "First Steps", to be offered for all new District Superintendents during District Superintendent training at Lake Junaluska.

- a. Presenters selected through General Agency collaboration.
- b. Introduction includes First Steps, Next Steps, Urban Academy, and how to identify/recruit additional mentors/coaches
- c. Registration for mentor training available at District Superintendent training.

Action Step2: Implement a 15-20 hour mentor/coach training module to be offered annually for District Superintendents and recommended urban ministry pastors and laity.

- a. Each class limited to 25 participants with preference given to District Superintendents whose district includes an urban center.
- b. Other participants apply with the recommendation of the District Superintendent.

- c. Upon completion of the mentor/coach training, each participant is enrolled in the 'Next Step Network.'

Action Step 3: Each trained mentor to work directly with at least one urban congregation annually, facilitating the completion of "First Steps" within the ministry setting.

- a. Each trained mentor is enrolled in the 'Next Step Network'
- b. Each trained mentor identifies potential "Next Step" participants

Timeframe: *By 2010*

Responsible Ministry/Agency: *GBOD, Global Ministries*

Inputs: *District Superintendents, GBHEM, Office of Urban Ministries*

GOAL 4: Strengthen and develop the current network structure for urban ministry.

Action Step 1: The Office of Urban Ministries will assist Annual Conferences in identifying capable leaders to represent the Annual Conference on the jurisdictional urban network.

Action Step 2: The Office of Urban Ministries will provide funds to assist in the participation and training of Annual Conference representatives and others to the jurisdictional network.

Action Step 3: The Office of Urban Ministries will encourage and work with Annual Conferences to create and support an urban network to support, resource and advocate for urban ministry.

Timeframe: *2010*

Responsible Ministry/Agency: *Office of Urban Ministries*

Inputs: *Annual Conferences, Jurisdictional Urban Networks*

GOAL 5: Promote and provide Annual Conference Urban Academies to train 1,000 clergy and lay leaders in urban churches.

Action Step 1: The Office of Urban Ministries will consult with Annual Conferences to design and develop plans for the two year academy.

Action Step 2: The Office of Urban Ministries will provide a seed grant for start-up.

Action Step 3: The Office of Urban Ministries will establish timelines, benchmarks and budget.

Action Step 4: The Office of Urban Ministries in collaboration with other general boards, agencies and commissions will train local church teams around the eight priorities of urban ministry and facilitate the development of strategic plans for these churches using the four elements of the Primary Calling and additional general agency resources.

Action Step 5: The Office of Urban Ministries will assist in the development of a strong and stable network of urban ministry practitioners for support, resourcing coaching and advocacy.

Timeframe: *By 2012*

Responsible Ministry/Agency: *Office of Urban Ministries*

Inputs: *Global Ministries, GCORR, GBOD, GBHEM, GBCS, UMCCom*

GOAL 6: The Office of Urban Ministries will promote and provide for at least 25 Annual Conferences or the districts one-day training modules on each of the eight priorities for urban ministry by 2009.

Action Step 1: Distribute brochures about the training modules to each Annual Conference Bishop, Directors of Connectional Ministries, Communications, Congregational Development and Urban/Ethnic Ministries.

Action Step 2: Identify, train and mobilize qualified persons to lead the training modules.

Action Step 3: Evaluate and follow-up with the participant churches.

Timeframe: *2009*

Responsible Ministry/Agency: *Office of Urban Ministries*

Inputs: *Global Ministries, GCORR, GBOD, GBHEM, GBCS, UMCCom*

Objective 2: Annual Conferences will establish churches and new faith Communities that are community minded.

GOAL 1: A general agency team will work in collaboration with National Strategy Teams for New Church Development and Annual Conferences to ensure that proper approaches and strategies are utilized when starting at least 40 new urban churches and faith communities.

Action Step 1: Assess New Church Start Models

Action Step 2: Insure for adequate funding, accountability and feedback.

Action Step 3: Identify potential urban areas or sites for a new church or faith community.

Step 1: Walk through the community to gauge interest.

Step 2: Acquire demographic information to learn about the population.

Step 3: Begin to establish relationship partnerships in the community through small groups and service projects.

Action Step 4: Identify new urban church pastors and lay teams and provide the necessary training for both. (See Objective 3: Goals 1 and 2)

Action Step 5: Identify potential churches that will support and deploy the new church start pastors and lay teams.

Action Step 6: Provide for a mentor/coach to accompany the new church start pastor and congregation.

Timeframe: 2012

Responsible Ministry/Agency: General Agency Team

Inputs: National Strategy Teams for New Church Development and Annual Conferences

GOAL 2: Collaborate and consult with the five national plans and other church leaders to ensure the proper approaches and strategies are

utilized when starting new urban churches or faith communities with ethnic populations.

Action Step 1: Assess the ministries of establish ethnic churches.

Step 1: Monitor the success.

Step 2: What is working, what is not and why?

Action Step 2: Work with ethnic leadership both nationally and in Annual Conferences.

Step 1: Bring the national plan leadership bi-annually together for strategic planning and strategies.

Action Step 3: Work within the culture and structures of the ethnic population in identifying the leadership and the manner in which a new church or faith community may be initiated to ensure success.

Action Step 4: Establish relationships with grassroots groups to ensure visibility, accessibility and to enhance what is already being done by the leadership.

