

Creative Church Ministries:

Stimulating Ideas for New Opportunities at the United Church of Christ of Vermillion

These pages represent a collection of active ministries from specific churches all around the world. You may find more information for any church by clicking on their website. Our hope is that these ideas will stimulate your thinking for our work here in Vermillion!

Fourth Presbyterian Church

At a glance...

Who:Fourth Presbyterian Church

Where:Chicago, Illinois

What:*Chicago Lights*: Community outreach organization that includes tutoring, the Center for Life and Learning, Center for Whole Health, and Urban Farm among others

Website:<http://www.fourthchurch.org/mission.html>

Additional Information

The Fourth Presbyterian Church of Chicago, which began in 1871, is committed to serving the needs of its congregation and community. In 2002, Project Light, which included the purchase and dedication of property, was approved for the purposes of building a community center in the future and expanding office and program space in the more immediate future. Among the many ministries of the Fourth Presbyterian Church are the *Lorene Replogle Counseling Center* where mental health needs of the congregation and community are addressed and *The Day School* where children engage in a variety of self-selected and teacher-directed activities, such as painting, drawing, building, completing puzzles, molding clay, singing, and dancing.

Ministry of Interest

Perhaps the most interesting ministry at Fourth Presbyterian Church is *Chicago Lights*. This is a non-profit community outreach organization created to serve the city and neighbors by providing hope for people facing poverty, helping people thrive academically, guiding people to financial stability, and promoting healthy lifestyles. This ministry includes tutoring to 400+ students, *Elam Davies Social Services Center* where they strive to help people work toward stability and self-sufficiency, *Center for Life and Learning* which provides social, educational, cultural, and physical activities for patrons, and *Center for Whole Health* where health and wellness in mind, body, and spirit are promoted through seminars, counseling, screenings, immunizations, health assessments, and referrals. Finally, Fourth Presbyterian Church has a program called *Urban Farm*, which is a community garden to be used for job training and youth development, as well as nutrition education. Please visit the Fourth Presbyterian Church website for more information about this and other ministries.

Sherwood Baptist Church

At a glance...

Who: Sherwood Baptist Church

Where: Albany, Georgia

What: *Sherwood Pictures*: Write and produce faith-related movies

Website: <http://www.sherwoodbaptist.net/templates/cussherwoodbc/details.asp?id=33770&PID=320318>

Additional Information

The Sherwood Baptist Church of Albany is a contemporary Southern Baptist Church which began in 1955. The mission of this church is not only to impact lives of its members, but to touch the whole world with the whole Word. Ministries at Sherwood Baptist Church include, but are not limited to, *The Alpha Pregnancy Center* which reaches out to women of all ages and walks of life who are facing difficult decisions and *Stewardship Ministry* to guide people to financial freedom. They also offer *Kid's Connection*, an after school program that offers homework assistance, games, gym and playground time, snacks, crafts, and movies. *The Biblical Counseling Center*, another ministry at Sherwood Baptist Church, offers personal, couple, and family counseling to help people face challenges from a biblical perspective.

Ministry of Interest

The most unique ministry at Sherwood Baptist Church is *Sherwood Pictures*. To date, the Sherwood Baptist Church has designed, created, and produced three movies: *Facing the Giants*, *Flywheel*, and *Fireproof*. Their newest movie, *Courageous*, will be released in theaters on September 30, 2011. Through these low-budget, family-appropriate, faith-based movies, the Sherwood Baptist Church shares stories of God's transforming power, the larger purpose in life, trials and partnership of marriage, and the challenges of fatherhood. With this ministry, the entire Sherwood congregation unites to touch the world through a form of popular media that can be easily understood. For more information about the ministries of Sherwood Baptist Church, please visit the church website.

McLean Bible Church

At a glance...

Who:McLean Bible Church

Where:Washington, DC

What:Multi-campus church

Website:<http://www.mcleanbible.org/>, <http://www.mcleanbible.org/ministries>

Additional Information

McLean Bible Church is a non-denominational church with a goal of impacting secular Washington, DC through the message of Jesus Christ that started with five families in 1961. Over the years, the church has grown significantly. Each time they saw something lacking in their church community, they would expand to fill the void. In the 1990s, the church was growing rapidly, but they could see they were not reaching the young adult population. For this reason, a ministry called *Frontline* was started. This ministry includes worship time, ministry teams, small groups, and a global impact team just for young adults. Another unique ministry that takes place at McLean Bible Church is called *Access Ministry*, which grew out of a need to reach out to those with disabilities. This ministry provides a Sunday School program, parent support, training sessions, summer camp, and sibling events for individuals with disabilities and their families, enabling them to become active members and participants of the church and community. Along with this ministry is *Jill's House*, which provides overnight respite care and therapy for those with special needs. Other unique ministries can be found on the McLean Bible Church website.

