

Project URGE

Report 3/2005 - 3/2006

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Connecting and uniting churches, organizations and individuals in working together to break down barriers of poverty, race and despair in the name of Jesus Christ.

1 John 3:18 - "Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth."

1. Continue efforts to link ministries, organizations & churches

Many new alliances between ministries have occurred this past year, which have resulted in direct benefits to ministries and those being served. This is a direct outgrowth of our monthly meetings and networking. Some of the networking has occurred through our relationships in the grant consortium called FACT (Faith And Communities Together), some with the Williamson REACH program, CCDA (Christian Community Development Association) and with the Roberts Wesleyan College Christian Social Ministries and the Urban Academy.

2. Publicize and seek to involve individuals and church groups into ministry

- a. Once again we provided the Fall/Nov. Ministry Bus Tour with approximately 50 taking the tour. We had a record number of presenters for the tour (18 ministries and organizations). This is certainly a rallying point for Project URGE's initiative to demonstrate the power of collaboration. Having said that, the percentage of people actually plugging into some activity after this tour was lower than the previous year. The majority of participants were not on the tour as a result of the publicity through churches, but mainly as a result of a newspaper article describing the event. Each year our tour survey has consistently shown that most people (67-70%) had never heard of these ministries and organizations prior to taking the bus tour.
- b. News articles came out in the 2005 *Democrat and Chronicle* newspaper regarding the Project URGE Bus Tour, as well as several about our affiliated ministries and organizations.
- c. We circulated approximately 750 Project URGE booklets in 2005.
- d. We became more visible through our exposure to various agencies and through work with the FACT (Faith and Communities Together) group. Additionally, we continue contacting more agencies and ministries, seeking greater and more targeted cooperation with regard to opportunities to minister to meet the challenges of our community.
- e. We continue to give presentations to churches and groups (both secular & faith-based).
- f. 30 Hour Famine Church groups continue to use our input and booklets for formulating the basis of their work projects. We arranged for the Perinton Presbyterian Church's 30 Hour Famine weekend service to four of our affiliated ministries.

- g. Williamson High School's REACH Program plugged into work at 7 facilities affiliated with Project URGE in the fall of 2005 and is set to participate in another service day in the spring of 2006. 50 youth and 10 adults took part. URGE coordinated the work sites and travel routes, as well as giving a verbal presentation at the school and setting up a display prior to workday.
- h. We will be updating our booklets for distribution in the fall of 2006. In the near term, we'll be updating our Project URGE video/DVD for further distribution in 2006.
- i. The Project URGE newsletter continues to be distributed to approximately 800 individuals, agencies and churches in the area.
- j. We also have an extensive e-mail list, sending E-briefs about twice a month with relevant information that has the potential to affect those involved.
- k. The Jacob's Ladder Team continues strengthening our relationships by helping out facilities such as: Community Lutheran Ministries, Catholic Family Charity's Homeless and Housing, Friends Helping Friends Bike Project, Rochester Family Mission and more.
- l. We began to develop a list of "point people", whose responsibility will be to communicate Project URGE activities, needs and events to their congregations.

5. Children/Youth Issues - impacting children from Biblical standards of educating & caring for them (providing a foundation so they will grow to be the leaders in the community)

- a. More churches became involved with helping Community Lutheran Ministry Summer Camp in 2005 and we look to expand that further in 2006.
- b. We'll continue to search for ways to find financing to improve and/or assist in purchasing facilities that will enhance opportunities for children.
- c. Encourage more participation in Rochester Family Mission youth programs.
- d. Encourage more participation in Grace Community Village youth programs.
- e. Encourage participation in Nevaeh's youth programs.
- f. We've been in discussion with Rochester City School District representative, Shirley Billups-Bell, about ways that we may be able to help in a collaborative way in the Rochester Area Children's Zone.

6. Providing social dinner/events at least twice a year (picnic/dinner)

In July of 05 we had our annual picnic in Ellison Park w/ approximately 40 attending and our yearly dinner, hosted by the Fairport Methodist Youth Group, at the Fairport United Methodist Church, where approximately 50 attended. It was a time where many were able to meet and become acquainted in a social environment. There was prayer, worship, a Dr. John Perkins DVD excerpt and a display of artwork from David Haygood, Jr. (who is responsible for the Project URGE logo).

7. Concert of Praise

Dr. John Perkins (Reconciliation & Community Development) and Cross Culture, a teen choir from Baltimore, came to Bethel Christian Fellowship where the 2005 event was held. Workshops on Christian Community Development, Homelessness

in Rochester, Abstinence program and the effect of media manipulation on children/teens were held in the afternoon. The worship event, featuring Dr. Perkins, Cross Culture, and a drama team called "Neutral Zone" and a worship group consisting of musicians from Cross Culture and several of our churches were involved. The majority of the Project URGE affiliates had information tables set up in the lobby. The event did not meet our expectations regarding the numbers of attendees. We had anticipated that people from the city government and many of the urban churches would attend the afternoon workshops with Dr. Perkins and Darryl Jordan. The turnout was a disappointment. The positive outcome was the valuable information shared by both Dr. Perkins and Darryl Porter, both during workshops, during workshop and in discussions since the event. At Dr. Perkin's encouragement, Project URGE has become involved with the Christian Community Development Association (CCDA), which has provided us with an incredible wealth of information.

8. Food delivery & pick-up

There are currently 5 families from Crosswinds Wesleyan Church transporting bread & baked goods from Tops in Canandaigua to approximately 7-9 ministry and homeless shelters in the city of Rochester every Saturday morning. This has been running for about 2 1/2 years.

Families from Browncroft Community Church and Fairport United Methodist Church help with the food pantry and soup kitchen at the Outreach Temple on Murray St. (near Lyell).

9. Jacob's Ladder Renovation & Rebuilding Team

Continues to help with renovating and maintaining homeless shelters, Community Lutheran Ministry, Rochester Family Mission, Mercy Residential, Friends Helping Friends, CFC's Transitional Housing and more.

10. Continue relationship building through our monthly meetings & social events

This continues to be one of the main ingredients in Project URGE. The networking occurs as a direct result of the meetings.

11. Continue to find ways to help homeless & disabled

The Bread Run will continue on Saturdays and we'll continue bringing clothes, bedding and necessities to shelters, as well as, encouraging more churches to become involved in the "Coatlink" effort, which collects new/used, coats, gloves, hats and bedding (useful items for homeless facilities).

12. Racial divide

We expect to innovate more programs for youth in regard to race relations in the summer of 2006 and are hopeful to launch a meaningful dialogue session in the fall for adults. There have been discussions in the past with two groups who

provide this type of facilitating. The implementation boils down to finding willing participants and money to finance the facilitators.

13. Develop administration staff of volunteers

We continue to enlist leaders of subgroups and work on a more harmonious flow of activities on the agenda for 2006. The number of people involved in the hands-on operation of Project URGE has diminished slightly. We seek to raise enough funding for at least one administrative staff person, as well as, find a greater core of committed individuals.

The board continues to be intentional about being diverse from a racial, gender and denominational perspective. The board is currently comprised of Ms. Maggie Harris (chairperson), Director of Community Lutheran Ministry, Inc. on Joseph Ave. in Rochester, Mrs. Carolyn Haygood (co-chair), from the House of God and a city resident, Fred Stresing (secretary), who heads Project URGE's Jacob's Ladder Team and is in customer support for Hewlett-Packard, Garry Manuel (director), from Crosswinds Wesleyan Church in Canandaigua, owner of Manuel's Music Studio and guitar instructor, Mrs. Eva Irene Daughtery of the Outreach Temple (COGICU) and retired Xerox employee and Ms. Kathryn Pridey of the Fairport United Methodist Church, volunteer at Sanctuary House, nutritionist with Rochester General Hospital.

The ministry leaders of our Covenant Agreement affiliates are the advisory team for Project URGE.

14. Grant/Research Team

Project URGE has been involved with a consortium of agencies which is called FACT (Faith And Communities Together), which was comprised of Foodlink, Roberts Wesleyan College, City of Rochester, Action for a Better Community, Salvation Army and Faith Coalition Alliance, which pledged to work together on applying for the Federal Capital Compassion Grant. Once again in 2005, no upstate group was awarded this sizeable funding opportunity for improving capacity building. We began meeting late in 2004 and continued through the summer of 2006. In the near future we will begin working on the application for 2006. Project URGE encouraged the group to remain intact and collaborate on initiatives to benefit the community, regardless of the outcome of the 2005 application. This has been the case for several of the organizations, including Project URGE. Our own grant team met only a couple times in 2005, although we acknowledge this as an important piece for our affiliates and for Project URGE itself. The difficulty in meeting stems from the number of obligations that several of us are required to attend, coupled with the scheduling conflicts of an all volunteer group.

15. Project URGE Expansion

There is a continuing effort to spread the Project URGE Model across upstate New York. There have been 2 meetings to date with pastors and leaders in Syracuse. The premise is that we can learn from each other and be of one voice in Christ. This will create a stronger body, afford us more knowledge/expertise through

sharing experiences and give us greater resources for change. This effort has never broken out of the talking stage. While we continue to be hopeful for this to occur, it is not a priority for the organization at this time.

16. Project URGE 4 Point Plan

In the fall of 2005 Garry Manuel began outlining a 4 Point Plan, which targeted four areas along the "poverty crescent". After attending the CCDA conference in mid-November, much of the methodology that was given by experienced workshop presenters (some with more than 20 yrs. experience) was folded into the plan for implementation. This plan concentrates on building and strengthening collaborative efforts in each area, first, with Project URGE affiliates, second, reaching out to those not currently involved who could contribute to the missing building components and third, drawing from outside those areas to bring in those with the passion and expertise to affect change. Additionally, the hope is to set up a farm market in each area, which not only will benefit the neighborhood, but area farmers as well. This could also serve as a hub to invite people to attend local churches, but also to distribute information that will benefit neighborhood residents.

We praise our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, for the work he has entrusted us with. As we continue in obedience to these tasks, it is obvious that our territories are enlarged.

Ephesians 4:11-13 - "It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ."