

Missions Education Month – October 2018

Presented by: Bless Charlotte Team & Missions Committee

Urban Ministries: Dale Mullennix

- Dale, former pastor at Myers Park Baptist, current head of Urban Ministries (retiring in May)
- Vocation – ‘The place where your deep gladness and the worlds great need intersect’
- People they serve: homeless folks downtown
 - Situationally homeless (crisis based homelessness, something bad happened, loss of job, illness)
 - Average person gets out in 45 days with their help and partners
 - 85% of people who are homeless are situationally homeless
 - Most people feel homelessness is unsolvable, but actually there are solutions, usually an economic answer – help them find a job that pays enough to live
 - Chronically homeless – the remaining 15% - HUD classifies those as homeless longer than 12 months continuously, or a series of episodes that add up to that over 3 years, AND you have a disabling condition (addiction, mental illness, physical disability)
 - Model of job opportunity isn’t enough to help chronics-- they need a healthcare answer
 - People look at chronics and assume their homelessness is REALLY unsolvable, Urban ministries with other organizations had developed a needs continuum to originally address this – Urban Ministries was the entry spot (soup kitchen, mail, job intro) and they would send folks who needed the next steps to other partners within the continuum ... this works best for situationally homeless, but for the 15% of chronics it didn’t work
 - 2007 changed their work – Denver Moore getting a tour asked Kathy Izard, “where are the beds?” Kathy came to Dale about helping and he reminded her of the continuum of care. During this time Liz Clausen-Kelly wrote an article about ‘housing first’ on housing the chronically homeless. John Moore called and said why aren’t we doing this- how can we do it – if you test it I will pay for it! After that Urban Ministries started a pilot program- basis is that for 15% of chronics you give them housing first and provide the continuum (all the needs) in the home and then solve their problem. All of a sudden people went from having all of these problems, to not. For example – alcohol was the way to survive the homelessness, yet in an apartment he didn’t need to drink... Before putting them in the

housing program they asked where homeless people spent their time (ER, Hospital, Jail, etc.) – cost of 1.8M for the pilot folks, 37k per person per year... to house it cost 10k. They later raised the money and built Moore Place, which currently houses 120 people. They have an additional 205 folks in apartments across the city.

▪ **Answer to homelessness is HOMES.**

- Charlotte currently is having an “Affordable Housing Crisis” – Real estate developers are buying up affordable areas in town and those with lower incomes are being displaced. While some are getting richer, others are staying behind. How do you figure out how to serve people who have these needs? Our city is forgetting those who are 30% below variable median income.
- What can the church do?
 - Help be an advocate for the very poorest. They tried to build another Moore Place 2 years ago. Also b/c of lack of affordable housing they cannot find additional apartments to expand their program. They are looking to figure out if they can build another Moore place or even 2.
 - Homelessness has gone the wrong way – more folks in the last two years, number of people on the street is going up. They use a vulnerability index to decide who should be housed first – it basically ranks who would die first (1-18, 18 being most vulnerable in health). They are currently seeing a big influx of 2-4's.
- What created all of this homelessness?
 - Deinstitutionalization of mentally ill people, can't keep people locked up but they didn't have anywhere else to go
 - In 1980 cut 90% of public housing
 - Advent of crack cocaine (cheaper and highly addictive)
- People in Room in the Inn (who come to our church) – are all over the spectrum in terms of situational to chronic
- **How can we help?**
 - They need advocates, talk to city council (particularly with housing), put time limits on affordable housing... be an ambassador for the poor.
 - Get out of your house and see homeless people as people. If we spend all our time with people like ourselves, we get ignorant and arrogant – not on purpose, just get used to doing the same thing.
 - Come volunteer – get more interactions with those who are different from you. Go to their website – volunteer.
 - Start to understand your neighbor who you didn't realize was your neighbor. Have to meet people where they are.

