

METROGRACE

Developing Urban Churches

March 2018

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

Homeless

When we hear about, "The Homeless," we're likely to imagine a stereotypical picture. We see a troubled man lying on cardboard near a steam grate. He's pulling a dirty coat over his unshaven face to fend off the cold. During the night, he's roaming backstreets, searching for some morsel of food. Most stereotypes develop around a kernel of truth. In reality, homelessness affects men, women and children; it is particularly difficult for families. In 2016, "about 15,000 Philadelphians experienced homelessness." (<https://beta.phila.gov>)

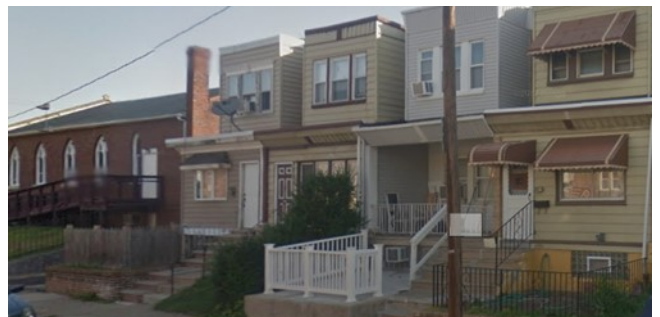


MetroGrace develops congregations in the urban neighborhoods that ring Center City. Most residents live in these communities. Homelessness looks different in these areas. Last month, our congregations were able to help in two situations.



One man in his fifties came to trust Christ about five years ago. He participates in one of our churches with regularity. This brother has been separated from his family for about ten years. He does his best to provide for his wife and daughter, working in the building trades. Mental illness and addiction have continually taken a toll. He does well for months at a time, then some switch is flicked; he goes off the deep end and swirls to the bottom of life. He's made three suicide attempts. Last

month, he lost his rental and was sleeping in his truck for weeks. He was able to find places to shower and eat; then he'd go "home" to his pick-up. When a man in one of our congregations heard about his plight, he was able to provide a room. Please ask the Lord to deliver this man from addiction, heal his mind and restore his family.



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Name: _____

Enclosed is my gift to support:

Jim and Lisa Brown \$ _____
 General Fund \$ _____
 Other \$ _____

*Thank you for supporting MetroGrace this month!
 Please include this cut-off with your next gift and
 use the back to indicate any changes to your
 contact information.*

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 Dr. Jim Brown,
 Executive Director**

One Sunday last month, a woman who lives on the block behind our facility came to church in tears. Her husband had been laid off during the winter months and they had gotten behind in their rent. Though he was now back to work and striving to pay what was owed, the landlord had scheduled eviction. Without intervention, this couple and their two children would be homeless in two weeks. Our small urban churches are unable to help financially; most months they're just trying to pay their own bills. But, our team was able to direct this couple to Catholic Social Services an organization that works with the City of Philadelphia to administrate an outreach program for those in danger of becoming homeless. The situation is not fully resolved, yet. But, our church is committed to helping neighbors navigate the complexities of poverty in the city. Please pray with us for this young family. Mom and the two boys have placed their trust in Christ. Dad has been more aloof.

Healing

More than a dozen years ago, Terry was leading a Bible study in a recovery house for women. She asked me to call a woman she had met. My first calls were not received well, but eventually this fifty-year-old woman began attending Crossroads. She was saved, baptized and disciplined. She loves to serve the Lord! She has cleaned the building, provided housing for struggling women and driven people to various appointments. Currently, she's teaching children and loving it!



About five years ago, a man in his fifties began attending Crossroads. He, too, had a troubled past. Hard core drug addiction had taken his finances, family and freedom. His recent salvation and recovery led him to

connect with one our churches.

Last year, this woman and this man began attending the same LifeGroup. They shared their stories of failure, faith and renewal. After more than thirty years of chaos, they've learned to live in peace. They've become good friends! At about sixty years of age, they can see a hopeful future together. Praise God with us for His healing! And, please ask the Lord to use this couple for His glory.

Hitched

This past year, I've had the privilege of working through the Growing in Christ course with two couples. It's been a joy to watch the Lord work in these young adults. In the process, both couples have gotten engaged! In a city where many couples see no need for marriage, we're praising the Lord for His transformative work! Weddings are planned for May and November. Please pray for God's continued blessing in the lives of these new families.



MetroGrace is developing gospel-centered, community-based congregations that create an urban presence where neighbors find help. We couldn't do it without you! Your prayerful, financial support is making a difference in the city! Thank you!

I would like to add or change my address, phone number or email address: