

THE URBAN IMPERATIVE

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Compiled by

David M. Best for Mission Strategy USA/Canada

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Foreword

Oliver R. Phillips, Director
Mission Strategy USA/Canada

Mission Strategy USA/Canada has been given the mandate for facilitating urban ministries in the Church of the Nazarene by USA/Canada Mission Evangelism Department Director Tom Nees. Accordingly, we have fashioned the following mission statement to direct our efforts: *Urban Ministries exists to develop strategies and provide resources to assist churches and districts in the task of holistic evangelism in the urban areas through starting, strengthening and stimulating congregations that seek to transform broken lives and impoverished communities.*

The office of Mission Strategy USA/Canada recognizes the sparse representation of the Church of the Nazarene in our major cities. We must increase the evangelistic strategic planning for ministry in the urban context.

The initiatives we are launching will be comprehensive in nature -- developing resources to be used by districts and congregations in a renewed thrust to urban centers. Workshops have already been held in cities including Seattle, Cleveland and Minneapolis. Results from these consultations have been positive.

The Urban Imperative is another tool we are offering in attempting to fulfill our mission to the cities. An adaptation of Chapter 4 was first published under this same title as a booklet in 2004. I commend this book length version to you for your careful study and reflection. Updates and additions will be available on line at www.urbannazarene.org.

Please contact us whenever you think we might assist you in your ministry with the people and city to which God has called you.

Introduction

*“The first service of a Holy Ghost-baptized church
is to the poor;
As the spirit was upon Jesus
to preach the gospel to the poor,
so His Spirit is upon His servants for the same purpose.”ⁱ*

-- Phineas F. Bresee

*“There’s no way that we can call ourselves Holiness people
if our heart is not broken and tender and
sensitive to the needy.”ⁱⁱ*

-Jerry Porter, General Superintendent-Church of the Nazarene

Evangelist Tom Skinner loved to challenge evangelical Christians with “If Jesus is the Answer, What is the question?”

Asking good, strategic questions is critical to getting valuable answers. And careful listening for people’s real questions is essential for offering truly helpful responses.

The famous speaker was late for an important lecture. He rushed out the hotel into the first available carriage and shouted to the hack, “Drive fast!” The hack put the whip to his horse and the carriage careened across the cobblestone streets of old London at people-scattering speed. After some minutes, the frustrated and now frightened speaker demanded to know their progress. The hack responded, “You told me to ‘Drive fast,’ but you didn’t tell me where!”

Asking strategic questions and defining desired destinations are critical. If you were to say “I want to visit you in New York City; please tell me how to get there.” Before I replied with any real helpful information, I would (a) need to know where you were coming from, and (b) how soon you wanted to be in New York since just about every transportation mode from boats to car services and buses, trains, and airplanes serves the city.

Language requires similar clarity. It would be foolish and naïve for me to assume that since you are reading this in English, we both have the same understandings of all the words used here. For me to assume because you are reading this in English that we both have the same understandings of all the words used here would be foolish and naïve. Similarly, even though this book is written specifically for those in the Church of the Nazarene, we know from research and personal experience that not all Nazarenes use the same terms in the same way.

So allow me at the very beginning to pose and respond to three questions that deal with definitions critical to the topic before us. Hopefully, these introductory remarks will help make our subsequent conversation more effective and offer clarity to our communication.

+ + + + +

What does it mean to live a holy life? How does someone know if he or she has been filled with the Holy Spirit?

Some theological traditions in the Christian faith place an emphasis on the work of the Third Person of the Holy Trinity. One tradition believes that to be filled with the Spirit involves having extraordinary power and demonstration of special abilities called *charisms*, or in English, *spiritual gifts*.

The Wesleyan-Holiness tradition – with which the Church of the Nazarene identifies itself – recognizes the scriptural witness to gifts of the Spirit, but understands that the sign or evidence of being filled with the Spirit is not any one or more of the gifts. It is a life bearing the fruit of the Spirit, the first of which the Apostle Paul lists is love.ⁱⁱⁱ

The Wesleyan-Holiness tradition holds that the power the Holy Spirit gives believers is to be holy. It sees this as the clear witness of the Scriptures. What does the Lord require of those who claim to be followers of the one true God? Nothing less than to be like God - holy, as God is holy. To act as God acts. The prophet summarized it: “To do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God.”^{iv}

The work of God, and the expectation that God’s people act as God acts, is a recurring theme of the Hebrew Scriptures. God liberates the Children of Israel from slavery in Egypt. God feeds them in the wilderness. God provides the people with a place to call home. God provides judges to maintain justice in the community. The people are chosen and invited into relationship with God and each other based on God’s loving kindness, not their wealth, status or importance in the world’s eye.

God asks for their devotion and love. But this worship has very specific ethical implications and imperatives. The Lord asks them to treat each other and strangers exactly as God has treated them.

The worship that God desires doesn’t always sound very spiritual. And those actions such as fasting, prayer, and praising God in religious services, no matter how faithfully or conscientiously executed, are insufficient and even potentially damning.

God’s understanding of acceptable religious acts of worship is much more expansive and “earthy.” Here are some examples found in the form of God’s rhetorical questions to religious folk who were fasting but also fighting with each other and oppressing workers to get richer. “Will you call this a fast, and a day acceptable to the Lord? Is not this the fast

that I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh? Then shall your light break forth like the dawn and your healing shall spring up speedily; your righteousness shall go before you, and the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.”^v

Worship, for God, includes such very material things as economics and commerce. And whether or not violence is used to enforce positions of power and influence.^{vi} To disregard the needs of people or directly mistreat them makes a mockery of worship and impugns God’s character. From the record of the Hebrew Scriptures, it is apparent that if our lives are not given to doing justice, loving others and walking humbly, God finds our “religious acts” of worship quite displeasing, to say the least.^{vii}

To be holy as God is holy is not so much evident by possessing some special abilities, or practicing feats of extreme devotion and personal piety as it is behaving as God has already shown us: act justly, be constantly loving and merciful, and walk wisely before God.

In the New Testament, James echoes this call when he declares that those who show partiality to the rich and disrespect the poor commit sin.^{viii} And he issues a challenge to all who claim to be spiritually mature and wise: “By his good life let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom.” The knowledge and wisdom of God will be “first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, without uncertainty or insincerity.” And the “harvest of righteousness” of the life lived in the fullness of the Spirit “is sown in peace by those who make peace.”^{ix}

Paul exhorts those who say they know and love God to present their “bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.” And Jesus is quite direct: “Why do you call me ‘Lord, Lord’ and not do what I tell you?”^x

Note the constant expectation that some action or behavior is to flow from “knowing God.” Being *filled* with the Spirit means one will *walk* in the Spirit.^{xi} To walk in the Spirit, to follow Christ, means becoming like Christ in attitude and action.

This experience of “filling” and “walking” in the Spirit will graciously enable one to become, as Jesus said, “perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.”^{xii} And what does this mean? How is God perfect? Jesus shows us in his life what God is like^{xiii} In his words just prior to this promise of perfection, Jesus teaches we are perfect when we love our enemies just as God’s “rain of love” falls on both the righteous and sinners. It is a perfection of love in our hearts that we receive by faith. The Spirit cleanses and fills us completely with love enabling us to be totally devoted to God. This perfect love manifests itself outwardly in love for our neighbors and even our enemies. We desire to seek first God’s kingdom and justice. We prayerfully devote ourselves to God’s will being done on earth just as it is in heaven.^{xiv}

To be filled with the Spirit is to “be holy,” thereby loving God perfectly with our entire being and loving others as we love ourselves. This behavior flows naturally from God cleansing our hearts by faith. There is Pentecostal power to be sure. But when God pours out the Spirit in purifying power, it enables people to be more fully formed into the image of Christ, becoming life-long peacemakers, not just occasional pew jumpers.

Look at the Spirit’s presence and power at the birth of the Church. “When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly a sound from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire, distributed and resting on each one of them. And

they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”^{xv}

The result of this empowerment? People from “every nation under heaven” encountered and understood the Good News of God! The Spirit’s power was not distributed so Christ’s disciples could feel good, proud, or pious. No, it was so the young could see visions; old men who had long stopped dreaming of anything good happening could dream dreams; so men and women could demonstrate and declare God’s prophetic, life giving truth.^{xvi}

This very first gathering of the Spirit-created Church of Jesus Christ tells us that his Church is a “new creation,” a never-before-seen community comprised of people from diverse cultures. If there is any doubt as to Holy Spirit’s intention, the final book of Divine revelation describes God’s redeemed city built foursquare with “a river of the water of life, flowing through the middle of the street of the city. On either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.”^{xvii}

John’s vision from God also revealed “a great multitude which no man can number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throng and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, ‘Salvation belongs to our God who sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb!’”^{xviii}

A “great multitude” which cannot be numbered accurately -- with even today’s most sophisticated techniques and technology -- is already with us. The increasing populations of our cities are comprised of people from almost every nation, every ethnic, language and culture group on the earth.

Oliver Phillips believes the recent immigration patterns to the U.S. are by divine providence.^{xi} If so, since most of these new immigrants are moving to cities, then in the urbanization of the world, we have been given a providential opportunity never available to any other generation for living out the Pentecostal power and holiness theology of perfect love in a measure and as foretaste now of what will be in the heavenly city that is yet to come.

This leads us to a second question.

What do we mean by the terms *city*, *urban*, *urbanization*, and *urbanism*?

Dictionaries define a city as “an inhabited place of greater size, population, or importance than a town or village.” (In Britain, it is an incorporated town deemed of major size or importance to have a bishop.) The word is derived from Middle English *citie* large or small town, from Old French *cite*, and from Medieval Latin *civitat-*, *civitas*, from Latin, citizenship, state, from *civis* citizen.^{xx}

Another word to describe a city area is *metropolitan*. It is of interest for our present study of Church and City to note that the primary meaning of *metropolitan* is “an ecclesiastical authority,” or the particular geographic area over which the primate presides. The word is from Late Latin *metropolitanus*, “of the see of a metropolitan.”

Metropolis is from Greek *mEtEr*, “mother” + *polis*, “city.” In ancient Greece, it would be a city or state of origin of a colony. Today, it is used to describe a large, important city.^{xxi}

For our purposes, the terms *city*, *metropolis* (or its derivations) and *urban* will be used interchangeably. We should caution, however, that different groups choose to define these terms more narrowly or specifically. As some have observed, “it is virtually impossible to define ‘urban’ with any universally recognized precision.”^{xxii} (For more information on

specific criteria used to define urban areas by some researchers and the U.S. Census Bureau, visit UrbanNazarene.org)

What seems undisputed is that the effects of expanding urban areas -- urbanization and urbanism -- “are the two most widespread phenomena” of recent decades.^{xxiii} A web search of *urbanization* found 515,000 locations, and 237,000 for *urbanism*.

International Urban Associates defines urbanization as “the absolute growth of cities, both in numbers and size, as masses of people move into the urban centers of the world.”^{xxiv} The dictionary says urbanization “relates to the quality or state of becoming urbanized...to make urban in nature or character.”

Every nation on earth is experiencing urbanization, although it is a relatively new phenomenon. Prior to the Industrial Age, technology was not available to produce sufficient agricultural surplus for supporting more than about 5% of an entire population living in cities. This was the case for the United States in 1800.^{xxv} Throughout the 19th century the United States was urbanizing. (And the emergence and growth of the American Holiness movement corresponds and responds to this reality.^{xxvi}) In 1920, the U.S.’ urban population exceeded the rural. By 1970, the process of urbanization of the United States was essentially complete.^{xxvii}

There are places in the U.S. (and the world) where cities have expanded geographically and now intertwine to form a megalopolis. (Some observers note that globalization can be viewed as a by-product of this interlocking and ever-expanding influence of cities.)

But urbanization is more than a specific geographic area with high density, diverse population. *Urbanization* is “to make urban in nature or character.” In this sense, urbanization affects even those places that don’t qualify as cities by population density.

Urbanization, -- that is “to make urban in nature or character”-- is happening even in small towns and rural areas.

Some call this effect *urbanism* -- the adoption of urban lifestyles and urban values. It is seen as a “product of urbanization, but is not necessarily related to living in a large city.”^{xxviii} Urbanism can be defined as “the characteristic way of life of city dwellers, or the culture or way of life of city dwellers.”^{xxix}[My emphasis]

Young people in places like Weedpatch, California, Bucksport, Tennessee and Dog Pound, Alberta are all following the fashion and music trends of urban youth -- often to the consternation of the parents! Technologies such as computers, satellite TV and the Internet have linked people together. I have seen young men in rural India wearing jerseys featuring famous American athletics, and this time it's not because some well intentioned missionary group sent those items over in their used clothing box! No, the clothes were bought in the local marketplace.

A few years ago, I talked with a retired blue-collar worker outside his modest house -- a converted hunting cabin -- way up a hollow in the hills of East Kentucky. After a while, he excused himself to join his wife inside the house so they could listen to the Berlin Symphony Orchestra ...courtesy of the satellite dish in his yard. And then there was the pastor from a country in central Africa telling me how much he loved Dolly Parton's music!

This brings us to the third question.

How do you react when you hear the word “urban”?

Even when agreeing on definitions, sometimes the terms themselves can unintentionally inhibit communication. On those occasions, words become barriers not bridges to understanding

Take the words of our title, *The Urban Imperative*. “Imperative” is a word often associated with the field of ethics. Essentially, it denotes the concept that a particular behavior or response, of necessity, should follow from a particular “indicative” (objective fact). “Imperative” is not a term usually problematic for Christians. Emil Brunner’s *The Divine Imperative* is a classic work in Christian ethics. And thinking of the Christian life in terms of ethical imperatives is certainly normative and very familiar to those in Holiness churches.

The term *urban* is the challenging one.

Urban means “relating to or located in a city, characteristic of the city or city life.” Its root is Latin *urbs*, *urbanus*, “of a city.” A related word is *urbane* which means “polite, refined, and often elegant in manner.” This is hardly what Christians – particularly white evangelicals -- envision when they hear the words “urban” or “city.” On the contrary, they are much more likely to conjure up images of crime, congestion, pollution, inner-city blight, and poverty.

Several years ago, a survey among pastors and laypeople in the Church of the Nazarene revealed that one-third of them grew up in a small town, and almost the same percentage was raised in a rural area.^{xxx} Clearly, for church leadership in the United States and Canada, small towns and the rural heartland are much more comfortable and understood than the city.

One last assumption needs addressing. Many people assume that urban and rural areas have no connection or affect on the each other. But what would urban dwellers do for food without farmers? No amount of increase in urban gardening could meet the need. And what would the farmer do without urban populations as a market? Among researchers and social advocates, there is a growing awareness of the essential interconnectedness of rural and urban areas. Family farmers and urban citizens are finding common ground and

forming coalitions around economic and ecological concerns. Truly, as the Bresee Institute for Metro-Ministries observes, “urban areas do not stand alone or in isolation, nor can urban areas be dissected into contrasting zones such as inner city, downtown, industrial and commercial zones, suburban, sprawl communities, edge cities, or encircling rural areas, because they all contribute health or disease to the whole.”^{xxx}

The purpose in emphasizing urban ministries is not to divide people into factions of urban vs. rural. Classifying society into urban/rural categories may serve a purpose for researchers, but it would be a dangerous division for gospel ministries.

Instead, we are calling the Church to recognize that its theology and ministry must now be done in an urbanized society. This society is an incredibly complex network of systems and people in which there are multiple connections and interrelationships. In our urbanized world, now more than ever, no person is an island from other humans. And people do not live isolated from the systems and effects of politics, commerce, culture, and media.

In the coming chapters, we will suggest that what is essential for ministering to urban dwellers is a Scriptural gospel of the kingdom that offers redemption for people, places and systems. That kind of full salvation is also very good news for people living in the country or small towns of today’s interconnected urbanized society.

Indicatives and Imperatives, Commissions and Commandments

In the field of ethics, indicatives lead one necessarily to imperatives. God’s indicative “I am holy” leads to an imperative for those made in God’s image: “Therefore you be holy.”

The Wesleyan-Holiness tradition sees an ethical response (imperative) arising from the divine fact (indicative) of the Spirit's cleansing. And it affirms that what God expects and promises is possible.

By grace, the image of God is stamped fresh on our hearts. There is grace abundant for holy habits to be formed, "practical divinity" to be demonstrated, and bountiful blessings to be shared - all rooted in a perfect love for God and others, even as God has loved us. It is, as Scripture says, "faith working through love."^{xxxii}

For people who accept the authority of Scriptures as reliable for instruction and guidance, the biblical Great Commission and Great Commandment are important and informative. In them, we are called to declare and demonstrate the Gospel through the joys of making disciples of all peoples, and loving others as we love ourselves

To take seriously the Great Commission -- going into the world and making disciples of all nations (people groups) -- will, these days, require the church to go to the cities. Over half the world's population, which "God so loved that he gave his only begotten son," lives in urban areas. In the United States, that percentage increases to three out of every four people living in urban centers (with some counts putting urban dwellers at almost 90% of the US population).

To take seriously the Great Commandment -- loving God and our neighbors -- will require recognizing and knowing the needs of our neighbors. To see need and not respond is incompatible with Christian love (1 John 3:16). Of course, we may not see need, if we are not living and ministering where the majority of people in need live.

For a denomination committed to the Great Commission and Great Commandment, the implications are startlingly obvious.^{xxxiii} The divine imperative that has always animated Wesleyan-Holiness people has become for our generation, in essence, the *urban imperative*.

It is not enough to include urban areas in our evangelism strategies. Cities must be the priority if we are to authentically and faithfully fulfill the Great Commission and Commandment in the U.S. and Canada.

And so it was that the first century Christians' mission strategy sent them to the major cities of their day--places of commerce, culture and crossroads of people groups. Here they proclaimed the risen Christ and planted churches. We 21st century believers would do well to follow this biblical pattern. To do less, may reveal we are devout hearers and defenders of the Word, but not really doers of God's word.

Through God's empowering Spirit, we can live in the Babylons of this day and be the salvation bearers, the shalom makers – channels for God's life giving river of healing water to “the nations” of people that are now living, often with deep despair and in unjust, oppressive conditions in our cities.

In the pages that follow we present for your prayerful and thoughtful consideration some ideas about ways the Church of the Nazarene can fulfill its scriptural and historical mandate in the 21st century. We only ask that you read with an open heart and mind, trusting the Holy Spirit to guide you to any truth that may be contained here. I have prayed this for you. As you read the words of *The Urban Imperative*, I pray they might move into your head and heart, and then out to your hands in holy service to a world weary for Good News.

Imperative:

a command or order, an obligatory act or duty

Hypothetical Imperative:

an imperative of conduct that springs from expediency or practical necessity rather than
from moral law

Categorical Imperative:

a moral obligation or command that is
unconditionally and universally binding

*You therefore, must be perfect, as your
heavenly Father is perfect.*

--Jesus the Nazarene and the Christ

**Urban Ministries and the Wesleyan-Holiness Tradition:
Scriptural and Historical Foundations**

“Many argue that Christianity does not offer a solution to the social problems of the modern age. They insist that Christian reformers, acting on biblical principles, must accept an alliance with systems of thought based on human experience... That is not true, at least for Wesleyans.”^{xxxiv} -- Timothy L. Smith

“It has always been the mission and character of the Church to move toward those in spiritual and physical need with the message of the Gospel. Today..., that God-given missional impulse moves the Church to minister in the city. – Ron Benefiel

The intended audience of *The Urban Imperative* is leaders in the Wesleyan or holiness traditions, and specifically, the Church of the Nazarene.

To speak of the Wesleyan tradition -- meaning both its theology and history -- is almost by definition to speak of urban ministries. John Wesley's ministry focus on the poor in the urban areas of 18th century England is evident in his own writings and well documented by scholars.

Timothy Smith, distinguished scholar of American history, argued persuasively that the American holiness movement originated in cities of the East and then migrated to the rural areas of America.^{xxxv} Historian and Manager of Nazarene Archives Stan Ingersol punctuates the point: “In all cases, it was urban dwellers...who gave the holiness movement life.”^{xxxvi}

And the largest denomination to come out of the American holiness movement -- the Church of the Nazarene -- has, according to Ingersol, “always had an urban presence.”^{xxxvii}

Even those who view the American Holiness tradition as a distinct branch of the Wesleyan tree may at least concede that both movements share an urban focus. We will hyphenate “Wesleyan” and “Holiness” in this work, and leave the arguments for the similarities and distinctions of these movements to wiser writers and lengthier studies.

To be Wesleyan, is to take seriously the Scriptures. John Wesley described himself as “a man of one book” (although a most passionate reader and writer of many others).^{xxxviii}

One scholar has suggested that Mr. Wesley’s famous four-fold source for authority -- Scripture, Tradition, Reason, Experience -- might be better described as a “unilateral *rule* of Scripture within a trilateral *hermeneutic* [the methodological principles for interpreting and applying the Scripture] of reason tradition, and experience.”^{xxxix} Whether or not one accepts this assessment, Scripture was, for Wesley, surely the first of the four sources.

Using the categories of the Quadrilateral as a framework, let’s look briefly at urban ministries in light of the Scriptures, the Wesleyan-Holiness tradition and experience. We will also consider the reasonableness of urban missions.^{xl}

Scripture

The Christian canon opens with humankind in a garden, but concludes with all the nations of the world living in fellowship with God in a city.

Urban pastor/theologian Ray Bakke tells us the word “city” occurs 1,250 times in the Bible, and the Scriptures reference 140 different cities.^{xii} Here are just a few examples:

- Cain built the first city recorded in Scripture.
- Abraham interceded for Sodom.
- Joseph administered a major city-state.
- Moses oversaw the construction of cities in Egypt.
- Nehemiah led efforts of community and economic development, and tithing of leadership for needy neighborhoods.
- Esther lived in the city, and at great personal risk engaged in the political processes. She spoke truth to the powers, lobbying the authorities to act justly.
- Isaiah proclaimed that God’s people were to be restorers of ruined cities.
- Jeremiah wept for his people and Babylon.
- Jonah was sent to the city to proclaim God’s saving love.
- Jerusalem - its name alone is rich with meaning^{xiii}

In the Hebrew Scriptures, the city is not portrayed as a bad place. It is a good gift of the Lord, offering refuge and protection of human rights (Exodus 21.13; Numbers 35.6); economic and material benefits (Deuteronomy 6:10).

The city (*polis*) in the New Testament:

- Jesus began his ministry in a small town, but fulfilled it in a city.
- The Church was born in the city
- Paul was an urbanite.
- A casual study of the New Testament canon reveals just how much the new Christian faith was truly an urban phenomenon. For example,

- Paul’s missionary campaigns were to the significant cities of that time; his church planting efforts in these centers of global transportation, diverse cultures and peoples helped disburse the Gospel around the world.
- A good portion of the Epistles were directed to churches in urban centers,
- The seven churches in Revelation 2 and 3 were city churches.

From study and reflection on these references and other major themes of the Scriptures, a biblical theology of the city will emerge. The contours of such a theology are wonderfully suggested in the letter from God that Jeremiah delivered to the believers exiled in Babylon (Jeremiah 29). Here we find God’s vision for the city. It involves indwelling the city (incarnationally present with the people and *polis* we are serving); investing in the city (utilizing and redeeming the economic systems for good and just development of the city); increasing in the city (a theology that involves the material, sexual, familial, and generational); and interceding for the city (an urban spirituality that is quite particular and substantive—praying for the city’s shalom, its peace, its wholeness).

In sum, this urban biblical theology is theocentric. We serve the city by God’s design. God is at work there, impelling and empowering us to join in this redemptive activity. An urban biblical theology is optimistic about the city, because God has promised plans for peace, to give us “a future and a hope.”^{xliii}

Wisdom of Christian Tradition

The Christian Church begins in the city of Jerusalem on the Festival of Pentecost. It soon spread to the world’s major cities through the ministry of Paul.

Nazarene missionary and missiology professor Paul R. Orjala notes that “The concept of missionary is worked out in the life and ministry of Paul and his companions

whom he describes as *apostoloi*, and the particular kind of missionaries they are is urban missionaries!” [Orjala’s emphasis]^{xiv}

Dr. Orjala declares, “This means that the New Testament concept of missionary is closer to that of *urban missionary* than the current popular concept of missionary in our present day.” Orjala argues that the term *urban missionary* can help the Church return to a balanced understanding of the usage of *missionary*, one more consistent with “the whole history of missions in these two millennia of the existence of the Church.”^{xiv}

The early Church Councils were convened in cities, and many of the pastors, teachers and theologians of the Church’s first centuries lived in cities.

To be fair, we must acknowledge that the cities of the Bible, the Roman Empire, and Medieval, Reformation and Enlightenment era Europe were nothing compared to the large metropolitan areas or mega-cities in today’s world. The modern city is just that: modern and quite recent to human history.

Limits in the technologies of transportation, building engineering, and other factors kept cities at a certain size for hundreds of years. In 1790, when the first census in the United States was taken, no city had a population of 50,000, and only five had more than 10,000 people. But in 30 years, New York quadrupled in size and America had its first city that exceeded 100,000.^{xvi}

Although the scale and scope of cities have certainly changed, their basic underlying functions have remained relatively constant: protection, commercial and transportation activities, locale for religious, governmental, and cultural centers.

This brief look at Christian history reveals some valuable information for considering the relationship of the Church and urban missions.

The world of the New Testament Apostles was predominately rural, yet the nascent Christian faith was clearly an urban religion.

Likewise, the Wesleyan revival in England, and the Holiness Movement in the United States were primarily urban based movements of Christian renewal and mission outreach—even at a time when these countries, though urbanizing, were still primarily rural, agrarian societies.

The genesis of the apostolic Christian faith is in the city; the roots of our historic theological tradition are in the city, and the Church of the Nazarene was conceived in the city.

