



good cities

Leadership development that advances the gospel of the Kingdom and works toward the common good of the city.

GoodCities Newsletter

2016

What is a Good City?

A good city is a place where people find meaningful employment, create families, live in neighborhoods, engage in the arts, education, government, and live out their faith. In a good city, unjust systems are confronted and com-

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Helping Florence Flourish II

Eric Marechal and Rev. Chris Handley lead a city movement in South Carolina.

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Why Cities Matter

Cities are the focus of GoodCities for good reason. God's mission is about people and 80.7% of the U.S. population lives in cities. This article lists the top ten reasons Christians should focus their missional work in cities.

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Leadership Network & GoodCities Partner in New Offering:

City Impact Accelerator

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Dallas City Convene

Big plans in the Metroplex.

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Springfield City Manager Meets with 120 Pastors

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Twin Cities Convene

On November 15, sixty-five leaders gathered for Twin Cities Convene at the Twin Cities Room of Bethel University's Anderson Center. Registered participants came in equal numbers from business, church, and nonprofit community groups with a slightly smaller number of educators from colleges, universities and Bethel Theological Seminary. They came to discuss and act on two critically important issues facing the Twin Cities:

- The Job Vacancy Crisis and
- High Unemployment in minority communities.

In Minnesota, the current state-wide
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Above: Cover of Twin Cities Convene Participants Notebook

GoodCities Celebrates 10 Years!

GoodCities provides leadership development that advances the gospel of the Kingdom and works toward the common good of the city. For 10 years we've helped leaders in every city of our nation and in cities throughout the world engage God's people to seek the peace and prosperity of their cities.



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WHAT IS A GOOD CITY?
(CONTINUED)

passionate help is offered to those in need. It is a place where God's redemptive plans are experienced by its citizens and sojourners.

A good city offers the experience of God's common grace, the opportunity to experience God's salvation, and a future filled with hope.

"If you want to hang out with people who are on the front lines of the city movements in the US, the Good Cities meeting is the place to be."

Jim Herrington, President of FaithWalking

"City Convene creates space to hear from God and one another. It's a place to learn emerging 'best practices' from the leaders of the growing numbers of Gospel movements in cities across the US."

*Kevin Palau
President of the Luis Palau
Association*



For videos and stories about city transformation **Visit the GoodCities blog** at <http://connect.goodcities.net>

GoodCities (Continued from p.1)

GoodCities has been coaching Christian leadership teams in fifteen cities and offering leadership development through our conferences for another 160 cities. GoodCities is celebrating our tenth anniversary on April 2, 2017. The demand for our services is high and escalating.

Our growth requires a step function in which we expand our team to grow the number of conferences from five each year to ten. Ten is not our final goal, but it is an expansion of our effort to serve this burgeoning movement that is now in its early majority phase.

Our aim is social and spiritual transformation through the gospel of the kingdom.

Leaders are the key to city transformation and today. My friends and I who work with many city leadership teams recently discovered that we are aware of 434 gospel city movements in the U.S.



These leaders are unlikely to come to a destination city for a national conference, but will respond to a quality conference within drivable distance that energizes their vision and engages them in practical

approaches.

Well-equipped leaders will carry the majority of the leadership burden from here on out. It is vital that they be equipped with vision, resources, and tools to lift this movement to it's full potential.

The results of our work in Modesto, Akron, Atlanta, Little Rock, Minneapolis, Lansing, Cincinnati, San Antonio, San Diego, Florence, Long

Beach, Knoxville, St. Paul or elsewhere could not have been predicted in advance. The processes our leaders set in place have leveraged social capital and have produced contextualized outcomes in education, foster care, jobs, reduction in alcohol and chemical abuse, strengthened families, reduction of sex trafficking, increased prayer, evangelism and discipleship.



Our funders have been exposed to our work, our thinking, our writing and are investing in GoodCities because they believe in us. Expanding our circle of donors is vital for the future of this movement and we can point to results that are bearing fruit in season and out through evidence-based processes we helped to birth in the cities with which we have worked. Long after we have exited the scene, these processes are still at work creating good cities. In this newsletter, you will be able to read about the fruit of GoodCities' work with cities across our nation.

Grace and Peace,

President of GoodCities



GoodCities is a dba for our 501(c)3 CitiReach International.



City Impact Accelerator

Building a Better Community

Leadership Network and GoodCities are partnering in a new offering for 2017: City Impact Accelerator. In two cities twelve locally-selected teams from multiple domains (e.g. churches, government, businesses, nonprofits, education groups, etc.) will experience a proven collaboration process that speeds problem-to-solution innovation and implementation. This will result in positive impacts on societal issues such as literacy, job creation, healthcare, and other issues of interest to the cohort.

These cohorts will be led by Glenn Barth and Reggie McNeal. GoodCities is excited about this partnership that brings together the strengths of Leadership Network's (LN) anchor churches with the community and marketplace leadership from cities where GoodCities has been working for years. LN and GoodCities both facilitate using an appreciative inquiry process that brings deeply-owned results.

Ten Reasons Cities Matter

10. It's where the people are. 80.7% of Americans and 54% of the global population live in cities.
9. Cities are home to diverse ethnicities including many who have come from difficult circumstances and may not know God's grace. (Revelation 22:2)
8. Cities are home to places of worship. Many churches and Christian nonprofits can experience John 17:21.
7. Cities are places of commerce where people find meaningful vocations. (Jeremiah 29:7)
6. Cities provide education that acculturates young people and newcomers.
5. Cities are seats of justice. (Isa 58:6;



Amos 5:15)

4. Cities create culture.
3. Heaven is a city. A city is meant to reflect heaven. (Revelation 21 & 22)
2. Cities are places of transition and transformation.
1. Cities are a focal point of service and witness.

Helping Florence Flourish City Convene

Leaders from church, government, nonprofit, and business groups gathered October 19 & 20 in Florence, SC for City Convene. They heard from experts in the fields of Racial Reconciliation, Christian Unity, Homelessness, Job Creation, and Educational Achievement. During the two-day conference they made plans for the engagement of volunteers and new resources for service and witness in their city and county.

Drew Griffen, City Manager for Florence, brought a team of leaders from the city. These included City Council members, the Chief of Police, and the Chief of the Fire Department. Afterward he commented: "It is my belief that our community is coming together and we are on the edge of making great strides. As an organization we are ready to support the effort that results from this important conference."

Pastor Chris Handley, leader of Helping Florence Flourish, said, "City convene invigorated the leaders of our community as we seek to become a greater and greater blessing."

Bishop Richard Howell addresses Twin Cities Convene regarding the implications of our unity in Christ.



Twin Cities Convene

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unemployment rate continues to hover at approximately 3.6% while 30% of African Americans are unemployed. At the same time, job vacancies in Minnesota are rising (97,000 as of June 30, 2016).

From a Christian perspective, there is no more transformational issue in a city than helping people find good jobs and helping employers find good workers. In the Bible, Jeremiah 29:7 says, "...seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper."

Cities and the people who live in cities are important to God. When our brothers and sisters are suffering due to lack of work, lack of training, and/or lack of connections to find good work, why would we stand by? Our witness in our own local context depends on compassionate and thoughtful actions that reflect the values of the kingdom of heaven for employers and potential employees. God cares about the economy of the Twin Cities because He cares about the people who live here.

GoodCities engaged leaders at Twin Cities Convene using the tools of Appreciative Inquiry to meet, hear short presentations related to our situation, discuss and plan for ways that this job vacancy problem can become an opportunity to employ all Minnesotans.



Russell Gosselin (Elevate), Greg Burris (City Manager, Springfield, MO), Glenn Barth, and Ron Showers (Convoy of Hope) at "Together We Can" on November 2, 2016.

Together We Can Springfield, MO

On November 2, Convoy of Hope convened 120 pastors for Together We Can, a half-day interactive conference designed by GoodCities. In a single morning with the guidance of Russell Gosselin of Elevate, Greg Burris (City Manager of Springfield), Ron Showers of Convoy of Hope, and Glenn Barth, plans were made to take action in serving among the poor in Springfield.

- **Partnerships** with churches in poor neighborhoods were formed.
- **School/Church** relationships were strengthened and new volunteer efforts begun.
- **Neighborhood Cleanup projects** were launched with urban and suburban collaboration.
- **Dignity through Work** efforts were established to address unemployment and panhandling.

Pastor Don McClintock said, "I loved the think-tank organizational boards used to solve problems and map collective impact action plans."

Russell Gosselin said, "Churches are excited about what they learned and the opportunity to engage in meaningful ways in our city. Each leadership team set dates and times for meetings to plan their steps."

Unite Greater Dallas City Convene

City Convene began with a State of the City address by Mayor Mike Rawlings at First Presbyterian Church on April 12. Over 200 pastors came to the breakfast, where they heard Mayor Rawlings call on the church to help the City of Dallas address three critical issues:

- **Education:** Only 14% of students who graduate from high school in Dallas go on to college, the new gateway for the U.S. workforce.
- **Domestic Violence:** The health of families is critical to the health and well-being of children and the city.
- **Homelessness:** 3,904 individuals were physically counted during a 2016 point in time homeless count.

During the next day-and-a-half City Convene conference, pastors and nonprofit leaders addressed these and other critical issues faced by the City of Dallas by developing strategic engagement plans. The plans took into account what is already being done.

In 2015, 476 homeless received permanent supportive housing. 2,857 volunteers were engaged in serving this community. 2,209 volunteers served as mentors and tutors to 4,029 students and gave \$3,483,720 to support schools.