Ministry of Interest

“One church in multiple locations.” Although McLean Bible Church started with only a few people in one location, it has grown significantly over the past 50 years. The long-term goal is to build ten campuses in the Washington, DC area to accommodate the growing church community. To date, McLean Bible Church has 5 campuses for people of all ages, with one of those being an internet campus, and 3 *Frontline* campuses specifically for young adults, with one of those being an internet campus. Their college ministry called *The Gathering* meets on the campuses of American University, Georgetown University, George Mason University and the University of Maryland. See the McLean Bible Church website for more information on the campuses.

Mount Moriah Missionary Baptist Church

At a glance...

Who:Mount Moriah Missionary Baptist Church

Where:Indianapolis, Indiana

What:Various children's ministries including *Little League Basketball, Before and After School Care, Summer Day Camp, and Teen Night at the Mount*

Website:www.mountmoriah.net/YouthMinistry

Additional Information

Mount Moriah Missionary Baptist Church, founded in 1940, largely focuses on the children in the church community. There are, however, other ministries to get involved in. Juvenile visitation and a food pantry are a few ways that the members of Mount Moriah Missionary Baptist Church reach out to the community. They also take part in *Feed-A-Family, Clothing Give-Away, Thanksgiving Give-Away, and Christmas Give-Away.*

Ministries of Interest

The people of Mount Moriah Missionary Baptist Church put a large emphasis on children's ministries. *Mount Moriah Little League Basketball* provides an opportunity for children to be instructed on fundamentals, such as dribbling, shooting, passing, and out-of-bounds. At the end of the season, the kids participate in a tournament where trophies are awarded. The church also offers *Mount Moriah Before and After School Care* where school-age children spend time before and after school participating in fun, safe, and structured activities while their parents are at work. *Mount Moriah Summer Day Camp* is another ministry that gives children an opportunity to participate in arts, crafts, field trips, sports, games, and more in order to build confidence, shape character, and strengthen well-being. *Teen Night at the Mount* occurs on Friday evenings for youth ages 8 to 19. While at this event, teens can take part in arts, crafts, pool, music, video games, basketball, and fingernail painting. The goal of this event is to reach teens through positive activities and reduce the number of high risk youth in the area. For more information on the ministries offered at Mount Moriah Missionary Baptist Church, please see the Mount Moriah Church website.

Oasis Church

At a glance...

Who:Oasis Church

Where:Mountainside, New Jersey, and Online

What:Online congregation

Website:<http://oasis-church-nj.com/about>

Additional Information

Oasis Church of New Jersey, who seeks to refresh the world, is a contemporary Christian church that has both an online and local congregation. The mission statement for this church can be summed up in three words: Go, Grow, Give. They want to “*go* bring people to Jesus for membership in His family,” “*grow* them up for ministry in the church,” and “*give* them back into the world that they may continue to reach others.” Like the mission statement, the core values of the church are also concise: *communicate* the gospel message to those in need of Christ, *connect* to the community in order to grow spiritually, *contribute* God-given gifts creative opportunities available through the church, and *celebrate* the blessings God has given to individuals and the church.

Ministry of Interest

Once firmly established, many churches develop a website to share the exciting news and activities going on in their church community. Oasis Church, however, began as an outreach and relationship advice website and then grew into a church. The goal of the “worldwide online congregation” is not to make people “‘religious’ but to transform lives in the name of Jesus.” Over 100,000 people from across the globe utilize the outreach ministry and 7000+ people listen to Oasis podcasts. The unique feature of the real-life, relevant podcasts is that “no topic is taboo.” The church also has weekly worship services in Mountainside, New Jersey, and small group meetings and activities three nights a week. See the church website for more information about this ministry.

Mars Hill Bible Church

At a glance...

Who:Mars Hill Bible Church

Where:Grandville, Michigan

What:Mentoring elementary school students

Website:<http://marshill.org/mentoring/>

Additional Information

In the 1990s, Rob Bell and his wife found themselves dreaming of a church based on desire, longing, and connection, minus fluff and hype. For this reason, the Bell's and a few of their friends met for the first Mars Hill gathering in February of 1999. Over the years, Mars Hill Bible Church continued to grow, so much that they outgrew their meeting place known as The Hanger. The Mars Hill congregation now meets in an old mall that was generously donated to them. Not only does Mars Hill want to construct a spiritually healthy congregation, but they want them to follow Jesus' example and serve the world. Water is the topic of one of the ministries at Mars Hill. Because clean water is an essential part of life for everyone, Mars Hill partners with *World Relief Rwanda* to provide clean water to those in need. Mars Hill also supports the Grassroots organizations. Although not started at or run by Mars Hill, they are promoted by Mars Hill because people connected to the church have come up with ways to reflect the mission of Mars Hill through their own work and service.

Ministry of Interest

One of the most fascinating ministries at Mars Hill Bible Church is a mentorship program. The church partners with *Kids Hope USA* in order to connect at-risk students in a local elementary school with a caring adult mentor. Mentors and students meet one-on-one for one hour each week. Through these meetings, a caring relationship is formed with the hope of providing the student the emotional, social, and academic support needed for success. While the changes start small, they often escalate to a life-changing experience for both students and mentors. Invest in the life of a child! For more information, see the mentoring page of the Mars Hill website.

National Community Church

At a glance...

Who:National Community Church

Where:Washington, DC

What:One church. Seven locations.

Website:<http://theaterchurch.com/>

Additional Information

The National Community Church (NCC), which began in early 1996, is an interdenominational Christian church that meets in multiple locations across Washington, DC. This church has a variety of unique and interesting ministries. *Paddle, Prayer, and Pickup* is an opportunity to float down the river in canoes in order to clean up the river. This activity is also ideal for enjoying personal and emotional stillness and reflection. *Cinem-a-nthology* is another ministry offered at NCC, which explores God Anthology themes through relevant movies. *Dance Party DC* is a small group designed for fun people to dance, not dancers to have fun. It also serves as a great opportunity to meet new people. *Nutrifying Your Temple*, another ministry, functions to help people learn and practice healthy eating habits, boost metabolism, and regulate energy levels. A more complete list and description of ministries can be found on the NCC website.

Ministry of Interest

Coming to a theater near you... Church services at National Community Church were in a school building for a short time before moving to the movie theaters at Union Station in Washington, DC. The church, which has a goal of being a church for the unchurched, has now grown and expanded to seven locations: Ebenezer's Coffeehouse, Ballston Common Mall in the Regal Movie Theaters, Georgetown in Loews Movie Theater, Kingstowne in the Kingstowne 16 Theaters, GALA Theatre, and Potomac Yard in Regal Cinema 16. They also have an online ministry, including blogs and podcasts. This new, exciting church in multiple locations has attracted many people, 70% of which come from an unchurched or dechurched background. For more information about the NCC campuses, please see the NCC website.

North Point Community Church

At a glance...

Who:North Point Community Church

Where:Alpharetta, Georgia

What:*Care Network:* Support and assistance for individuals and couples when they need someone to lean on

Website:<http://www.northpoint.org/>,<http://www.northpoint.org/site/page/history>

Additional Information

North Point Community Church (NPCC) of Alpharetta, Georgia, began in late 1995 out of Pastor Andy Stanley's vision for a "safe environment where the unchurched can come and hear the life-changing truth that Jesus Christ cares for them and died for their sin." Over the years, NPCC has expanded into three campuses, which attract 20,000+ adult worshippers and 6,000+ children each Sunday. It is not the numbers that drive the church through, it is the changed lives. NPCC has also implemented programs, such as *KidStuff*, where elementary-aged children and their parents interact in a "values-driven learning environment" and *InsideOut*, a program for teens. There are also Sunday morning experiences for people of all ages.

Ministry of Interest

Care Network is a unique ministry of North Point Community Church. The *Care Network* was designed to provide support for people when they are in need. Depending on the situation, needs of people are different. For this reason, many different ministries fall under the *Care Network*. *Hope Ministry* is a broad support organization for those facing life's challenges. *Intimate Encounters* is a small group environment for married couples to gain a better understanding of God's plan and purpose for their marriage. *GriefShare* is a support group that offers God's perspective on loss and grief for those seeking comfort for past or current losses. Also, *MoneyWi\$e* is a program that gives encouragement and advice to those who are facing financial hardship, whether it be from job loss, divorce, health problems, or debt. For a more detailed and complete list of *Care Network* ministries, please visit the NPCC website.

Redwood Park Church

At a glance...