Critical Reason

Is it reasonable to claim it imperative that the Church engages the city?

Setting aside for a moment any biblical, Church history or moral considerations, one writer featured in a prominent business magazine argues, “Sheer self-interest should stir us. The woes of the...city are by no means confined by metropolitan boundaries—just ask any suburbanite whose child has been busted for drugs or home has been burglarized. Also, the economic fates of cities and their suburbs are inextricably linked.”^{xlvii}

If people confess an understanding of a God and Lord of the Church who is committed to redeeming and reconciling all creation so there might be justice and shalom in the cosmos, then Christ’s community has an imperative for the welfare of cities. Any self-interest for institutional survival is additional, secondary motivation.

Should our denomination sincerely desire to fulfill the Great Commandment and Great Commission in the U.S. and Canada, then ministry to people is mandatory. Most people now live in urban areas. With these points established, urban ministry is a sound and reasonable decision.

Experience of Grace

Is mission to the cities practical? Are there those who have experienced God's blessing in demonstrating and declaring the whole Gospel to the whole complex of urban situations? Are there examples of the Gospel redeeming and transforming people and places?

Yes, the evidence, both historic and contemporary is there. Study the history of Paul, Wesley, and Booth in other countries in centuries past. Then consider Palmer, Hoople, Bresee and others in America's 19th century.^{xlviii} Review the more recent records of Nazarenes living out the gospel in New York City, Washington, DC, and Los Angeles. Look at the experience of the denomination's *Thrust to the Cities* in the 1980s and 1990s.

In summary, when using the categories of the Wesleyan quadrilateral as a framework for evaluating an urban mission focus we find that:

- Urban ministry provides opportunity for today's Church to respond missionally in ways consistent with the teachings of both Old and New Testaments. A focus on ministry in cities follows the strategy of missions adopted so effectively by the Early Church's first missionaries as recorded in Scripture.
- It is consistent with the wisdom of Christian antiquity. The Church's early centuries, the Wesleyan revival with which we identify, and our denomination's history all testify to the importance and value of urban evangelism.
- It is reasonable. Eighty per cent of the U.S. population is urbanized, with nearly 6 out of ten persons living in cities of over 200,000 people. And the psychosocial affects of urbanism ensure that the remaining Americans are, in some degree, touched and influenced by urban centers. If the Church of the Nazarene is to

faithfully fulfill the Great Commission and Great Commandment, it is logical and reasonable to assume it must be accomplished in the cities.

- Experience confirms an urban mission focus. We know from the experience of Wesley in England's industrializing urban 18th century, the American holiness movement's experience in cities of the 19th century and our denomination's first experiences of ministry at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries that the Church can faithfully and successfully minister to both people and the *polis*. The more recent experience of the denomination's emphasis of *Thrust to the Cities* also illustrates that with purposeful intention, prayer, and the power of the Spirit, the denomination can effectively minister God's grace to the complex challenges and opportunities of today's great urban centers.

Councils, Creeds and Confessing a Common Christian Tradition

There are scriptural themes and doctrines confessed by Christians of all theological traditions. These were hammered out and distilled into creeds by the early Church.

The Church leaders labored to clarify the nature of God and his actions in the world, finally forging the doctrine of the Trinity through the great ecumenical councils. In the Triune God, there is an understanding of redemption that encompasses the entire world.

The God who creates also wills that all things, in heaven and on earth, be "summed up" in Christ Jesus, the Son. There is a reign of God that manifests itself, now, in a measure, through the coming of the Anointed One, The Son of God. In Jesus, redemptive, restorative healing takes place not only for humankind, but also to such a depth that the "whole creation" eagerly awaits final restoration. In this Triune God, the life giving breath of

the Holy Spirit was active not only during that first creation, but now animates the Church, and in common grace, blesses the whole world with divine favor.

This Trinitarian understanding influences how humankind sees its relation to God and the creation. Here is a God who is active, not only in the original creation, but in the dramatic demonstration of power on that "Eighth Day" of creation and is now making "all things new in Christ."

There is a "second incarnation" of the Son, in the Church, Christ's Body on earth today, of whom he is the Head. God the Holy Spirit is empowering this "Body II" to be obedient to the Father in the divine mission, even as Jesus was obedient during his earthly life to demonstrate and declare the Reign of God.

God creates the world and calls it good; forms humankind in His own image; establishes fellowship with humanity and life in peaceful communion. When this life-filled world is threatened by sin and evil, God's intentions are not thwarted. God conquers oppressors, establishes justice and liberates people so they might have peace; then confronts and triumphs over evil's worst--trampling down death by death.

This God who desires that all might have life and have it abundantly -- and who describes His Kingdom as a city -- surely cares about the conditions of people, socio-economic-political structures, and ecosystems of those human settlements in His world called cities.

And, if God cares, then this has deep implications, yes, even imperatives, for those who call themselves His children.

"The evidence of the presence of Jesus in our midst is that we bear the gospel, particularly to the poor." ^{xlix}

-- Phineas F. Bresee

FOR INDIVIDUAL AND/OR GROUP REFLECTION

Christian ethics is not simply a set of principles, but a “way of life grounded in social practices that develop moral virtues.”^{li} There are holy habits to form. Wesley lived and preached a “practical divinity” as essential for all those who had truly entered into the experience of Christian perfection.

So “When young people tell Archbishop Rembert Weakland of Milwaukee that they are having a difficult time understanding what it means to be a Catholic, he tells them to participate in the Eucharistic celebration with the same parish community every Sunday for six months and during the same six month period to work in a soup kitchen for the poor. If they do these two practices, they will come to understand what it means to be a Catholic.”^{li}

1. With the story above in mind, what do you believe would be the instruction to someone wanting to understand what it means to be a Wesleyan, a Nazarene?
2. How does God view the city? Is there a biblical perspective on the city? (Babel or Jerusalem?)
3. What role does our understanding of salvation history and eschatology (Last Days) play in the church’s engagement with the city?
4. From an examination of scripture, how should God’s people perceive the city in relation to Christian ethics and mission?
5. How might a Wesleyan theological tradition inform an urban church’s theology today?
6. How has the Church historically developed and carried out its theology of the city in behaviors and actions?

7. From the doctrinal and biblical “indicatives” of Scripture, and considering the historic mission strategies of the Church, is it reasonable and rational to believe an urban imperative follows?

**The Church of the Nazarene and Urban Missions:
Have We Left our “First Love”?**

“...newspapers reported personal assaults almost every day. As the population grew, violence in the city increased to such an extent that the local minister considered Los Angeles hopeless and left town.”ⁱⁱ

The time has come for us to once more align who we say we are with the priorities we establish for evangelistic and missional endeavors. Our denomination takes seriously the challenges posed by ministering in the urban context. We refuse to be complicit with those who abandon the city where God seeks to be a viable presence in the lives of those who live there.

– Oliver R. Phillips

Too often in the history of the United States, the Christian community’s response to the city has been influenced more by the secular society than by the sacred scriptures.ⁱⁱⁱ

The American holiness movement, and particularly the emerging denomination intentionally named after Jesus the Nazarene, was an exception. At the dawn of the Church of the Nazarene, when the majority of its ministry was urban centered, the United States

was primarily rural. (The decennial census of 1900 reported the U.S. population as 60.4% rural and 39.6% urban.)^{liv}

For Phineas Bresee's Nazarenes, holiness meant preaching the gospel to the poor. And it was a full-bodied gospel that touched every aspect of the person's life. Their holiness evangelism might be rightly defined as *holistic evangelism*.^{lv} And it was directed squarely to the rapidly urbanizing centers formed by the country's industrialization.

The West Coast based Nazarenes began to unite with other Holiness groups from different sections of the nation. The movement's "preachers and deaconesses were activists," focusing their work on the poorer sections of the urban centers and fervently believing the message of their doctrine, described by one writer as, "cleansing men's hearts and correcting social wrongs."^{lvi}

Yet, according to Timothy Smith, "neither the origin nor the subsequent history of the Church of the Nazarene can be understood without a knowledge of the two holiness traditions, urban and rural."^{lvii} Denominational archivist Stan Ingersol contends that the "resulting tension between the two visions was often creative, but also the source of severe problems."^{lviii}

Scholars disagree over some of the ways the Holiness movement is related to the urban context, but Ingersol says there is "no lack of consensus that the Church of the Nazarene's rise was tied intimately to the expansion and development of America's urban culture." He notes that Nazarenes "have always engaged the city – and been engaged by it in turn – throughout our short history."^{lix}

Our denominational records reveal a lessening of that mutual engagement of city and church. This engagement with the city is further eroded if you define Nazarene urban ministry as being holistic in theology and practice. Just such an understanding of the gospel

led to a pattern of comprehensive social ministries and political engagement that was the “most distinctive (and perhaps defining) characteristic of early Nazarene urban presence.”^{lx}

This distinctive characteristic of Nazarene urban ministry appears to be intimately connected to the urban holiness folk’s understanding that such ministry was normative for believers who experienced the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit. Their engaging the systems and structures of society was directly related to their understanding and experience of perfect love.

It is here tension can be seen between the urban and rural traditions of the holiness movement. Although our urban presence may never have been withdrawn, this distinguishing style of the founding Nazarenes “began to wane even before they had passed from the scene.”^{lxi} Why this occurred is not central to our current task. What is more helpful to ask is: Was there a resulting impact on the Church’s relationship to the city and its very understanding of the Gospel in general, and holiness in particular?

Certainly those in the rural holiness tradition were engaged in social ministries. But did their understanding of the relationship between social ministries and the Gospel differ from their urban holiness counterparts? Were the rural holiness tradition’s social ministries more likely to focus response on issues of primarily personal morality -- offering ministries of mercy to an individual they believed was suffering solely as a result of personal sins and choices?

Dr. Ingersol relays the account of a worker from the rural rescue homes in Pilot Point and Bethany titled “A Long Night in the Slums.” The worker describes taking a train to Little Rock, confronting the matron of a house of prostitution, and taking one of the girls back with her to the Rest Cottage. “Her solution for victims of urban decay,” Ingersol concludes “was straightforward: it was a strategy of extraction.”^{lxii} Apparently there was no interest in or attempt to address the social and cultural values that at some level created a market for

prostitution, nor confront or reform the civil and political systems that abetted or kept women working as prostitutes.

This version of urban ministry and this view of the gospel emerged preeminent as “the character of Nazarene urban ministry gradually narrowed until it consisted almost exclusively of evangelistic soul-winning religion.”^{lxiii}

We know those in the rural holiness tradition harbored little affection for the city and its systems. Timothy Smith cited “the farmer’s feeling of alienation from urban culture” as a factor in the Holiness movement becoming influenced by Fundamentalism.^{lxiv}

What theological, sociological, historical factors are at the heart of the rural holiness tradition’s disdain for the city can only be suggested here.

Historian Stan Ingersol attributes this shift in part to the fact that the pioneer urban social ministries rarely became self-supporting and/or failed to institutionalize with the denomination’s structure. The same type of strong, quintessential American entrepreneur personalities that so dominated the country’s other sectors during the Gilded Age were starting and operating the ministries. So often when such a “key individual directing a social ministry died or relocated, the particular agency closed down.”^{lxv}

Another force, he suggests, was the influence and popularity of the “modern evangelists,” with their particular social concepts and fundamental spirit they communicated so effectively.

In addition to these elements, were there other factors in play? Did the optimism for correcting societal wrongs that infused the early urban Nazarenes’ holiness theology become overwhelmed following World War I by influences of nativism, fundamentalism, and premillennialism? Did the changing composition of cities from the 1890s to 1920s (due to new immigrant groups) have any bearing on this shift? What about the emergence of

Southern Revisionist history of the Civil War, the rise of Jim Crow laws, and massive migration of Black Americans to the cities?

Regardless of the roots and reasons, an anti-urban bias now permeates the Church of the Nazarene culture. This shift actually started early in Nazarene history as “the church, which began its first generation oriented toward the urban poor, moved into its second generation with a narrower sense of its own purpose and mission.”^{lxvi}

By the 1920s-40s Nazarenes had moved “away from a Wesleyan social activism of its pioneers and instead wedded the holiness message to personal standards.”^{lxvii} “Being caught in the tide of the modernist debate, the church,” Ronald Emptage argues, “adopted its own Wesleyan version to avoid some of the radical fundamentalistic positions. While it was growing numerically, those who joined came into a culturally conservative house through an evangelistic door.” And those culturally conservative “houses” of worship were increasingly located predominately in rural areas and small towns. By 1996, half of all Nazarene churches and pastors were serving small towns or rural areas.^{lxviii}

Today, nearly 80 percent of the people in the United States live in an urban area or urban cluster as defined by the US Census Bureau. In 2002, 54 percent of all Americans lived in one of 49 large cities (defined as having at least one million people), yet only one third of active Nazarene congregations (organized churches or reported NewStarts) were in those areas, and only 30 percent of Nazarene members.^{lxix}

Our denomination was founded in an overwhelmingly rural country, but had most of our churches in America’s urban areas. Today, the U.S. is essentially an urbanized nation, but the majority of our churches are in small towns and rural areas.^{lxx} Research has shown that three out of five new Nazarene pastors start their ministry in rural areas and towns with fewer than 10,000 people.^{lxxi}

Although we have never completely abandoned the city, the Church in the US and Canada definitely has what Tom Nees described as a “heartland” flavor.^{lxxii}

We are now in a position of playing catch up. Regardless of where one stands on the “two traditions” thesis of the Church’s origin, or even what personal opinions or preferences one may have regarding rural vs. urban living, the facts are that the majority of the people, with the majority of the needs, now reside in cities. If we maintain a bias against the city, how will we fulfill our mission as a Great Commandment and Great Commission church? How will we “spread scriptural holiness over the land” if we avoid the cities of this land?

Dr. Oliver Phillips asks a probing question “How does a predominantly white denomination become missionally evangelistic within a changing multicultural nation?”^{lxxiii} Here is a complementary and equally challenging one: How does a predominately rural/suburban denomination with predominately rural/small town pastors become missionally viable in an overwhelmingly urbanized nation?

It will require Pentecostal purity and power of the Hallowing Spirit of God. It will also take active intention on the part of leadership. Focus, commitment and perseverance are essential when accepting any worthy, challenging task.

As an urban pastor in 1976, Tom Nees challenged the denomination: “If the church is ever to bring the gospel to the city, it will require massive investment of effort and money. If we win the city to Christ, it will only happen as we listen to the creative leadings of the Holy Spirit.”^{lxxiv}

More recently, as director of US/Canada Mission Evangelism for our entire denomination Dr. Nees wrote: “I fear if we continue to do nothing different than we are doing, in the near future, when and where there is no majority group, this denomination will be marginalized as a predominately English-speaking white fellowship in a sea of diversity.”^{lxxv}

Since urban areas are the predominate places this immigration is occurring one might also safely conclude that without a major change in mission focus, the Church of the Nazarene will be marginalized as a predominately English-speaking, white, rural/small town denomination in a sea of urbanization.

Urban areas are challenging. The diversity (and often conflict) of cultures, the cost of living, congestion and pollution, the high concentration of persons in poverty, plus those suffering from life-robbing habits and diseases all add up to be more than many people choose to face. It is easier to live elsewhere, hoping to avoid the pain of the people and *polis*.

General Superintendent Jerry Porter warns, “The challenge for us today is to be very, very careful that as the Church of the Nazarene 21st century we have not now become a church that is insensitive to the poor.” Rather, he argues, “we need to be planting churches and initiating ministries constantly among the poor.”^{lxxvi}

For those who have experienced the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, Christ-likeness is forming in their lives. They are living daily in Christ and taking on the mind of Christ. Being partakers of the divine nature, Spirit-filled believers, with *this* nature, will begin to move as Christ: toward the pain, despair and brokenness of the world — not away from it. “Holy love draws them in,” Ron Benefiel contends, “so that they become fully present, incarnationally engaged, expressing the love of God in the world in ‘justice, mercy and truth.’”^{lxxvii}

This was the experience and practice of the Holiness leaders in 19th century America as historian Timothy Smith observed, “Men and women with hearts for the poor like Phoebe Palmer and B.T. Roberts . . . not only refused to forsake the city, but saw it, instead, as their venue for service.”^{lxxviii}

The General Assembly recognized an urban imperative and understood the cost in 1972 when it adopted a report from the Commission Relating Church and Society. The report called the denomination to a commitment to the cities. Dr. Raymond Hurn recalls, “It made three basic recommendations:

1. First, that we commit our resources to where the people are.
2. Second, that we ‘commend and encourage’ our educational institutions to continue to give attention to preparing interested young people to offer their services to special ministries in large cities.
3. Third, because of the great challenge of the cities, the report calls for a ‘careful coordination of our efforts and the ingenuity of leadership at general, district and local levels.’ It will require, the report said, ‘the total financial and manpower resources of the denomination.’”^{lxxix}

The denominational distinctive of our Church is not just a doctrine to be discussed; it is an experience to be lived: a person’s heart and life purified by faith enjoying a grace-empowered relationship of perfect love for God and one’s neighbor.

Throughout most of the history of people who claimed to enjoy this experience of heart holiness, the evidence of that experience was loving care and concern for the poor. More often than not that passion for the poor took place practically and pragmatically in the cities.

In 1984 Paul Benefiel noted that the basic tenant of most holiness people in the late 20th century is “the conviction that the mission of the church is to preach the gospel and not to reform society.”^{lxxx} [My emphasis] Dr. Benefiel’s phrase, “to reform society” alludes to the “mission” for which John Wesley believed God had raised up the Methodists: “not to form

any new sect, but reform the nation, particularly the Church; and to spread scriptural holiness over the land.”^{lxxxix}

It is worth noting that the final phrase – “to spread scriptural holiness over the land” – is one Nazarenes have frequently quoted, but almost always in complete isolation from Wesley’s prior one!

Could revitalization of our doctrinal distinctive be inextricably tied to our demonstration of that doctrine through an intentional focus on the needs of people and their cities? Seeking once again to reform and transform the cities of our nations? Can speaking and writing correct words about a doctrine bring life to our denomination? Or might this only give the appearance or form of godliness without the power?

General Superintendent Jesse Middendorf declares, “Holiness is not removed and aloof from human need. It finds its best expression in close and personal identification with those whose needs are greatest.”^{lxxxix}

Certainly there are people with material needs living in rural and suburban settings, but as seminary president, urban pastor and sociologist Ron Benefiel states “the great majority of those in need live in our central cities. It is there more than anywhere that we, as the people of God, have the opportunity to show the love of God in ministries of compassion, mercy and justice.”^{lxxxix}

Today, seven million families in the United States are living in poverty. That is a total of 34.8 million Americans, of which 12.2 million are children.^{lxxxix} Will we Nazarenes be and live with them as witnesses to Jesus’ Good News for the poor? Will they have an opportunity to learn about and experience Scriptural holiness that can set them free from sin, filling their lives with love?

“We Nazarenes believe the original emphasis [of John Wesley]

to be both scriptural and relevant."^{lxxxv} -- Timothy L. Smith

FOR INDIVIDUAL AND/OR GROUP REFLECTION

1. Undertake your own study of the primary sources documenting Nazarene urban missions. (For a timeline of Nazarene denominational involvement in urban mission, go to urbannazarene.org. You will also find a continually expanding on line archives of lectures, addresses, news stories, and publications by Nazarene leaders, urban pastors and educators.)
2. Read and study John Wesley's sermons, particularly, 4-Scriptural Christianity, 16-The Means of Grace, 39- Catholic Spirit, 40-Christian Perfection, 43-The Scripture Way of Salvation, 59-God's Love to Fallen Man, 64-The New Creation,
3. Do an assessment of your congregation's ministry with the poor who live in your church's "parish" (geographic ministry area).
4. What is the "distinct characteristic" of your congregation that distinguishes it from other evangelical churches in your community?

Resources and Opportunities in the City:

What Have We Overlooked?

*“...the postmodern office towers housing multinational corporations and these new, mostly
nonwhite
immigrants who are building middle-class neighborhoods
with distinctive cultures are creating...
a new kind of city in the United States -- the World City.”^{xxxvi}*

-Thomas Bender

*“The eternal (and temporal) destiny of millions depends upon our
loving obedience in becoming an incarnating,
multicultural Church,
reaching out to people who are not like us,
as well as to those who are.
Urban ministry is inevitably multicultural because
the cities are multicultural.”*

– Paul R. Orjala, missionary

In an impassioned sermon preached at the denomination's first national multicultural conference in 1994, General Superintendent Dr. Paul Cunningham poignantly relayed his feelings as a seminary student watching the church leadership decide to leave the city of Chicago and sell its buildings.

As valuable as were those resources of property, the greater tragedy was in leaving the resources of people. Who would communicate the radical optimism of God's Good News to the precious people, if not the denomination that claimed to exist to proclaim just such a message of transforming love and purifying power?

With faithful fervor, Dr. Cunningham continued preaching, "Someday we're going to get a vision for the cities. It's missionary work in our cities. We'll not save our cities until we get a missionary vision for the cities. We left the cities and then the new America moved to the cities. The mission field decided to come to us, and it came to stay."^{lxxxvii}

A number of years ago, *The New York Times* reported that 123 nations were represented in just one New York City zip code. Ray Bakke noted at the time that this meant "nearly two-thirds of the world's nations have representatives in one American community."^{lxxxviii}

Cities are where the opportunities exist to "make disciples of all nations." Missions is no longer about geography, but of culture. And the cultures have come to the United States and Canada. In 1990's census, four out of 10 residents of New York City over the age of five spoke a language other than English at home. Half the population of Santa Ana, California is foreign-born.^{lxxxix}

Cities are centers of commerce and transportation. Here also are the trendsetters for the arts, culture/values and the seats of economic, political and religious power. When we

overlook the cities, we forfeit opportunities to be “salt” and “light” to these influencing institutions and the people who work in them.

Many elements are at work historically and sociologically to create a city. But from the standpoint of people, some of the effects of city life include: a person’s traditions, social mores, and values are tested as they mix with those of other people and cultures; there is more openness to change and engaging a range of ideas; more freedom and anonymity in the city.

If urban dwellers are recent immigrants to the city, they are often experiencing culture shock, discarding old ways of thinking and viewing the world, and in search of a truth that will sustain them. There is of course, the potential for this experience to be unsettling psychologically. Old values, relationships and social mores are less binding, and previous assumptions less firm. People are looking for new meaning and community.

Some research indicates that the “act of migration...was in fact a theologizing experience. Those who moved had to think about God’s relationship to the whole world, and not just to their homeland; and their sense of God’s care for them intensified as individuals tore themselves loose from rural villages that had once nurtured them.”^{XC}

Migration to a new country is also often an internationalizing experience for the immigrant. A lessening of allegiance to a single nation-state in lieu of viewing oneself as international citizen might make a person more receptive to the gospel’s invitation to a “New Creation-community in Christ” where the “dividing wall between people groups has been torn down and there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female.”^{Xci}

It is important to recognize that the urbanization of the United States is only the leading edge of what is happening around the globe. Today, half of the entire world’s population lives in cities 25,000 or larger. One conservative estimate expects that by 2030, over 60% of the world’s estimated 8.2 billion people will live in urban areas.^{Xcii}

We need to focus on and understand cities in America not only because they are where the majority of Americans live and work, but also because they are indicators of how the entire world is moving. As part of our denomination's commitment to world evangelism, we could view our work in the cities of Canada and United States as laboratories and lessons learned. These urban areas could also serve as incubators and field training venues for those called to world mission service.

In New York City, for example, almost any people group or nation the denomination currently serves is represented. Missionary candidates assigned to a particular nation could be placed in an appropriate section of New York or other cities for a period of service prior to their deployment to the international field. In some cases, church planting among immigrant people groups in U.S. and Canadian cities has opened the door for entry by World Missions in these new Americans' countries of origin. And immigrants to the U.S. and Canada who were Nazarenes in their native countries have helped start churches in their new adopted cities.

Ray Bakke rightly admonishes us to “stop looking at the city as just a problem with the poor, locked-out people. That’s only seeing the victim pattern. See the city as the R&D unit for the whole church.”^{xciii}

When we begin to study the city, we will find a new generation of churches there that are communities of the King, visible signs of the Kingdom now present in a measure. We will discover congregational ministries that are living answers to the prayer the Lord taught his disciples -- “Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”

Some of these congregations will be Holiness churches in theology and practice. We may wish to, in the spirit of our denomination's founders, establish a relationship with them. And if providentially guided further, invite them to formally unite with the Church of the Nazarene in solidarity of proclaiming the Good News of full salvation.

The city is more than just the necessary location for the gospel to be proclaimed in the 21st century. It provides the Church with an opportunity to demonstrate the power of the Gospel is greater than the power of crime, poverty, addictions, fear, despair and any number of “isms” such as nationalism, tribalism, capitalism, narcissism, or nihilism. Just as the Apostle Paul discovered in Athens, so there is also much religion and many gods in the cities of our day. The urbanization of the world gives opportunity for the “Unknown God” to be made known in power and liberating truth. But this opportunity will be missed if we are not engaged in the cities.

We know that our Church has both a theological tradition and history of ministry in cities. We have experience that confirms gospel ministry in urban centers is possible. For example, when the decadal *Thrust to the Cities* effort concluded in the mid 1990s, over 570 works were established in 15 world-class cities. Of these “works,” 187 were fully organized churches.^{xci} From this effort we learned that urban areas are not impenetrable. “The *Thrust to the Cities* proved that evangelism and church planting can occur in major cities in North America.”^{xci}

At the time the *Thrust to the Cities* was getting underway, veteran urban pastor and district superintendent Paul Benefiel stated “urban America is a mission field, for it is in the cities where the greatest potential for church growth resides.”^{xci}

Researcher Dale Jones reports, “Still, the most effective evangelism in the Church of the Nazarene of Canada and the United States is through the growth of new churches.”^{xci} Where better to start those new churches than where the majority of people live? Could it be that the urban centers are the “plenteous” fields the Lord sees ready for harvest today?^{xci} In the cities of Canada and the United States, the opportunities for the transforming work of God are as amazing as his grace.

It appears there are potential workers for these harvest fields. In surveys conducted at District Assemblies by Dr. Jerry Porter (with assistance from Rick Housel), Nazarene clergy and laypersons were asked to indicate what were the most critical issues for the Church of the Nazarenes.

The number one ranked issue selected by over 85 percent of the respondents (which included every age group) listed “outreach evangelism” as *very critical* or *critical*. This was followed by “Holy living--helping people live holy lifestyles.” The fifth highest ranked issue was “Effectively communicating the doctrine of holiness” (80.90%), followed by “Accepting outsiders--making new people welcome” ((76.04%) and “Multicultural ministry--creating inclusivity” (72.27%). What better way for the Church to respond to these expressed “felt needs” than to create avenues of ministry for people to serve in the urban areas of Canada and the United States?

Here are some resources now present in the denomination that could be appropriated, maximized and deployed on behalf of the urban imperative.

- District Superintendents are recognizing the needs and opportunities and catching the vision for urban missions.
- Recent surveys of Nazarene laity and pastors demonstrate an increase in understanding the Gospel in holistic ways
- A large majority of both pastors (88.3% and lay leaders (85.6%) agreed with this statement, “The effort to reach non-Anglo groups in Canada and the United States should be as intensive as our mission effort in other world areas.”^{xxix}
- The denomination has a long-standing commitment to reaching out across cultures with the Gospel.

- The denomination has a wealth of resources in its educational institutions that could be directed toward equipping both lay and future clergy to be urban sensitive and urbane in the best sense of the liberal arts tradition.
- The Church of the Nazarene has a core of local churches in strategic urban areas across the country that could be challenged and encouraged to serve as centers for contextualized equipping of future urban missionaries.

What would you add to this list?

The urbanization of the U.S. (and the entire world) may just be a providential sign. Will the we read the signs of the time? Will we have eyes to see? How will we as a church in the Wesleyan-Holiness tradition respond to the complex challenges and needs of today's cities: Poverty, crime, inadequate housing, personal immorality and corporate injustices, AIDS? Will we respond as our denomination did to the urban challenges of late 19th and early 20th century America or will we be silent as we were during much of the second half of the 20th century when the US cities deteriorated and later erupted over civil rights, poverty, and war?

In 1986, Ron Benefiel said "this is an age of opportunity for urban ministry."^c It was true then, and even more so today. Recently Dr. Benefiel identified three strategic groups of people living in US and Canadian cities.

- Immigrants are some of the most responsive groups in North American to church planting and evangelistic efforts. Many arrive with deep religious commitment. But many more have no church affiliation and are open to the Gospel message. Dr. Benefiel states "Immigrant groups in our urban centers continue to offer the greatest potential for church growth in the country today."
- Young, educated professionals are moving into revived old central city neighborhoods. There are millions of young adults in what Dr. Benefiel calls this

“new urban intelligentsia.” Though generally less responsive to the Gospel, Benefiel says they are the “single most unchurched demographic group in American today.”

- As it was in the 18th and 19th centuries, cities are home to large numbers of people struggling with great economic, physical and psychological needs. Recognizing there are people with material needs living in rural and suburban settings, Benefiel reminds us “the great majority of those in need live in our central cities.”¹⁰¹

But to seize this wealth of opportunities for Kingdom service will require declaring and demonstrating a full-orbed gospel that offers a radical optimism for people and the polis in which they live. Any form of a two-tiered gospel that segregates or discriminates between personal and social implications of God's salvation is insufficient and must be challenged and resisted as unbiblical. Responding to the opportunities of our cities will require new thinking, new forms of ministry, and contextualizing the Biblical, historic theology of love for an urbanized society in a post-industrial age.

Where is Jesus?

One day Jesus was traveling from Judea to Jerusalem. The Apostle John records that Jesus “had to pass through Samaria” (John 4:4). In light of geography that makes sense, but then, why did John mention an apparently obvious fact of travel? Because direct routes of travel are trumped by histories of hatred. Jesus did not have to pass through Samaria to reach his final destination of Jerusalem. Jesus and his disciples could have and, as all good Jews did, would have gone completely around Samaria via the trans-Jordan to avoid any contact with the despised mixed race Samaritans.

But the apostle's words are startlingly concise and clear: He had to pass through Samaria. And that, of course, was the truth if in fact Jesus was to reach his "ultimate destination" of obedience to the Father (John 5:19).

We can as a church avoid mobilizing a massive presence in the troublesome cities of the U.S. and Canada, places filled with so many non-Christians and much immoral behavior. But Jesus is passing through the Samarias of our day.

The Scripture teaches that the Church is the body of Christ, with Jesus its head. Now, if the Head of the Church of the Nazarene is Jesus the Nazarene, then the Church Body must be with the Head. . .in Samaria. Somebody is thirsty. Somebody is ashamed. Somebody is alienated and marginalized. There are walls of race, culture and religion separating people from God and each other. And these must be torn down, since Christ "has broken down the dividing wall of hostility." People are thirsty for a cup of justice, healing water from the spring of righteousness so there might be peace and celebration in the city.^{cii}

The gospel is set to deliver us from all sin, now, including any willing participation in social or economic evil.^{ciii}

- Timothy L. Smith

FOR IDIVIDUAL AND/OR GROUP REFLECTION:

1. Reflect on the city and God. What is your theological viewpoint/bias?
2. Exegete / analyze your city.
 - How did it form?
 - What key events and people were part of its history?
 - How is it interrelated to surrounding suburbs and rural areas.
 - What are the systems (political, religious, economic)?
3. Pray and Adopt a plan for practical action
4. Utilize urban migration from rural areas to plant urban churches with certain in-migrant and immigrant people groups.
5. Consider community organizing as tactic for planting churches
6. Meditate on God's care and concern for even the most wicked and depraved city
(for example, sending Jonah to Nineveh.)

**Investing in the City:
A Revival of Priorities**

“When holiness is genuine it is holistic; it reaches out to touch and lift the whole person in the Spirit of Christ.”^{civ}

-- William M. Greathouse

*“The Church must deal with the cities
or become an irrelevant appendage to society.
...If the Church cannot be a strong, dynamic influence in
the cities, it will be very difficult for the Church
to be a viable spiritual force at all.”^{cv}*

-R. Franklin Cook, missiologist,
former Editor in Chief, *Holiness Today*

History shows that the Church of the Nazarene understands this urban imperative intellectually.

- The 1972 General Assembly adopted a report calling for a significant commitment to the cities. Ministries were implemented, and in the early 1970s two of the Nazarenes' most visible urban missions since the denomination's beginning were founded: the

Community of Hope in Washington, D.C., and the Manhattan Church of the Nazarene in New York City (The Lamb's).

- From 1985 to 1995 Thrust to the Cities, a global denominational emphasis, successfully planted churches in 15 world-class cities.
- In 1997, the General Board of the Church of the Nazarene adopted a recommendation based on “agreement at every level of the church leadership that a comprehensive, denominational urban mission strategy is needed to take advantage of the opportunities for evangelism and new church development in the increasingly urbanized, multicultural societies of the United States and Canada as well as the rest of the world.”^{CVI}

While these actions underscore a covenantal awareness of the urban imperative, our church's engagement of the city has been erratic. Implementing strategies and maintaining focus on urban missions remain the challenge. We can overcome this mercurial approach to urban missions by committing to a systematic, disciplined plan for long-term investment in the city.

A Long-Term Investment Strategy

Let's look at some steps that might help us as a denomination make a long-term investment in urban missions.

1. We must honestly address our theology and identity. Although we identify ourselves as a Holiness church in the Wesleyan theological tradition, surveys show that a significant percentage of our pastors and laypersons hold traditional or neo-fundamentalist beliefs and behaviors.^{CVII} Are the core values outlined by the general superintendents the actual values of a majority of Nazarene leaders in the United States?^{CVIII} One's theology of the human

condition, the meaning of salvation and holiness, Last Days, and Second Coming will definitely influence attitudes toward the challenges of our cities. We must not forget that the *place*—both physically and psychologically—from which we “do theology” will affect both process and outcome. For example, Black Americans read and interpret the story of Moses and the Exodus far differently than white English-speaking Americans. Position and perspective matter a great deal.

2. We must determine whether our missiology and the actual practices of missionaries are congruent with our stated Wesleyan-Holiness theology. What distinguishes our outreach techniques and evangelism tactics from churches not in the Holiness tradition?

3. We must address our ecclesiology, our theology of the church, particularly how the church views itself in relation to the Kingdom of God and the world. Do our corporate worship practices help us engage or protect us from an urban culture? Do our polity and administrative structures reinforce or conflict with a Wesleyan-Holiness theology? What do we ask pastors and church leaders to “measure” in their reporting to district and general assemblies?

4. We can and must be certain we are experiencing entire sanctification. The fathers and mothers of our denomination were quite clear that the evidence of being in the experience of perfect love was full devotion to God and service to the poor. In most cases this involved the “neglected quarters of the city.”^{cix}

5. We should consider forming groups or Wesley-style “classes” among our congregations to seek the heart-cleansing experience of perfect love. We should ask the Holy Spirit to purify our hearts by faith from any immoral actions or attitudes including pride, lust, racial prejudices, economic arrogance, gluttony, and greed.

Churches could invite interested individuals not a part of their congregation who live in the city to form a “class” for the purpose of studying and seeking Christian holiness. Such a

gathering might develop into an urban house church or a mission group that discerns a call to serve the city.

6. We can and should pray for the city where we live or the one nearest us. Each time we see or hear a news report about some sinful act in the city, we should ask the Holy Spirit to help us resist recoiling with disgust and instead be moved with compassion. One writer said that each time he hears a siren, he realizes there are lives in need, possibly facing heartbreaking tragedy. He uses the siren as a “trigger” to pause and pray for both those in jeopardy and the responders. It is difficult to hate people or things when we are praying for them on a regular basis.^{cx}

7. We can and should consider conducting personal or small group studies of the city. Cities mentioned in the Scriptures, including the Early Church’s missionary strategy, can help us construct a theological perspective on the city.

In addition to biblical and theological approaches, individuals and groups could target a city for study. Historically, what are the city’s origin and significant events? Anthropologically, who are the people groups and cultures present? Sociologically, how do the various sectors of the city, such as governmental and educational systems, urban design, religions represented, and the arts interrelate with each other? Economically, what are the commercial “engines,” and who are the economically powerful?

8. Local churches and districts can and should take an inventory of their financial and building assets. Is there under-utilized property in the city? Has someone made a major gift to the district for church planting and evangelism that could be directed for urban church starts? Could a “Partnership Fund” be developed to find and purchase urban properties for use in church planting, education institutes, social ministries, and economic development ventures?

9. We can and should take an inventory of human resources as well. What leadership assets are available? Can we identify people who demonstrate calls and gifts to serve the city and who are willing to relocate? What leaders already living in the city share a Wesleyan-Holiness theology and philosophy of ministry with whom we could partner or affiliate? Are there leaders, inside or outside the Church of the Nazarene, who possess multilingual and/or multicultural gifts who could be recruited and mobilized?^{cx} Careful effort should be made to identify not only men but women leaders as well.

10. We can and should study traditional missiological strategies and techniques used in international missions. Can any of these be adapted to urban areas in the U.S. and Canada?

All of these actions must be immersed in prayer, earnestly seeking God through all means of grace such as the Lord's Supper and the spiritual disciplines including fasting, meditation, silence, and solitude.

You are always invited to contact the office of Mission Strategy USA/Canada for further resources such as the *Urban Imperative* video, online help at www.UrbanNazarene.org, and the potential of a live, onsite consultation with urban specialists.

The Cost and Return on Investment

“Is the monetary cost of ministry in the city just too high?” some are asking. Like everything else in the city, expenses for the basics of ministry tend to be more costly in urban areas than in rural areas or small towns. As stewards of God, it is not inappropriate to question the “return on investment” in urban ministries. However, the “return” must be carefully identified as biblical and consistent with Kingdom priorities. It is equally important

to ask, “What price can be placed on obedience to the Great Commission and Great Commandment?”

Behind this question of cost often lies an assumption that urban churches are small, struggling, and slow to grow, requiring constant financial support from outside sources. In some cases, this may be true. However, a blanket assumption that all urban congregations are financially dependent is simply false. Some of our largest and strongest congregations today in terms of attendance and monies raised are in urban centers.

At the same time, some urban pastors ministering with the poor or new immigrants have expressed growth problems. “We cannot afford to grow anymore until we can find more resources. People are being saved, but they are still hungry, homeless, and under-employed.”

Although this challenge of disciple-making exists, authentically Wesleyan-Holiness ministry has historically seen “redemption and lift” among the poor. As people believe the gospel and begin to live in Christ and in fellowship with other members of God’s body, personal habits change, and lifestyle choices begin aligning with biblical stewardship. The congregation collaborates with the poor in establishing context-appropriate opportunities for empowerment through ministries in education, health care, housing and business development, and “speaking truth to the powers” in seeking to change unjust labor practices, housing, and racial or employment discrimination. Those who were oppressed and in bondage from bad habits, poor choices, unexpected disasters, or socio-economic injustices find they are truly being set at liberty by the Good News of Jesus.

To assist new church starts in high cost urban areas, we might consider designating targeted areas of certain cities as Shalom Zones. Resources could be directed to these Shalom Zones for an initial period. It is important that any such approach avoid developing dependency in the new start or fostering a sense of paternalism among donors.

According to one veteran urban pastor, partnerships are the most beneficial approach. “Many denominations give a grant to someone to pastor a church. As I learned 25 years ago, that puts my church and me on welfare. Instead, I want that money put in the bank as a line of credit.” When a church building needs repair, he suggests, “Create your own community-development foundation with a building program and building manager. Offer classes on building, and charge your neighbors for taking the class. Instead of having volunteer carpenters come to fix up your building, get them to teach the classes. In the process, they just happen to fix your building.”^{cxii} By this process, no one has been demeaned; instead all have been empowered with new skills and confidence that they can work. Eventually, the church can employ those skilled people to rehabilitate housing in the community. The result is new skills, created jobs, and dollars generated by and re-circulated in the neighborhood.

Of course, urban ministry involves other “costs” as well. People often ask, “Is it safe to live in the city?” Frankly, much of the violence in cities is overstated, especially in major media centers such as Los Angeles and New York.

But make no mistake—there are dangers facing the urban minister. The city is not always friendly. In some neighborhoods to which we are called, violence is the currency of the streets. The urban worker must make peace with God on these matters of personal safety. For me this means I go wherever I am led. If I have God’s business in a certain place or neighborhood, I go with confidence and common sense, trusting my life to Christ’s care.

In light of these real concerns, we might well recall the words of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.: “A man’s not fit to live until there is something he is willing to die for.” We need the clarity of mission that Dr. King must have had when he preached these words to his congregation at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta:

Every now and then I think about my own death, and I think about my own funeral. And I don't think of it in a morbid sense. Every now and then I ask myself, "What is it that I would want said?". . . I want you to be able to say that day, that I did try to feed the hungry. And I want you to be able to say that day, that I did try, in my life to clothe those who were naked. I want you to say, on that day, that I did try, in my life, to visit those who were in prison. I want you to say that I tried to love and serve humanity. Yes, if you want to say that I was a drum major, say that I was a drum major for justice; say that I was a drum major for peace; I was a drum major for righteousness. And all of the other shallow things will not matter. I won't have any money to leave behind. I won't have the fine and luxurious things of life to leave behind. But I just want to leave a committed life behind.^{cxiii}

Two months after Dr. King spoke these words, an assassin pulled the trigger on a high powered rifle. A 30.06 caliber bullet hurtling over 1,000 miles per hour tore into Dr. King's neck as he stood on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tennessee. Dr. King's voice box was silenced, but his words and witness still speak.

Just the night before his death, he preached these memorable words:

Like anybody, I would like to live a long life. Longevity has its place. But I'm not concerned about that now. I just want to do God's will. And He's allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I've looked over. And I've seen the Promised Land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight, that we, as a people will get to the Promised Land. And so I'm happy, tonight. I'm not worried about anything. I'm not fearing any man. Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord.^{cxiv}

We must love God and love the city to which God has sent us. Perfect love casts out fear.

One night when returning from a speaking engagement, I took a taxi back into Manhattan from LaGuardia airport. As we approached the city, the lights of Manhattan seemed to sparkle like polished, precious gems against a jeweler's ebony velvet cloth. The lights of the 59th Street Bridge were like a strand of diamonds linking the boroughs of Queens and Manhattan.

Is this just a romantic view of a place beset with crime, immorality and poverty? I don't think so. I am aware of all those things about New York. But God has given me a love for New York. I have an appreciation for its possibilities under God's grace. God has granted me vision to see the beauty behind the beast.

According to an old Jewish folk-saying, "We do not see things as they are. We see them as we are." Could it be that our distaste and fear of the city says more about us than it does about the city?

Because Jesus delivered a fatal blow to the evil one through His life, death, resurrection, and exaltation, we are not afforded the luxury to view any person, any situation, any city as hopeless. God has not given up on this world. Even now the whole creation is groaning for redemption. Dare we be so brash to condemn that which God sent His only Son to save?

Ask God to place the city on your heart. Ask God for a love to see its possibilities. As Goethe said, "Treat a man as he appears to be and you make him worse. But treat a man as if he already were what he potentially could be, and you make him what he should be."

This truth applies not only to how we relate to men and women but also to how we approach our cities. God sees them for what they could be—places of justice, peace, and security. We are called to be God's ministers of reconciliation, servant peacemakers, and truth-tellers. May we be blessed with a prophetic imagination to see things as they should be.

*“Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for,
the conviction of things not seen.*

--Hebrews 11:1

FOR INDIVIDUAL AND/OR GROUP REFLECTION

1. List some specific ways you could invest in the city.
2. What is your understanding of entire sanctification, perfect love?
3. In what ways have you witnessed God's saving, transformative power in your life, in other people, and in places—institutions, neighborhoods, businesses, etc.
4. How do you view cities in general? What do you think and feel about the city where you live (or the one closest to you)?
5. Read Hebrews 11. How might this scriptural description of faith apply to the way we view the current conditions of cities? What does the phrase "prophetic imagination" mean to you?

**The Currency of Urban Mission:
A Strong, High-Value Gospel**

“We believe that human nature, and ultimately society can be radically and permanently changed by the grace of God.”^{CXV}

- - Board of General Superintendents, Church of the Nazarene

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“For he has made known to us in all wisdom and insight the mystery of his will, according to his purpose which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.”

--Ephesians 1:9-10

What will characterize urban ministry in the Wesleyan-Holiness tradition? How will ministry invested in the city look?

It will *not* look like ministry as usual. Like Wesley and Bresee, we must create entirely new structures and responses to our urban realities while respecting the “traditions” of the denomination. In doing so, we recognize that we will inevitably encounter resistance from those who hold to the existing status quo in Nazarene theology, missiology, practices, and polity.

If an urban theology is informed by the greatness of a Triune God, then an urban missiology will reflect another foundational Christian doctrine: Incarnation. Urban mission must be “incarnational.” The redemptive action of God must take on flesh and blood reality

in dealing with people's personal sin and the city's systems and structures. Such mission work is done onsite and in the context of a long-term commitment to a city.

Urban mission is not a program to be brought to the city as much as a process to be lived out in the city with the people, empowering them to determine their future.^{cxvi} Some accomplish this through *community development*.^{cxvii} Others believe that community development can become too programmatic and argue instead for *community organizing* for long-term development to be truly owned by the community.^{cxviii}

Bob Linthicum, who has been involved with community organizing in both the U.S. and in developing countries, warns that we should expect community organizing in the U.S. to take much longer and cost more money than in developing nations.

Prayerful study must be given to the kind of evangelism practiced in urban ministry. Although some methodologies effective in rural areas or small towns may not be so in urban centers, the larger issue requiring careful consideration is not technique but rather the *nature* of biblical evangelism. Understanding biblical evangelism is vital to proclaiming the Good News to the city with integrity, authenticity, and power.

We must consider: How is the gospel “good news” for urban dwellers? What does it mean to proclaim Christ to the city? What will urban centers of gospel proclamation look like?^{cxix}

The Scriptural Meaning and Value of the Gospel

We must remember the message we proclaim is the *evangel*, the gospel, which can be translated “Good News.” That Good News is the news of the Kingdom of God breaking into this world. God’s rule has come. John the Baptist gives a preview of the news story, but Jesus is the main reporter. He announces that people should change their thinking and

believe now because the Reign of God has arrived. In this instance, truly the Message and the Messenger were one and the same.

Although not everyone had the same opinions on exactly how that Kingdom would come, the results of its coming were generally held in agreement. The just rule of God's Messiah would bring shalom, a time when righteousness and peace would kiss (Isaiah 51:7, 58:6-7, Psalm 85:10). In other words, all God's creation would function as designed.

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke 4:18-19).

These words from the prophet Isaiah were understood to speak of the promised Messiah, or Anointed One. God's Messiah would do the work of God. The Messiah would announce the year of Jubilee when justice and peace would be present in the community.

The commonly held expectation was that the Messiah would accomplish all that had been promised: to save the people from their sins, which they understood to include right relationship with God and people that generates shalom—a health and wholeness and holiness in all aspects of their lives and communities. All this, Jesus said to His neighbors in His inaugural sermon in His hometown synagogue, had been fulfilled in their hearing.

The homefolks' immediate reaction to His message was not an invitation for "extended meetings." It was an enthusiastic response to be sure but not in a way that made Jesus want to hang around for post-sermon fellowship.

Nevertheless, others would respond far differently. Through His deeds and words, Jesus drew followers that gladly believed His claim and confessed Him as Messiah, or Christ.

The New Testament writers affirm Jesus is God incarnate. He announces the Good News, and He *is* the Good News. Jesus is the Christ, the complete fulfillment of the people's long-expected hopes for God's redemptive in-breaking.

His ministry resonated with those to whom the power and potential of Kingdom Jubilee would mean most. Only in a militaristic or nationalistic sense of messianic expectation did Jesus fail to perform. His ministry and mission fulfilled all the Old Testament hopes to save His people from their sins. This salvation saturated *all* facets of life with redemptive love.

For this mission of salvation Jesus sent His disciples, while still with them: To preach, teach, heal, and announce the Kingdom of God was at hand. Repent and believe! This was Jubilee language indicative of radical reversal in the daily lives of people and their social systems.

For this mission of salvation Jesus also sent the disciples at His Ascension: To make disciples and teach them "all that I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:20). These words allow for no division of those teachings into categories of importance.^{cxx}

The Early Church demonstrated this comprehensive salvation in the communities it touched. The gospel of Christ has the power to transform lives and reform communities. The authentic heralding of the evangel produces disciples and church planters who understand H. Richard Niebuhr's maxim: Christians are not "those who are saved out of the perishing world, but. . .those who know that the world is being saved."^{cxxi}

John Wesley's understanding of Scripture offers a much fuller view of salvation than many American evangelicals teach:

By salvation I mean, not barely . . . deliverance from hell, or going to heaven; but a present deliverance from sin, a restoration of the soul to its primitive health, its original purity; a recovery of the divine nature; the renewal of our souls after the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness, in justice, mercy, and truth. . . .

Now, if by salvation we mean a present salvation from sin, we cannot say, holiness is a condition of it; for it is the thing itself. Salvation, in this sense, and holiness, are synonymous terms.^{cxxii}

Offering people salvation *in this sense* is a distinctly different task than the practices of “evangelism” so common to American Evangelicals.

Mr. Wesley also made no “distinction between individual and social ethics because the Bible would not allow it.” Timothy Smith warned Nazarene leaders in 1979 about “our tendency not to define entire sanctification as perfect love toward our fellow human beings as well as toward God.”^{cxxiii} Investing wisely in the cities will require us to recapture an understanding of holiness that includes perfect love for God and our neighbors.

Wesleyans claim to have a radical optimism because of God’s great grace. We need a greater view of sin to go with this greater grace. We must regain a view of sin as both personal and systemic, along with an equally expansive view of the Atonement that affirms what the Scriptures teach: In Jesus’ life, death, resurrection, and ascension, the works of the devil are destroyed in both individual human hearts and social institutions.

Fully Funding the Urban Investment Plan

We must make a full commitment to be present in the city with the gospel, advocating for those in need and on the edges of society, providing healing ministries for those sick and bound by addictions, promoting and developing ministries for justice and peace in the community.

To declare the gospel successfully to an urbanized world will require investing the resources necessary to understand and engage city life, developing “languages” that

communicate in urban cultures, and supporting the research and development of new forms of congregational ministries.

The Church founded by Jesus was born in a city. The church named after Jesus the Nazarene was likewise born in another city nearly two millennia later. Our denomination subsequently formed was galvanized by a desire for Christian perfection and a passionate love for the poor, primarily in America's cities.

Our tradition and theology view the city as a particularly valuable place for ministry. God has given us a history of success in urban ministry.

It is now imperative that we revive the church's historic and recent engagement with the city. It is imperative that we reclaim the God-given mission to "spread scriptural holiness."^{cxixiv} It is imperative for our theological integrity. It is imperative that we commit to a full engagement and investment in the cities of Canada and the United States. Anything less will be insufficient and potentially damaging to the credibility of the gospel.

Poverty in the city is more than economic. We must also recognize in many city neighborhoods a poverty of hope, a loss of belief in the possibilities of a future, giving up thinking that things can ever change. In other neighborhoods, a poverty of affluence chokes out an abundant life, even in the midst of an abundance of things. For these urban dwellers, the questions are not about economic success but rather about finding everlasting significance for life.

