

METROGRACE

Developing Urban Churches

October 2017



Dr. Jim Brown
Executive Director

Longevity

Urban ministry takes time. People rarely transform overnight. Real life change requires new habits that are developed day-by-day.

Recently, a couple came to me and asked, "What was the name of that Bible commentary you mentioned? We really want to grow more." Wow! That's a phrase every pastor wants to hear! But, that breakthrough took more than ten years.

When I met this couple, they were living together, caring for a child from a previous relationship as well as their own child who was born before marriage. They placed their trust in Christ. They separated to live in accord with God's plan. They completed the Growing in Christ course. They completed pre-marital counseling. They were married. God blessed them with another child. Now they worship consistently at Crossroads. They serve the Lord in accord with their giftedness. And they are a blessing to their church family.

I mentioned that Bible commentary more than a year ago. But **now** they are ready to dig deeper.

The average length of pastoral tenure is 3.6 years. It would be hard to see genuine life change in such a short period of time. Please pray for more urban workers to build their lives in the city.



Life Events

Often people recognize their need for God's help amidst significant life events. For urban pastors, this often means a call as people face problems. When a child is arrested, a spouse overdoses, a marriage breaks or a death occurs people are ready to hear from God. MetroGrace churches develop an urban presence that makes ministry possible during these times.

Last month, three funerals enabled our congregations to minister to families during their time of need. Many who would never attend church were touched by Christ's love and the truth of the gospel. One woman who had been skeptical about our church said how impressed she was by the love shown to her family.

In addition, our congregations helped a family who experienced an explosion at their apartment complex because someone was, "cooking meth," producing methamphetamine. And one of our congregations worked with a broken family where a paranoid father took the children a hundred miles away and refused to return them.



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Dr. Jim Brown,
Executive Director



Not all life events are negative. Last month, two young couples began the process of learning how to be married. Each hopes to be married in the next year. Decisions to wed are joyful! But, the distorted image of marriage and family requires correction. Long hours of personalized biblical instruction are required. Our churches help couples build solid marriages.

Thank you for supporting MetroGrace! You are transforming lives in the city!



Pete and Danielle
Forshtay

Legacy

Doug and Susan Blocksom moved to Philadelphia more than a dozen years ago. Doug had taken a position as General Manager in a suburban industrial firm. They could have chosen a comfortable life in beautiful Bucks County, but they chose to live and serve the Lord in the city!

The Blocksoms had grown under the ministry of Pastors Chuck Davis and Ron Smalls in Ocala Florida. While in Ocala, Doug and Susan worked with teens. One year, at Brethren National Youth Conference, the Blocksoms made themselves fully available for God's use.

When Doug's job required a move north, Pastor Chuck Davis connected the Blocksoms to Kurt Miller who steered Doug and Susan to MetroGrace.

Soon, Doug was serving as an elder at Crossroads Community Church. They worked with children, teens and adults. They reached out to some of the most needy. They helped people come to know Jesus as Savior. They helped individuals grow in their relationship with Christ. Doug preached God's word. No task was too great, or too small. Often the Blocksoms would help with work at our facilities, making it fun for youth to get involved. They are great examples of servant leadership!

Recently, the Blocksoms retired and moved to Florida to be closer to family. We praise the Lord for that blessing in their lives! They have left a **rich legacy** in Philadelphia!

What will your legacy be? Have you made yourself fully available for God's use? The Blocksoms' well-deserved retirement leaves a gap at Crossroads Community Church in Wissinoming. Could the Lord use you to serve in the city? Maybe the Lord is prompting someone reading this to say, "Pete and Danielle need help. Let's move to Philly and serve with them in Wissinoming." GREAT IDEA! God can use you in the city.

We're also praying for a church planting intern. We're looking for the man God has called to develop an urban congregation. Please pray for an intern who will move into the neighborhood, build relationships and receive training to lead a church planting team. Thanks for praying with us!

When *longevity* enables meaningful relationships and *life events* provide opportunities to serve, we can leave a *legacy* of transformation.

Come serve the Lord with us!



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