

2024 Annual Report

Empowering the City



Transforming
Communities
Together



Rev. Dr. Alvin Sanders

President's Letter

World Impact continues to be a driving force to empower Christian leaders with opportunities to learn, grow, and belong because we desire Christ to be declared and demonstrated through Christians and churches engaging communities that experience poverty. Learning happens when we provide resources to the public that can be discovered with or without any connection to us. Growing happens as people convene together in learning communities and build relationships with each other and our staff. Belonging happens as people stay connected to us and each other. I believe we are the best in urban America in facilitating these three things.

Last year I introduced you to our Barna research to inform and support the leaders of urban churches. We also wanted to provide suburban and rural churches an opportunity to learn from, and potentially partner with, urban congregations. This year, we introduced it to urban leaders in various ways, including holding events in five cities. I'll share a few personal highlights.

In Los Angeles, I met a city official who wanted to integrate his work and faith. In Denver, I met a formerly incarcerated woman whose life was transformed by our training. In Oakland, I met a young woman who was on fire to evangelize her urban neighborhood.

Maybe the biggest thing I learned was the enormous need to create spaces for urban leaders to belong. More times than not, we had to make people go home! There is a tremendous thirst out there for what we provide. Indeed, the harvest is plentiful. The laborers want to learn, grow, and belong.

Our biggest challenge was not doing as well as expected financially. To assist, the Board of Directors directed that all administrative costs be covered by non-donation dollars. Thank you for making it possible for urban leaders to learn, grow, and belong.

In Christ,

Rev. Dr. Alvin Sanders
President & CEO

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The Need

URBAN MINISTRY LEADERS NEED ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE AND EFFECTIVE MINISTRY TRAINING.

Ninety-five percent of today's leaders are not formally trained for pastoral ministry, and a lack of training can lead to pastors experiencing frustration, cynicism, burnout, and harmful theology.

Our Response

WE PARTNER WITH DENOMINATIONS, MINISTRY NETWORKS, AND CHURCHES TO ENSURE THAT THESE DYNAMIC CHRISTIAN LEADERS CAN BE TRAINED, NO MATTER WHERE THEY LIVE.

Our four core ministry programs are vital to their success.



CHURCH-BASED SEMINARY

Multiply disciples and develop leaders by starting a training center in your church, parachurch, prison, or denomination as a satellite of The Urban Ministry Institute (TUMI) Church-Based Seminary.



PRISON MINISTRY

With training, men and women who have experienced incarceration can be powerful agents to advance God's Kingdom in and through the local church.



CHURCH PLANTING

Equip leaders from your movement, denomination, ministry network, or church to train church plant teams to establish new churches in their context by offering Evangel Schools of Urban Church Planting.



TRAUMA HEALING

World Impact's Trauma Healing exists to equip churches, ministry networks, and denominations with the mental health and biblical resources needed to lead others to receive healing and freedom from trauma.

Our Vision & The Impact

A HEALTHY CHURCH IN EVERY COMMUNITY OF POVERTY.



Our Why

We want to make the world a better place for those who live in poverty. This is a daunting task, since poverty is a deeply embedded, generational issue. Countless ministries and organizations through the ages have fought valiantly to reverse the cycle of poverty—yet the problem persists. And the reality is that most people who live in poverty today will likely stay there. But why?

We believe society has, for too long, been advocating an incomplete solution—namely, charity. Social services, philanthropic organizations and even churches have too often utilized quick, monetary fixes that offer relief from one day's problems, but not the next.

Charity can certainly help in the moment—or for a season. At its worst, charity may hurt the recipients by creating an unhealthy dependency on the persons or agencies providing the help. Despite sincere efforts to alleviate this crisis over the past century, poverty continues.

While this is a sad reality for society in general, it should not be a surprise to Christians.

In Matthew 26:11, Jesus is very clear that, until his return, the poor will always be with us. In other words, the existence of poverty is a permanent attribute of human society.

As Christians, what do we make of that? How should we react when the God who owns *“the cattle on a thousand hills”* and who could alleviate all the world's poverty *“in the blink of an eye”* tells us that, despite our best human efforts, poverty will never go away?

One reaction could be to simply ignore the problem. If poverty is unsolvable, why not turn our attention and resources toward other societal problems that have at least some hope for a solution? The realist might say, *“If I can't fix it, why try? It's not my responsibility anyway.”* But that doesn't sound very *“Christlike,”* does it?

Jesus himself never neglected the poor. He demonstrated deep compassion by caring for people in need throughout his earthly ministry.

Further, the Scriptures cite specific ways we are to interact with the poor in our daily lives (e.g. Matthew 25:34-36, Mark 10:21-22, Luke 14:12-14). When James refers to our care for orphans and widows as *“pure and undefiled religion”* (James 1:27) he implies strongly that all believers have a spiritual calling to help the less fortunate among us. Christians cannot look the other way.

This is why we exist. We desire for Christ to be declared and demonstrated through Christians and churches engaging communities that experience poverty.

We want people to shift gears in tackling poverty. No more quick fixes or neglecting spiritual needs. Embrace long-term, relational care for the poor that respects God's role in transformation and focuses on spiritual needs. We call this redemptive poverty work.

Redemptive poverty work is a transformative solution for addressing poverty that stems from the teachings of Jesus Christ. In Matthew chapter one, we are taught that Jesus is the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy, offering salvation from the oppressive effects caused by the Fall. Through his sacrifice, Jesus paid the price to free us from the bondage of sin and restore our lives (Mark 10:45).

Poverty, resulting from the pervasive influence of sin, greatly diminishes one's quality of life. It is crucial that we do not overlook the importance of introducing people experiencing poverty to the redemptive work of Christ.

By understanding and embracing this concept, people can experience the complete victory over the forces of sin and evil. Redemption involves sacrificial actions aimed at achieving holistic restoration. The profound story of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection goes far beyond a mere formula. It signifies his triumph over Satan and the annihilation of his works, ultimately reinstating the reign of God on earth. This message of hope and renewal is undeniably good news for all.



Unity in Community

GOD IS BUILDING A HOME. HE'S USING ALL OF US—REGARDLESS OF HOW WE GOT HERE.

God has deliberately tasked the Church with bringing hope to the world, our cities, and our neighborhoods. Only Christ offers a radical hope that restores the brokenness infiltrating our homes and communities. And the Church is a community of people united to declare and demonstrate Christ to their neighbors.

When we engage our neighborhoods, we're following Christ's lead. He came to us:

"The Word became flesh and blood and moved into the neighborhood." – John 1:14, The Message.

In Ephesians 2, Paul uses hospitable language to describe the Church:

"You're no longer strangers or outsiders. You belong here, with as much right to the name Christian as anyone. God is building a Home. He's using us all- irrespective of how we got here—in what he is building."



God's church is a living, breathing Home. When the church moves into the neighborhood, our neighbors identify us by our hospitable actions, not our street address. God's redemptive work in each of us, from poverty to prosperity, is the work of Home. We depend on each other to teach and learn the Homework, trusting that God keeps us on the same page.

We're unified in a community committed to sticking around through life's trials and errors. We're in it for the long haul because God's redemptive work will captivate us for a lifetime.

What does it look like when the church moves into the neighborhood?

We reached out to several World Impact-trained ministry friends to learn how they're meeting the needs of their communities.

1. What does a neighborhood church look like?

"Our job as the local church is to be this sacred space where heaven meets earth and to carry out his mission," says Juan Carlos Morarie, Senior VP of Programming at World Impact. We *"have to be prepared to meet people where they are, 24/7,"* Bishop Bro Reams explains.

Story continues on page 06





The church is in the mix, getting to know the neighbors. *“As a culture, we make assumptions quickly... I don’t know how we minister, empathize, and come alongside folks we don’t understand. We haven’t even spent a moment walking with them and understanding who they are. I want to be curious about what’s going on in my city, what’s going on around us,”* Mr. Morarie says.

Neighborhoods are complex and nuanced. Hope, life, pain, and struggle are all infused in its history. When facing this reality, Megan Williams, a church planter in Detroit, offers her perspective: *“We look at the negative and say, okay, how can I love you in this? And Jesus can heal you, and we can come to a place of revival here.”*

When the church moves in, God transforms neighborhoods from neglect to restoration.

2. How do we meet the needs of our communities?

PRACTICAL NEEDS

Jesus moved into the neighborhood to tackle real needs. We recognize Jesus in our marginalized neighbors who face seasons of hunger and homelessness (*Matthew 25:35-40.*) When we provide urgent necessities, our neighbors see Jesus in us.



Our leaders are creatively meeting the needs of their neighbors in impactful and winsome ways.

- Dr. Alvin Bernstein launched the first church-based vaccine clinic in Contra Costa County, California.
- Sabrina Saunders made healthcare information accessible through Q&A sessions with local doctors and therapists.
- Many churches get food to struggling neighbors through strategic partnerships with local not-for-profits, volunteers, food banks, and grocery stores.
- Pastor Shantell Owens developed Think Big, which offers tutoring, mentorship, World Impact’s Trauma Healing, and apprenticeships to learn practical job skills.
- Pastor Patricia Strong Vargas initiated Ghost Tires to raise awareness for safer streets. She worked with officials to install stop signs and enforce traffic laws.
- Pastor Chad Wooley coordinates secondhand swap meets to provide affordable resources.
- Pastor Will Vucurevich’s church hosts an annual car show for dads whose kids are involved in foster care so they can have supervised visits with their children.

TRAUMA HEALING

Jesus moved into the neighborhood to set the burdened and battered free (*Luke 4, The Message.*)

One of the most urgent needs is dealing with the fallout from trauma. Our neighborhoods exist in a broken world. It’s only a matter of time before we experience trauma: brokenness in a relationship or life experience. If we don’t properly heal, we get stuck. We stay burdened and battered. We’re lonely and isolated because of disconnected relationships.

“Often, the church is a space where the loneliness is most intensified, where people have experienced grief and trauma,” Dr. Bernstein notes. But many of us have been taught to sweep things under the carpet instead of working through the brokenness. No wonder our neighbors are skeptical of our authenticity.

World Impact champions Trauma Healing. *“Trauma Healing gives a vocabulary to our shared experiences,”* says Tyronne Pitre, grief and trauma specialist.

When the church moves in, God transforms the brokenhearted from hurting to wholeness.

3. Partnerships: Unity in Community

When the church moves into the neighborhood, it partners with other community members to work together and meet practical needs.

“If the church can figure out what it’s good at and do it well, and then link arms with other ministries, churches, government, whatever, that is the way to go about this,” says Daren Busenitz, SVP of Ministry Mobilization at World Impact.

WE PARTNER WITH OTHER CHURCHES

When we partner with churches in other zip codes, we’re living out our reality that we’re being built into God’s home. We reach a lost world together. Each of us is necessary to accomplish this glorious purpose.

“We’re so much more powerful when we’re together, and we’re so much more powerful when we’re clear about our vision and our agenda for our communities and congregations,” Ms. Saunders says. We strategically pool our resources, pray for one another, and serve each other. Partnerships can thrive when we’re not afraid of cultural differences.

We also come alongside our brothers and sisters who live in areas of the world where God is at work in communities with limited access to the gospel. God transforms restricted communities from subdued to spiritual awakening.



WE COLLABORATE WITH GOVERNMENT RESOURCES

We live alongside city council and school board members. They’re invested in empowering the neighborhood to thrive—we have this in common with them! We can intentionally build relationships and networks so we’re aware of local resources and opportunities to serve. Government grants are often available to churches when they are well placed to meet community needs.

WE EQUIP LOCAL LEADERS

Some leaders have already stepped out in faith. They’re in our neighborhoods, trusting God with a vision. *“A lot of them are bi-vocational, slugging it out; they’re doing as well as they can with very few resources. Our heartbeat is to get to them,”* Rev. Busenitz says.

Other leaders are up and coming. We’re raising leaders from unlikely places. We train marginalized neighbors and those incarcerated because we believe all things work together for good. God uses each of us because of our experiences, not in spite of them. When we help these leaders find their fit, they’ll use their gifts to bring hope to their communities. They’ll have an outreach that is more powerful than anything we could have had without them.

“The Lord takes all of us,” Mr. Morarie says. *He uses who we are.”*

When the church moves in, God transforms leaders from excluded to equipped.

That’s hopeful news for us! God graciously includes us in the home He is building, regardless of how we got here. We are a part of the team that aims to eradicate the traumatic effects of sin in our urban neighborhoods and empower our cities to thrive.



Discover videos and additional resources on our website: worldimpact.org/unity-in-community

From Local Volunteers to International Friendships

THE STORY OF DEBBIE AND DAVID MILLER, LONGTIME SUPPORTERS OF WORLD IMPACT

“Our church has been praying for you. Our church is 10,000 people here in Africa.”