Rescue Mission: Jeff Glenn

- Jeff has been there for 5 years, from Charlotte, went to APP State, worked at the YMCA (various), Biblical Counseling degree and then to RM
- Why do they do what they do at Rescue Mission? More important - founded by 'what does God say.' They embody their mission statement: transforming lives In the name of Jesus Christ by serving people with addiction in order to equip them for the community. Don't just help residents cope/bear addiction, want to transform their lives. What needs to be healed in the church, reminds everyone that there are 1000 addictions out there – substance is just one.
- Addiction defined:
 - Webster's – a persistent compulsive dependence on a behavior on substance, includes mood altering behaviors. Substance vs. Process addictions are examples.
 - Theologically – addiction is the bondage to the rule of a substance, activity or state of mind, which then becomes a state of mind that even bad consequences don't bring dependence and lead us away from God, sinful destructive attachment to an idolatry – anything we worship (love, power, drugs, success, exercise, etc.) it is inside of us – false worship of the heart... a disorder of worship, the object of God themselves
- Two locations – Rebound for men (180) and Doves Nest for the women (90 ladies and 30 children) – one of 150+ Rescue Missions around the country. Many on staff who are even in recovery – 52%. Help residents and staff understand 'don't tell me you will take me somewhere if you haven't been yourself.' Residents want to hear from folks who have been there – tell me about God from your perspective. No united way or government funding – all donations.
- The ground at the foot of the cross is level – it doesn't matter what you bring – Jesus leveled it all
- They use 12 steps of AA and the foundation of Jesus, if recovery is only a changed behavior then God will take you back to the start and do it over again.
- Who is our neighbor????? Luke 10:25-37, Rhea - Hebrew for neighbor means anyone that you know.
 - You can't give away what you don't have, you need to heal first and then encourage
- Serving the neighbors, self, others.
- What are the needs of our city:
 - Started ForCharlotte, instead of competing with one another
 - Low economic mobility and generational poverty – one of 900 churches in this City, but our city is 50 of 50 in terms of helping folks with their mobility. All those churches and we are in the bottom
 - Lack of social capital, family structure
 - Racial divisions.
 - Rescue mission is used as a tool to help with these issues – they want churches to be coordinating - they want to be excellent at

what they do – want to help churches plan and implement a sense of calling, to partner with them on strategic discernment, help business community embrace a compassionate approach to addiction – how can you care about employees, want CRM to be a resource for the prevention of addiction – at the onset of addiction... they want to develop a relationship is ongoing between volunteers and folks

- **How can you get involved?**

- Maintain CRM as a partner and enhance engagement.
- Which do you have time talent or treasure – that you can participate with them?
- Ongoing sponsorship of their meals, serving them – most common way to be a part of their work. Pay for it but engage with the men/women – what is God doing in your life.
- Volunteering in the learning center – 20 computers, help with getting jobs, education so they can return to life.
- There will be a new café on the property with residents working in it, to help them be used to a job environment.
- We need to take this info with us – back to places of business, etc.
 - 2 Corinthians 1:3/4 – share this with residents, why are you going through something bad? To help others who are going through the same thing.
 - Jeff shared his story of addiction, overcoming it, the power of God to help him through it. He was originally helped by Rescue Mission and now is an employee and advocate.
 - Currently – the biggest rise they are seeing is an addiction to prescription drugs, in addition to expectations of opioids.
 - Adopt/host donation drives for them, always looking for items... lets schedule churches to host donations, so they can keep items in house on a plan. Also sponsoring residents in the café.
 - How successful are they – 120 day program, those that don't relapse in a given year are considered successful --- 72% are actually successful. Non-faith based is only 17% countrywide, WOW.

Warren Stukes Junior, Urban Area Director for FCA and Associate Minister at Friendship Missionary Baptist Church

- Been at FCA for the last 2 years, for urban charlotte
- Schools Served: Independence, Rocky River, Garinger, Northside Christian, Vance, Harding, W. Charlotte, Philip O Berry, and JC Smith
- FCA's mission is to see the world transformed by Jesus through coaches and athletes. God and sports can go together. Coaches, every time they speak, are speaking life or death, to be Christian and help them see that, or not. So they

want every coach and athlete to have Jesus. Do this through coaches, campus, camps, and community.

- On campus – they do one on one with coaches, coaches huddle/devotionals before schools, team huddles where they do study together, one on one mentoring with a student athlete, multi-sport on campus huddles, pray for/with the teams before games, meet us at the pole day
- Off campus – pregame meals where you partner with churches to provide the meals, and can present ministry during that, send coaches to camp where they can rebuild/minister to their family, marriage retreats even for coaches/spouses/families, leadership camps where they help kids become the leaders for huddles
- They do scholarship a lot of their kids to go to camp – can't afford lunch, so they cannot afford to go to camps...
- All of the schools he serves in are the top poorest in the city, 5 of them are free breakfast and lunch for the entire school, b/c the poverty is that bad.
- Kids are not all just making bad decisions; some of them are in heartbreaking situations.
 - In the last two months 5 of his athletes died, including the one from Independence (kid tried/committed suicide and then he had to meet with the athletes)... serious issue going on is mental illness for athletes, coaches struggling with marriage, broken homes, etc. Kids are dealing with awful family situations – cleaning a gun and accident, kid run over, etc. Helping with funerals is a part of his work.
 - He worries less about athletes records and more about their soul, their life decisions, etc. God is not in a trophy. 2 Timothy 4:7, “fought the fight, run the race, etc.”
 - Establishing the relationship with these kids is the foundation to help them through the different adversities they are facing
- UrbancltFCA – he insta and tweets their devotions, you can follow him there!
- Warren is a missionary with FCA, which means he has to raise money for him to be full time
 - FCA has a unique ministry that they are allowed in the school
 - Budget for the year:
 - Urban FCA Staff 50,000
 - Camp scholarships 40,000
 - Other ministry resources 13,000
- **What can we do to help??**
 - Different schools have options for meals, support monetarily for helping sustain this, money for bibles, resources for camps, training for kids, things always come up for pressing needs
 - Sow into our recreational ministry, help train athletes that are here, care about that ministry. Don't just have church teams, have a sports ministry – there should be the 'word' 'time out for Jesus' at every timeout and at every time the message is getting in

- Cultivate strong ministry to draw in fathers/parents, have a word for them too. Never know what may catch someone. Challenge coaches to do it in a Christian way, and do it. Invest in having Bible's for coaches, print off devotionals, 'this is what we learned at practice, coach asked me if I had a prayer concern, etc.'
- Warren's #: 704-258-8552, Insta/Twitter: urbancltfca, Facebook: UrbanCharlotteFca

QC Family Tree: Greg Jarrell

- Providence and QC have been a part of their ministry since 2005
- QC Family tree is in the Enderly Park neighborhood, led by Greg and Helms Jarrell- on Tuckaseegee. Wonderful people there have been their teachers and pastors.
 - Their work there is hospitality – welcoming folks into their space, helping meet folks in their need – if they are homeless, hungry, come and we will help you. All of these works are acts of Mercy.
 - Over the course of doing that work they began to see systemic issues/patterns that were happening - around race/class, racial and economic justice, and continuing their interpersonal work as well.
 - They also work with youth to help empower and let them take control over their own destiny – a few are helping step into their leadership roles in their neighborhood.
 - They operate 5 apartments, 2 houses as long term affordable housing. In last few months, housing rentals have doubled, facing a tidal wave of cataclysmic investment in their neighborhood – but they are able to help some families remain in place and maintain their home
- ***A Riff of Love***, is new book Greg has written, available at Park Rd Books.
 - He says 'our neighbors are master improvisors- they take a small amount of resources and turning it into something beautiful.' The neighbors make beautiful out of a lot of poverty and things that could be bad.
 - He read a quick excerpt about a rent party, where you hold a party to have folks help you pull money together to pay rent. The sharing economy is the way folks move forward.
- **Charlotte Housing Crisis:** There is a housing crisis in charlotte- as it relates to availability of the poorest residents, 50% area median income and below, 35k or below a year.
 - Rent is 800-1200 a month in Enderly park, you should pay no more than 30% of your income on housing, so if you are making 35k no more than 800 (including all bills/insurance/etc.).

