

METROGRACE

Developing Urban Churches

June 2018

MetroGrace connects **supporting, serving** and **stationed** partners to develop gospel-centered, community-based churches in urban neighborhoods.

Urban ministry requires long-term investment in the lives of people.

Connections with those people come in a variety of ways. Standing on a corner, attending a civic association meeting, hosting neighborhood voting, outreach events, concerts of prayer, worship services and ministries to men, women, teens and children all provide opportunities to initiate relationships with people.

Last September Crossroads Community Church of Holmesburg hosted a memorial service for a family member of a regular attendee. A friend of the family attended that service, was moved by the Word and began attending Crossroads regularly.

At the beginning of this year she came to church in tears. She explained that her son's drug-addicted girlfriend had taken her grandchildren and fled the state. We prayed with her and for her. In the process, her son visited Crossroads twice.



After much consternation and legal wrangling, the young woman and the children returned. The father was granted custody. But, what seems to be the conclusion of the story is really just the beginning.

The young mother has been released from drugs. She and the father of her children have placed their trust in Jesus. They are working through the Growing in Christ course. They meet each week for counseling. They're praying for complete reconciliation and they plan to be married.

We're still a long way from wholeness. But, it is exciting to see God work! He can use incredibly difficult circumstances to bring people to Christ and grow them toward maturity.

Urban ministry is all about people – and Jesus!

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Name: _____

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Jim and Lisa Brown \$ _____

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**Dr. Jim Brown,
Executive Director**



Our newest congregation, Crossroads Community Church in Rhawnhurst, plans to connect with people by hosting a community barbecue this month. Please pray for the team as they work together. Ask the Lord to bring many neighbors to our facility. Pray for new relationships to be initiated. Pray that contacts would participate in services, come to know Christ as Savior and begin a lifetime of growth.

Pray for Mike and Margarete Connor as they lead in Rhawnhurst. Mike continues to prepare through a church planting internship. He's studying Homiletics in our Pastors Institute. He's preaching regularly. And, he's gaining hands-on experience in urban ministry. Ask the Lord to grow our core team and supply the varied gifts and abilities required to develop a new church.

Pastor Pete Forshtay, from our church in the Wissinoming neighborhood, reports that our youth group, *Thrive*, has been doing well.



"One of our volunteers had a busy semester at school and his schedule didn't coincide with our Wednesday night meetings; but, now the semester is over and we're really glad to have him back! We're always in need of more staff and volunteers, so be praying the Lord works on the hearts of more to get involved.

"One of our students received Christ as Savior this past week! It didn't happen the way one might expect, either. The day after youth group, on a Thursday afternoon just after school let out, I got a call from this student who said she'd like to see me about something. I asked her to meet me at our church in Wissinoming in about 10 minutes (as I had just settled into my favorite chair at a nearby coffee shop for some much needed studying.) I packed up my stuff, grabbed my coffee and drove to church where I was greeted by the student shortly after my arrival. She explained how friends of hers were playing with a Ouija board app. Yes, I said app. Its on their phones now! She told me that after having joined her friends and experiencing something strange, she felt as if she had a demon on her and had asked me for holy water so that she could fight it off. Her family, like so many families in Philadelphia, consider themselves Catholic but do not belong to any parish. I explained to her that that's not how this works and began asking her questions about her salvation and whether she had ever made a decision to follow Jesus. She asked me to wait. She pulled out her phone to ask her mom about her religion. She thanked her mom and relayed to me that she was baptized as a baby and was Catholic; but, she quickly followed that up with, 'But I want to be Christian now and I don't want to go to hell. I don't know what to do about this demon on me!'

"And so we talked. I explained how the Light and darkness cannot occupy the same space and that if she invites the Holy Spirit to be with her, that He'll never leave; that demons aren't allowed to stay; and, that she'll be forever forgiven her sin and guaranteed everlasting life with God. And so we prayed together. She is scheduled to be baptized by the time you read this newsletter!

Be praying for this young student as she, like many others who are saved outside of a church family, face many challenges in their discipleship and growth. And praise God that another soul has been won! Thank you for your partnership in bringing her to Jesus.

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