

UNITED METHODIST METROPOLITAN MINISTRY OF GREATER GRAND RAPIDS
2011 Application for Funding

(1) The outcomes we hope to achieve

Metro's long-term goal and mission is "to inspire and equip United Methodists to serve Christ in transforming the Greater Grand Rapids area". The major new strategy in 2009 for achieving that goal has been to embark on the Communities of Shalom (CoS) program, coordinated by the Drew University School of Theology in partnership with the General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church.

We are currently in the process of creating 5-7 new Communities of Shalom in Grand Rapids! Conceived by General Conference in 1992 in response to the Los Angeles riots, this is a proven United Methodist strategy to revitalize local churches and neighborhoods.

The Core Values of CoS are spiritual growth, multi-cultural harmony, economic prosperity and health, healing & wholeness. The four CoS Principles are: faith in action, Asset-Based Community Development, collaboration and systemic change.

(2) How we will measure said outcomes

Outcomes are not measured in units of service, although we are able to provide those in some areas of our work: attendees at workshops, luncheons, meetings, programs, etc. Outcomes are measured in terms of lives changed and communities transformed, a much more difficult measure.

Outcome indicators will depend on each unique ministry created by the individual Shalom Zones. The five months training provided by CoS national trainers in Grand Rapids will include methods to measure outcomes. We expect to observe renewed strength and vitality in many of our urban churches and neighborhoods, through collaboration with their community partners in the Communities of Shalom program.

(3) The needs/problems to be addressed by Metro Ministry

Grand Rapids District and Metro leadership is critically aware of the challenges urban churches face in transitional neighborhoods. Several of our churches are facing closure within 2-4 years if we do not address these issues. The neighborhoods surrounding our urban churches are also in crisis.

Beginning in 2006, Metro Ministry formed a partnership with the District Superintendent and others, the Urban Ministries Task Force, to examine issues and causes. We have been committed to building relationships for effective collaborations across our Grand Rapids UM connection. To that end, in the last three years, the Task Force has organized many opportunities for learning, worship and fellowship among UM clergy and laity in metropolitan Grand Rapids.

(4) Metro's History Mission and Goals

History

Metro Ministry's official history began in Grand Rapids in October 1954. Established to address issues of affordable housing, hunger and GR District new church development; the mission was updated in 2009 to emphasize training/equipping United Methodists to be more effective in their community outreach efforts.

Mission

The Mission of UM Metropolitan Ministry is to inspire and equip United Methodists to serve Christ in transforming the Greater Grand Rapids area. March 2006

Goals/Vision

To see the day when Christ's peace and justice is a reality for all people in the Greater Grand Rapids area.

Strategies in 2009

I. Incubating and releasing new/re-developed ministries

- Interfaith Sustainability Group – an ecumenical effort, Metro as coordinator. Provided leadership for E-Waste Recycling Drive 6/20/09 at Hope RCA in GR. Ended July 09.

- Communities of Shalom-work with area UMCs to create new collaborative ministries

II. Building Capacity for Ministry (equipping)

- NCJ Urban Network “Two Coins for Justice”, 1/6-7/09
- Metro Forum (Keller 12/08, Granberg-Michaelson twice postponed to 2/10)
- JustFAITH (four UMCs in 2008/09, plus one new UMC in 2009/10)
- Communities of Shalom – Shalom Summit 10/09, Shalom training 11 & 12/09

III. Collaboration/Consultation with UMs engaged in ministry

- Urban Ministries Task Force – coordinator
- Fassett Fund for Justice
- Consultation: African American new church, St. Paul’s, 2/4/09, w/ Dr. Eugene Blair
- “Clusters Gathering” at First UMC on Saturday, 2/7/09
- Shalom Workshop, Trinity UMC, 4/15/09, lead by Dr. JP Duncan
- Second Annual Joint Worship Service, Wyoming Park UMC, 5/17/09
- Metro/GR District Clergy/Laity Picnic – 9/2/09
- Communities of Shalom – working with 5-7 new Shalom Zones in Grand Rapids
- Annual Holiday basket sign-up SECOM: October 2009 – bilingual volunteer
- MI Area Hispanic Taskforce – 10/6/09
- NECM, SECOM & UMCH – Ex-Officio Member, Boards of Directors
- CGBM & GR District Board of Missions – Committee Member
- Annual Conference Program Committee - member
- NCJ Urban Network – Vice Chair & member, event planning team

IV. Developing Community Relationships

- Restorative Justice Coalition – member, Steering Committee (ended August 09)
- Volunteers in Service Roundtable (VIS) – participant
- Community Sustainability Partnership, member
- Communities of Shalom –collaborative interfaith, ecumenical & community relationships

(5) Metro partners and their roles in our mission

Metro can only accomplish its Shalom mission to transform Grand Rapids with the collaboration of United Methodist Churches, ecumenical organizations, nonprofit agencies, businesses and schools. The strong leadership and support of the Rev. Laurie Haller has been critical to the success of our recent attempts to bring Metro area churches together. Other essential partners in 2009 have included members of the Metro Board of Directors and area pastors & laity. They all bring expertise, energy, enthusiasm and funding to our efforts.

(6) Long-term strategies for funding Metro Ministry

Metro is a unique advocacy, planning and program development ministry. We look to the Conference and District for long-term support. This funding, along with Metro Member church apportionments, are the primary sources of our annual budget. Our Christ-centered, denomination-specific ministry makes it especially challenging to secure operational funding from secular sources.

(7) Assessing success/failure in achieving 2009 outcomes

We know that the work accomplished in partnership with the GR District since 2006 has been critical in bringing us to this exciting and challenging moment where we can fully expect to establish 5-7 Shalom Zones in the Greater Grand Rapids area within the year.

Although several UMCs may still need to close, we will encourage alternatives and significant ministries to grow from them. For example, in the near future, Metro Ministry may be able to target funding to new Shalom and other urban ministries using the proceeds from the sale of the former Oakdale UMC church building and parsonage.