Who:Redwood Park Church

Where:Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada

What:Drama sketches used in worship and *DARE* group for seniors 55+

Website:<http://www.redwoodpark.org/#/inside-redwood/worship-and-the-arts>,
<http://www.redwoodpark.org/#/connect/seniors-dare-group>

Additional Information

Redwood Park Church is a mainline Christian church in Thunder Bay, Ontario, that seeks to reach out to those who do not have a relationship with Christ. They do so through their creative, inviting atmosphere and ministries that are sensitive and inclusive to those who do not know Christ. One opportunity that people can volunteer with or take advantage of is the *Redwood Park Opportunities Centre*, one of Redwood's main ministries. In the Centre, there is a food bank which serves hundreds of families each month, as well as *Threads*, a clothing store where clothing is sold at affordable prices. This unique organization allows Redwood Park Church to reach out and impact many people in the community.

Ministries of Interest

In order to pull people in and actively engage them in the worship, Redwood Park Church implements several creative art forms into their services. One of the first keys to relating to people is through contemporary music. Drama sketches are also used in worship to introduce new ideas and to help people better identify with the messages and themes presented in the services. Sound mixing, video production, and on-screen visual presentations are also an important part of services at Redwood Park, especially in our "media driven culture." Another way that the Redwood Park Church engages its members, specifically its members over the age of 55, is through the *DARE senior group*. This ministry, which is based on Psalm 71:18, functions to take Christ's care and love to senior members, allowing many opportunities for spiritual growth, prayer initiatives, support groups, missions, service opportunities, and social and relationship building. It is hoped that through this ministry seniors will be encouraged and encourage others to live life for Christ all the days of their life. For more information on these and other opportunities and activities, please visit the Redwood Park Church website.

The Journey

At a glance...

Who:The Journey

Where:New York, New York

What:*Growth Groups:* Small groups of about 15 people that meet once per week for 12 weeks to discuss topics of interest that the group has chosen

Website:http://www.journeymetro.com/pages/page.asp?page_id=132479,
<http://www.nyjourney.com/>

Additional Information

The Journey, a contemporary Christian church, has four convenient locations throughout New York City, as well as San Francisco and Boca Raton, Florida. In 2002, The Journey started with a small group of people meeting in two Manhattan locations. Over the years, they have met in a variety of buildings and locations and continued to grow in numbers, as well as ministries. Among the fascinating and engaging ministries at The Journey are *Play Groups*. These groups, which are for people of all ages, provide an opportunity to meet people and build relationships in a fun, relaxed environment, whether it be watching a movie in theaters, row boating, playing laser tag, or extreme bowling.

Ministry of Interest

Another opportunity for participants at The Journey to get involved, meet new people, and learn about Christ is through *Growth Groups*. These groups, which are composed of about 15 people who have common interests, are not meant to be overly time-consuming or very permanent since the groups meet for only 60 to 90 minutes a week for 12 weeks. *Growth Group* meetings are also meant to be convenient, so it is important to consider the meeting location when choosing which group to join. Each year, new groups are formed in January, May, and September. This continual reorganization allows participants to get involved in various groups and topics and allows them to meet many new people. Current groups include Professional Groups, College Groups, Athletic Groups, High School Groups, Community Service Groups, Meal Time Groups, Mom's and Family Groups, Women's and Men's Groups, Worship Arts Groups, and Couples Groups. For more information on *Growth Groups* and other opportunities, see The Journey website.

Imago Dei Community

At a glance...

Who:Imago Dei Community

Where:Portland, Oregon

What:*College Mentorship and Refuge Night*

Website:<http://www.imagodeicommunity.com/community/>

Additional Information

Imago Dei Community began with the idea of exploring the Bible and asking “Why?” Why study the Bible? Why is community important? Why preach the gospel? Why love the world? The name “Imago Dei,” which is Latin for “the image of God,” is an expression that the church uses to remind itself that God made humans in His image. However, when our relationship with God suffers, we lose the identity and wholeness needed to satisfy the full life that we crave. An interesting ministry at Imago Dei Community is *Imago Dei Arts*. This program functions to help artists understand God and express His creative image through various art forms, such as painting, dancing, photography, and music. Creative arts like songs, poems, dance, and paintings are also implemented into worship at Imago Dei Community.

Ministries of Interest

While Imago Dei Community has activities for people of all ages, the *Imago Dei College* is of particular interest. Through this program, college students meet at Imago Dei on Friday nights where they may listen to speakers, pastors, or professors talk about theology, philosophy, or biblical teaching. Students may also enjoy short drama sketches, poetry reading, music, or other art forms and time at the gym for games such as dodge ball and kickball. Perhaps the most interesting feature of *Imago Dei College* is college mentorship where older men and women in the church community volunteer to mentor and disciple college-age people. Not only will these adults mentor students, but they will encourage them to get involved in life at Imago Dei Community, church ministries, community activities, and men’s and women’s forums. Imago Dei Community also hosts *Refuge Night*. This is a weekly gathering for adults (childcare is available) to grow spiritually and learn from life struggles. Participants meet in large groups for 20 to 30 minutes before breaking into small groups to look at educational pieces and work on relationship building, accountability, and affirmation. Although this is not a professional counseling program, an effort is made to evaluate each individual and give recommendations. For more information on these ministries, visit the Imago Dei Community website.

Crosspoint Community Church

At a glance...

Who:Crosspoint Community Church

Where:Decatur, Alabama

What:*House of Rock*: Multi-purpose ministry facility

Website:<http://www.crosspointlive.tv/>,
<http://www.crosspointlive.tv/About/houseofrock/>

Additional Information

Crosspoint Community Church is a community of people that come together from all walks of life. Some are new Christians, some are old Christians, and some are just there to check things out. The church offers a very relaxed atmosphere to help people relate to God and build relationships with people who care, without regard to “what people wear, how they look, or how much money they make.” Regardless of where you fit into the spectrum, it is certain that you will find Crosspoint comfortable and inviting. One way that Crosspoint Church satisfies the need of its worshippers is through *Fusion*, a worship experience just for kids (newborns through 5th grade). While adults are at the adult service, kids spend time learning about God in a positive, age-appropriate manner. Perhaps the most interesting part of *Fusion* is the program known as *Reactor*, which is for children in kindergarten through 5th grade. *Reactor* is a separate worship service equipped with a stage, lights, music, and dancing to help kids learn God’s plan for their lives. Visit the Crosspoint Church website to learn about more opportunities.

Ministry of Interest

House of Rock is Crosspoint Community Church’s new ministry facility. This state of the art building, which sits on about 12 acres of land, is thought of as the “base of operations” for spreading God’s word to North Alabama. The *House of Rock* is divided into 3 zones: *Fusion Kid’s Ministry*, *Lobby and The Coffee Bar*, and *Worship Auditorium*. The space dedicated to *Fusion* is divided into 5 separate age-appropriate learning environments. The *Lobby and The Coffee Bar* are located in the center of the building, dividing *Fusion* from the *Worship Auditorium*. This space provides a relaxed atmosphere for adults to connect and enjoy premium coffee. Finally, the *Worship Auditorium* is where the “Rock” is put in the *House of Rock*. This area is equipped with padded chairs, an HD video system, and a “mind-blowing” audio system. For more information on *House of Rock*, see the Crosspoint Community Church website.

Nairobi Lighthouse Church

At a glance...

Who:Nairobi Lighthouse Church

Where:Nairobi, Kenya

What:*The Encounter.* A life-changing weekend away from inner healing, deliverance, value confrontation, and renewal of purpose

Website:http://www.nairobilighthouse.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=47&Itemid=78

Additional Information

Nairobi Lighthouse Church began in 1987 with 9 adults and 13 kids by Pastor Don Matheny and his wife Amy with the goal to touch and change those in the nation who were un-reached. As the church expanded over time, the idea that “as the church grows larger, it must grow smaller” became increasingly important. For this reason, they implemented a cell-group ministry, which divides believers into smaller groups to provide more effective mentorship and discipleship, equipping them to reach out to others in the name of Christ. With this ministry, the goal is to teach “every believer to serve as a minister in their own home, neighborhood, work place, and beyond.” Nairobi Lighthouse Church has also implemented several networks and Sunday morning worship opportunities for believers of all ages.

Ministry of Interest

One way believers can get involved on a personal level at Nairobi Lighthouse Church is through *The Encounter*. This ministry is a life-changing weekend for individuals to have private time with God. Not only is this time spent “one-on-one” and “face-to-face” with God, but it is spent out of town, away from the distractions of life such as TV, cell phones, friends, and family responsibilities. This weekend away is meant to be a time for inner healing, deliverance, value confrontation, and renewal of purpose. For more information about this and other ministries, please visit the Nairobi Lighthouse Church website.

Fellowship Church

At a glance...