The Christian gospel provides full salvation for every kind of poverty. There is forgiveness of sins, freedom from past guilt, and possibility for a new future through faith, producing new purpose and meaning. Those who may have given up believing anything good could happen find themselves alive with holy imagination, a radical optimism, and "the conviction of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1).

When people really believe that things can be changed and that they can participate in that process, a foundation for lasting transformation has been laid. Regaining lost hope often requires the faithful presence of others standing by and living with them, being God's grace in the flesh to them, believing with and sometimes for them in the gospel's radical claim that God's steadfast love is the greatest of all powers. For these reasons, the Church's constant, full investment in the city is critical to the gospel's credibility.

Our level of investment in urban ministries will prove where our doctrinal and missional heart truly is. "For," as our Lord said, "where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matthew 6:21).

Bullish or Bearish on Society's Future?

The Church itself can be a place of little hope if it views society from what sociologists call a "paradigm of secularization." This viewpoint says, "As modernization increases, religion becomes more marginal and is replaced by secular understandings and values."^{CXXV}

If we operate from this paradigm, we will buy into the philosophy that "we live in a post-Christian era in a society that is hostile toward the church. The demise of the traditional family is near. Without moral values, the criminal population increases so rapidly that we cannot build enough jails fast enough to house it. Churches must increasingly appeal to participants who are selfish consumers. We can no longer take the loyalty of people for granted. Religious ideas cannot be authoritatively imposed. We should not use the Bible, the hymnal or symbols like the cross since Americans have few, if any, Christian understandings." According to Nazarene sociologist Kenneth Crow, this paradigm of secularization "appears to be the dominant understanding among social scientists and in the church."^{CXXVI}

A denomination operating from this paradigm will be far less likely to invest in intentional, sustained efforts of urban missions. In spite of the demographic facts about the vast majority of city people needing and potentially responsive to the transforming love of Christ, any church filtering these facts through the secularization paradigm will likely conclude that it is impossible to transform godless cities.

Thankfully, there is another paradigm, one that views “the church and individuals as free agents who are able to make choices. It is not deterministic.” Those who operate from this paradigm see “the church as an independent variable, able to influence society. . . . It is clear that religion has not become marginal to American society.”^{cxxvii} These Christians see cities as anything but godless and recognize the wide array of religious and spiritual practices available in urban communities.

Few city dwellers are atheists. The question for most is not “Does God exist?” but “What is God like?” and “Is God powerful enough to make a difference in my life and community?”

One Saturday I attended an Easter Vigil at the Episcopal cathedral in New York City. I arrived twenty minutes early thinking that would be more than enough time to find a good seat in the massive Cathedral of St. John the Divine. When I entered the dramatic space said to be the largest neo-Gothic cathedral in the world, I discovered there was no place to sit—not one empty chair. The immense nave was completely filled with worshippers. I, along with hundreds of other pilgrims had to stand in the side aisles. We stood shoulder to shoulder, as crowded as the “A” train at rush hour. On Saturday night in New York City, thousands of educated, urbane, modern city dwellers were packed in this place to worship and participate in an ancient service of the Church--and one of the longest--three plus hours!

In spite of this spiritual searching and the positive ministry paradigm that affirms the Church’s potential to influence the city, sociologist Kenneth Crow reflected in 1996, “It

seems to me we Nazarenes tend to understand the church and our role in society from the viewpoint of something like the secularization paradigm. . . . If there has been a shift in Nazarene identity, perhaps it is because we came to accept the secularization paradigm.” Yet, as Crow suggests, is not the “free will paradigm . . . a better fit with our beliefs and heritage”?^{cxxviii}

What we believe about free will versus secularism is not an esoteric issue of interest only to researchers, sociologists, and academicians. On the contrary, the paradigm we choose through which to view our world and more specifically our view of urban ministry has profound significance. Our viewpoint will influence our theology, missiology and mission strategies, educating systems, and institutional decisions regarding resources and priorities. How we define our obedience to the Great Commission and Great Commandment and what that will look like in practice will depend in part upon the paradigm from which we choose to offer our “obedience.”

If we are faithful to our Wesleyan-Holiness heritage, we will fully invest in urban ministries that will serve all Christendom with a Kingdom view, holistic in approach, ceasing to make biblically inaccurate distinctions between personal and public righteousness.^{cxxix} Our Wesleyan-Holiness roots call us to minister incarnationally and with a passionate, gracious optimism about the possibilities for personal and social transformation.

God's command through Jeremiah is yet to be internalized today, “Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.” - - Oliver R. Phillips

FOR INDIVIDUAL AND/OR GROUP REFLECTION

1. Conduct a study of the following persons from the Hebrew Scriptures: Joseph, Jonah, Jeremiah, Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther. What do you learn about the nature of sin, salvation, the role of God's people in cities and the larger society? Can you detect and define any models for urban ministry? Could any of these be adaptable to your city?
2. Review the ministry of Jesus. What was his understanding of the Gospel? Of salvation?
3. Study the Acts of the Apostles for examples of how the young Church ministered in an urban and multicultural world. Did Paul have a single evangelism approach for all the cities? What values, principles and strategies might apply to the 21st century urban ministry? Note especially Chapters 2, 8, 10, 11, 13, 16-19
4. From your study of Acts, how does the early Church understand the role of the Holy Spirit in the missionaries' urban church planting, cross-cultural evangelism, pastoral care and socio-economic issues of the communities?
5. How does the early Church view Christ as presented in the book of Colossians? Do you see a different aspect of Christ presented in the book of Philipians? If so, what might these differences mean for our understanding of Christ and salvation? How can these two epistles help us know God more deeply and have a fuller understanding of God's nature and will?

6. How does Paul portray the Church in his letter to the Christians in the city of Ephesus? What imagery, models or language does he use to describe those who are in Christ? Are there insights from his teaching to this urban church that could help in ministry with your city?

**Staying in the City:
Essentials for Sustaining Service**

“In the exploding global urbanization of today, the battle for the gospel must be won in the cities or it will not be won at all.”^{cxxx} -- Paul R. Orjala, missiologist

“Implementing a new World Evangelism initiative for the immediate and into the 21st

Century will require that

every urban area on every district be the target

of an urban mission plan utilizing all available

local, district and general church resources

including specially trained urban missionaries.”^{cxxxi}

– from “Urban Mission Recommendation” to General Board

The optimism and dynamism of the Wesleyan-Holiness perspective is needed today more than ever because there is a faith-testing new context for the church’s ministry. Something is happening in the world...and it is already essentially complete in the United States: urbanization.

Some believe God is giving us a message in this urbanization of the world. At least we can probably agree on the need to “interpret the signs of the times.”^{cxxxii} And it is evident: we are living in times of urbanization and globalization.

If the Church of the Nazarene sees in these “signs” the imperative of urban ministry and once again focuses its mission efforts in the cities, another question must be asked: Will the denomination remain fully invested in the city this time? Let’s consider some factors critical to sustaining an urban presence.

The Education Factor

In 1948, a young Nazarene pastor wrote of the need for training leaders in urban ministry, pleading “that we as a church recognize this situation and seek to educate young people for city work to meet this great challenge of the vast multitudes which are not touched by any church whatsoever.”^{cxxxiii} About four decades later in the mid 1980s, Nazarene missionary, denominational executive and author R. Franklin Cook observed, “Ministerial education should include ethnic considerations and unique urban problems.”^{cxxxiv}

Progress has been made, but sadly, after all these years, it is insufficient.^{cxxxv} A quick review of the Modular Course of Study produced by Clergy Services of the Church of the Nazarene in 2004 shows that out of seventeen modules, not one covers ministry in the urban setting. Nor are there any single courses on urban theology, the church in the city, the city in theological perspective or pastoral ministries in the urban church. There appears to be no offerings on urban anthropology, urban sociology, urban systems or missiology geared for the urban world.

In the module, “Exploring Nazarene History and Polity,” there is a lesson titled “Defining Issues of the 20th and 21st Centuries.” Four topics are covered, but none of them deal specifically with the global phenomenon and challenges of urbanization. Admirably, the guide to the section on “Ethics and Lifestyle” notes “the message of holiness caused Nazarenes to concern themselves with the conditions of the poor. Nazarenes believed that holiness should evidence itself in concrete acts of service to the poor, not merely feelings of sorrow for them.”^{cxxxvi}

In the module, “Communicating Christ Cross-Culturally,” Fletcher Tink, former missionary, urban pastor and now adjunct professor of urban and compassionate ministries at Nazarene Theological Seminary notes the role that differences in rural, suburban and urban cultures can play in communicating. Tink observes that often the communication used in urban settings is rooted in rural or suburban cultures, thus creating “mixed messages that confuse young urbanites who seek to find the gospel in the midst of the city and all of its symbols.” Then, he concludes with a simple sentence that remains to be fully heard and acted upon: “Much creative effort needs to be expended on discovering, adapting, contextualizing urban forms of Christianity.”^{cxxxvii}

Hopefully, a future module, “Communicating the Gospel in a Pluralistic World,” will recognize that this pluralistic world is most dramatically encountered in the urban setting. If our Church is committed to a Wesleyan-Holiness tradition of evangelism, we will direct our efforts more intentionally to the places with the majority of people live. It becomes vital that the Church provide future pastors the equipping experiences critical in helping them minister in the context of an urban world.

But today’s ministers in the Church of the Nazarene have been trained to think theologically in context of rural and small town frameworks. In addition, over 20 percent of the pastors have not studied in any Nazarene schools.^{cxxxviii} Popular preachers, teachers

and published authors, who, for the most part, do not teach or write from a Wesleyan-Holiness theological perspective, heavily influence church members.^{cxix}

If we do not provide the opportunities for re-training our current pastors, they could become increasingly frustrated in giving themselves to ministry structures from another generation and culture—experiencing little results for all their faith and effort. Pastoral ministry tools suited for serving the rural and small towns of America will be inadequate when serving the city. Any one who has attempted to make a repair, construct something, or assemble a product without the proper tools knows how frustrating, and possibly damaging to the intended result, this approach can be.

Urban leaders need training in tools for urban ministry. In short, they need a missionary skills-set combined with urban systems knowledge.^{cx} To any longer assume that pastors serving in the United States and Canada need no special preparation since they are not missionaries “overseas” is unacceptable and unnecessarily sets up both clergy and laity for frustration in ministry. Ultimately, it is a disservice to the Great Commission and Commandment . . . and dishonors the God who has given them to us.^{cx}

What is measured is perceived to be what the institution values. The pastor who has retrained for urban ministry, but then finds no place to report on such ministry may suffer another kind of frustration and possible sense of failure. Regular reporting of pastors and all ordained clergy should, for example, include places to record how they engaged in ministry with the poor and marginalized of their communities.^{cxii}

The Leadership Factor

Whenever, and as much as possible, we must work with individuals who are already "inside" the city.^{cxiii} There are people in every city that God is working His redemptive

purposes in and through. Our task is committing to a constant, Spirit-directed search and discernment of those individuals God is now using, or could use, as they are developed.

Discovering and developing these indigenous leaders is critical. Training should begin "where people are" educationally and experientially and include opportunities for both lay and clergy. Optimally, levels of training available would range from certificate granting institutes to diploma and degrees (including opportunity for advanced degrees)

Training urban leaders is done best in the city. This is true for those who feel called to city and come to it from "the outside," as well as for those already living in the city. Training should not take people out of the urban context. Context always affects the content, interpretation and application of what we are learning.

In the polity of our denomination, District Superintendents play a significant role. Jesse Miranda believes the following characteristics and qualities in DSs are critical for urban leadership development and church planting.

- Affirm pastors where they are, with gifts they have
- Recognize growth in urban context takes time
- Church planting is not like a factory, but a garden
- Sometimes be "operative" in leadership style—doing something to get it done-- but often, needs to function "co-operatively"
- Must perceive and evaluate potential for churches to sponsor others
- Utilize "splits" and divisions with surgical precision of separating Siamese twins to begin new works
- Plan ahead--view differences as possibilities
- Attitude and skill that can convert a problem into potential^{cxliv}

Additional ones might include the ability to:

- Help churches in transitioning communities to intentionally assess and determine their futures.
- Facilitate District leaders in creating a strategic plan for the urban areas under their jurisdiction.

Content of Urban Leadership Training

In addition to the importance of *context* for urban leadership training, there is the issue of the *content* of that training.

The characteristics, competencies and gifts needed in urban missionaries to the U.S. and Canada are, to some degree, not all that distinct from what one would expect for those engaged in world, or so-called “foreign” missions.^{cxlv}

In *Successfully Serving the City*, I give some “Essential Tools for Effective Urban Ministry” within three basic categories:

- Knowledge: Scriptures, classic theology, biblical foundations of urban mission, evangelism,^{cxlvi} urban spirituality and corporate spiritual formation
- Skills: “exegeting the city” to understand its history, social, economic, and political systems; community organizing; reading culture and intercultural diversity; and organizational development/management skills related to non profits, boards, building issues, and finances.
- Attitudes: open to diversity, cooperation, collaboration, solidarity with the poor (meaning an incarnational attitude, ministering with presence, not paternalism), and patience.^{cxlvi}

The office of Multicultural Ministries convened a meeting of urban missionary practitioners in 1996. The committee developed the following core competencies it believed should be mastered by anyone designated as an urban missionary in the Church of the Nazarene.

- An ability to analyze social, economic, and political systems, and to organize appropriate ministry responses.^{cxlviii}
- An ability to develop organizational and financial strategies to create and sustain ministry opportunities.
- An ability to analyze and organize a congregation/community for holistic ministry and community-based evangelism.
- An understanding of culture, ethnicity, religion, and gender within the urban context.
- An ability to develop strategies for working among diverse cultural groups and developing multicultural ministries and leadership.
- A clear understanding of biblical and theological themes and paradigms that inform and shape ministry in the city.
- A clear understanding of the development of personal leadership skills and spiritual formation.

The committee also recognized that urban ministry is multidimensional and that different leaders will have different areas of expertise. The committee recommended the following areas of concentration in which leaders might focus their preparation for urban missions:

- Congregational renewal

- Urban youth
- Church planting
- Community development
- Organizational management
- Pastoral care and counseling^{cxlix}

Training that will genuinely help us sustain our urban missions must be geared intentionally to developing these qualities and competencies in leaders. Training should be offered on a continual, ongoing basis. This training could utilize but need not depend on formal degree programs or traditional educational institutions. Possessing a degree from an accredited institution or a certificate from a local urban training center is fine, but secondary. The primary goal is preparing people for effective, long-term urban missions. The nonnegotiables for such preparation are that it is in *context*, offering relevant *content* and producing *competencies* that can be measurably demonstrated.

Sustaining service with the city will require more than retraining existing leaders and new modes of ministerial preparation for pastors. It will require more than new structures—those necessary fresh wineskins for containing and communicating the new wine of the Gospel Kingdom. Sustaining service with the cities will require new ways of thinking from what most Nazarenes have come to believe about church.

The Thinking Factor

Observers of congregational development often identify churches by their different emphases. A church's particular emphasis may have formed for a variety of reasons such as location, theology, gifts of the leadership, or intentional decision. Some of those models

include the *pulpit-centered church*, *training/teaching center*, *worship center*, *soul saving station*.

For sustained urban ministry in the Church of the Nazarene, there is a much more foundational issue: church culture. Denominational culture is a set of values, beliefs and priorities that frames and shapes the institution's thinking, planning, and decision-making. Ron Benefiel suggests a denomination's culture emerges from the reflection/action processes that define, first, its theology, then missiology and ecclesiology.^{cl} Once again, we see the importance of theology.

The Church of the Nazarene's culture will help determine, for example, whether we think generally with a denominational or a Kingdom mindset; view other denominations as competition or seek collaboration and opportunities to "Christianize Christianity" with scriptural holiness.

To sustain service with the city will require a denominational culture that is:

- Judged by Scripture – expressing a biblical, holistic evangelism; ecumenical (or using Wesley's term, "catholic") in spirit;
- Based in truth—exposing the lie that keeps people fatalistic, apathetic and passive in the face of poverty, oppression, and the bureaucracies of cities.
- Committed to justice—striving to live as the new, Holy Spirit formed beloved community; working for God's goal to unite all things in Christ, people living in harmony with God, with one another, and the earth;
- Optimistic about transformation – perceiving the church engaged with and as a transformer of society; expecting that both rich and poor need, and can experience change.

Within this church culture and with Holy Spirit sparked imaginations, we can begin envisioning new models. We need to think in new ways for “doing church.” Here are some suggestions to stimulate your prophetic imagination:

- Many are acquainted with a CDC. A *community development corporation* is a corporate entity created for the purpose of developing a particular community economically, usually in housing, business development and job creation. Some churches form CDCs as part of a strategy for holistic gospel ministry to their neighbors.
- But what about seeing the church as a CDC? That is as a *Community Development Congregation* or, maybe a
- CEC, a *Community Engaging Congregation*
- A church in a major city might think of itself as a *Center for Global Change*: a congregation whose members are from nations of the world, still have familial and cultural ties to those nations, and in a sense view themselves as citizens of a global community
- *Community of the King*: demonstrating in word and deed the signs of the Kingdom of God – a kingdom that is transnational.

The Community Factor

Regardless of the model, a key focusing question for leadership of every urban church (and for that matter every church in the Wesleyan-Holiness tradition wherever its location) is this: “Are we a private or public church?” In other words, “Would the neighborhood/community notice if we were not here?”

Ministry in the Wesleyan-Holiness tradition avoids sectarianism and engages the community. Yet in one survey, Nazarene pastors ranked “Abilities in The Area of Community And Organizational Relationships” next to the last of importance to them in their ministerial work.^{cli}

Robert Smith observes, “The ‘open-ended’ nature of Wesleyanism that enables it to dialogue with its social context is far easier to experience in a ‘religious movement’ than in a denominational context.” He argues “denominations are expected to proclaim their distinctive characteristics, so that they might find their way in a crowded social context. It would appear that the dynamic nature of Wesleyanism must be sacrificed when Wesleyanism becomes a component of a denominational structure.” Smith wonders: “Can a denomination function denominationally and at the same time maintain the spirit of the Wesleyan dialogue?”^{clii} Smith believes it is possible.

But in order for it to happen, Smith says “the Church of the Nazarene must risk its very soul by taking its systems of beliefs and practices to the market place of contemporary society [which as we have seen is an urbanized society]. The dialogue created in such a venture will allow the church to teach while being taught. Before this dialogue can begin, [the] Church must reclaim its distinctive, not restating irrelevant shibboleths, but by rethinking our doctrinal beliefs in our present social context.”^{cliii} If, however, we do not recognize “our present social context” is an urban one, any rethinking will be valueless for translating the message of holiness to “serve this present age.”

As heirs of Wesley and Bresee, we must exercise freedom and courage to go beyond the boundaries of the status quo or institutional norms. Tom Nees put it well nearly 30 years ago: “The Church must understand that it exists for others. It is basically a servant community called to follow Christ in mission to the world.”^{cliv}

Today, that world has come to America and lives in its cities. Dr. Nees, recently noted: “As a result of immigration and inevitable global population changes, the cities of the United States and Canada have become as foreign as any so-called foreign country to English-speaking white people who make up 90% of the members of the Church of the Nazarene in their countries. It is no exaggeration to describe these urban areas as ‘mission fields’”^{clv}

Our Church could avoid these mission fields of America and Canada, but in so doing we risk withdrawing into a self-righteous, self-satisfying form of “holiness.” Instead, we are choosing instead to reform these nations and spread scriptural holiness over their cities. Committed to the Nazarene’s Great Commission and Great Commandment, the Church that bears his name will therefore respond in obedience to the urban imperative.

A sustained commitment to this urban mission will require a denomination-wide effort. What the Church of the Nazarene says, does, and publishes should support its Wesleyan-Holiness theology and urban mission.

To assist in this endeavor, the office of Mission Strategy USA/Canada is launching a number of initiatives that are outlined in Appendix B.

“Stay in the city until you are endued with power...” Luke 24.49

FOR INDIVIDUAL AND/OR GROUP REFLECTION

1. Do you agree that urbanization and globalization are “signs of our times”? If so, begin to think and record your “interpretation” of these signs for you and your church’s ministry. If no, what do you see as the dominant context for the Church’s ministry in the U.S. and Canada?
2. How would you grade yourself on the competencies needed for effective urban ministry? Are there other skills you would add to those presented in this chapter?
3. What has been your predominate model of the church in relationship to the greater society. Would you say you view life most often from a paradigm of “things are getting worse” or “change for the good is possible”?
4. Evaluate Jesse Miranda’s list of characteristics in District Superintendents. Do you agree (or disagree) with him? How might Superintendents be helped in leading districts with urban populations?
5. Research the possibilities for you or your small group to enroll in training for urban ministry.
6. If your congregation’s building is located in an urban area, would you be willing to offer the facilities as a site for formal urban leadership training. If so, design an outline of action steps to investigate this potential ministry.

7. Study the initiatives being offered by Mission Strategy USA/Canada (Appendix B).

With research and knowledge of your urban area, your church and/or district, prayerfully select and rank three of these resources that might most help your church and district to respond to the urban imperative.

Responding to the Imperative:

Profiles in Urban Mission

“The field of labor to which we feel especially called is in the neglected quarters of the cities...”

-- Articles of Faith and General Rules of the Church of the Nazarene, November 26, 1895

“You if you love, you will keep my commandments.”

--Jesus Christ

People are responding to the urban imperative. There are those who have invested their entire adult lives in urban ministry, and others who are just now answering the call.

In this chapter you will meet one who has given almost three decades to one ministry and over 40 years to the same city. Some of the churches were started just a few years ago; others have been faithful witnesses of the gospel in city neighborhoods since the 1800s.

We were able to include only six. Many more ministries could have been selected. We attempted to have some mix in the geographic location, age of the church or ministry, and predominant people groups being served. Three are affiliated with the Church of the Nazarene and three with other denominations.

The essential criterion for selection – and one all these ministries share in common -- was a commitment to faithfully embody the gospel in the context of their urban communities. But in doing so, each has distinct ministries, leadership styles, and

organizational structures. As you read the profiles, look for both the distinctions and points of similarity. And make note of principles you see that might be transferable to your urban context.

Here are thumbnail sketches on the six. To get a bigger picture and learn more about these ministries, go to www.theurbannazarene.org or contact them directly.

We pray these ministries challenge and inspire you in your obedience to the urban imperative.

Beulah Church of the Nazarene – Brooklyn, New York

Located in Crown Heights neighborhood of Brooklyn, the Beulah Church of the Nazarene defines itself as a missional church “ministering to the total person...a church that is evangelistic, inclusive compassionate and reproductive.”^{cvi}

Under the leadership of its Senior Pastor, the Reverend Dr. Wenton Fyne, Beulah has created three not-for-profit organizations in addition to the church corporation to help them fulfill their mission and faithfully proclaim the Gospel in Brooklyn.

Pastor Fyne notes the church is “a seven day a week operation.” “We are an inner city church committed to coming alongside the community. We are turning the church to the outside.” For him, the three other corporations are “expressions of our faith” and “manifestations of the gospel.”^{cvi}

Hope City Empowerment Center is located on Washington Avenue, a few miles from the church’s main facility. On September 11, 2001 Hope City ministered to people who fled downtown Manhattan by foot after the World Trade Center was attacked. Hope City was an oasis to hundreds of dazed, dust-covered and weary New Yorkers. Hope City continues to be an oasis in what can be a dry, harsh city any day.

A multi-faceted center, Hope City empowers the needy, provides fellowship and activities for seniors, weekly meals, clothing distribution and offers a multi-educational center for youth. Programs are designed to not only meet immediate needs, but give people motivation and skills to help themselves.

Services are offered to the community six days a week in four general areas: *Basic Adult Services* include the Lamb's Table that offers hot meals and a pantry for the homeless and needy; *Senior Program* with bible meditations and fellowship, hot lunches, crafts, exercise programs, and excursions. *Youth Program* in computer literacy, tutoring, and *Counseling Services*.

Hope City is a separate not-for-profit corporation with an annual budget of approximately \$330,000 including in-kind gift. Grace Braithwaite, a long time member of Beulah Church, serves as Hope City's executive director

Understanding the church as called to serve "this generation in the community in which God has placed us" Beulah leadership identified some of the greatest challenges in its community to be affordable housing and economic disenfranchisement. To respond to these challenges with the gospel, the Church created two additional entities.

Beulah Community Housing Development Corporation was incorporated in January, 2005. BCHDC is committed to developing decent, affordable housing available to low income earners in the community through rehabbing existing deficient housing and developing new housing.

Currently BCHDC is offering educational seminars for home buyers, linking bankers, attorneys and real estate professionals with potential buyers, and establishing strategies to meet the goal of completing two to three housing projects annually in these first few years of operation.

Recognizing that the revitalization of the community if done by others, leaves “the church and the community with no economic power, BCHDC aims to break this cycle by acquiring land within our community to build financial institutions, educational institutions, grocery stores, sports facilities and housing.”

The objective is to create “a self-sufficient community through acquiring real estate and developing businesses.” In pursuit of this objective, strategic alliances are being fostered with local politicians, city, state and federal agencies.

The charter and application process for Beulah Credit Union is entering its final phases. The Church sees BCU creating “an opportunity for us to lay a firm foundation and have a voice in the financial world, both collectively and individually. It is an opportunity for members of Beulah Church of the Nazarene to own and operate our own financial institution and it will also allow our members to save and borrow money at reasonable rates.”

BCU will offer credit to those in the community that might not otherwise be deemed credit worthy by other financial institutions and provide a vehicle for people ready to make investments with opportunities to invest, and in the process, invest in the neighborhood.