Long-term World Impact supporter David Miller shared this quote in a recent interview. David and his wife, Debbie, have been connected to World Impact for over 30 years, having been introduced through their church, First Evangelical Free Church in Wichita, Kansas.

How did a couple from Wichita, Kansas, have a church of 10,000 in Africa come to pray for them?

David, a now-retired family medicine doctor, volunteered with World Impact’s Good Samaritan Clinic starting in 1987, where he also served on the board. During his time volunteering, he built a relationship with Al Ewert, who has been serving on staff with World Impact for over 52 years.

Debbie and David grew more connected to World Impact as Al shared more of the vision that World Impact had in serving communities experiencing poverty across the United States and around the world.

Today, David attends a Zoom call every Thursday morning with a team from South Africa and other World Impact staff and ministry partners. He enjoys hearing the excitement in their voices as they report on how God is at work in their countries, sharing, *“It’s not just a job for them. It’s definitely a calling. God has raised those people up to do this. And then you think about all those people that they’ve trained under them.”*



David attends these weekly prayer gatherings because he built relationships with several of these East African leaders during a trip to Malawi with the World Medical Mission division of Samaritan’s Purse. During this trip, David took books and resources from World Impact to give to Pastor Rutherford Banda, who has since started a World Impact Church-Based Seminary site.

“I’ve had the privilege to go to Malawi and meet with some of the people we support and work with. My encouragement would be, if there’s any way to go and see these missionaries in their environment, it’s amazing.”

Debbie and David Miller have faithfully served communities locally and internationally through service, prayer, presence, and financial gifts. But, by God’s grace and provision, they’ve built relationships centered on the love of Christ and fulfilling the Great Commission.



"We are fortunate to have volunteers and supporters like Debbie and David who have walked in humility and service and touched the lives of countless people. I have watched their selfless service with World Impact in Wichita and East Africa, where they helped establish our partnership in Malawi, which has since moved into other African countries," said Al Ewert.

One of these relationships was with Bishop Sentozi, the pastor of the East African church with 10,000 members. It was Bishop Sentozi's church that prayed for Debbie as she navigated a recent cancer scare. The Millers met the Bishop when he was in Wichita, Kansas, visiting World Impact and sharing ministry updates with staff and supporters.

David shared, *"And just that he (the Bishop), across the world, would have his church, a very praying church, pray for my wife here. I mean, just that kind of relationship. That can happen over WhatsApp. That can happen over the phone, whatever. But to have it happen in person is a very special thing."*



Do you feel called to support ministry in communities experiencing poverty in the United States or around the world?

David suggests, *"The first thing to do is to seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit about what your involvement is."*

He pointed out that there are many opportunities you could pursue with so many different organizations. He suggested letting the spirit guide you, perhaps to relationships like those with Al Ewert and World Impact that the Millers experienced.



Make a donation today at worldimpact.org/donate



Watch David's interview: worldimpact.org/the-millers



God is using Unity Church to transform Detroit neighborhoods from neglect to restoration.

IN DETROIT MICHIGAN, A CITY WITH A RICH HISTORY THAT'S OFTEN OVERLOOKED AND MISUNDERSTOOD, MICAH AND MEGAN WILLIAMS ARE PLANTING UNITY CHURCH.

Their profound commitment is fueled by a love for the people in their neighborhood and a belief in its potential.

Megan, raised in a Detroit suburb, developed a deep love for the city through her volunteer work with Central Detroit Christian (CDC). Micah, who grew up in Lansing, felt a strong call to attend Wayne State University, which is in the heart of the city. As he invested in relationships, God drew his heart to put roots down in the neighborhood and plant a church.

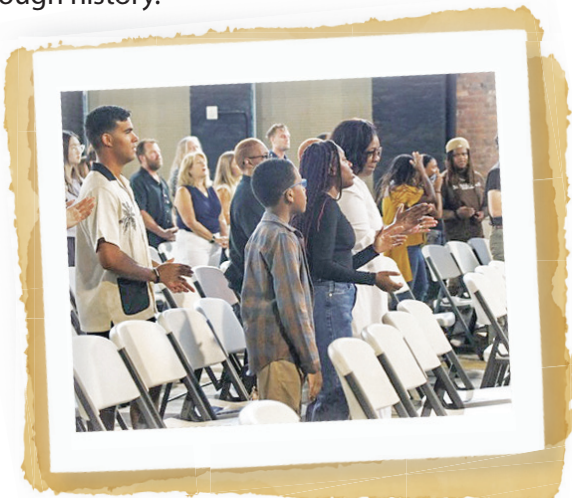
Micah and Megan believe God uses the church to bring hope to the entire world. *"We want to see His kingdom advance right here in Detroit. We want our schools, neighborhoods, families, and children—everyone—to reflect the glory of the kingdom of God right here in Detroit,"* Megan explains.