Who:Fellowship Church

Where:Grapevine, Texas

What:*Fellowship Creative*: Reflecting Christ's love and plan for the world through creative arts

Website:<http://www.fellowshipchurch.com/fccreative>

Additional Information

Fellowship Church of Grapevine has a simple purpose: Reach Up, Reach Out, and Reach In. They strive to *reach up* to God in praise and honor, *reach out* to God's children and invite them to be a follower of Christ, and *reach in* to become actively involved in service. One of the ways that Fellowship Church fulfills their purpose is through the *Allaso Ranch*, a ministry for youth grades 2 through 12. *Allaso Ranch* is a one-week, fun-filled, outdoor, summer camping adventure where kids work on relational and spiritual growth. At the state of the art ranch, kids can play at the water park, float on the lazy river, ride down zip-lines, ride on or hike the mountain bike trail, ride horses, participate in sporting activities, and enjoy great food.

Ministry of Interest

Fellowship Creative is a prominent ministry at Fellowship Church. This ministry is based on Genesis 1:1 which demonstrates God's creativity in making the heavens and the earth. Genesis 1:27 also states that man was created in God's image. Therefore, the creative gifts given to us by God should be used to reflect and share the message of Christ. *Fellowship Creative* provides an opportunity for artists and creative thinkers to "build relationships, grow in creativity, and develop resources to build the local Church and expand the kingdom of God," whether it be in the form of music, writing, photography, video, web design, marketing, or production. It is also the hope that this ministry will inspire others to use the gifts God has given them to be creative. For more information about *Fellowship Creative*, see the Fellowship Church website.

Healing Place Church

At a glance...

Who:Healing Place Church

Where:Baton Rouge, Louisiana

What:*Servolution*: A serving revolution. Sharing God's love and changing lives through simple acts of kindness.

Website:<http://www.healingplacechurch.org/>,
<http://www.servolution.org/ideas.php>

Additional Information

Healing Place Church (HPC) was founded in 1993 with the hope of being “a healing place for a hurting world.” With this idea in mind, HPC compassionately reaches out to the community through mission projects and outreaches, “offering hope to the poor, oppressed, and forgotten.” God has also opened up opportunities for the church to expand into what is now a multi-site organization. Between the 8 campuses, over 6,000 people attend worship services each weekend. Even though the church is continually reaching out to the world, they also focus on the community of believers within the church and provide opportunities for everyone to experience the saving power of Christ. For more information about HPC, please visit the church website.

Ministry of Interest

One of the biggest ways that Healing Place Church reaches out to the community and the world is through their *Servolution* ministry. *Servolution* is a serving revolution where volunteers donate their time and open their hands and hearts to change the lives of others, often creating a life-changing experience of their own. The acts of kindness are often simple, yet largely effective in sharing God's love. Some outreach ideas include hosting a free garage sale, handing out free gum at a city parade, delivering fresh flowers to nursing home residents, giving away free pencils and scantrons to college students during midterm and finals week, helping freshmen move into dorms, serving free bottled water to students who exit bars, and hosting a fun day for children with special needs. For a larger list of outreach ideas, please visit the HPC website. Also, begin brainstorming with your friends, family, and fellow believers!

Gateway Church

At a glance...

Who: Gateway Church

Where: Austin, Texas

What: *International Students Dinner Ministry*: Make a difference in the life of an international student by helping them feel at-home and experience fun things to do in the local community

Website: <http://www.gatewaychurch.com/serve-locally>

Additional Information

Gateway Church is a non-denominational church that is committed to being the church that can be read about in the Bible. This church openly recognizes that humans are imperfect, but is excited that we can pursue and experience a relationship with Jesus and each other. People from all walks of life are welcome here, regardless of where they come from or what their questions and struggles are. Because the church is large and meets in several Austin locations, it encourages participants to join a *Network*, which is a group of 30 to 75 people who meet regularly, to more intimately experience spiritual growth and more effectively serve the community. Various serving networks are available for believers at Gateway Church. Some opportunities include a food pantry, single moms dinner, refugee support, and Austin Habitat for Humanity.

Ministry of Interest

Among the opportunities available at Gateway Church to serve the church, community, and world, is the *International Students Dinner Ministry*. Because international students are removed from their family, home, and culture, adjusting to life in America is often quite difficult. For this reason, Gateway Church encourages people to make a difference in the life of an international student (or a group of students) by welcoming them in and helping them experience fun things in the local community. It is as easy as inviting them over for a backyard bbq, taking them to a football game, or sharing holiday traditions with them. Not only is this a great way to help an international student feel more at-home in America, but it is an awesome opportunity to experience and learn about other cultures. This is likely to be a life-changing experience for the host as well. For more information about this ministry, see the Gateway Church website.

Christ Lutheran Church

At a glance...