Step 1: Establish a variety of partnerships.

Action Step 5: Provide adequate funding with various ethnic partnerships that are part of the project.

Step 1: Provide for adequate and flexible time to establish these partnerships.

Step 2: Consider the context and political realities of starting new churches in Native American, Latino and immigrant communities.

Timeframe: 2010

Responsible Ministry/Agency: *Global Ministries, GBOD, Office of Urban Ministries*

Inputs: *Racial Ethnic Plans*

Objective 3: Identify and develop urban pastors.

GOAL 1: Collaborate with GBHEM and at least one seminary in each jurisdiction to train and coach 150 seminarians for urban ministry settings.

Action Step 1: Create an urban ministry training network for the 13 seminaries.

Action Step 2: Assess current course work and make recommendations.

Action Step 3: Work with seminaries to identify field education ministry sites.

Action Step 4: The network will work with seminaries that do not offer urban ministry course work to provide those learning opportunities.

Action Step 5: Pool funds to assist in the field education placements and development of the network.

Timeframe: 2009

Responsible Ministry/Agency: GBHEM

Inputs: Seminaries, Office of Urban Ministries

GOAL 2: Collaborate with GBHEM, the 13 seminaries and Annual Conferences to establish a “culture of the call” for urban churches and the neighborhoods.

Action Step 1: Identify, train and deploy 15 new and indigenous pastors and/or missionaries in urban ministry settings by 2012.

Action Step 2: Provide continuing training and support after the initial deployment of these urban ministry pastors and/or missionaries.

Action Step 3: Work with Annual Conferences to ensure that ministry recruitment within local urban churches is an ingredient of all Annual Conference urban ministry strategic plans.

Timeframe: 2012

Responsible Ministry/Agency: GBHEM

Inputs: Seminaries, Office of Urban Ministries, Global Ministries- Mission Personnel

GOAL 3: Develop and implement ongoing laity training.

Action Step 1: Identify, train and equip a minimum of 10 lay persons in 40 annual conferences to engage in leadership opportunities on the district, conference, jurisdiction and national church levels.

Action Step 2: Provide continuing training and support after the initial training.

Action Step 3: Work with Annual Conferences to ensure that leadership roles will be open to laity in a variety of capacities.

Action Step 4: Provide scholarships for participants.

Timeframe: 2010

Responsible Ministry/Agency: *Global Ministries, GBOD*

Inputs: *Annual Conferences, General Agencies*

Objective 4: Assist Annual Conferences and Districts in urban strategic planning.

GOAL 1: Collaborate with Annual Conferences and districts to develop Annual Conference or district urban ministry strategic plans.

Action Step 1: The Office of Urban Ministries will consult and communicate with Annual Conferences and districts the value and impact of an urban strategic plan in assisting new urban church starts and the transformation of existing churches. Each plan must be sensitive to the cultures present in urban areas.

Action Step 2: The Office of Urban Ministries will work with Jurisdictional Urban Networks and Annual Conference staffs to identify districts or annual conferences that are ready to develop urban ministry strategic plans.

Action Step 3: The Office of Urban Ministries in collaboration with other general agencies will establish a standardized strategic planning model and train consultants to utilize this model.

Action Step 4: The Office of Urban Ministries in collaboration with other general agencies will provide experienced personnel to work closely with Annual Conference/districts in developing the plans.

Step 1: Develop a network of consultants to implement a standardized planning model process.

Action Step 5: The Office of Urban Ministries will assist Annual Conferences/districts in the implementation and evaluation of the plans.

Action Step 6: Pool necessary funds to enable the development of the plans.

Timeframe: 2009

Responsible Ministry/Agency: Office of Urban Ministries, GBOD

Inputs: *Annual Conferences, Jurisdiction Urban Networks, General Agencies*

Objective 5: Challenge and assist urban congregations to transform the communities in which they reside.

GOAL 1: Equip urban congregations with education and tools for community assessment, engagement and transformation.

Action Step 1: Ensure that community economic development, community organizing and health, healing and wholeness are vital components of all local church urban training events and programs as well as Annual Conference urban ministry strategic plans.

Action Step 2: Utilize existing networks and resources to encourage and foster partnerships with community organizations and agencies for economic and community development.

Action Step 3: Monitor, emphasize and if necessary, create opportunities for local churches to learn how to be community leaders within the current jurisdictional urban network structure.

Action Step 4: Identify urban congregations that are an integral part of the community's transformation as teaching models for other urban churches.

Action Step 5: Host educational events and training programs at the churches identified in Action Step 3.

Timeframe: *2009*

Responsible Ministry/Agency: *Global Ministries, UMCom,*

Inputs: *Jurisdictional Networks, Annual Conferences*

GOAL 2: Global Ministries in collaboration with other general agencies will expand the capacity of urban churches to live, minister and worship with the poor.

Action Step 1: Provide training, educational information and resources to annual conference leaders about the work of the church in addressing the crisis in poverty.

Action Step 2: Provide appropriate responses to poverty including advocacy; direct services to enable partnerships; the development of new faith communities; the empowerment of young people; addressing health issues and providing opportunities for economic empowerment.

Timeframe: 2009

Responsible Ministry/Agency: *Global Ministries*

Inputs: *GBCS, GBOD, UMCOM*