There's not a church in their neighborhood. *"I never thought about how churches started,"* Megan says. *"They're just always there."* But long before their arrival, people prayed that God would build a community of believers. Prior launches hadn't gone well. The Williamses recognized the neighbors' resiliency, grit, and determination in the context of a tough history.



The challenges of physical and relational poverty exacerbate spiritual poverty. *"How in the world do you have time to process the good news of the gospel, that there is something far greater to live for here on earth, when these problems and these struggles are just filling your mind all day?"* Micah observes.

The Williamses moved into the neighborhood because living in the city offers an entirely different experience. *"You actually get to talk with your neighbors and understand even how they got into the position they did,"* Micah says. God is establishing His presence by using a community that extends beyond their neighborhood streets. Partnerships enable them to serve the neighborhood they love.





"We love Central Detroit Christian. We love this neighborhood. We got engaged on the roof of this building. I got dressed for our wedding in this room. We got married in a field right around the corner from here. This is our neighborhood. These are our people. We are so grateful we get to do it with them." Micah said.

Central Detroit Christian Community

Development Corporation: The CDC, under the leadership of long-time World Impact partner Lisa Johannan, has offered invaluable support, from fundraising assistance to providing a space for Unity Church to hold its services.

Rebuilding Homes Together: This local program gives homeownership opportunities to Black and Brown residents and other lower-income residents who have not previously had homeownership opportunities. Hudson Webber Foundation CEO and president Donald Rencher is passionate about providing tools to move the city forward.

Megan and Micah purchased their first home seven blocks from the CDC through this program. As their family grows (they're expecting their second child), they're surrounded by a community that supports them and prays for their marriage and family.

World Impact: When Micah researched training options, he realized many organizations were geared toward a suburban context. He knew they needed training specifically for serving their urban

neighbors. World Impact's Evangel School of Urban Church Planting was a perfect fit. The curriculum *"gave us the structure, framework, and encouragement that will help guide us into this call the Lord has placed on our hearts,"* Micah says.

The Evangel School's training equipped their whole team. Together, they articulated their vision while eating Dunkin Donuts and plotted their 12-month plan on sticky notes. The team also benefitted from learning alongside other church planters. The camaraderie is encouraging and strategic as they look ahead to the next stage of their ministry plan alongside a World Impact church planting coach.

Micah and Megan are grateful for your donations to support future church planter efforts to declare and demonstrate Christ in their communities.

"Everyone everywhere needs Jesus," says Megan. *"Even if you're 5000 miles from Detroit, you can still impact what we're doing here. And we can do the same for you. I think that's what's special about the body of Christ; we can love everyone everywhere without even having to be there."*



Watch an interview with Megan and Micah:
worldimpact.org/unity-church-detroit



God is using trauma healing to restore our communities.

TYRONE PITRE IS A GRIEF AND TRAUMA SPECIALIST. HE AND HIS WIFE LEAD A GRIEF RESOURCE GROUP AT THEIR CHURCH, WEST ANGELES, IN LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA.

The importance of trauma and grief healing work was made clear to Tyrone on March 31, 2019, after the death of beloved rapper and activist Nipsey Hussle. *“I didn’t know anything about him. I mean, zip. But our church was about a mile and a half away. I was working, came upon the news feed, and was like, oh, what’s going on? And instinctively, I just felt I needed to go down there and pray. That was it. I got down there and started praying, and I just started seeing the grief going around.”*

The whole community showed up for Hussle’s funeral procession. The overwhelming grief Tyrone witnessed there moved him deeply.

But the Church didn’t show up in this community outpouring of grief and support.

“I saw the Nation of Islam, I saw the Bahai Faith,” Tyrone remembers. *“I was waiting for someone else to come. I was waiting for the cavalry.”* Tyrone asked an elder about the conspicuous absence of any Christian presence. He said, *“Brother Pitre, I work in Skid Row. There’s probably not going to be anyone here.”* Tyrone was upset.