Who:Christ Lutheran Church

Where:Charlotte, North Carolina

What:*The Academy of Fine Arts:* Music, art, and drama instruction classes taught by talented people in the community

Website:<http://christelca.org/templates/System/default.asp?id=1380>,
<http://www.afacharlotte.org/>

Additional Information

Christ Lutheran Church, which has both traditional and contemporary church services, strives to *welcome* all of God's people, *connect* them with other believers, *equip* them with the Word of God, and *send* them out into the world to share the good news of Christ. One way that Christ Lutheran Church seeks to send out believers to change the world is through partnerships with a variety of agencies in the Charlotte area. Some ministries include *Crisis Assistance Ministry*, which provides furniture and clothing to those in need, *Operation Christmas Child*, where a shoe box is packed full of gifts for a little girl or boy, and a women's shelter for women in crisis. The church also has *Christ Lutheran Children's Center*, which began as a *Mother's Morning Out* program and grew into a full-day class opportunity for children 6 weeks to 5 years to develop in a Christ-centered environment. Class curriculum includes chapel, music, Spanish, and storytelling. See the Christ Lutheran Church website for more information.

Ministry of Interest

The Academy of Fine Arts, which is located in the education wing at Christ Lutheran Church, is a unique opportunity for people of all ages to learn through the arts. This ministry offers music, art, and drama lessons taught by the best artist teachers in the community. These experiences are not only fun and challenging for students, both young and old, but they help develop creativity, self-confidence, valuable study and practice habits, and improve math and language skills that will be beneficial in everyday life. For more information about this ministry, please check out Christ Lutheran Church's website for *The Academy of Fine Arts*.

Long Hollow Baptist Church

At a glance...

Who: Long Hollow Baptist Church

Where: Hendersonville, Tennessee

What: *Operation Crazy Love*: Partnering with other ministries and organizations to demonstrate God's love through service

Website: <http://www.longhollow.com/serve/operationcrazylove>

Additional Information

Long Hollow Baptist Church is a Southern Baptist Church near Nashville, Tennessee, that meets at three different locations. Whether you are a child, teen, adult, senior, professional, or student, Long Hollow has ministries and programs designed specifically for members of all ages and backgrounds. Among the opportunities available at Long Hollow are mission trips to Haiti, Thailand, Cumberland, Kentucky, Russia, American Samoa, Peru, Kenya, France, Nicaragua, Uganda, and New York City. Local opportunities to serve are also available, such as *Room in the Inn*, a homeless ministry, *Church Under the Bridge*, a homeless outreach, *Samaritan Center*, a family crisis ministry, *Salvus Center*, a faith-based health center, and *Who U With*, a college athlete and coach outreach program.

Ministry of Interest

One of the unique ministries at Long Hollow Baptist Church is *Operation Crazy Love*, which is based on 2 Corinthians 2:15. This verse states: "For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing." Through this ministry, Long Hollow Baptist Church joins various ministries and organizations in order to impact the community and world by sharing the love of God through service. When first launched, *Operation Crazy Love* partnered with 9 organizations and 4 ministries to reach people in the surrounding area. Although this organization has relied heavily on the support of women in the church, this ministry is an opportunity for all to get involved and serve. Service opportunities include, but are not limited to, clean-up day through *Good Neighbor Mission*, *Food 4 Families Thanksgiving Outreach*, volunteer nurses at *Salvus Center*, and ESL tutors through *World Relief*. To learn more about *Operation Crazy Love*, please visit the Long Hollow Baptist Church website.

Holy Trinity Community Church

At a glance...

Who:Holy Trinity Community Church

Where:Memphis, Tennessee

What:*Counseling Ministry:* Providing mental health care to those in the Memphis area

Website:<http://www.holytrinitymemphis.org/ForYourInfo.htm>

Additional Information

Holy Trinity Community Church, which was founded in 1990 by a small group of Christians who were exiled because of their gender/sexual orientation, is an active member of the United Church of Christ. The church has expanded over the last 20 years and continues to accept all those seeking a relationship with Jesus Christ, regardless of race, color, national or ethnic origin, gender or sexual orientation. Furthermore, the ministry of the church emphasizes charity and love as principal virtues. One ministry at Holy Trinity is called *Seriously Sober*. This is an Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) support group that meets once a week at the church to make a difference in the lives of many through the traditional 12-step recovery program. Holy Trinity also supports many service organizations throughout the community, such as *Church Health Center*, *Memphis Lesbian Gay Coalition for Justice*, and *Memphis Vocal Arts*. Another ministry at Holy Trinity is *Karaoke at Dru's Place*, a bar ministry that reaches out to people and raises money for the Holy Trinity music program through karaoke singing. Among other creative ideas, the church has also implemented an online discussion board for its members to talk about a wide variety of issues.

Ministry of Interest

One of the most unique ministries of the Holy Trinity Community Church is the *Counseling Ministry*. The church and the Counseling Department of the University of Memphis work together to provide a wide range of top-of-the-line mental health services to Memphis area community members. These services, which are provided by respected mental health professionals in the community, extend to adults, children, individuals, families, and couples. Counseling is also available for depression, anxiety, relationships, addiction, and sexual identity issues. For more information about this and other ministries at Holy Trinity, visit the church website.

Ellis Avenue Church

At a glance...

Who:Ellis Avenue Church

Where:Chicago, Illinois

What:Various youth ministries include *youth organized church services*, *STRIVE tutoring program*, *summer day camp*

Website:<http://ellisavenuechurch.org/>

Additional Information

Ellis Avenue Church is an autonomous Baptist Church that seeks to unite Christ's followers regardless of economics, race, or education. Worship is the primary activity that takes place at Ellis Avenue. The goal of the church is to create a welcoming, warm, supportive, and meaningful worship environment that satisfies the needs and interests of its diverse congregation. Ellis Avenue Church also supports several community ministries, such as Hyde Park Kenwood Interfaith Council, which seeks to kindle inter-religious dialogues, address community issues, and offer social services to those in need. *Southsiders Organizing for Unity and Liberation (SOUL)* is another ministry that Ellis Avenue Church supports. This organization functions to stand-up for issues of equity and justice, such as education funding reform, green job creation, and transportation upgrades, for the members of the surrounding community.

Ministries of Interest

While the Ellis Avenue Church treasures all of its members, it sees the youth as an amazing gift to the church and wants to encourage them to participate in worship. For this reason, the church has created several programs specifically for the youth population. While the traditional youth choir (*The Young Voices of Ellis*) and Sunday School classes are available for middle and high school students, Ellis Avenue also has a biannual worship service organized and led by the youth. These services often include youth choir songs, praise dance, mime performances, poetry readings, and a sermon given by a youth member. Opportunities, such as Sunday School classes, nursery, and children's messages, are available to the youngest children in the congregation, as well. At the 4th grade level, youth in the congregation are assigned an adult mentor to help them build their faith. The *STRIVE* afterschool tutoring program and summer day camp, which take place right in the church, provide additional opportunities for children to grow spiritually in a safe, fun environment. For more information about the Ellis Avenue Church, please visit the church website.

Cathedral of Hope

At a glance...

Who:Cathedral of Hope

Where:Various locations

What:Health and Wellness Ministry: Encouraging members to get their bodily temples "*Fit for Faith*"

Website:<http://www2.cathedralofhope.com/health-a-wellness>,
<https://www2.cathedralofhope.com/>

Additional Information

Cathedral of Hope is a congregation of the United Church of Christ that started when a group of 12 people came together in the 1960s to form the first gay organization in Texas. This small group eventually grew into the Cathedral of Hope, the world's largest gay church, with congregations in Dallas, Oklahoma City, Dallas-Fort Worth area, Houston, and Salt Lake City. The church hosts a live internet worship service, as well. Many educational and service ministries are also available for people of all ages to explore the Bible, grow spiritually, and learn about God's inclusive love for all. Care and community outreach ministries are among the many service opportunities available at Cathedral of Hope. The care ministries function to assist those in crisis, grieving, recovering from illness, and in need of help at any time of day or night. *Child of Hope Ministry* is a community outreach that includes *Health Fair*, which provides free medical services to low-income community members, mission projects that extend a helping hand to those in need locally, nationally, and internationally, and *Crayola Crusade*, which collects school supplies for children from low-income families.

Ministry of Interest

One of the most unique ministries at Cathedral of Hope is a health and wellness ministry based on 1 Corinthians 6:19. The "*Fit for Faith*" ministry includes a variety of opportunities, such as bicycling, meditation, sitting, walking, yoga, and kick-boxing, to prepare your temple (body) for the journey of faith. There is also a *Fit for Faith's "Biggest Loser" program* that teaches members how to lose weight and keep it off through proper exercise, nutrition, and awareness. The health and wellness ministry also includes an HIV/AIDS support group called "*F.A.C.E.*" (Faith, Acceptance, Caring, Education). Please see the church website for more information on the ministries at Cathedral of Hope.