Both the credit union and housing development corporation come under what Pastor Fyne calls the economic development arm of the church. Beulah Church is the parent birthing and nurturing these initiatives at each step of the way with finances, board leadership, staffing and volunteers. Although separate corporations, Pastor Fyne notes they are accountable to the Church theologically and philosophically.

On Sunday approximately 1,000 people gather for worship at one of three services in what Pastor Fyne describes as a “blended service” style. The congregation is predominantly black, with approximately 50 percent of the people middle and upper class

and the other half struggling or working lower class. They come from all five boroughs of New York City, but the majority live in Brooklyn.

But for the people of Beulah, “church” is more than just a one day a week thing. Dr. Fyne’s vision of “turning the church to the outside” is clearly becoming reality in Brooklyn.

For more information:

The Rev. Dr. Wenton Fyne, Senior Pastor

Beulah Church of the Nazarene

1250 St. Johns Place

Brooklyn, NY 11213

T: 718.756.2310

I: www.beulahnaz.org

Grace Urban Ministries, Inc. – San Francisco, California

Grace Urban Ministries (GUM) was founded by Grace Fellowship Community Church in 1996, its mission statement declares “Grace Urban Ministries, Inc. (GUM) is an ecclesio-centered 501(c) (3) nonprofit corporation serving children, youth and families in San Francisco, seeking to bear witness to the just and compassionate reign of Jesus Christ.”^{clviii}

GUM works in close partnership with Grace Fellowship Community Church “to serve communities that face significant social and economic adversity.”

Under the leadership of founding pastor Bob Appleby, and its current senior pastor Sharon Huey, Grace Fellowship Community Church has from its inception in 1983 sought to be intentionally responsive to questions of calling and context: *What does it mean to be the Church? And what does it mean to be the Church in San Francisco?*

Shortly after moving the Mission District in 1992, the congregation began serving its neighbors. Four years later, “GUM was established to develop congregation-based

community services as a means of embodying the gospel witness of the church in this particular urban context.”

Children, youth and families that face significant social and economic adversity are the focus of services such as “after-school tutoring, youth job-training, dental health screening, adult education, and technical assistance and other activities that engage the complex challenges unique to the vulnerable of the San Francisco Bay area.”

Current services include:

- PRYSM (Preparing Youth to Serve in the Marketplace”) is a seven week program offered in the summer for a small group of high school students. Workshops consist of basic job skills, an internship with an off-site company, field trips to workplaces and mentoring by adults.
- Grace Educational Mentors (GEM) is an after-school program providing children with homework help and skill strengthening exercises in math, reading and writing.
- Kaleo, the Greek word for invite or “call” is a biweekly evening gathering for neighborhood parents and adults. Kaleo offers hospitality, a place to rest, recreate and find mutual support as well as practical skills through Grace Learning Partners, offering adult education in, for example, computer literacy and English as a second language.
- Seasonal ministries such as neighborhood toy and clothing sale, (offering educational materials, toys and garments as Christmas gifts) and a mobile health program providing dental screening and education.

Craig Wong, a member of the congregation since 1986 was hired by the church as ministry coordinator in 1994 and began giving leadership to developing community services. Two years later, GUM was incorporated and Craig became its executive director.

Wong stresses that while GUM provides the research, development and management, it is the congregation that ultimately embraces and serves the neighborhood. As a GUM brochure puts it, “the ministry structures we develop operate as outward-directed, integral extensions of a faith community, which offers social stability and relational consistency beyond mere service delivery. By implication, GUM programs reflect the gifts and maturity of the congregation, as well as the particular needs of the neighborhood. Therefore, GUM cooperates with pastoral leadership to ensure that ministry flows from, rather than competes with, the life and vision of the congregation.”^{clix}

This approach arises from a theology of the church as the center of God’s missional agenda. The local church is the God called entity that gives living, visible expression of the good news of deliverance made possible by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Wong states “it is our joyous privilege and responsibility to develop ministry that purposefully serves the local congregation in ways that build her missional, incarnational presence in the city. ...We must continually reflect on our role as a servant of the Church. . .As a servant organization [GUM must] willingly and purposefully honor and submit to the pastoral leadership of the local congregation and be led by their instruction and worship.”

Though two separate entities, Wong says “we put a lot of energy into making sure that these two entities are inextricably connected and integrated and working as one.”^{clix}

He continues, “Theology drives everything. Whether it is the church entity or the nonprofit body, they are going to be driven by the same theology. We both understand the mission of the church the same way, so the mission and vision of the nonprofit is going to flow out of that. We understand the church is at the center of God’s missional agenda. The church is God’s strategy.”

A significant source of GUM's financial annual budget (currently about \$213,000) comes from congregational giving, but GUM also partners with other churches, community and family foundations offering the opportunity for stewardship of these "societal resources"

Powerfully illustrative of GUM's approach to "help the church embody the Gospel" is the fact that almost 100 percent of GUM's volunteers are from Grace Fellowship Community Church. And those 50 people serving in these ministries represent about 1/3 of the adults in the congregation.

To residents of a city that experience so little of the true peace for which its namesake, St. Francis gave his life, Grace Urban Ministries is just what its name says: ministries of grace in this urban community, embodying the good news of Jesus, the Prince of Peace.

For more information:

Craig Wong, Executive Director

Grace Urban Ministries, Inc.

3265 16th Street

San Francisco, CA 94103

T: 415.703.6094

I: www.gum.org

Home of the Nazarene, Inc. - Hialeah (Miami), Florida

Home of the Nazarene (in Spanish, Hogar del Nazareno) is a ministry that takes seriously the words of Jesus: "For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me. I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me" (Matthew 25:35).

The Home of the Nazarene is a private facility for men with life-controlling problems. The men are offered a “solution not just another program.”^{clxi} Using a scripture based curriculum, Hogar del Nazareno teaches the men a way to “be completely free from the dependency of drugs and alcohol.” A theme verse is “If the Son sets you free you shall be free indeed” (John 8:36).

Iglesia del Nazareno El Buen Pastor (The Good Shepherd Church of the Nazarene) - - just outside Miami in Hialeah -- gave birth to Home of the Nazarene

On Mother’s Day evening in 1996 a homeless person stood up in the church service and asked if the congregation could help. He wanted to leave the streets and begin a new life. Senior Pastor Mel Santiesteban asked the congregation if anybody had a house. A member said yes, “I have a small two bedroom house. I’ll give it to you for two months.” “That night,” Associate pastor Obed Santiesteban recalls, “we decided to call it the Home of the Nazarene.”^{clxii}

The Good Shepherd Church continues to nurture and support Home of the Nazarene. The men from the Home, in turn, attend services, usher, serve as parking lot attendants, and lead classes. Pastor Santiesteban, who also serves as Executive Director for Home of the Nazarene, says “They are the best disciples. And can take the role of any members in the church.”^{clxiii}

The Home of the Nazarene’s training consists of three phases.

The first is a discipleship process that is one year in length. This includes Bible study, and courses in character development. There are group studies on topics such as attitudes, anger management and dealing with temptation. The men attend individual and group counseling sessions and church services.

The second phase involves courses in Christian living, parenting and self-improvement. This training phase encourages emotional wholeness, goal setting and job preparedness.

The final phase offers additional counseling in personal and family issues. Students are given assistance in finding employment. Every graduate is guaranteed a job. Due to the quality of the program, there are a number of employees who seek and want to employ graduates. Many graduates are offered positions at the companies where they interned during their training.

The program model was designed by Pastor Santiesteban so the men are not being given a “hand-out.” They are working during the entire process, developing skills and a strong work ethic. Money earned is deposited into their personal accounts and is available to them when their reentry phase is completed.

Hundreds of men have been students at Home of the Nazarene. Over 300 have graduated with 72 percent of these men still maintaining sobriety and productive lives. Mel Santiesteban says the success rate for graduates in the last four years is 85 percent.

In 2000, the church was able to purchase a building that was already configured to function as a residential treatment facility. It is located in Opa-Locka, a community adjacent to Hialeah with high levels of poverty and need.

The Home’s facility can accommodate 50 students comfortably. In addition to the living quarters, the Home provides the men a library, classrooms, laundry facilities, kitchen, a multipurpose room (for dining/chapel/special events) and outside recreation area. The annual budget for Home of the Nazarene is \$250,000. Additional support comes from gifts in kind and volunteers.

When you study the history of the Home of the Nazarene, you eventually learn about Nora. Nora was attending the Good Shepherd Church and ministering to homeless women and mothers with addictions.

She was known to bring prostitutes right off the streets to church services. One day on her way to church Nora saw Lisa, an obviously pregnant prostitute at a public phone. Nora felt led to stop and counsel her, eventually convincing Lisa to come with her to church.

The church leadership was not always in total support of Nora's approach. So after Pastor Mel Santiesteban lost his wife to cancer, it surprised some when Mel and Nora started seeing each other. Today, Nora is Pastor Santiesteban's wife.

Years before attending Good Shepherd Church, Nora was a very successful businesswoman. But Nora started using drugs socially and then became addicted. Unable to maintain her career, she eventually became homeless.

Out of Nora's personal experience of brokenness and redemption, she emphasizes that the Home of the Nazarene is not a rehab program. "It is a school, a training program."^{clxiv} And it is intensive and comprehensive. The men are provided a loving, structured and supportive environment. They come primarily from the greater Miami area, other Florida cities and Puerto Rico. But the Home's reputation is growing. Men have been referred to or have sought out Home of the Nazarene from as far away as New York and California.

As Nora discovered, the church at first was not totally enthusiastic about drug addicts, pregnant prostitutes being invited and attending services. Some members, as Nora puts it, "blinked" when they saw these people coming to the services. But the church changed.

The congregation of Good Shepherd (averaging over 1,400 in worship in 2004) now is not only accepting but passionate about ministry to the "least of these." When asked how

that change happened, Nora responds, “The ones who ‘blinked,’ left. The church was cleansed.”

Nora has a vision to open a home for women and their children. She already has a name chosen. But for now, Nora is busy with Pastor Mel and the staff counseling and praying with Abraham, Pedro, Tony and more than 40 other men who have found a new life and home in Jesus the Nazarene.

For more information:

The Reverend Melquadies Santiesteban, Executive Director

310 E. 5th St.

Hialeah, FL 33010

T: 305.681.0305

Neighborhood Christian Centers, Inc. – Memphis, Tennessee

Memphis, Tennessee is well known for Graceland, the National Civil Rights Museum, and its rich variety of American music. Memphis is also a Southern city graced by stately brick homes and thousands of azaleas which bloom each spring. The Neighborhood Christian Center is surrounded not by museums, mansions or profusely blooming azaleas, but by the city’s poor, weakened social systems and limited economic vitality.

In this setting -- so often gripped by sinister resignation to a future of continued deprivation and social isolation -- the Neighborhood Christian Centers’ primary mission is “to provide compassionate, Christ-centered ministry to the practical and spiritual needs of the city’s poor.”^{cixv}

Neighborhood Christian Centers, Inc. (NCC) offers numerous services for the economically disadvantaged, as well as for those in need of spiritual nurturing and counseling, and educational/re-educational aid(s).

The goal is to empower family units, men, women and children, equipping them to be productive citizens. NCC does this through 11 full centers, 36 affiliate centers and 27 independent locations covering 18 zip codes in Memphis.

NCC emphasizes it is not a church nor is it a not-for-profit with just a single neighborhood focus. Its self-description reads:

“NCC seeks to minister to material and physical needs, but is also committed to evangelism and discipleship through developing long-term personal relationships and building up neighborhood churches. To those with the resources, NCC has become identified as an established, effective means by which Christians can become directly involved in responding to the needs of the poor. This network provides an efficient and effective means of bringing resources to needs and further offers a tremendous opportunity for Christians, as the body of Christ, to have a significant impact upon the problems of poverty and racism in our community.”

NCC began in 1978 sponsored by a coalition of Christian ministries. A local church contributed seed money for hiring JoeAnn Ballard as the director and only full time staff person.

In 2005, NCC had 32 full time staff, 15 part-time employees, approximately 1,000 volunteers and a budget in excess of \$1,400,000.

NCC serves the city through 21 programs that are interdependent, empowering an individual from childhood to adulthood. Some of these are:

Youth Ministries

- Educational Ministries – One-on-one tutoring, Read to Me program for children birth to five years, homework centers and computer labs.

- T.R.U.T.H. Seekers (Teens Receiving Understanding Through Him) - After-school Bible studies for youth ages 5-18 that focus on prevention of at-risk behaviors.
- C.A.P.S. (College Assistance Program & Services) - Helps students apply to college and secure financing; it also provides support structures to enable students to remain in college and earn a degree.
- NCC Arts - A summer work program in which at risk teens serve as “missionaries,” participating in community service, performing arts and financial education.

Compassionate Ministries

- Christmas Baskets/Family Pairing
- Food Pantry and Clothes Closet
- Emergency Assistance
- W.A.I./M.A.I. (Women and Men Achieving Independence) - Services are designed to assist welfare recipients to re-enter society as productive persons with work and life skills.

Family Enrichment

- Chapel Ministries – NCC hosts client weddings and funerals as well as new neighborhood churches until they become established.
- LoveBuilders – Monthly sessions for couples are offered that lead up to the annual conference on marriage and family.

- Neighborhood Church Network – A growing number of small, minority churches are empowered to meet the needs of the poor and mentored to be the “hands and feet” of Jesus.

Through these programs NCC seeks to ensure a better future spiritually, morally, and physically for the community of Memphis.

NCC’s story begins, in a real sense, 13 years before its founding. In 1965, a 20 year old woman arrived in Memphis with the assurance of divine call, entrepreneurial skills, a strong work ethic and no small amount of perseverance. All these would be needed in the years of developing outreach ministries and her self-education in urban issues, neighborhood and community development.

Over four decades later, JoeAnn Ballard still has a genuine concern for others – a desire to break the cycle of poverty and dependence. NCC does this in very practical ways that reflect principles from JoeAnn’s personal formation. (You can read her life story by visiting www.theurbanimperative.com)

"Your witness is through your actions," she tells volunteers and staff members.

"A bad attitude coupled with a lack of values leaves a person in a desperate situation," notes Dr. Ballard. "We teach positive values by example." And those values are very specific ones, such as caring about what happens to yourself, working for what you want, planning for your future, learning to say no to destructive habits and realizing the power within yourself to change your situation.

Ballard put those values to work personally soon after she arrived in Memphis because, as she puts it, "All the things they tell you in Bible College may not be the way it is when you actually get on the ground."^{clxvi}

Two years after arriving in Memphis, JoeAnn married Monroe Ballard, a school teacher who shared her concern for the poor. As they continued working full time jobs, the Ballard's Sunday School outreach and compassionate ministry expanded to the point that JoeAnn notes "everything we do at NCC we were doing from our home," -- just without a not-for-profit organization! This included being foster parents to over 75 children.

So although the early days were challenging, Ballard testifies "Coming to Memphis was no mistake. I was in the perfect will of God. Now, I didn't see all this [ministry at that time] but I knew, no matter what, I was in the perfect will of God. So out of that perfect will of God came this [ministry of NCC]."

Since its beginning NCC has been in North Memphis. JoeAnn recalls "My first office was in a church a block or two from [NCC's current administrative center]. Kids would put feces in my desk when I was away."

Today, a new North Memphis is emerging. "The city was able to move in and make changes. It's now called Uptown. The city says the police went in and cleaned it up but we know the truth," JoeAnn says. "We know it is life blood and the Holy Spirit that has changed this neighborhood, and has done a work that is unbelievable."

And that work happened through NCC partnering with churches. Ballard notes, "Early on we identified certain churches and would send clients to those churches to be shepherded by them. Even though a person could come to NCC to get some need met, her ultimate course could not be charted by NCC. We knew what we were not. We were not the church. And I wasn't trying to be a pastor."

"Pastors did not have to be jealous of me. I wasn't looking for anything; instead, I wanted to give them something."

JoeAnn believes that "The small church is the savior of the community. [It] is the under girder of a city."

“What happens,” she explains, “is the small church gets the life sucked out of it. We’ve been able to give small churches life blood and as a result of that they flourished.”

NCC offers the small church tangible resources, proven program models and training of volunteers so the congregation can successfully provide the services in its neighborhood. The 78 small churches that NCC currently connects to in Memphis are, Dr. Ballard declares, “healthy churches.” On an average Sunday, NCC’s network of small churches will gather 11,800 people for worship.

Neighborhood Christian Centers sees this networking and empowering of small churches as a model for other cities. NCC developed a community pastor’s guidebook for people interested in contextualizing these principles in other urban centers.

When asked what she was studying and planning to do before she left the liberal arts college for Bible College JoeAnn replied, “Political science was my major. I was going to go to law school. I was going to be a lawyer.”

JoeAnn Ballard may not have a license to practice law, but she is certainly an advocate for the poor. She has built a city-wide network of advocates serving people in the spirit of Christ who “upholds the cause of the oppressed and gives food to the hungry, sets prisoners free, gives sight to the blind, lifts up those who are bowed down, loves the righteous, watches over the alien, and sustains the fatherless and the widow, but frustrates the ways of the wicked” (Psalm 146:7-9).

For more information:

Dr. JoeAnn Ballard, Executive Director

Neighborhood Christian Centers, Inc.

785 Jackson Ave.

Memphis, TN 38107

T: 901.881.6013

New City Fellowship – Saint Louis, Missouri

New City is a multicultural church founded in 1992 after several years of prayer by Christians convinced of the need for their denomination (Presbyterian Church in America) to commit to reconciliation between Anglo and African-American communities in St. Louis and caring for the poor.

Founding Pastor Barry Henning came to St. Louis from a racially mixed congregation ministering in Chattanooga's (Tennessee) inner city. From its beginning, New City Fellowship was committed to be a catalyst for the Church to fulfill its call through acts of justice, compassion, and righteousness.

The church's vision statement says: "New City Fellowship exists to seek the establishment of God's kingdom rule in the hearts of people from every ethnic group by discipling the nations in the reconciling Gospel of Jesus Christ through a clear proclamation of salvation by grace through faith in Christ alone and by doing Spirit-led deeds of justice and mercy."¹⁰⁶

New City Fellowship is committed to "being a church where all the nations God has placed within the St. Louis community are gathered to experience the reconciling love of God in Jesus Christ...through redeemed multi-cultural worship where the delight of God in us and our delight in Him is experienced...through Christian community relationships where fellowship, love, increased knowledge of God and a commitment to take care of all basic human need is practiced...through an equipping of the people of God that mobilizes each member to be a part of extending God's justice and mercy to the nations and proclaims the unsearchable love of God in Christ Jesus to St. Louis and throughout the world."

Now how attractive would such a vision and mission be to people facing the challenges of urban life, just trying to get through each day? The founders set goals: By the third year to have 100 people worshipping and five community ministries operating. On the first Sunday 100 people were present. (Today, 80 percent of those are still part of the congregation.)

And just two weeks after launching, the church had community ministries functioning. The first was modest home repairs for widows. This was followed by an after-school tutoring program, creation of a cleaning company that employed single mothers, and a Saturday recreation program for children. Additional ministries were developed and today New City supports 10 outreach ministries with a budget of \$1 million a year.

The congregation targets University City and the Hamilton Heights community. Individual lives have changed and the community has experienced significant reductions in violence, drug sales, and gang activity.

Sitting in on a weekly staff meeting, one quickly senses New City's commitment to biblical and theological understanding as foundational to its ministry. This is also evident in viewing New City's web site where you find extensive scriptural support and teaching lessons about the church's core values of:

- Gospel Power/Sonship – Grace in Christ alone.
- Kingdom Focus – Committed to justice and mercy.
- Body Life – Functioning as the Body of Christ with an emphasis on reconciliation, mutual care, and ministering as a team, not just as individuals.
- Spiritual Means – Worship, Promises of God, Boasting in Weakness, and Trials are all spiritual means God uses to shape his people.^{clxviii}

In conversation with the pastoral leadership, they

stress the themes of reconciliation, commitment to the poor, ethnic leadership, and inclusive worship services. “Diversity is a gift to be valued,” they note, but candidly admit this means “a stretch for everybody” in the congregation. When reciting the core values, Pastor Henning added “a free outpouring of the Holy Spirit” is “absolutely essential.”^{clxix}

New City’s “culture is to show God’s love to the poor, widows, immigrants and refugees of St. Louis.” To help demonstrate this love, Restore St. Louis was created as a means to combine the church leadership with the resources – human, financial and spiritual – of other churches and businesses both in the area and around the nation. Restore St. Louis (RSL) is an unincorporated structure under the pastoral and financial oversight of the church. Gary Leibovich, a gifted business, has been part of New City Fellowship since 1996. In 1999, Gary left a financially successful career and lifestyle to direct RSL.

The outreach ministries for which RSL serves as a link between community and congregation are:

- Branch House
- CityLights Urban Projects
- Firm Foundation Tutoring
- The Freedom School
- Free Store
- Harambee Youth Training Partnership
- New City Development Corporation
- New Hope Moms
- People of Refuge
- Summer Tutoring
- Summer Urban Missions
- Work Day

To see detailed descriptions of these ministries, visit <http://restorestlouis.org> or www.theurbannazarene.org

One of these outreach ministries, New City Development Corporation (NCC) was established as a separate not-for-profit organization in 1999 by New City Fellowship “to further facilitate racial and cultural reconciliation and participate in the rebuilding of North St. Louis.”

In partnership with other local organizations and ministries, NCDC has provided quality homes, job training, home repair, and general community and economic development for the West End and Hamilton Heights neighborhoods of St. Louis city.

NCDC has restored homes and built new infill homes in the target neighborhoods. These homes not only contribute to the economic development of the community, but also provide a training ground for the carpenter’s apprentices, Harambee Youth, and volunteers.

Far from being just “housing,” New City understands “these are *homes* for families who now own them. These families are building relationships with their neighbors, ministering to them and being touched by them through the work of the Holy Spirit.”

Currently NCDC is not engaged in home construction but remains committed to community development by concentrating on construction trades training and job readiness through Harambee Youth Training Partnership and a year round version of Harambee called Job-Readiness.

Pastor Henning notes, “By maintaining a part time, year long work schedule, the kids are being equipped for transition to other entry level jobs with basic, good work habits.” And at the same time, the elderly, widows, single-parent households, immigrants and other on limited incomes receive much needed repairs and renovations to their homes.\

At the heart of all these Gospel expressions is a congregation committed to the vision cast in 1992 – to be a church intentionally positioned in a specific community in order to

serve neighbors that others have forsaken; live out Christ's ministry of reconciliation among people of different race, nationality, and socio-economic status; and to do justice and love mercy.

Each Sunday 700-800 people of diverse backgrounds gather at two different locations in St. Louis: the original University City and South City site in a neighborhood directly south of downtown. They come to worship God, celebrate the signs of the kingdom, and affirm their commitment to the vision.

Pastor Henning is passionately committed to the New City model of intentionally locating and ministering in needy neighborhoods. But he does not believe every congregation must adopt New City's approach. He is, however, firmly convinced that every church, wherever it is located, must find ways to consistently associate with the poor.

"When you minister to the poor," Henning observes, "All the walls come down. When you seek and serve the poor, you get the whole community." In his words, one can hear echoes of God's command and promise: "Seek the welfare of the city...for in its welfare, you will find your welfare" (Jeremiah 29:7).

For more information:

The Reverend Barry Henning, Senior Pastor

New City Fellowship Church

1142 Hodiamont

Saint Louis, MO 63112

T: 314.726.2302

I: www.newcity.org

Trinity Lutheran Church – Saint Louis, Missouri

For over 100 years, Trinity Lutheran Church has ministered in the Souldard, a neighborhood just south of downtown Saint Louis named for the Souldard Farmers Market that has operated continuously since 1779.

The congregation was organized as Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church shortly after German immigrants from Saxony reached Saint Louis in 1839.

Trinity is the oldest Lutheran congregation west of the Mississippi river. The congregation has served the this part of Saint Louis faithfully through changes from thriving “heart of the city, to depressed inner city neighborhood and now a revitalized historic district.”

Worship services include traditional and contemporary elements, preaching from a pulpit dating to the time of the current sanctuary’s construction in 1864, and communion with a chalice brought from Germany in 1839 by the Saxons. Not surprisingly, the congregation is often referred to as Historic Trinity Lutheran Church.

As the neighborhood changed and began deteriorating in the 1970s, thousands of people moved out of the city to rural and suburban communities in the county. Many churches followed. Trinity also watched a number of its members leave the city and join other churches. But the congregation chose to remain in downtown Saint Louis. Trinity made a conscious choice to stay in the city.

The choice was not without cost, but the leadership of Trinity felt there was a need still there and that the community needed the gospel more than ever. So Trinity continued its ministry faithfully through difficult, challenging years of blight, economic downturn, and decreasing safety. One church member remarked “it got pretty rough during those years. It was pretty bad, but the church survived.”^{cxxx}

Throughout the entire period of urban decline, Trinity Lutheran remained a witness to the Gospel and served the needs of the community. Today, the Souldard, once a neighborhood many left and most avoided, is a registered historic district.

Nineteenth century brick townhouses are being renovated, abandoned factories converted into apartments, and independently owned shops and restaurants opening along the tree-lined streets of this walkable neighborhood only five minutes from the city's central business district.

Neighborhood and church renewal are visibly parallel. A total of more than 300 people gather for worship at one of Trinity's three services each weekend. And during the week, members are engaged in ministries every day.

Education has been central to Trinity's ministry since inception. Trinity's school has ministered to the community and been a door for people becoming members of the church. The church's current office administrator, Barb Kurtz, is one of these. Barb recalled, "I worked at the school for awhile; [I know] some of the kids weren't taught anything about Jesus except at the school. And some of them brought their families to [the church]." Trinity continues to offer a school for primary grades now in collaboration with St John's and Messiah Lutheran Churches.

Trinity's commitment to ministries of compassion and mercy is well known. It's ministry to the homeless is one of the biggest in the city, according to Barb Kurtz. The services offered involve:^{clxxi}

- Offering emergency shelter and transitional housing and care for homeless mentally ill (in partnership with Peter and Paul Community Services, a joint ministry with St. Vincent and S.S. Peter & Paul Churches);
- Daily assistance of hot meals to the homeless and elderly, along with food pantry for families;

- Providing clothing and personal items, including vouchers for hair cuts, utility payments, assistance with laundry or other needs during a crisis.

Other expressions of gospel proclamation include:

- Resettlement services offered through Good Samaritan Service Center.
- G.E.D. classes
- A ministry to ex-offenders offering a weekly group meeting for encouragement, support and spiritual formation.

It is striking and instructive to note that a congregation once formed to serve German immigrants now reaches out to Vietnamese and Bosnians while still offering a very popular service in German once a month on the fourth Sunday.

One of the more recent ministries to emerge is an outreach to people moving into newly converted loft apartments and condominiums downtown. People are hosting small group bible studies in their lofts. The goal is to have over 20 small groups by spring 2007, and then begin a worship service.^{clxxii}

At this same time, church leaders are building relationships with civic organizations and the private/public associations critical to the downtown's development. The church is also intentionally participating in major downtown community activities and events.

Most of Trinity's ministries are supported by congregational giving. Fundraising with outside sources has mostly related to the repair and restoration of the congregation's historic building.

Trinity Lutheran's mission is to be "a loving, Christ-centered community actively reaching out to all people."

So what began as a congregation comprised exclusively of German immigrants is now committed to reaching "all people."

Trinity's vision described by the Church Council states in part,

“We will be effective

- In reaching those who do not yet know Christ
- In building up those who want to know Him more fully

“We will influence lives

- through a 24-hour, seven day a week ministry
- through use of our facilities
- through our active role in the re-population and revitalization of downtown St. Louis
- through an award-winning day school
- through diverse musical events and worship options
- through innovative social programs

Trinity also sees part of its ministry as a church that “mentors other historic downtown churches.” The congregation’s faithful gospel witness to Saint Louis City gives it the experience, wisdom and credibility for such a mentoring ministry.^{clxxiii}

Trinity Lutheran has a slogan – “The Historic Church Serving Today’s People.” More than an empty phrase, it seems to accurately capture Trinity’s devotion to and demonstrations of God’s love, the grace of the Lord Jesus, and fellowship of the Holy Spirit.

For more information:

The Reverend David B. Marth, Pastor

1805 South 8th Street

Saint Louis, MO 63104

T: 312.231.4092

I: www.historictrinitystlouis.org

“Now to him who by the power at work within us is able

*to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think,
to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus
to all generations, for ever and ever. Amen*

--Ephesians 3:20-21

FOR INDIVIDUAL AND/OR GROUP REFLECTION

1. Do you agree that all the ministries profiled “share in common a commitment to faithfully embodying the gospel”? If so, in what sense? If not, explain.
2. The churches and organizations profiled come from different denominational and theological traditions. How do you see these denominational/theological heritages informing their ministries in the city?
3. Based on the descriptions and data presented to you, what similarities do you see in these ministries? What dissimilarities do you find?
4. Are there principles in these ministries that could be transferable to other urban settings? If so, list and explore what these might look like in your particular context.
5. In light of your life experience as a Christian and considering your responses to questions #1-4, do you see a place or need for a “biblical theology of the city” and/or an “urban spirituality”? Is there any value to thinking in these terms or can the standard categories provide the theological resources sufficient for sending and sustaining the church in its urban mission?
6. How do you view the relationship of church to para-church (or a separate not-for-profit corporation)? Can you identify the philosophies and practices taken by the leadership of the ministries profiled?

CONCLUSION

*“The holy character of God in love, re-created
in the people of God, is the primary
basis for the Wesleyan mission and the
further development of a Wesleyan missiology.”^{clxxiv}*

- - Ron Benefiel, President-Nazarene Theological Seminary

*“Holiness builds a church with a heart
for the poor and broken!”^{clxxv}*

-- Stan Ingersol, Archivist, Church of the Nazarene

I love my denomination. I was born into it but later made a decision as an adult to remain in it. The Church of the Nazarene helped my parents raise me through Sunday School, junior church, Vacation Bible Schools, and summer youth camps. I received a college degree through a Nazarene school and met my life mate there. The Church has given me a place to serve, beginning as a five year old singing Easter music at the Spring Valley Church in Southern California. From there, that “place to serve” has included the cities of United States, Europe, South Asia, Central and South America. I am grateful. I love my denomination. I am a member “on purpose.” I believe in Christian holiness more than ever.

Yet my denomination will not be a Holiness Church simply by more pastors preaching more holiness sermons, or theologians and denominational leaders talking more doctrine, or even more people testifying to the experience of entire sanctification.

But when we walk the talk, when our passion for personal morality is matched with an equal zeal for public righteousness, when we again walk in love, speaking truth to the powers that continue to oppress, when we walk and live once again in the “neglected quarters” of our cities, then we will demonstrate to this generation what it means to be a Holiness Church:

A Church that is filled with the Holy Spirit’s power of perfect love, poured out in service to the poor, immersing our ministries and focusing our denomination’s efforts in the urbanized world of our generation.

Then, no one could mistake our denomination as a Holiness Church with only a “form of godliness, but denying the power.”^{clxxxvi}

Nazarene Theological Seminary’s president Ron Benefiel (former pastor of Los Angeles First Church of the Nazarene and founder of Bresee Institute for Urban Training) has noted, “The need and opportunity for the Church to minister in the city is evident. The challenge is certainly there before us. The question is whether or not we will respond by taking the good news of the Gospel into our cities.”^{clxxxvii}

Nazarenes take the Scriptures seriously. We must take the Great Commission and Great Commandment equally seriously. Add to these Scriptural mandates the facts of an urbanized world and the imperative before us could not be clearer.

The mission strategy of the New Testament church is evident from a quick scan of the list of letters the apostles wrote to the churches they had planted in the cities of their day. For those who use the “harvest principle” to determine deployment of mission resources, the ripe harvest fields today are in the cities. For holiness people, this harvest

has always been in the cities—from Wesley in Bristol, Palmer in New York, the Booths in London, to Bresee in Los Angeles. Along with the countless others they inspired and led, these men and women courageously responded and showed us the way of the urban imperative.

Ministering with people in cities is challenging, the issues often complex, and questions will be many. But there can be no doubt it is the imperative for the Church today, and especially so for a denomination in the Wesleyan-Holiness tradition.

What remains to be seen is will our Church be faithful to Scripture, its historic tradition, a reasonable, rational understanding of population realities, and our recent experience in the cities. Will we respond to this urban imperative, directing resources to minister *intentionally* and *intensively* and *extensively* in the urban centers of the United States and Canada?

Should all these arguments presented prove unpersuasive, let me appeal baldly to the pragmatic, “can do” attitude of the American culture. A church committed to the Great Commission and Great Commandment surely realizes that it can faithfully fulfill these only to the extent it connects with people. Today, the overwhelming majority of people in the United States live in an urbanized context. Now what can be the long term result for church growth and the literal survival of the institution by planting churches in rural and small towns when fewer and fewer people live in those places? Religious sects that will not invite “outsiders” into the fellowship or practice celibacy do not exist long. Churches that insist on ministering exclusively to their own kind and in their group’s native language will someday disappear as the second and third generation children of these immigrants speak primarily the language of *their* country and limit use of their parents and grandparents’ traditions to holidays and the occasional family celebration.

Ron Sider wrote a few years ago: "three sets of facts simply do not fit together. There is widespread poverty in our world. The Bible says God and his faithful people have a special concern for the poor. And North American Christians give less and less every year."^{clxxviii} To his strong words, let me add three additional sets of facts that "do not fit together": The Christian church's beginnings, as well as the Wesleyan-Holiness tradition's ministry focus, were the cities. The United States is an urbanized nation. Only 33% of Nazarene churches in the U.S. are in large cities.

Ninevehs are not pleasant places-certainly not places that God-fearing people would want to visit let alone live with those pagans and cultural misfits. But remember the facts of the Biblical record: A Holy God is concerned about unholy people. A prophetic, missionary message can reach into another culture. Cities can be won; redemption and transformation can take place.

One veteran urban practitioner and educator volunteered a warning: The worse thing a denomination could do is to start something (in urban ministries) that it can't or won't finish.^{clxxix} As we have seen, the Church of the Nazarene has a record of engaging and disengaging from the city. We need to listen to the wisdom in this warning and make choices accordingly.

My songwriter/evangelist grandfather loved to tell the fable of "The Hen and the Hog." It is a rural story with a rural flavor, but makes a powerful point for any one contemplating urban ministries and confronting the urban imperative. The hen and hog were traveling together one day and passed a church that displayed the subject for the Sunday sermon: "How Can We Help the Poor?" After a moment of reflection, the hen ventured, "I know what we can do! We can give them ham and eggs for breakfast!" "You can say that," the hog replied. "For you, that's a contribution, but for me, it's total commitment."

What cities need from the Church is not a contribution, but total commitment of our resources and life. The urban imperative has reached the heads of the Church of the Nazarene; whether it has entered the heart and bloodstream of the entire body is now the question.

Now there are some who maintain that a passion for urban missions is just not likely to take hold of the Church of the Nazarene. Martin Marty retells Yale Professor Divinity School professor David Bartlett's account of commentator Robert Novak during a political campaign saying "something to the effect that the poor people of Appalachia were poor because they were losers and had neither the ambition to make it in our American competitive society." His debating opponent, Mark Shields, "stopped him in mid-sentence with a very Pauline phrase: 'Stop that. You're a better person than that.'" Bartlett went on to explain "Paul is always telling his fellow converts that they are better persons than they think they are. They live in the Spirit, and the fruits of the Spirit are 'love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.' Then he goes on to add: 'If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.' (5:25) Be who you are."^{clxxx}

We are those Spirit-filled people called Nazarenes who have experienced the purifying power of the Holy Spirit cleansing us from all sin, perfecting us in holy love for God and our neighbors. We are Nazarenes with a human legacy of Wesley's service in the teeming cities of England's industrialization and Bresee risking all to serve the needs of the cities of 19th and 20th century America. Let us be who we are in the 21st century. And as we as enter our second century as Nazarenes, may we respond with a "Yes, Lord Yes" to the urban imperative and take the life changing love of God to the cities.

As a reader of this book, you are entitled to free updates and revisions as they are published. Just go to www.theurbanimperative.org and register to receive the latest version and find additional resources to assist your ministry with the city.

AFTERWORD

“I preached this morning upon the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah and had I wanted material for supposed scenes in those cities I could have found them in the very scenes now transpiring around me.” ^{clxxxix} --The Reverend James Woods, 29 April, 1855

(Presbyterian minister in Los Angeles)

It is in those places of moral decay that we can discover the power of the gospel to transform the waste places into citadels of hope and recovery. -- Oliver R. Phillips

The city – a repository of all that is negative and wretched in sinful humanity. The city could be viewed as an archetype of humankind’s rebellion against God. Was it not Cain, the sinful, disobedient son who crafted the first city? And what of Sodom, Gomorrah? Veritable cesspools of sin. Then there is wicked Nineveh and hedonistic Babylon.

Against all these stands the pastoral serenity of the Edenic garden. But the city is also the place of God’s redemptive work—even Sodom could have been saved. Nineveh was the object of God’s love. God’s people in exile were to work and pray for Babylon’s salvation. And God’s relationship with humanity that began in a garden, will culminate in a city.

We do not know if Paul pondered any such concepts. We only know the great missionary took the message of Christ’s cross and resurrection to the Gentiles – in cities. The biblical record shows Paul and his band in the great urban centers of the day: Antioch,

Corinth, Ephesus, Philippi, and Rome. Indeed, it was Paul's Lord who set the example. Jesus set up his Galilee base in a city; he taught in the city; he wept for the city; and although rural people heard him gladly, it was in the city he spent his final days, appearing in court at "City Hall" and finally being executed just outside the city's wall.

After Christ's resurrection, Jesus appeared to 500 citizens in the city; directed his disciples to stay in the city for the promised Comforter. And it was in the city that the Church was born and its ministry begun.

For the Early Church, the city was a strategic place for proclaiming the Good News. Here, at cultural and commercial crossroads, the new believers could influence and transform who societies.

But all these reasons notwithstanding, could it be God's concern for the city today is related to the degree and depth of injustice and oppression often experienced there? Could it be God takes special delight in redeeming that which humanity has often used to establish its own self-sovereignty and self-sufficiency?

Cornelius Plantinga, Jr., relates a scene from the film *Grand Canyon* where "an immigration attorney breaks out of a traffic jam and attempts to bypass it. His route takes him along streets that seem progressively darker and more deserted. Then, the predictable...nightmare: The man's fancy sports car stalls on one of those alarming streets whose teenaged guardians wear expensive guns and sneakers. He does manage to phone for a tow truck. But before it arrives, five young street toughs surround the attorney's disabled car and threaten him with considerable bodily harm. Just in time, the tow truck shows up and its driver—an earnest, genial man—begins to hook up to the sports car. The toughs protest: The driver is interrupting their meal. So the driver takes the group leader aside and attempts a five-sentence introduction to metaphysics: 'Man,' he says, 'the world ain't s'posed to work like this. Maybe you don't know that, but this ain't the way its

s'pposed to be. I'm s'pposed to be able to do my job without askin' you if I can. And that dude is s'pposed to be able to wait with his car without you rippin' him off. Everything's s'pposed to be different that what it is here."^{clxxxii}

The tow truck driver was expressing a biblical hope and vision: cities of fear transformed into cities of peace -- human settlements as they are "s'pposed to be" in God's vision. It is hope in God for this biblical vision that compels us to accept the urban imperative, realizing that though it may seem slow in coming to pass, "it will surely come, it will not delay."^{clxxxiii}

And in the meantime, could words from the gospel songwriter's pen carry unexpectedly profound importance for those fearful of the city's level of sin and apparent lack of godliness? Might we want to sing these words again, this time while living, working and serving the city?

Where Jesus Is, 'Tis Heaven

Since Christ my soul from sin set free,
This world has been a heav'n to me;
And mid earth's sorrows and its woe
'Tis heavn'n my Jesus here to know.

Once heaven seemed a far-off place,
Till Jesus showed His smiling face.

Now it's begun within my soul;
'Twill last while endless ages roll.

What matters where on earth we dwell?

On mountaintop or in the dell,
In cottage or a mansion fair,
Where Jesus is, 'tis heaven there.

Refrain:

Oh, hallelujah, yes, 'tis heav'n.
'Tis heav'n to know my sins forgiv'n!
On land or sea, what matters where?
Where Jesus is, 'tis heaven there.

-- C.F. Butler, 19th Century

The words of *The Urban Imperative* have been written in prayer and with hope that they will serve in some measure to help the people of God called Nazarenes hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church of the 21st century.

*Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known,
and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of
your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name;
through Christ our Lord. Amen*

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

An Analysis of Urban Population and Nazarene Ministry

The Research Center at Nazarene Headquarters has determined a series of community types by population density. For example, the category "Major Urban Core" has a minimum of 15,000 people within one mile, a minimum of 100,000 people within three miles, and a minimum of 250,000 people within five miles. The following table lists the Research Centers community types and the one, three, and five-mile radiuses used to determine them. Map 1 visually represents these community types.

Table 1: Nazarene Community Types

Community Type	Minimum 1 Mile Pop. Radius	Minimum 3 Mile Pop. Radius	Minimum 5 Mile Pop. Radius
Major Urban Core	15,000	100,000	250,000
Large Cities	10,000	25,000	100,000
Fringe Major Urban	-	10,000	100,000
Small City or Suburban	5,000	25,000	50,000
Suburban	-	10,000	50,000
Small City Core	5,000	10,000	25,000
Fringe City	-	2,000	25,000
Small Town	2,500	2,000	5,000
Bordering Small Town	-	5,000	5,000
Near Small Town	-	-	5,000
Rural	-	-	-

Map 1: USA Community Types



Table 2 (following page) compares the USA population with a few Nazarene statistics using the community types listed earlier. While the category Major Urban Core represents 15% of the national population, only 9% of Nazarenes worship in churches located in those communities. Furthermore, there is only 1 church per 100,000 people in Major Urban Core areas. Compare this with having 6 churches per 100,000 people in Small Towns.

Not only are there fewer churches in urban areas, but there is also a smaller proportion of the population attending those churches. In Major Urban Core areas there are only 104 Nazarenes in average worship attendance per 100,000 people. This is the second lowest ratio. Rural areas have the lowest ratio at 96 worshippers per 100,000 people. The highest ratio is in Small Town areas where there are 551 worshippers per 100,000 people.

Below is a bar graph based on Table 2 that shows the percentage comparisons from of the USA Population with Nazarene statistics.

Graph 1: Comparison of USA Population and Nazarene Statistics

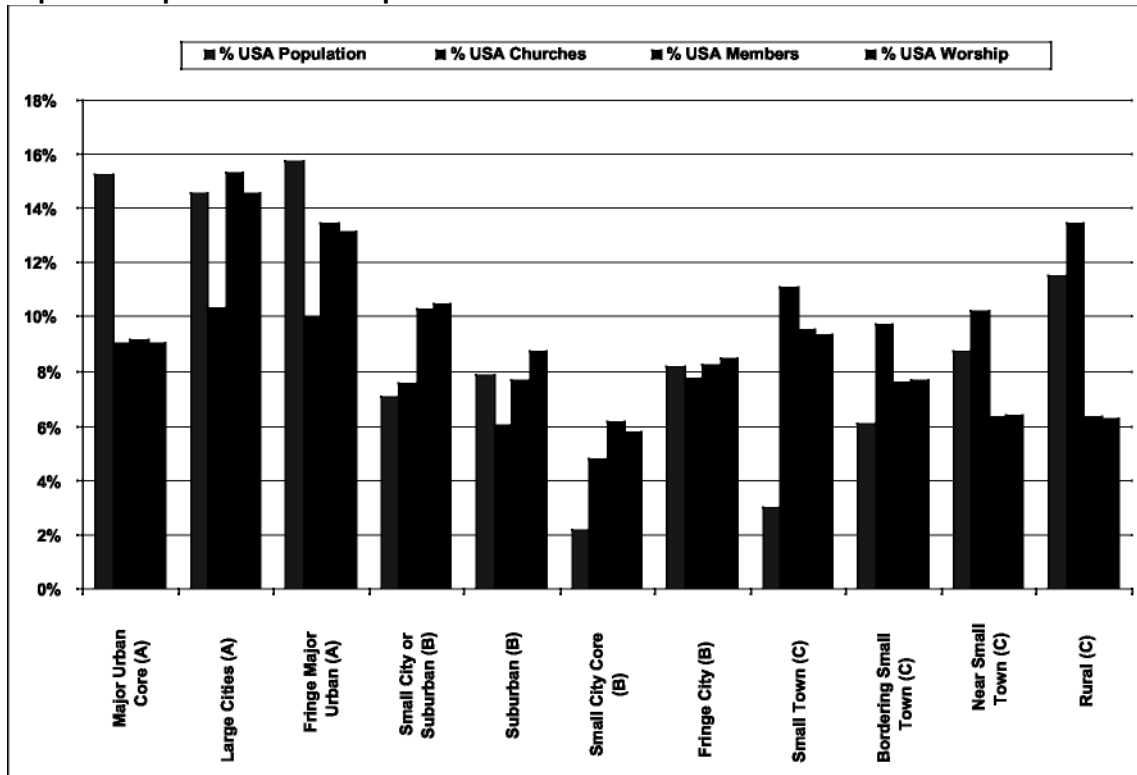


Table 2: Comparison of USA Population with Nazarene Statistics

Community Type	2005 Population	% of USA Pop.	Active Churches	% of USA Churches	2004 Membership	% of USA	2004 Average Worship	% of USA Worship	# of Churches per 100,000 in Population	# of Nazarenes in Worship per 100,000 in Population
Major Urban Core (A)	44,517,299	15%	448	9	56,449	9%	46,085	9	1	104
Large Cities (A)	42,506,802	15%	514	10	94,811	15	74,495	15	1	175
Fringe Major Urban (A)	45,950,102	16%	496	10	83,105	13	67,362	13	1	147
Small City or Suburban (B)	20,650,302	7%	375	8	63,443	10	53,677	10	2	260
Suburban (B)	22,846,127	8%	301	6	47,322	8	44,638	9	1	195
Small City Core (B)	6,292,908	2%	237	5	37,970	6	29,709	6	4	472
Fringe City (B)	23,743,914	8%	384	8	50,764	8	43,464	8	2	183
Small Town (C)	8,695,362	3%	552	11	59,000	10	47,916	9	6	551
Bordering Small Town (C)	17,807,331	6%	484	10	47,099	8	39,267	8	3	221
Near Small Town (C)	25,462,095	9%	508	10	39,163	6	32,860	6	2	129
Rural (C)	33,601,248	12%	670	13	39,416	6	32,220	6	2	96
Totals	292,073,490	100%	4,969	100	618,542	100	511,693	100	2	175
Summary of Urban, Suburban, and Small Town and Rural Areas										
(A) Grouping: At least 100,000 people in five mile radius	132,974,203	46%	1,458	29	234,365	38	187,942	37	1	141
(B) Grouping: Between 25,000 and 99,999 people in five mile radius	73,533,251	25%	1,297	26	199,499	32	171,488	34	2	233
(C) Grouping: Less than 25,000 people in five mile radius	85,566,036	29%	2,214	45	184,678	30	152,263	30	3	178

Note: Twenty-two Churches of the Nazarene have not been identified by community type; these have been omitted from the above study. Their combined membership and worship figures account for less than one percent of the national totals.

Table 3 below provides USA cultural group totals by community types. A majority of African Americans, Hispanics, Haitians, and Koreans live within urban areas. Native Americans are more likely to be in small towns and rural areas. A bar graph (Graph 2) of the cultural group percentages by community type follows the table.

Table 3: USA Cultural Groups by Community Types

Community Type	2000 Population	% of USA Pop.	African American	% of African American	Hispanic	% of Hispanic	Haitian	% of Haitian	Korean	% of Korean	Native Amer.	% of Native Amer.
Major Urban Core (A)	44,865,916	15%	9,191,161	27%	13,256,265	38%	329,339	62%	393,415	37%	138,901	7%
Large Cities (A)	42,900,091	15%	6,184,458	18%	7,554,396	21%	108,823	20%	216,190	20%	185,981	9%
Fringe Major Urban (A)	46,364,452	16%	5,974,929	18%	3,971,300	11%	44,039	8%	235,940	22%	175,283	8%
Small City or Suburban (B)	20,852,216	7%	2,295,415	7%	2,358,566	7%	18,951	4%	58,780	5%	115,159	6%
Suburban (B)	23,142,496	8%	1,979,388	6%	1,361,352	4%	10,142	2%	61,966	6%	84,140	4%
Small City Core (B)	6,338,870	2%	590,368	2%	758,733	2%	1,762	0%	10,829	1%	40,044	2%
Fringe City (B)	24,038,510	8%	1,705,047	5%	1,273,687	4%	5,453	1%	38,173	4%	113,082	5%
Small Town (C)	8,746,151	3%	691,164	2%	1,076,842	3%	4,789	1%	8,898	1%	82,980	4%
Bordering Small Town (C)	17,992,023	6%	1,232,398	4%	992,782	3%	2,925	1%	16,119	2%	142,876	7%
Near Small Town (C)	25,736,743	9%	1,539,054	5%	1,101,485	3%	2,796	1%	17,853	2%	223,947	11%
Rural (C)	33,838,723	11%	2,323,843	7%	1,533,050	4%	2,447	0%	14,140	1%	788,813	38%
Totals	294,816,191	100%	33,707,225	100%	35,238,458	100%	531,466	100%	1,072,303	100%	2,091,206	100%

Summary of USA Population and Cultural Groups

(A) Grouping: At least 100,000 people in five mile radius	134,130,459	45%	21,350,548	63%	24,781,961	70%	482,201	91%	845,545	79%	500,165	24%
(B) Grouping: Between 25,000 and 99,999 people in five mile radius	74,372,092	25%	6,570,218	19%	5,752,338	16%	36,308	7%	169,748	16%	352,425	17%
(C) Grouping: Less than 25,000 people in five mile radius	86,313,640	29%	5,786,459	17%	4,704,159	13%	12,957	2%	57,010	5%	1,238,616	59%

Graph 2: USA Cultural Groups by Community Type

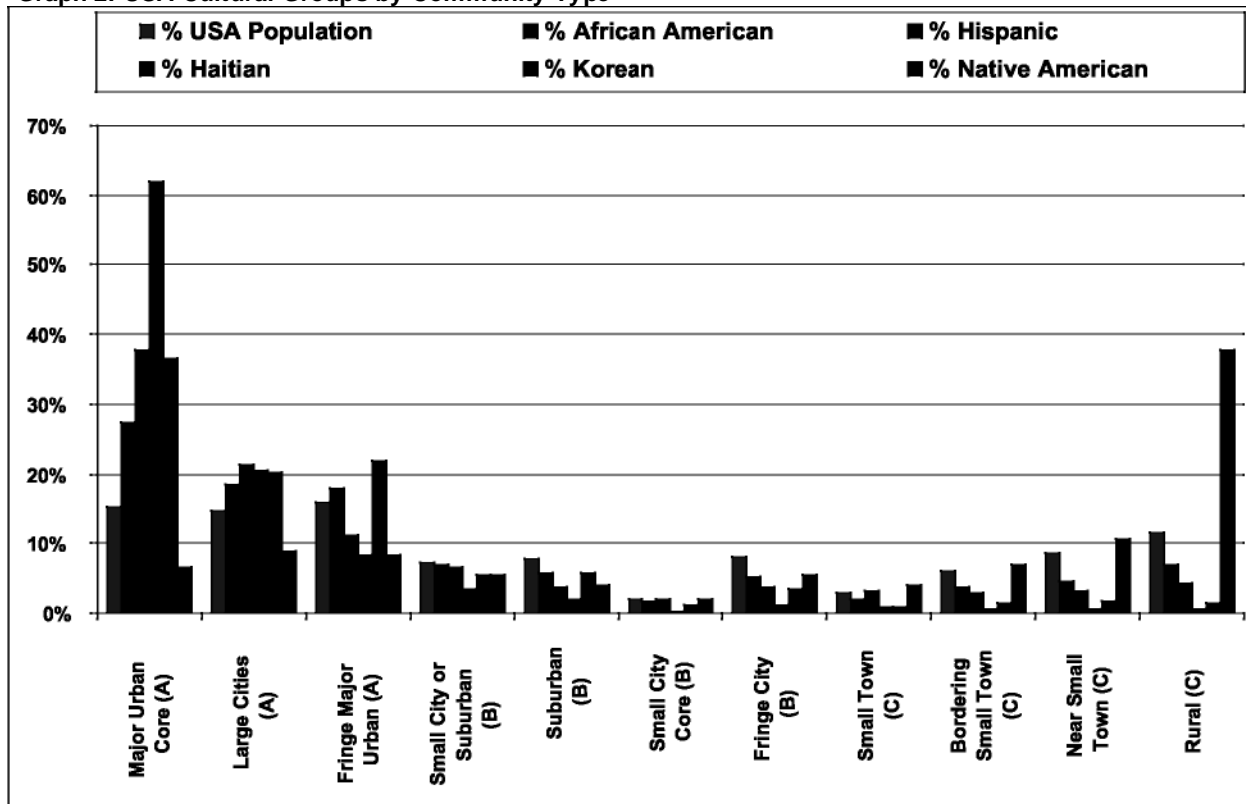


Table 4 below shows the number and percentage of Nazarene churches that are new (defined as having been organized for less than five years and NewStarts), as well as the number and percentage of Anglo churches. Nineteen percent of the churches in Major Urban Core areas are new. This is well above the overall percentage of new churches (11%). Also, 35% of the churches in the Major Urban Core areas are classified as being predominantly Anglo. This is well below the overall percentage of churches that are predominantly Anglo (83%).

