



THE
LUTHERAN CHURCH
Missouri Synod

Urban & Inner-City Mission



*"For even the Son of Man came
not to be served but to serve, and to
give his life as a ransom for many."*

— MARK 10:45 —



Resources and Services

- Create local and regional urban ministry partnerships
- Facilitate strategic Lutheran ministry training opportunities that embrace viable community engagement, cultural, generational and ethnic diversity
- Model merciful and compassionate care for local Gospel outreach
- Provide resources for asset-based neighborhood renewal
- Nurture mission and ministry conferences and webinars
- Bring Christ through mosaic (multi-ethnic) Word and Sacrament ministry

Strong Faith, Fervent Love: Reaching the City with Christ

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod's Urban & Inner-City Mission (UICM) is purposed to advance revitalization in city ministries, most of which are multi-ethnic or reach out across cultures with mercy and witness to the Gospel. Through the UICM, the church strives to provide a spiritual home for people who are searching for hope and healing. UICM offers training to equip leaders in witness, mercy and life together for community engagement that leads to gathering around Lutheran altars.

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U.S. Cities: America's International Mission Field *by Laura J. Seaman*

According to the 2012 U.S. Census, 82 percent of Americans live in urban areas. LCMS congregations in these areas have the task of taking the Gospel to people across a spectrum of ethnic, status and religious diversity.

The Rev. Arthur Boone serves as pastor at Nazareth Lutheran Church in Northeast Philadelphia, an ethnically rich community that faces challenges similar to many other urban or inner-city neighborhoods. "Insecurity, poverty ... the situation is difficult everywhere, especially in the inner city," said Boone.

In the nation's fifth largest city, Boone knows what it means to be a part of urban ministry. Though Nazareth is a mostly Hispanic congregation, it reaches out to a number of ethnic groups with God's gifts in Christ.

"A lot of immigrants don't know anything about Christianity," said Boone. "Through ESL [English-as-Second-language] class, we have seen about every nation on earth and religious sect come through. We had two Chinese teenagers who had never heard of Jesus before." For some, acts of mercy provide the first exposure to Christ's saving message of hope for the future.

Urban and Inner-City Mission (UICM) is a specialized ministry within the Office of National Mission that provides expertise and resources to revitalize congregations, schools and special service ministries.

"We are living in a time when many cities are outgrowing their suburbs, and yet they are plagued with poverty and crime, and the numbers are mounting of those falling away from the Word of God," said the Rev. Steve

Schave, director of UICM. "So too, we have international missions and multi-cultural ministry right in our own backyard in the neighborhoods of our cities. But the reality is that the footprint of the church is shrinking as the streets grow dim. What an opportunity we have, in a distinctly Lutheran way, to bring Christ back to our cities." Schave added that "Now is the time to intellectually engage the scoffer, to care for those broken by sin, to show mercy to the marginalized, to bring peace and beauty and life where there once was chaos and decay and death. There is no place that more desperately needs Christ than our cities ... now is the time to respond."

Many people who move to the U.S. migrate toward big cities, where there are pre-existing ethnic enclaves, social services, lower-cost housing and low-wage jobs. These immigrants seek the unique support of churches, faith-based institutions and parochial schools.

LCMS congregations are witnesses to Christ's Gospel and provide a spiritual home for people who are searching for hope and healing. UICM assists congregations in urban areas to bring God's Word into sharp focus for people of all ages and ethnic backgrounds.

Summing up his experience as a pastor in a highly diverse urban setting, Boone said, "I've seen it change lives."

"Insecurity, poverty ... the situation is difficult everywhere, especially in the inner city."