- We lack 34k units of affordable housing in our city. Living within your means is difficult for these folks who cannot afford it.
- Housing is expensive, driven by the cost of land. Land and how we live on it is what drives the cost. For about five decades this city was built in a suburban way, we subsidized new developments even further out. As we did that, our city disinvested in neighborhoods closer in. As Charlotte grows, affordable housing folks cannot find places and keep getting pushed out farther from city center.
- QC Family Tree does the direct work – providing subsidized housing, but also wants to help address the policy work
- Where do ppl go when they are displaced?
 - Current movement is a suburbanization of poverty, poor neighborhoods used to be clustered in inner-city close to downtown... now the inner-city is being moved to the first ring of suburbs. Many of QCFT's neighbors are being pushed outside of I-85.
 - Poor neighborhoods are patrolled by police more, use ambulances more, kids rely more on school buses, all of those costs begin to add up as poor neighborhoods are pushed out further.
 - Suburban neighborhoods have more land etc. – there will be such a higher cost. Folks are further from jobs, longer bus rides, higher childcare, etc.
 - Some of the homes in the worst condition are the ones that are corporations/investors/portfolios – the goal is to return profit, but doing that by displacement of current residents (no acceptance of section 8 vouchers... stabilizes neighborhoods). The investment company is participating in gentrification.
- Does QCFT's neighborhood have access to healthy foods? They have an Aldi nearby, but they also do a garden project where they try to help folks with providing more nutritional things.
- West Side Community Land Trust – Started by QCFT – seeks to own land, most significant asset, that then they sell housing on. By owning the land you can help keep the prices maintained (www.WestSideCLT.org).
 - Trying to create long-term stability for more folks in Enderly park. City currently owns some land nearby that they are trying to acquire, that is one small way they are trying to help
 - To cultivate this work, and help in the crisis, it is generational work... took 100 years to create this housing crisis, so the solutions are very long term.
 - Enderly Park has been designated an 'opportunity zone' for affordable housing, more help... it is a bit of a double edge sword. Enderly Coffee just opened up, friend Tony opened it and everybody loves it – black, white, brown, rich, poor, everyone can afford it. It has been an interesting meeting block. The more folks who come, more folks say these houses are cute we could live here.

- We need options for creating neighborhoods where everyone can share in the rising tide, the investment, and everyone can benefit. What is the difference between finding a great investment for yourself monetarily vs. investing in people who are there already?
- In 2016 Greg met a retiring pediatrician, he wanted to work on affordable housing issues. He took 600k of his retirement account and put it into a self directed IRA. His agreement was that he would investment that money with QC – he did so in 2016 and started buying properties in Enderly park that the land trust will continue to buy back and help provide affordable housing through. Another friend of theirs has contributed 120k. ‘A profit is not the only good I can do with my own money.’
- **What other ways can we help:**
 - Consider your own assets? Can you split your lot in two? Can you build an accessory dwelling unit, a carriage/tiny house to rent to someone? You can rent it through urban ministry centers program. Can you start an investment club to make loans to low-income homeowners, or to hold and maintain affordable housing?
 - Join where the work is happening – westsidelandtrust.org, QC Family tree, other nonprofit developers, housing trust fund bond proposal on November ballot (policy reform is probably more important but in terms of symbolic help they are one place), Vision 2040 plan through City of Charlotte.

Refugee Support Services: Rachel Humphries

- RSS is a 501C3 that helps refugees, Rachel is the person who started it.
- Who are refugees, how do they become refugees, and what are the challenges that folks deal with?
 - A refugee is a person who has fled his country “owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion” ... it is a 3 country process –A refugee leaves their home country, runs to a second where they find the UN (United Nations), ultimately are approved to the final country
 - These types of people are NOT Refugees:
 - Asylum seeker – come to our country first, and then ask.... a person who has crossed an international border and hopes to be granted refugee status
 - Internally Displaced Person – like refugees, they are forced to move, but remain in their own country