Table 4: Nazarene Churches by Community Type

Community Type	2004 Churches	% of USA Churches	# of New Churches*	% of Churches That are New	# of Anglo** Churches	% of Churches That are Anglo
Major Urban Core (A)	448	9%	87	19%	157	35
Large Cities (A)	514	10%	89	17%	327	64
Fringe Major Urban (A)	496	10%	101	20%	374	75
Small City or Suburban (B)	375	8%	34	9%	317	85
Suburban (B)	301	6%	44	15%	270	90
Small City Core (B)	237	5%	20	8%	208	88
Fringe City (B)	384	8%	38	10%	361	94
Small Town (C)	552	11%	27	5%	521	94
Bordering Small Town (C)	484	10%	42	9%	461	95
Near Small Town (C)	508	10%	36	7%	484	95
Rural (C)	670	13%	27	4%	623	93
Totals	4,969	100%	545	11%	4,103	83%
Summary of Nazarene Churches by Urban, Suburban, and Small Town and Rural Community Types						
(A) Grouping: At least 100,000 people in five mile radius	1,458	29%	277	19%	858	59
(B) Grouping: Between 25,000 and 99,999 people in five mile radius	1,297	26%	136	10%	1,156	89
(C) Grouping: Less than 25,000 people in five mile radius	2,214	45%	132	6%	2,089	94

*New Churches: Churches organized less than five years or churches not yet organized (NewStarts). **Anglo Churches: Churches classified as having a majority of White, English-speaking people.

The following map shows churches color coded by their community type.

Map 2: Nazarene Church Locations by Community Type

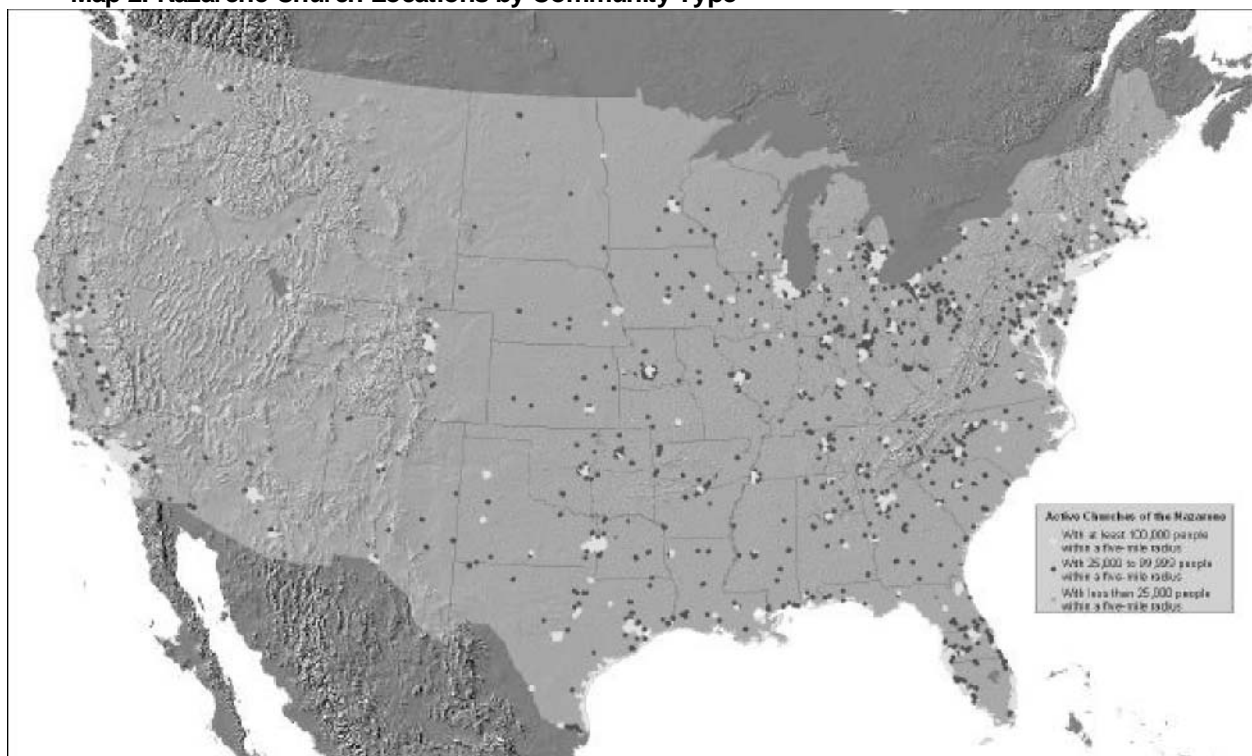


Table 5 is a listing of the 34 metropolitan areas that have a Major Urban Core of at least 100,000 people. They are listed in order of their Major Urban Core population.

Table 5: Metropolitan Areas With a Major Urban Core of at Least 100,000 People

Metropolitan Area (CBSA)	Total Population, 2000 Census	Urban Core Population, 2000	African American	Native America	Hispanic	Korean	Haitian	Active Churches	Full Members	Average Worship, 2004
New York-Northern New Jersey-Long Island, NY-NJ-PA	18,323,002	11,002,635	2,619,188	19,922	2,920,488	114,833	158,051	85	8,972	7,785
Los Angeles-Long Beach-Santa Ana, CA	12,365,627	9,133,973	785,295	25,470	4,504,648	173,533	1,839	103	11,550	8,940
Chicago-Naperville-Joliet, IL-IN-WI	9,098,316	3,304,266	1,094,377	4,979	845,777	15,238	3,976	17	1,014	1,012
Miami-Fort Lauderdale-Miami Beach, FL	5,007,564	2,251,247	517,274	2,486	1,052,208	1,386	125,162	24	5,948	4,827
San Francisco-Oakland-Fremont, CA	4,123,740	1,847,831	242,511	5,890	345,248	17,015	363	20	1,250	1,678
Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD	5,687,147	1,676,334	700,703	3,728	151,599	7,775	4,594	7	349	458
Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV	4,796,183	1,169,218	483,856	3,016	183,459	5,959	2,965	8	891	610
Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale, AZ	3,251,876	1,089,734	44,454	20,771	403,257	1,845	74	17	5,123	4,362
Boston-Cambridge-Quincy, MA-NH	4,391,344	1,073,482	165,054	2,575	126,567	6,272	27,349	16	1,965	1,509
San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara, CA	1,735,819	1,051,676	29,477	3,447	298,214	14,013	191	12	1,016	776
Houston-Sugar Land-Baytown, TX	4,715,407	999,185	172,222	1,951	451,603	2,313	310	4	863	756
San Diego-Carlsbad-San Marcos, CA	2,813,833	882,785	93,267	4,305	339,342	1,974	210	15	1,168	944
Las Vegas-Paradise, NV	1,375,765	734,805	65,765	4,327	214,936	3,315	413	3	399	490
Detroit-Warren-Livonia, MI	4,452,557	730,085	535,356	1,986	24,313	103	116	6	1,578	1,315
Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington, TX	5,161,544	676,316	99,127	2,504	241,122	3,113	79	9	1,811	968
Baltimore-Towson, MD	2,552,994	600,512	387,918	1,745	9,615	1,854	157	1	54	40
Denver-Aurora, CO	2,157,756	487,367	40,034	3,384	160,720	2,260	69	7	421	504
Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario, CA	3,254,821	415,249	40,928	1,470	244,744	885	68	13	2,757	2,312
Milwaukee-Waukesha-West Allis, WI	1,500,741	380,149	165,784	3,794	58,829	220	57	-	-	-
Cleveland-Elyria-Mentor, OH	2,148,143	309,410	176,230	570	18,782	259	48	3	149	138
New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner, LA	1,316,510	309,353	192,205	786	12,273	227	183	2	71	48
Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington, MN-WI	2,968,806	277,613	62,296	5,522	26,177	1,026	75	4	389	194
Sacramento--Arden-Arcade--Roseville, CA	1,796,857	277,427	42,050	2,391	65,518	500	9	6	1,264	1,058
San Antonio, TX	1,711,703	265,492	5,635	433	222,397	103	-	9	592	497
Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA	3,043,878	252,738	17,644	2,319	12,242	2,783	27	9	1,817	1,097
Providence-New Bedford-Fall River, RI-MA	1,582,997	222,393	24,756	1,729	62,657	570	1,966	5	409	287
Buffalo-Niagara Falls, NY	1,170,111	193,733	86,672	686	5,057	235	158	1	88	56
Pittsburgh, PA	2,431,087	187,748	47,301	343	3,020	896	59	1	33	25
Honolulu, HI	876,156	182,028	1,578	293	7,604	9,765	35	3	377	180
Austin-Round Rock, TX	1,249,763	174,521	14,829	463	68,878	825	104	1	297	103
Fresno, CA	799,407	172,028	9,812	1,468	84,219	170	39	4	345	373
Portland-Vancouver-Beaverton, OR-WA	1,927,881	154,327	6,083	1,069	7,226	432	82	5	881	759
St. Louis, MO-IL	2,721,491	150,841	58,497	241	3,572	174	135	2	205	124
Rochester, NY	1,037,831	123,236	46,995	753	21,910	132	88	1	74	-

APPENDIX B

Resources from Mission Strategy USA/Canada - 2004

District Urban Initiative

Mission

With a growing recognition that cities represent the epicenter of God's abiding grace, Mission Strategy USA/Canada has initiated urban strategy workshops with district superintendents and their leadership team in an effort *to formulate designs for an increased holiness presence in the city.*

What is the District Urban Initiative Process?

This process is designed for districts and churches to help them become more aware of their contexts, more attuned to headquarters' resources, the needs of people in the urban community, and more focused on the specific mission and ministry they are best suited to carry out as a district. The goal is to effectively encourage, organize, and help develop strategy to minister effectively in the urban area.

We recognize that the urban crisis calls for new paradigms to engage in ministry with the city. This crisis opens the door for grace and transformation, provided that we develop an overarching strategy. District leadership may nurture such strategy by coordinating its churches into new partnerships, by brokering and developing available resources, by developing the ethos of listening/action/reflection, and by creating a format where a dynamic process can take place.

The workshop begins at 4:00pm on Friday and concludes 12 noon on Saturday. Most headquarters participants are available to speak at congregations on Sunday morning.

District Urban Initiative – A Collaborative Resource

Ministry leaders from US/Canada Mission Evangelism department are available to present a menu of options for effective ministry. District

superintendents are encouraged to determine the ministry focus that is a match for the respective district. Ministry focus options are:

- Starting new churches
- Ethnic specific ministry
- Compassionate ministry
- Strategic evangelism
- Cross-cultural strategies
- Ethnic ministry leadership development
- Demographic research analysis
- Community development

Frequently Asked Questions

- Why is ministry in the City that important?
- What do we mean by “Urban” and “The City”?
- Is Urban Ministry just ministering to people who are poor, and reside in the ghetto?
- How does ministry in the City differ from ministry elsewhere?
- What does the Church of the Nazarene uniquely “bring to the table” in ministry in the City?
- What are the theological resources that help us to minister in the City?
- Where does one find additional resources to create or enhance ministry in the City?
- How does one fall in love with the City?
- What are some of the issues that one must face in the City?
- How do I get started in learning to care for and serve those in the City?

The District Urban Initiative is a resource of Mission Strategy USA/Canada.

For further information, or to schedule an event, call Susan Grube – 800-738-7167

URBAN MINISTRY RESOURCE CENTER

“There is nothing more powerful than an idea whose time has come.” – Victor Hugo

The VISION

THE RATIONALE

With the increasing stock of church buildings vacated by urban plight, Mission Strategy encourages district leaders to transition these edifices into *Urban Ministry Resource Centers*.

These buildings would be transformed into centers of comprehensive missional opportunities for the training of urban leaders and the implementation of strategies and programs for urban evangelism.

We understand an urban center as a geographical area characterized by a high population density and a multiplicity of interconnected social systems. Therefore, the UMRC mission includes, but is not limited to, inner-cities, slums, minority ethnic groups, and the poor and oppressed.

CORE VALUES

THE PURPOSE

The Urban Ministry Resource Center seeks to empower and train those who help those in need through:

- Connecting people to Christ,
- Connecting people to the community, and
- Connecting people to their calling.

THE STRUCTURE

A UMRC may choose to create its own 501(c) 3, with a board of directors and could be resourced by funding from a partnership of interested congregations, districts, foundations and state entities. This opportunity could be the catalyst for a NewStart congregation as well as the conduit for urban community organization and development.

In order to serve the urban centers most effectively, the UMRC is committed to developing and pursuing five levels of ministry:

1. Worship

The UMRC is a place of worship where people can be connected to a power of transformation beyond themselves. Believing that congregational life and social responsibility are interdependent, the congregation will exemplify that ministering and serving are the normal expression of Christian living.

2. Charity

The UMRC provides on-site assistance with basic life necessities. Initial services include soup kitchen, food pantry, clothing ministry, lunch, restrooms, transitional housing, telephone for outgoing local calls, showers, washer and dryer and a mail drop. Referrals to other agencies and direct assistance will be offered as appropriate.

3. Service (Family Life Center)

The FLC shall develop a continuum of holistic caring ministries that improves the quality of life for individuals and families. These shall include adult education, family life classes, counseling, healthcare, job training, employment referral, immigration services, and teen activity.

4. Justice

The UMRC is a faith-based entity which serves as a bedrock for renewal and redevelopment in the community based on these principles:

- The Judeo-Christian prophetic call for justice.
- The cooperative self-help economics of the urban culture.
- The liberation of human spirit, mind, and body from oppression.

From this commitment comes a sense of calling to engage in the systematic struggles of Christian community development which includes affordable housing, quality education, economic opportunity, and a safe and secure community.

5. Training

The UMRC is a training center that prepares individuals for urban ministry both clergy and laity:

- By guiding immigrant pastors called to ministry to complete the Church of the Nazarene's Course of Study for Ministers.
- By preparing individuals who are committed to ministering to urban areas for Christian leadership.
- By equipping individuals for urban and cross-cultural ministry with the appropriate skills necessary to effectively impact the urban environment.

- By assisting mid-career ministers already involved in the urban setting in developing new ministry skills while continuing their ministry.
- By assessing and deploying church planters for urban centers.

The MISSION

THE OBJECTIVE

1. To identify needs of the community and start ministries or programs to meet those needs.
2. To provide on-site assistance with basic life's necessities.
3. To partner with existing ministries or human-service agencies that are already accomplishing a shared mission in the community.
4. To encourage the movement toward self-sufficiency.
5. To involve volunteers from the community in "hands on" work with those in need.
6. To work with other organizations to sponsor and promote community events, such as forums, on the causes of poverty.
7. To serve as a field site for urban planners, churches, social service providers and others to examine the problems and proposals for making modern urban living viable.
8. To provide support for the poor and homeless through information and referral.
9. To provide education seminars and personal development workshops in the areas of human diversity, racism, reconciliation and relationship issues.
10. To provide congregations with practical information about their

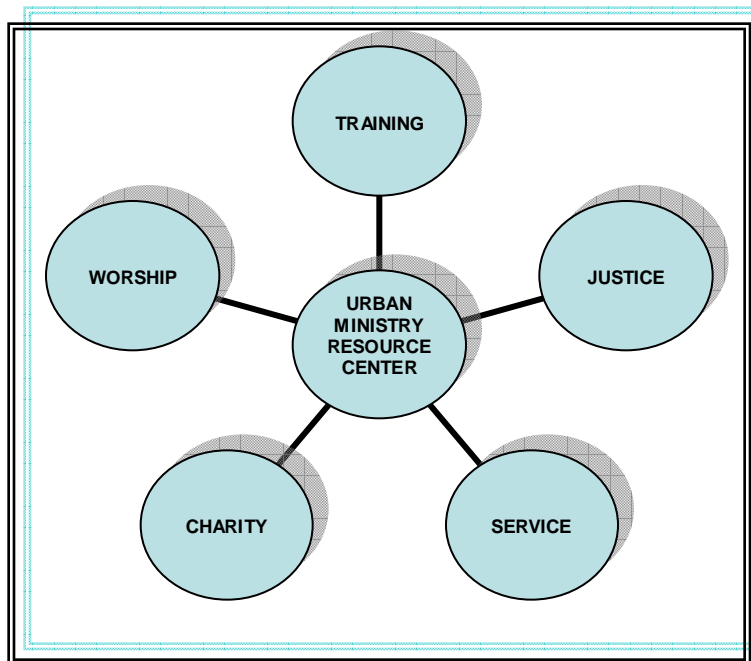
community, including demographic and sociological analysis.

HUMILITY

LESSONS FROM OTHERS

- *Clearly defined human needs together with a well-prepared action plan can attract significant funding from surprising sources.*
- *Creating funding sources beyond congregational giving is necessary for implementing long-term and lasting redevelopment.*
- *A congregation is more likely to give generously when it can see the results of giving in human needs being met and people being served in the local community.*
- *The faith of Christians and the strength of all the church probably are at their best when challenged by the pain, struggles, and sufferings of the wider community.*
- *The redevelopment of a congregation must take seriously the redevelopment of the community in which it is located if there is to be permanent change.*
- *Being an active participant in the physical and spiritual well-being of the surrounding community is a significant witness to the Incarnation of Christ.*

URBAN MINISTRY RESOURCE CENTER (Ministry Schematic)



**URBAN MINISTRY RESOURCE CENTER
(Biblical Model Comparison)**

	Charity	Service	Justice
Biblical Model	The good Samaritan helps a person who has been robbed and beaten, giving emergency treatment, rescue, short-term hospitality, and personal passion. (Luke 10:30-37)	Early Christian Church appoints six deacons to care for the widows, orphans, and the poor. Food and shelter provided with prayer and support community. (Acts 6:1-7)	Moses leads the entire Hebrew nation out of slavery in the Exodus. Appoints leaders to organize self-government under law. (Exodus 12:37, 13, 14, 18)
UMRC Model	The UMRC provides on-site assistance with basic life necessities. Initial services include soup kitchen, food pantry, clothing ministry, lunch, restrooms, transitional housing, telephone for outgoing local calls, showers, washer and dryer and a mail drop.	The FLC shall develop a continuum of holistic caring ministries that improves the quality of life for individuals and families. These shall include adult education, family life classes, counseling, healthcare, job training, employment referral, immigration services, and teen activity.	The UMRC is committed to a sense of calling to engage in the systematic struggles of Christian community development which includes affordable housing, quality education, economic opportunity, and a safe and secure community.
Responds to	The secondary effects of injustice, social crisis, people in pain and need – food, shelter, and clothing.	The secondary consequences of unjust conditions, social upheaval, groups in pain and emergency disaster situations.	Basic causes of injustice, the roots of injustice, socioeconomic and political sources of suffering, and group oppression.

MISSION RESOURCE COORDINATORS

The district superintendent will appoint a mission resource coordinator for the district whose primary responsibility will be to give direction to the agreed upon strategies for urban evangelism.

Job Description

1. The mission coordinator shall answer directly to the District Superintendent and the urban leadership team
2. The leadership team shall define the expectations for the coordinator in specific cases—whether that role is to act after consultation; act and inform; or simply request the opinion of the team
3. The coordinator shall serve as assistant to the D.S. in representing the ethnic ministries of the district
4. The coordinator shall report periodically to the District Advisory Board in the manner specified by the D.S.
5. the coordinator shall represent ethnic ministries to the various departments and committees of the District according to the discretion of the D.S.
6. The coordinator shall serve as the catalyst and visionary agent for the new ethnic congregations of the district.
7. The coordinator shall assist in the development of new congregations-guiding them toward the status of organized churches
8. The coordinator shall serve as the contact person and be available for advice and counsel to those who express interest in initiating a new ethnic ministry
9. The coordinator shall serve as a mediator when any of the ethnic congregations face internal or external conflicts.
10. The coordinator shall counsel pastors and churches regarding legal processes (such as incorporation) according to local, state, and federal law.
11. The coordinator shall provide opportunities for fellowship and interaction among pastors on specific occasions planned for that purpose.

12. The coordinator shall organize and assist in the celebration of camps and retreats for the ethnic churches.
13. The coordinator shall define, in consultation with the D.S., the zone division of the ethnic churches for the purpose of fellowship among the pastors and congregations, evangelism, and other growth-oriented activities.

CHURCH SPONSORSHIP – Reaching Urban areas vs. Starting Churches

The Book of Acts indicated that new churches were started almost spontaneously as Spirit-led men and women witnessed in various places and new believers came together for fellowship, to study the scriptures, for worship, prayer and mutual support. The best way to start new churches is for a local congregation to select a needy field and establish new work through assessed leadership. This method assures experienced leadership, denominational relationship, encouragement, and fellowship for the NewStart.

Sponsorship in the urban setting should be contextual. the sponsor church should provide an identity, lend its leaders in its initial years, teach and led in planning within the context of the people, guide the group of new believers—without smothering them—to develop their own leadership, grow in doctrinal stability, denominational loyalty, evangelistic efforts, missionary outreach, and other endeavors that would enhance the Kingdom.

The sponsoring church in an ethnic context will do well to:

1. Seek to establish a genuine friendship
2. Recognize the cultural uniqueness
3. Adapt to the cultural values of the other person
4. Remember that it is a task of reconciliation
5. Seek to understand similarities as well as dissimilarities in order to build cultural bridges
6. Establish true communication; if possible, use the language of the people
7. Seek to rewrap the gospel in terms of the new culture for evangelistic impact

In addition to these cultural principles, there should be:

- Prayer support
- A core group of leaders
- A workable financial plan over 2 to 3 years, and
- Ongoing encouragement to the leaders and church

Lyle E. Schaller, in his *Understanding Tomorrow*, states that “to a substantial extent the growing religious bodies of the next dozen years will be those religious bodies which:

- Affirm the legitimacy of the ethnic church
- Encourage a bilingual approach to preaching the Word
- Are able to affirm a pluralistic style of church life
- Are not locked in to exclusionary procedures in the recognition and acceptance of ethnic congregations
- Involve the laity in the ongoing life of the denominational family.

APPENDIX C

Selected Resources for Urban Ministry

Training and Consultations

Nazarene Urban Ministries

6401 The Paseo

Kansas City, MO 64131

800.738.7167

UrbanNazarene.org

Bresee Institute for Metro Ministries

614 W. 39th St., Suite 2

Kansas City, MO 64131

816.931.9585

bimm.org

Alliance of Church-Based Community Developers

1345 S. Burlington Ave., Ste 204

Los Angeles, CA 90006

213-737-9604

www.accdonline.org

Center for Urban Ministerial Education

Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary

363 S. Huntington Ave.

Boston, MA 02130

617.983.9393

Center for Urban Strategy Development

30 Bradhurst Ave., #4C

New York, NY 10030

212.862.9866

centerforurbanstrategydevelopment.org

Christian Community Development Association

3827 W. Ogden Ave.

Chicago, IL 60-623

312.762.0994

ccda.org

CityVoices.com

200 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 502

312.726.1200

<http://cityvoices.gospelcom.net/index.html>

HABBM (Hispanic Association of Bilingual Bicultural Ministries)

P.O. Box 92045

Pasadena, CA 91101

Email: HABBM@aol.com

International Urban Associates

Chicago, IL

312.275.9260 773.477.8163

Partners in Urban Transformation

Business & Sales Office

Mailbox 44, 25101 Bear Valley Rd.

Tehachapi, CA 934561

661.821.0656

Programming & Ministry Office

1236 Fairway Circle

Upland, CA 91784

partnersinurbantransformation.org

SCUPE (Seminary Consortium for Urban Pastoral Education)

20 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 502

Chicago, IL 60601

312.726.1200

scupe.com

San Francisco Urban Program (of Westmont College)

301 Lyon St.

San Francisco, CA

415.931.2460

<http://urban.westmont.edu>

Urban Leadership Institute (component of Urban Ministry Program at Claremont

School of Theology)

3300 Wilshire Blvd.

Los Angeles, CA 90010

213.380.0655

www.cst.edu/URBANWEB/ulihome.htm

Published Resources

World Vision Resources

800 W. Chestnut Ave.

Monrovia, CA 91016

800.777.7752

worldvisionresources.com

Sojourners

2401 15th St. NW

Washington, DC 20009

202.328.8842

sojo.net

U.S. Center for World Mission

1605 E. Elizabeth St.

Pasadena, CA 91104

626.797.1111

uscwm.org

Visit the on line resource area of www.UrbanNazarene.org for a comprehensive list of organizations, publications and equipping events currently available.

If you do not have access to the World Wide Web, call toll free 1.800.738.7167, and we will be glad to send you information by postal mail.

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U.S. Center for World Missions

1605 E. Elizabeth St., Pasadena, CA 91104

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ⁱ Phineas F. Bresee, *Nazarene Messenger*, October, 1901

ⁱⁱ Advent Sermon, Jerry Porter. Kansas City, MO: Nazarene Theological Seminary, 5 December 2003

ⁱⁱⁱ Galatians 5:22. Paul teaches the Church in the city of Corinth that demonstrating the gifts of the Spirit are of lesser, or even no value, if love is not present in Spirit-filled believers' lives (1 Corinthians 12-14).

^{iv} Micah 6.8

^v Isaiah 58:5b-8

^{vi} Micah 2:1-2, Amos 8:4-6, Micah 3:9-11

^{vii} Amos 5:21-24

^{viii} James 2.9

^{ix} James 3:13b, 17-18

^x Romans 12:1b, Luke 6:46

^{xi} Galatians 5:25

^{xii} Matthew 5:48

-
- ^{xiii} “He who has seen me has seen the Father.” John 14.9b
- ^{xiv} Christian Perfection is often misunderstood. Well meaning people repeat such popular phrases, as “Christians are perfect, just forgiven.” Part of the problem is again, one of terms -- the difference between today’s common use of perfection and what the Scriptures mean by the word. Other disagreements about Christian Perfection are in fact more substantive, based in biblical interpretation and theological systems. Many good resources for studying the concept are available from contemporary Wesleyan-Holiness writers. But beginning with John Wesley’s “A Plain Account of Christian Perfection” may be as good a place to start as any.
- ^{xv} Acts 2:1-4
- ^{xvi} Acts 2:15-19. It is informative for our ministry to notice that the verbal preaching of the Gospel followed the actions of the Gospel. Peter’s preaching was explanation of the Galileans manifestation of multi-lingual skills. Demonstration precedes declaration. This is the pattern we find on the first day of the Church. But every day in our ministry, we would do well to remember that the Church must truly *be* Good News, before it can *do* Good News, before it can *tell* Good News.
- ^{xvii} Revelation 22:1b-3
- ^{xviii} Revelation 6:9,10
- ^{xix} *Who Moved My Church?* :8
- ^{xx} Merriam-Webster OnLine Dictionary
- ^{xxi} Merriam-Webster OnLine Dictionary
- ^{xxii} Center for Congregational Research and Development
- ^{xxiii} International Urban Associates (get specific source info) See also *Wikipedia, The free Encyclopedia* for further discussion of the process of urbanization and a brief introduction to the effects it can have on economics, ecology and people’s psychology. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Urbanization>
- ^{xxiv} International Urban Associates: 17
- ^{xxv} “The Urbanization of the World,” Dennis Hodgson. Fairfield University.
<http://www.faculty.fairfield.edu/faculty/hodgson/Courses/so11/population/urbanization.htm>
- ^{xxvi}
- ^{xxvii} “Urbanization,” *Reader’s Companion to American History*. Houghton Mifflin College Division
http://college.hmco.com/history/readerscomp/rcah/html/rc_088600_urbanization.htm
- ^{xxviii} International Urban Associates: 17
- ^{xxix} Merriam-Webster On Line Dictionary
- ^{xxx} Kenneth E. Crow, “The Listening Post.” Paper presented to Association of Nazarene Sociologists and Researchers
- ^{xxxi} Bresee Institute for Metro Ministries web site, <http://www.bimm.org>
- ^{xxxii} Galatians 5:6
- ^{xxxiii} See the Church of the Nazarene “Cores Values” at www.nazarenecentennial.org
- ^{xxxiv} Timothy L. Smith, “A Wesleyan Theology of Salvation and Social Liberation.”
- ^{xxxv} See Smith’s *Revivalism and Social Reform and Called Unto Holiness, Volume 1*
- ^{xxxvi} Stan Ingersol, personal correspondence to David Best, February 13, 2004
- ^{xxxvii} Stan Ingersol, “Nazarenes and the Urban Ethos.”
- ^{xxxviii} John Wesley, *Works*, Volume V, “Preface to Sermons on Several Occasions,” p. 3
- ^{xxxix} Randy L. Maddox, *Responsible Grace: John Wesley’s Practical Theology*, p. 46. Scholars have noted that the quadrilateral was actually formed by Wesley ingeniously adding an evangelical and existential vitality of Experience to his Church’s triad of Scripture, Christian Antiquity and Reason, the long held Anglican approach to theology and doctrinal instruction. See Albert C. Outler’s “The Wesleyan Quadrilateral – In John Wesley.”
- ^{xl} In this chapter, I am utilizing the Quadrilateral as a means for considering the church’s *initiation* of urban ministry. For an example of the Quadrilateral as a methodology for developing the church’s *practice* of urban ministry, see Michael J. Christensen’s “Practical Divinity: Our Theological Task in Urban Ministry” at TowelandBasin.org
- ^{xli} “Why We Need a Theology of the City.” Ray Bakke, *International Urban Associates Newsletter*
- ^{xlii} See Robert Linthicum’s *City of God, City of Satan: A Biblical Theological for the Urban Church*
- ^{xliii} “God’s Vision for the City.” David Best, *Successfully Serving the City*, Session No. 4. Eldin Villafane Director of the Center for Urban Ministerial Education connected with Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in Boston, MA summarizes the urban theology implicit in Jeremiah 29 with three key words: Presence (29:5-6), Peace (29:7a) and Prayer (29:7b)
- ^{xliv} Paul R. Orjala, “The Urban Missionary”
- ^{xlv} Paul R. Orjala, “The Urban Missionary”

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- xlvi US Census Bureau
- xlvii Kenneth Labich, *Fortune* September 6, 1993
- xlviii See Donald Dayton's *Discovering an Evangelical Heritage* for examples of how the gospel transformed people and society of 19th century United States.
- xlvi Phineas F. Bresee, *Nazarene Messenger*, December 31, 1901
- ¹ William Spohn, *Theology Today*, Winter 2000. Cited by Martin E. Marty in *Context*, May 1, 2001, p. 4
- li William Spohn, *Theology Today*, Winter 2000 cited by Martin E. Marty in *Context*, May 1, 2001, pp.4-5
- lii "Pandemonium in the Plaza." Guillow, *Southern California Quarterly*: 188, 1995
- liii See Harvie Conn's *The American City and the Evangelical Church: A Historical Overview*
- liv U.S. Census Bureau. Go to urbannazarene.org for detailed information on how the U.S. Census Bureau defines its classification of urban territory into "urban areas" and "urban clusters".
- lv Paul Benefiel's uses this phrase in "The Doctrine of Holiness as a Holistic Philosophy of Ministry," a 1986 presentation to ANSR. If the American Church cannot recapture the Scriptural meaning of "evangelism" in its full sense without use of an additional modifying word, then a good argument could be made for "holistic" as that modifier. *Holistic* emphasizes the functional or organic relationship between parts and the way various wholes interact. In this sense, it captures something of shalom's meaning as *complete*, with various elements in *harmony*. Contemporary society is acquainted with *holistic* and it is a commonly accepted concept in social sciences, psychology and medicine
- lvi Emptage
- lvii Timothy Smith, *Called Unto Holiness*, p. 28
- lviii Stan Ingersol, "Nazarenes and the Urban Ethos"
- lix Stan Ingersol, "Nazarenes and the Urban Ethos"
- lx Stan Ingersol, "Nazarenes and the Urban Ethos"
- lxi See Ingersol, "Nazarenes and the Urban Ethos" See his paper for some suggestions what precipitated the rapid decline in these types of ministries.
- lxii Ingersol
- lxiii Ingersol
- lxiv Timothy Smith, *Called Unto Holiness*
- lxv Ingersol, "Nazarenes and the Urban Ethos"
- lxvi Ingersol
- lxvii Emptage, "Denominational Identity in Historical Perspective"
- lxviii Kenneth E. Crow, "The Corps of Pastors of the Church of the Nazarene."
- lxix Church of the Nazarene Research Center, June 2003. In 1986, I reported 14% of U.S. Nazarene churches in urban centers, comprising about 20% of the membership across the country. There has been a narrowing of the gap in 18 years, but still the church is underrepresented with the majority of the population.
- lxx See "Analysis of Urban Population and Nazarene Ministry," Appendix
- lxxi Kenneth E. Crow, "Clergy Preparation from the Perspective of Recent Additions." Paper presented to Association of Nazarene Sociologists and Researchers
- lxxii Tom Nees, *The Changing Face of the Church*, p. 27. See Stan Ingersol's article, "Nazarenes and the Urban Ethos: An Exploratory Essay" for helpful insights from a historian on the denomination's engagement of the city.
- lxxiii *Who moved My Church?:* 9
- lxxiv Tom Nees. "The Church Has Already Lost the City." *To the City with Love*, pp. 15-16
- lxxv *Building an Inclusive Church in a Multicultural Society*, 1999
- lxxvi Advent Sermon. Jerry Porter. Kansas City, MO: Nazarene Theological Seminary, 3 December 2003
- lxxvii Ron Benefiel. "Excerpts from 'Christian Holiness and Ministry to the Poor: Toward a Wesleyan Missiology.'" Unpublished paper. n.d.
- lxxviii Stan Ingersol, "Timothy Smith and the Recovery of the Nazarene Vision." *Holiness Today*, March 1999
- lxxix Raymond W. Hurn. "Miami Challenge by the 1972 General Assembly and the Response of the Department of Home Missions." *To the City with Love*, p. 17
- lxxx Paul Benefiel, "The Doctrine of Holiness as a Holistic Philosophy of Ministry"
- lxxxi *Works*, Volume 8, p. 299
- lxxxii Jesse Middendorf, "Compassionate Holiness," *Holiness Today*, December 2003
- lxxxiii Ron Benefiel, *Urban Imperative* video script
- lxxxiv U. S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey
- lxxxv Timothy L. Smith, *Nazarenes and the Wesleyan Mission: Can We Learn from Our History?* p. 2

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- ^{lxxxvi} “Urbanization” (final paragraph) Readers Companion to American History, http://college.hmco.com/history/readerscomp/rcah/html/rc_088600_urbanization.htm
- ^{lxxxvii} Paul G. Cunningham, “There’s Room at God’s Table for Everyone.” Sermon, September 1994
- ^{lxxxviii} Ray Bakke, “Why Do We Need City Pastors?” *CityVoices*, March 1999, p. 2
- ^{lxxxix} “Facts about urbanization in the U.S.A.” World Resources Institute. <http://www.wri.org/enved/suscom-facts.htm>
- ^{xc} Timothy L. Smith. “Internationalization and Ethnicity: Nazarene Problems and Accomplishments”
- ^{xcⁱ} See Stephen Warner on diversity and mobility as summarized by Kenneth Crow in “The Role of Denominational Paradigms in Identity Development” Galatians 3:26-29, Ephesians 2:14-16
- ^{xcⁱⁱ} “World Urbanization Prospects, The 2003 Revision.” United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division
- ^{xcⁱⁱⁱ} Ray Bakke, “Apostle to the City.” *Christianity Today*, March 3, 1997
- ^{xc^{iv}} Estep, 1995
- ^{xc^v} Tom Nees personal correspondence and “Recommendation Adopted by the General Board,” February 1996
- ^{xc^{vi}} Paul Benefiel, “Nazarenes in the City: The Strategy for Los Angeles.” Paper presented to Association of Nazarene Sociologists and Researchers
- ^{xc^{vii}} Dale Jones. “Nazarene Myth – Conceptions.” Paper presented to Association of Nazarene Sociologists and Researchers, 1997.
- ^{xc^{viii}} John 4:35, Matthew 9:27. The General Superintendents of the Church of the Nazarene have declared a goal of 6,000 churches in the USA and Canada in time for the denomination’s centennial year, 2008. To reach this goal, over 500 new churches still must be planted at the time of publication. Most of these new church starts will need to be in urban areas if we are to close the gap between where people live and our congregations minister.
- ^{xc^{ix}} Kenneth E. Crow, “The Nazarene Listening Post.” Paper presented to Association of Nazarene Sociologists and Researchers.
- ^c Ron Benefiel, “Bresee Institute for Urban Training.” Paper presented to Association of Nazarene Sociologists and Researchers, 1986.
- ^{ci} “The Urban Imperative” video
- ^{cii} David M. Best, Sermon, “He Had to Pass Through Samaria.”
- ^{ciii} Timothy L. Smith, “A Wesleyan Theology of Salvation and Social Liberation.”
- ^{civ} William M. Greathouse, *Herald of Holiness*, December 1, 1982
- ^{cv} R. Franklin Cook, “5 Great Missions Issues.” *World Mission*, n.d.
- ^{cvi} “Urban Mission Recommendation,” Kansas City, Mo.: Multicultural Ministries office, Church Growth Division, February 1997.
- ^{cviⁱ} For definitions of these terms and results of research, see Ron Benefiel and Ken Crow, “Fundamentalism in the Church of the Nazarene: A Longitudinal Analysis of Social and Political Values,” paper presented to Association of Nazarene Sociologists and Researchers, March 2004; and Linda Beail and Greg Crow, “Wesleyan or Fundamentalist? Political and Theological Stances of Nazarene Pastors,” paper presented to Association of Nazarene Sociologists and Researchers, March 2004.
- ^{cviⁱⁱ} See <http://www.nazarenecentennial.org>; INTERNET.
- ^{cix} *Articles of Faith and General Rules of the Church of the Nazarene*, October 30, 1895.
- ^{cx} For additional information see David Best, *Successfully Serving the City*.
- ^{cxⁱ} Oliver Phillips rightly observes the power in a church able to “harness the energies of a combination of these three groups” in *Who Moved My Church: Responding to the Changing Ethnic Landscape*, 28.
- ^{cxⁱⁱ} Ray Bakke, “Apostle to the City,” *Christianity Today*, 38.
- ^{cxⁱⁱⁱ} Martin Luther King, Jr. “The Drum Major Instinct,” February 4, 1968.
- ^{cx^{iv}} Martin Luther King, Jr. “I See the Promised Land,” April 3, 1968.
- ^{cx^v} The Board of General Superintendents, “A Living Faith: What Nazarenes Believe - Core Values” Conclusion section
- ^{cx^{vi}} Gustavo Crocker, interview by author, Kansas City, Mo., 27 October 1995.
- ^{cx^{vii}} For more information, see www.UrbanNazarene.org; INTERNET.
- ^{cx^{viii}} Bob Linthicum, interview by author, Monrovia, Calif., 15 November 1995 .
- ^{cx^{ix}} For more information, see David Best, “Professing Christ and Planting Churches: A Call to the City;” Robert McAfee Brown, *Spirituality and Liberation: Overcoming the Great Fallacy*; Stephen Charles Mott, *Biblical Ethics and Social Change*; Timothy Smith, “A Wesleyan Theology of Salvation and Social Liberation;” Bryan Stone, *Compassionate Ministry: Theological Foundations*.

^{cxx} The Western church has often undertaken its biblical and theological studies through a philosophical lens of dualism. Dualism is found in philosophical systems of various names but inevitably sees the world in two categories: spirit and matter. Regardless the version, dualism must be rejected as unscriptural (and some scientists would now argue also unscientific).

The exact relationship of personal spirituality, Christian community, and social action may ultimately be unfathomable. However, to reduce the inexplicable to a dualism inevitably leads to counterfeit gospel ministry.

^{cxxi} H. Richard Niebuhr, *The Responsible Self: An Essay in Christian Moral Philosophy* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), 177

^{cxxii} John Wesley, vol. 8 of *The Works of John Wesley*, 3rd ed. (Kansas City, Mo.: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1979), 47.

^{cxxiii} Timothy Smith, *Nazarenes and the Wesleyan Mission: Can We Learn from Our History?* (Kansas City, Mo.: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1979), 14.

^{cxxiv} John Wesley, vol. 8 of *The Works of John Wesley*, 3rd ed. (Kansas City, Mo.: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1979), 299.

^{cxxv} Kenneth E. Crow, "The Role of Denominational Paradigms in Identity Development," paper presented to Association of Nazarene Sociologists and Researchers, 1996, available from http://www.nazarene.org/ansr/articles/crow_96a.pdf; INTERNET.

^{cxxvi} Kenneth E. Crow, "The Role of Denominational Paradigms."

^{cxxvii} Kenneth E. Crow, "The Role of Denominational Paradigms."

^{cxxviii} Kenneth E. Crow, "The Role of Denominational Paradigms."

^{cxxix} Fletcher Tink, "Communicating Christ Cross-culturally," in *Modular Course of Study*, ed. Michael W. Vail (Kansas City, Mo.: Clergy Services of the Church of the Nazarene, 2002), 7.

^{cxix} "The Urban Missionary," Paul R. Orjala, unpublished paper, 1996

^{cxixi} "Urban Mission Recommendation." Multicultural Ministries office, Church Growth Division, February, 1997

^{cxixii} Matthew 16.3b

^{cxixiii} Vernon E. Thomas, "Missions and Evangelism in Our Great Cities," *Herald of Holiness*, June 14, 1948

^{cxixiv} R. Franklin Cook. "5 Great Missions Issues"

^{cxixv} Nazarene Theological Seminary offers courses in urban ministry, but no concentration, or field experience requirements. The undergraduate colleges offer courses in sociology, and some field practicums but often the courses are not interdisciplinary (religion and sociology departments, for example) and little practicums or residential semester urban experiences are available through Nazarene institutions. A quick review of the "Modular Course of Study" produced by the Church of the Nazarene Clergy Services for "

^{cxixvi} Modular Course of Study, "Exploring Nazarene History and Polity, Lesson 5, Defining Issues of the 20th and 21st Centuries" p. 5-5

^{cxixvii} Fletcher Tink, "Communicating Christ Cross-Culturally," p. 8-8

^{cxixviii} "Nazarene Ministerial Education." Kenneth E. Crow, unpublished paper presented to ANSR

^{cxixix} For a discussion of how contemporary expressions of Wesleyanism has been influenced by Fundamentalism, see Robert W. Smith's "Wesleyan Identity and the Impact of the Radical Right"

^{cx} For more information on training in cross cultural skills, and models for congregations, see Oliver Phillips' *Who Moved My Church: Responding to the Changing Ethnic Landscape*, Jerry Appleby's *The Church is a Stew: Developing Multicultural Congregational Churches* and "Urban Cross cultural Planting Models"

^{cxli} Nazarene educators, missiologists, pastors and executive leaders have recognized for decades this need for more focus on intentional, effective preparation of ministers for work in an urban and culturally diverse America. There have been pockets and seasons of success, but no sustained initiatives or structures have been incorporated into the Church's official educational systems. See Kenneth Crow (particularly his "Nazarene Ministerial Preparation") and Ron Benefiel's papers to ANSR, General Assembly commissions, and articles in various official magazines some of which are referenced in this book. Additional documents can be found in a timeline of Nazarene urban missions being developed at www.urbannazarene.org.

^{cxlii} I have advocated for changes in pastors' reporting for nearly 20 years. Recently I learned that the esteemed Timothy Smith made the same suggestion in a 1979 publication. (See Timothy L. Smith's *Nazarenes and the Wesleyan Mission: Can We Learn from Our History*, p. 17). Based on the form I completed for my elder's report at for last assembly year, neither Dr. Smith nor I have been persuasive.

^{cxliiii} Interview with Jesse Miranda

^{cxliiv} Interview with Jesse Miranda

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- ^{cxlv} See Appendix C for ten characteristics expected in missionaries with Anglican Frontier Missions.
- ^{cxlvi} Proclaiming Christ and planting churches in the soil of our cities concrete canyons will require knowledge of evangelism and outreach often considered to be of concern only for those going to so-called pagan or primarily non-Christian people groups. Leaders must recognize that in urban settings evangelism will need to be structured for all levels identified as E0 - evangelism among church-goers; E1- evangelism within same culture; E2 - evangelism to different culture; E3 - evangelism to very different cultures
- ^{cxlvii} David Best, *Successfully Serving the City*, Session 2
- ^{cxlviii} Recent study of new pastors conducted by Kenneth Crow for ANSR (“Clergy Preparation from the Perspective of Recent Additions”) show over half expressed weak ministerial preparation and competency in “analyzing the situation and needs of communities.” Strangely, in that same study, almost two out of three pastors felt their preparation made them sensitive to the social implications of the gospel. This combination could lead to frustration in fulfilling their pastoral roles, or generate well-intended, but ill-advised, ineffective and even harmfully paternalistic expressions of social ministry.
- ^{cxlix} Committee report: Meeting of Urban Mission Practitioners-Los Angeles, July 1996. Part of the Urban Mission recommendation prepared by the Multicultural Ministries office, Church Growth Division for consideration by the Board of General Superintendents and the General Board of the Church of the Nazarene.
- ^{cl} Interview with Ron Benefiel
- ^{cli} Kenneth E. Crow, “Essential Characteristics for Nazarene Pastors” Paper presented to Association of Nazarene Sociologists and Researchers
- ^{clii} Robert W. Smith, “Wesleyan Identity and the Impact of the Radical Right”
- ^{cliii} Robert W. Smith, “Wesleyan Identity and the Impact of the Radical Right”
- ^{cliv} Tom Nees, “A Call to Mission.” *To the City with Love*, p. 89
- ^{clv} Tom Nees, *Global Face of the Church*, p. 84
- ^{clvi} Beulah Church of the Nazarene, from <http://www.beulahnaz.org>; INTERNET
- ^{clvii} Wenton Fyne, Interview by author, Brooklyn, NY, 21 February 2006. All the following quotes of W. Fyne are same source.
- ^{clviii} Grace Urban Ministries, Inc., from <http://www.gum.org>; INTERNET
- ^{clix} Grace Urban Ministries, Inc., brochure
- ^{clx} Craig Wong, interview by author, 24 February 2006.(and following quotes of CWong are same source)
- ^{clxi} Home of the Nazarene, Inc., brochure
- ^{clxii} Obed Santiesteban, interview by author, Hialeah, FL. 6 February 2006.
- ^{clxiii} Mel Santiesteban, interview by author, Hialeah, FL 6 February 2006.
- ^{clxiv} Nora Santiesteban, interview by author, Hialeah, FL 6 February 2006.
- ^{clxv} Neighborhood Christian Centers, Inc., available from <http://ncclife.org>; INTERNET
- ^{clxvi} JoeAnn Ballard, interview by author, Memphis, TN, 17 January 2006 (following quotes of JBallard from same source)
- ^{clxvii} New City Fellowship brochure
- ^{clxviii} New City Fellowship Core Values, available from <http://www.newcity.org/corevalues/>; INTERNET
- ^{clxix} Barry Henning, interview by author, St. Louis, MO, 14 February 2006 (following quotes of BHenning from same source)
- ^{clxx} Barb Kurtz, interview by author, St. Louis, MO 14 February 2006. (following quotes of BKurtz from same source)
- ^{clxxi} Trinity Lutheran Church social ministries, available from <http://www.surf-gate.com/historictrinitylutheran/social.phtml>; INTERNET
- ^{clxxii} Trinity Lutheran Church downtown ministry, available from <http://www.surf-gate.com/historictrinitylutheran/Archive%20Vol3.pdf>; and <http://www.surf-gate.com/historictrinitylutheran/Downtown%20Sattelite%20Ministry.htm>; INTERNET
- ^{clxxiii} Trinity Lutheran Church vision, available from <http://www.surf-gate.com/historictrinitylutheran/historic.htm>; INTERNET
- ^{clxxiv} Ron Benefiel “Excerpts from ‘Christian Holiness and Ministry to the Poor: Toward a Wesleyan Missiology.’” Unpublished paper. n.d.
- ^{clxxv} Stan Ingersol. “This is Our Story: Nazarenes Reflect on Their Past: They Shared a Dream.”
- ^{clxxvi} 2 Timothy 3:5 (KJV)
- ^{clxxvii} From script of *Urban Imperative* video. Kansas City, MO: Mission Strategy USA/Canada, 2004
- ^{clxxviii} *Prism*

^{clxxix} Robert Linthicum, Interview, 1995

^{clxxx} *Context*, Martin E. Marty, editor. July 1, 2002, p. 5

^{clxxxi} Michael E. Engh, *Frontier Faiths: Church, Temple and Synagogue in Los Angeles 1846-1888*, p. 16

^{clxxxii} Cornelius Plantinga, Jr., "Not The Way It's S'posed to Be: A Breviary of Sin"

^{clxxxiii} Habakkuk 2:3b