

# METROGRACE

Developing Urban Churches

**March 2019**

**MetroGrace is developing gospel-centered, community-based churches with Crossroads Community Church of Philadelphia in the neighborhoods of Holmesburg, Wissinoming and Bridesburg.**

## **Miracles and Nobodies**

Urban centers experience rapid and widespread transition, constantly! These shifts bring excitement and concern. Some people are eager for the next new thing; they welcome the future with hope. Others dread change; they fear impending loss. The exhilaration and uncertainty of change is felt by children, parents, seniors and whole neighborhoods. Congregations established by MetroGrace provide neighbors with a sense of stability as they embrace their transforming world. They communicate God's unchanging word publicly and privately. They model discipleship. They love. That kind of stability requires commitment and longevity.

About fifteen years ago, a young couple at Crossroads was told that they would not be able to have children. Understandably, the news was devastating. Prayer warriors took on the request that doctors said was impossible. Thirteen years ago, that couple was blessed with their first child. They brought him to church and dedicated him to the Lord. That child grew-up at Crossroads, came to know the Lord and served in the congregation. Last month, David was baptized. His three siblings watched their big brother obey Jesus. Twelve extended family members witnessed his resolve. His parents beamed with pride. And, the urban congregation that prayed for him and watched him grow rejoiced in the work of the Lord! Life change takes time. Please continue to pray for David.



Change is frequent. There is no doubt that the church must shift to be biblically relevant. But, some things must remain constant; people need stability through the storms of life. Large churches that do great things for God are important. So are small churches. Our urban church families are providing steady relationships where neighbors come to know Jesus, grow in their relationships with Him, gather for worship and serve in love.

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my gift to support:

Jim and Lisa Brown \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
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Dr. Jim Brown,  
Executive Director**

I don't know Michael Oh, the Global Executive Director of the Lausanne Movement. But he grew up in Philadelphia; I like that. In an article dated August 26, 2011 (<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/come-be-a-nobody-for-christ>) he wrote:

Many people leave college with the goal to "be somebody." And this usually means getting a good job, making good money, buying a nice house, driving a nice car, attaining some important position, and helping your kids to do the same.

For the Christian, "being somebody" usually means all of that and faithfully going to church on Sundays and Bible study during the week.



But, I believe that Jesus is calling for people to be a nobody for him — people who would forsake the "American dream" to be a part of bringing gospel hope to the nations. People who don't mind if they are not recognized, respected, praised, or promoted — as long as the name of Jesus is cherished, exalted, and adored. People who understand that Jesus didn't come to this world and die on a cross so that we could have a comfortable suburban life and enjoy going to our local church's corporate gathering on Sundays...

### But Why Make This Choice?

Why choose to be a nobody when you could be a somebody? Because life is not about us. It's not about how much money you can make; it's not about how secure and comfortable you can be; it's not even about living a quiet life and being a consistent church attender. And not only is it not about us, it's also not even about the nations that are lost without the gospel. Ultimately it really is about God. God is worthy to hear from each of his servants for whom he died — "Lord I would go anywhere for you. Lord, I would do anything for you."

Are you willing to live a life that's not about you? Could you be a nobody for Jesus in Philadelphia? Our urban churches need men and women who will cross socio-economic boundaries, model discipleship and love people to Jesus. We need people who will endure in service to provide stability. Please ask the Lord to call devoted nobodies to serve in the city.

We're grateful for the team that the Lord has provided to make our urban ministry possible! Our leadership team is composed of servants in their thirties, forties and fifties. All have served for more than ten years.

Some have served much longer. Our team lives in the city. They work in the city. They serve with community organizations. They're growing families in the city. Their children go to school in the city. They play in neighborhood recreation centers. They're forming meaningful relationships with people who need Jesus. Come, join us!



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