- Special immigrant VISA – mainly translators for our troops over seas
 - Who can say someone can become a refugee? The UN decides if someone is a refugee.
 - Steps that happen in screening process: screened by original country, FBI, Homeland security, medical/fingerprints, cultural orientation courses all before they even travel to our country. They also come with right to work and a social security number.
 - Number of how many we can have is only 30,000 in the latest determination ,which is allowed by our President. He is able to set these numbers. For example- the number of Refugees allowed by our president in 2016 was 85,000 and 2017 was 53,700. The President is the sole person who establishes this determination.
 - Annually in NC we receive around 1000
 - Most refugees in 2017 came from Congo, Iraq, Syria (6,000 settled then) and this year there were 11 people from Syria.
- A Refugee Story –
 - The Montagnards – Persecuted b/c Christian, ethnically wrong for their country, and helped our troops in Vietnam War.
 - Plet – young woman from highlands of Vietnam, helped someone running from persecution and she fed them. After which the government began to chase her family and they literally ran into Cambodia. They met the UN on the boarder.
 - Suet – her husband distributed Bibles, which was illegal, as a result they had to flee. When they fled and got to UN camp, the previous government persecutors told lies to get into the camp – stole several of her children and successfully euthanized (lethally injected) one.
 - Everyone who comes to RSS has these stories, just from different countries, all after they have been well vetted.
- How does RSS help folks adjust to life in the US?
 - They've learned what people needed, more than stuff, was a culture coach – how to integrate, how do you get your kids in schools, how do you pump up a bicycle tire.
 - RSS has self sufficiency classes, American education, art therapy/knit together, help center (sit and wait, may need help with reading their mail, is this thing a bill or a coupon, every Wednesday they distribute veggies, fish, bread (gleaners) – as a part of their policy to arrive, survive, thrive – helping with their most immediate need.
 - Also do special events – kick off to summer with kids bouncy stuff, etc. and at the same time families could make a first aid kit.
 - They do supply collections – for things that people need/etc.
 - Love and Learn children's program – They help to do basic literacy skills with the children, the adults stay with the kids and sometimes they learn literacy skills at the same time.

- Knit together program- Thursday mornings - refugee women come together to develop community and make hats and purses. RSS puts them together as a trunk show; you can host one-- educate participants about RSS, accept donations and receive a hat/etc.
- Fruitful Friendship program – mentoring family to family or person to person, visit a refugee once a week for an hour for a year. Huge commitment. Share lives together.
- They have an interpreter list – lots of languages they need help with
- Help Teams are from community members in seven key areas: medical, financial, legal, social services, employment, children, housing. They need help connecting people to other series.
- When we all bring our little skills and bring it where you go to serve – it can be a simple skill and can give just that little bit, that is when magic happens.
- For the first 90 days of resettlement that is done through resettlement agencies, RSS is a post resettlement help agency, so folks who come to them past that first 90 days.
- 1000 touch points a month, in terms of refugees coming. 100 refugees serving on a regular basis.

Education, Charlotte School Board: Margaret Marshall

- Margaret Marshall is on the School Board in Clt, elected last year and is here to talk about problems in the system, educational needs in CMS, etc. She is also a member of our church.
- School is the most intimate experience with a governmental entity that a person has, we are going to look at 1000 ft at the whole system.
- When Margaret was in school, it didn't matter if you finished your education – you could find a job. Today we know it matters and want all of our kids to be educated.
- Verses:
 - Matthew 25: 37-40, The least of these... is a lot of these little children.
 - Jeremiah 33:6, peace and security and prosperous city is everyone moving forward
- Education: It is a race to the top or to the bottom. Ready set go!
 - Some are ready - born into stable homes, have sleep, were read to, have had exposure to diff. things, they are ready to go into school.
 - By 3rd grade they are on grade level, passed benchmarks, etc.
 - Some kids are a little behind – English isn't their first language, they might have a “word gap,” aren't hearing rich language – before they start school they know 30million fewer words than those who were ready
 - By 3rd grade they still have catch up, you do after school, summer learning loss, etc.

- Some kids are born into homes that have issues- food insecurity, domestic violence, housing issues, their brain hasn't been nourished and it has affected their brain's development... lowest income is typically 2 years behind those who are ready.
 - By 3rd grade they still have catch up, you do after school, summer learning loss, etc.
- CMS Is the most segregated system in NC right now – which means our kids who are behind never have other experiences to children who are doing well, they never get out of their neighborhood
- What is happening now?
 - Big focus on early learning and literacy, increasing pre-K, READ charlotte (Organization helping with kids reading on grade level by 3rd grade... all kinds of ways you can help with that effort)
 - Additional social/emotional professionals in CMS to educate the WHOLE child, we are far below best practice numbers
 - Focus on exposure and readiness for work – connecting kids with jobs, exposing them early... working on better technical education, more on and off ramps than college. College isn't what everyone wants or needs, trying to create more opportunities in different venues
 - Equity – which is a word they are using to talk about their plan. Equity is that you get what you need to get where you need to be (not equality where everyone gets the same thing)
 - Trying to align guaranteed viable curriculum that is the same across the board (west side vs. south side currently doesn't have the same math in 7th grade)
 - Goal is to give kids better chances to succeed, also social capital initiatives – to show kids what is possible, expand their world view
- **Where does the faith community come in??**
 - Students:
 - One on one tutoring – Heart Math, North Star Literacy, Tutor charlotte – congregations get their members to go in and participate in these already established programs
 - Weekend backpack programs – help with food insecurity
 - Summer learning loss programs – Freedom School, BELL, Y Readers, trying to combat summer learning loss. Congregations get involved again in these established programs.
 - Afterschool – Our church already does some of this with RAMA road, Sardis Presbyterian and others have programs similar
 - Funding bodies – communities in schools fund case workers in schools, and churches help fund some of these
 - Teachers and Culture: congregations sponsor a school and help
 - Teacher appreciation – anything to help teachers

- Teacher childcare – barrier for teachers, is there a way to help with this
- Professional Development – congregations fund work with this or help allow them to use their space
- Clubs – help with afterschool clubs, either AG ‘bulldog matters’ with one congregation
- Sports:
 - Volunteer coaches and mentors – Providence Methodist has a mentoring program with kids in Grier heights, enormous amounts of time academically and in sports
 - Specific team support – Central Church adopted the Harding football team (through the FCA Program, Warren Stukes Jr.)
- Parent Engagement
 - Family nights – Christ Lutheran started this thing called McPie – family night event, once a week with a huge 300 person meal, clubs for students with STEM work, parents take ESL classes or other seminars, have helped the parents be a part of the team with the school and students
 - Latino youth summit – Christ episcopal is doing this
 - Nepalese listening summit – done by Cokesbury UMC
- We are looking at ways to make change in our community – anything that helps poverty will help education, the wealthier a family is the better the education... education is where everything intersects – but the whole child is their entire life – better family environment, less poverty, better education.
- Questions:
 - Do these churches who do all of these things have members on staff who do this? ... McPie has staff, MPPres has a huge amount of money and nonprofit related, MPMethodist also has a fulltime staff person, Selwyn Pres has volunteer and regular staff that work through it
 - Would PBC get involved in one or two schools or do overall work with CMS – typically they pick one. Could we expand our work with Rama – work with their families, broader reach. Rama (overall) does have two large partners already
 - Are there any good partnerships with faith based communities and the non-profits? Huntington Farms where Forest Hills has worked with a non profit, Churches have funneled into Y readers as well. St. Gabe’s partners with Cochran Middle, working with teachers, etc.
 - What are the biggest challenges on Margaret’s heart – the kids that are so far behind when they start... as a community we haven’t addressed that, how do we work with preschoolers,

more we lessen that 30million word gap, how do we get to those young children. They aren't even in the school system yet. Also – what else can we do to lighten the load of teachers – showing that people care, more volunteers. Also the one on one time with students – those relationships you build are even more important to the children.

- What about providing those off ramps? – Harding has a program to do construction work on blue prints, code, and help with that trades. Now that you have these programs, what is the need from the community? Some of it is with direct involvement from people in trades, some of it is course work and certifications during HS to help them get higher paying wages afterwards, more paid internships and better transportation for this. If your company needs more entry-level jobs – come and help partner so they can get kids in.
- Kaitlin Bensch spoke about the kids who are coming to her school Old Providence as a choice school – which means they come from a lower income neighborhood and are so behind in terms of curriculum b/c it is so different from other schools in more impoverished areas.
- A lot of schools on the eastside need extra help... kids there are ESL

Charlotte Mecklenburg Food Policy Council: Erin Brighton

- 2010 founding to help with food insecurity in this city, Erin is a part time director and she has a board of 10 people.
 - Came together after the “food desert study” from 2010 – where they discovered what is lacking is unhealthy food – not just food period. When they first looked at this they partnered with the health department – other organizations picked it up and started caring about this.
- 2015 they did it again called “state of the plate” and looked at peoples access to healthy foods and vegetables, do you have to cross a major road, do you have SNAP, food stamps, limited access... if you have gas station food you are stuck
 - One statistic Mecklenburg county has the highest rate of children and families with food insecurity – means you don't know where your next meal is coming from –not necessarily poverty, but lack of food. Stat is 35% in Mecklenburg county vs. NC state average at 20%.
 - The “state of the plate” also has statistics on food pantry access with number of kids using that, bus lines, grocery stores, socioeconomic status and school achievement... they all look the same, the crescent vs. the wedge.

The city wants to create a better centrally located market. The focus has to be that it must be easily accessible for transportation. The study came to being by folks wanting something to talk about instead of a stadium. A lot of the problems our city runs into are related to folks not being fed...

- **Where could our church plug into their work?**
 - With expanding their food core program - helping with cooking, gardening, planting, etc.

ForCharlotte: Rob Kelly

- ForCharlotte is an org in CLT that unites churches of all denominations under the goal of coming together to help our city. Talk is on their “State of the City” report.
- Why cities?
 - God loves cities, theology is throughout the scriptures where message of God is carried to reach and redeem cities.
 - Jeremiah 29:4-7 – where the persecuted are told to pray for that city that has persecuted them. Seek the peace and prosperity – welfare, prosperity, peace, wholeness, fullness, (translations) shalom is also in this text’s original translation (shalom is setting things back right to what God had intended in the first place).
 - Cities matter as centers of power, culture, economics, etc. If you can change cities you can change the world.
 - In 2012 earth’s population became a majority Urban, by 2050 it will be 65% city dwellers, by 2050 Charlotte will grow by 1 million people.
- ForCharlotte began to rethink what happened if the church operated differently moving forward. We live in a divided city, even within the church. Rob used to be a pastor and saw this division first hand :
 - What would happen if we come to a new way for the church to operate?
 - Focus it on Christ’s mission in the world. We are all united in the person of Jesus
 - You can all disagree on how you worship, how you baptize, etc. BUT we can all agree on the mission of Jesus – hungry need to be fed, lost found, hopeless brought hope through Jesus
 - 180 churches are involved in this mission of ForCharlotte.
- Approach to city transformation is three prong:
 - The church: God’s people are called to transform the city
 - Shared values – gospel centrality, church unity, city transformation (do you love Jesus, do you love the church, do you believe Jesus can transform our city)
 - The Air Game: understanding and communicating the gospel needs of the city

- Shared information- based on trusted research and shared metrics/outcomes
 - The ground game: where leaders connect in the city
 - Shared relationships – church leaders, marketplace/ministry/city leaders
 - Shared air game/ground game result in common good of the city ... shared ground game and church are when helping hurts, uniformed assistance... shared air game and the church – is just competition and silos, if we think ‘our church’ is the only one it hurts....
 - When all three are brought together (church, air, & ground) we get the SHALOM of the city
 - What would it look like if pastors partnered together and benefited our city?
- Needs of the City:
 - What would it look like if the body of Christ engaged the needs of the city using shared and trusted research? What if we agreed on the needles we are trying to move? That is why ForCharlotte created the State of the City Report (<https://forcharlotte.org/state-of-the-city/>).
 - “State of the City” has 5 Areas of Focus:
 - Mobility Matters (upward)
 - Charlotte ranked 50 out of 50 in upward mobility, this means for a child born in poverty it is harder to get out of poverty in Charlotte than any other major city in America. Study was based on: economic mobility, racial segregation, social capital, school performance, family structure
 - In all of these measures there are maps, “the wedge” is South Charlotte vs. “the crescent” everything around it.
 - 1 in 7 Charlotte residents live below the poverty line, which is 24k for a family of 4.
 - 1 in 5 children live in poverty. 4.4% is the chance a child in poverty has to get out of poverty by adulthood.
 - Social capital – There is a massive deficit in the trust between people, people groups and orgs, the network of people that allows them to thrive. Voting participation is an indicator of this. It shoes whether folks have more trust in governing authorities (great social capital), vs. high levels of crime which indicate lower levels of trust in governing authorities (lower social capital)
 - Family Structure – Low percentage in the crescent who have 2 parent households, in the wedge it is much higher. 35% of children are in single parent households.

- School performance – 39% of third graders are reading at grade level... if you can get kids reading on grade level their entire lives are better
- Race – our city is massively segregated. It is segregated in schools, in living. How does the gospel speak to these racial divisions in our city??
 - The gospel reiterates that through Jesus there is no longer Jew or Greek, slave or owner, male or female--- race, class, gender equality – it is all about unity
- Margins Matter
 - 1 of every 7 in people in Charlotte are not from here – immigrants and refugees. They tend to be in southwest charlotte and east charlotte, growing cultural diversity
 - Vulnerable children – they have a partnership with DSS and foster care. There are 566 kids in foster care and 61 of them have parental rights terminated – in otherwords could be adopted... this is somewhere churches could help.
 - Affordable housing – this is a huge crisis in Charlotte, we have a huge deficit 5k available and 34k needed
- Marketplace Matters
 - We need to unleash the marketplace, half of our city is in the marketplace, what would it look like for the church to be involved
- Millenials Matter
 - Charlotte is the #1 Millenial resettlement in the country, and it is the largest generation in Charlotte.
 - 47% of Millenials are non Christian, 29% identify as no faith
 - Gen X-ers in contrast have only 5% on nones (no religious affiliation) in our city
 - Millenials have 29% of nones in OUR CITY
 - Paradigm shift happened from Gen X-ers – and Millenials are skeptic of institutions. Even of Millenials who were raised in the church, over 30% have left.
- Multiplication Matters
 - The state of the church in charlotte is that only 49% of Charlotteans attend church weekly, decreasing on average 1% a year. We are continuing to decrease every year and by 2025 those not attending church will out run those who do. The church as a whole is not doing what we need to do.
 - If the greatest declaration of the Gospel is the unity of the church – Jesus is very clear about – if our unity is the

best declaration... what statement does our division make? We have been making that divisional statement for a very long time. What would it look like to unite as people of Jesus to transform this city???

○ Questions:

- What are churches doing on affordable housing – Mayfield Memorial Baptist is renovating part of their campus to do affordable housing, West Charlotte churches doing work with Movement Mortgage, Covenant Pres gave \$2mm to this. Churches are mobilizing people. Sign up and send emails related to them.
- How do churches become a part of ForCharlotte – there are networks that meet for pastors, building operational unity as well on technology- there is a platform available, if you want it, to allow churches to find the maps/etc. and it would show your partners on it, unified platform that allows folks from different churches who can sign up for varying events.
- Food insecurity was another of our discussions – if a child doesn't have food they can't perform in education, a lot things related to this are political? Is this political in terms of churches? ForCharlotte fights for neutrality in their overall standings. Is there a place for Christians to advocate or vote – yes – you must use your own conscience
- Everyone sees how to fix a problem through their own eyes – what would be the top 3 things to start to fix that are data driven and not just heart driven:
 - Often churches make their ministry decisions based on conviction, but not necessarily on real need... It is best to marry the two.
 - Foster and adoption care is a needle that could be easily moved
 - Systemic change but greatest impact is literacy – Read Charlotte is one of the platforms available. Or participating in transformation networks around schools that wrap around the schools needs.
 - Universal Pre-K, impacting kids and families. 960 churches with buildings and facilities that could help meet the needs of families with that. A lot of churches are realigning to help with this. They can minister with these families as well. 960 churches in CLT – includes catholic, orthodox, and protestant