A few months later, Tyrone’s son, also a rapper who knew Nipsey, passed away. That grief he had witnessed at Hussle’s funeral resonated with the grief he was experiencing for his son. *“I [understood] what that was when my family and I started going through that grief, and it brought up childhood memories, adverse childhood experiences, and I didn’t have language for that,”* Tyrone says.

The immense pain of this loss dredged up unresolved trauma for Tyrone. The experience of losing his son mirrored the loss of his mother when he was just 12 years old. *“As I started going through*



grief counseling and trauma training, I started to have language for that,” Tyrone says. *“I was able to have language for that 12-year-old that was holding his mother. I had language for the people at Nipsey’s funeral.”*

Through grief counseling and trauma training, Tyrone was finally able to process these experiences and develop the language to move through his pain. He and his wife became certified trauma specialists through World Impact and now lead a grief support group at their church.

Tyrone’s personal journey through grief and trauma has equipped him with the tools and empathy to guide others on their own paths to healing. He understands the necessity of creating a safe space for people to express their pain and connect with others who have experienced similar losses.

Tyrone also recognizes the need for churches to be better equipped to address trauma in their communities. *“A lot of churches are not equipped right now,”* Tyrone says. *“Some have counseling centers, some don’t, but that’s where the connections come together and where the denominational lines and all of that have to be crossed.”*

Because we experience grief and trauma individually and collectively in our communities, Tyrone believes the church needs a plan for the church to be present in both spaces.

When the church moves into the neighborhood, it doggedly cultivates a safe space for restoration. Tyrone’s story powerfully reminds us that even in the darkest times, there is hope for healing and transformation. Through his work, Tyrone is helping others find that hope and build resilience in the face of adversity.





From subdued to spiritual awakening.

GOD IS ON THE MOVE IN RESTRICTED COUNTRY.

The sun shines across the countryside, revealing a beautiful landscape painted by God. But the picturesque scenery is overshadowed by the realities of isolation and hardship. The people in this restricted country face glaring challenges. Often silent, the nation's vibrant spirit still sings through unrelenting adversity.

In a small community far from the bustling urban city, Pastor Alejandro stands as a beacon of hope. He understands his congregation's hunger for spiritual nourishment. He experiences the same scarce resources and limitations in openly expressing his faith.

Ramon, Alejandro's former neighbor now living abroad, shares, *"The assembly of Christians in the country is carefully monitored and regulated by the government. Access to Christian material is very limited in this restricted country, both for leaders and believers in general."*

Pastor Alejandro feels burdened by the responsibility of guiding his congregation. After recently receiving training, he is emboldened by the content in *'Fight the Good Fight of Faith.'* This biblically based curriculum from World Impact is a precious gift in a place where such resources are in short supply. It speaks directly to the unique challenges faced by Christians in his country. The lessons on spiritual warfare and perseverance resonate deeply, echoing Ramon's passion that *"my home country is a minefield for evangelization, but it is still a field that needs and should be sown with the good seed."*

Alejandro has boldly introduced the curriculum to his congregation. The lessons, rooted in the timeless truths of the Bible, offer a source of strength and guidance in a world that often feels chaotic and unpredictable. The teaching also resonates with his church because it exposes them to the stories of believers worldwide overcoming similar challenges.

Once hesitant to openly share their faith, they are inspired to apply the Word of God to their daily lives. And as the seasons mark time, the gospel takes root and grows in their community. Transformation is evident.

Maria, a young mother struggling to provide for her family, finds comfort in the curriculum's teachings on trust in God's provision.

Carlos, a farmer facing the harsh realities of a drought-stricken harvest, draws strength from the lessons on resilience and hope.

The community rallies around the stories of endurance and perseverance of the Saints shared in the curriculum. They radiate quiet confidence as the lessons on community and fellowship foster a sense of belonging and mutual support. Neighbors don't feel alone in their journey. Through their studies, they've found a practical approach to discipleship, one that equips them to live out their faith even amidst their constraints.

Alejandro has witnessed God at work through *'Fight the Good Fight of Faith'* throughout his community. The once-muted church now pulses with a renewed and resolute sense of purpose. Carefully nurtured seeds of faith bear fruit, and the community stands as a testament to the enduring power of God's love, even in the most challenging of circumstances. *"The people across my country need it desperately,"* Ramon says.

Similar stories are unfolding across the country. Over 20,000 leaders, like Alejandro, have embraced the 'Fight the Good Fight of Faith' curriculum. Now trained, they are sharing its transformative message with over 120,000 people.

A spiritual awakening is taking place in the face of extreme adversity. Once subdued, the nation's people walk with a newfound hope and resilience. A flame is ignited and burns brightly, lighting the path toward a future filled with possibility.





God equips leaders to love the church, from judgmental to inclusive.

"I just want to continue to push the point home, emphatically, about the church showing love to the community."

Detra Wilburn's mother raised her in the church. Her father was a pastor, and her brother is a pastor. She came to know the Lord at an early age.

"I was the prodigal child," Detra adds. *"I ended up doing nine years in prison."*

During her incarceration, Detra had a desire to go deeper with God. *"My goal was not to be the same person when I walked out of prison that I was when I walked into prison. And I know the only way to do that was through Jesus Christ,"* Detra says. So, she prayed. Soon after, she saw a flyer for The Urban Ministry Institute (TUMI), World Impact's Church-Based Seminary program. *"And lo and behold, I signed up and graduated."*

Detra currently sits on the Board of Directors for TUMI Colorado, which she helped to launch. She is passionate about its effectiveness in training Christians to be church planters and ministry leaders in urban neighborhoods. *"I believe in the program wholeheartedly because I know what it did for me,"* she says. *"I really push the TUMI program because it's not easy, but it's doable."* The program can be completed in four years. *"It entails everything that you need to do to become a Christian leader without having to go to a full seminary college."*

Raising leaders is critical because Detra sees a growing disconnect between the church and the community. In her experience, many neighbors are too intimidated to walk through the doors of a church. *"Their number one concern is, 'Oh, I don't go to church because everybody in there is so judgmental.' Or 'I want to clean up my life first.'"* Leaders can reach out and engage their neighbors.

Detra prays that the church exemplifies Christ and is inclusive. *"Because we were all somewhere lost before Christ found us,"* she shares. *"I want everybody to know that they're loved. We don't have to affirm people's lifestyles, but we do have to accept*



them. And we love them because Christ is the one who's going to minister to their hearts and draw them to him."

Detra wants to see the church leaders extend this inclusive welcome to people coming out of prison. *"I believe the recidivism rate would go down if churches were more involved with citizens coming back into the community,"* she says. Programs such as the Onesimus Workshop, alongside World Impact's Prison Ministry, equip churches to support released prisoners.

"We can love people where they're at, and we can show the grace of God to people because when you have experienced the grace of God, you will know exactly what it means to give it," Detra says. *"Sometimes our life is the only Bible somebody may read. And so, it's more about our actions than our words. I can talk to you about the gospel of Christ all day long, but if I'm not showing it to you through the love of Christ, then I don't think you're really going to get it."*

Those who financially support the work of World Impact are an essential part of creating these connections. *"[Your donations] are not in vain. Continue to give, continue to pray, because I'm a product of it,"* Detra shares. *"Their great work in the community and building Christian leaders is saving our communities and children."* God is using each of us, regardless of how we got here, to create a dwelling where we all belong.





Opportunity in Second Chances

THE POWER OF MENTORSHIP

Pastor John Cunningham, Jr. is a testament to the transformative power of restoration and reconciliation. He leads the Christ-Centered Missionary Baptist Church in Hayward, California, where he extends compassion and support to those reentering society after incarceration. This passion led him to work with World Impact’s prison ministry programs.

“I know what it’s like,” Pastor John says. *“Being formerly incarcerated, I have a heart for the men and women that are behind bars.”* John understands that to those who are called according to God’s purpose, all things work together for good. *“Everything that I went through was preparation for me to stand before God’s people in the capacity that I am,”* Pastor John says. *“My goal is to help people to understand who they are in God. They don’t have to make the mistakes that I made to get to where God would have you to be.”*

God works through His community of believers to restore relationships and draw us into community. *“The church saved my life while I was incarcerated,”* Pastor John says. *“My relationship with God was a foundation from which I was able to survive incarceration. I’m an advocate of the church being the impetus of not only rehabilitation, but reconciliation. It’s important that the church is the voice, and that the church has the influence, even greater influence than the other agencies, [because] a relationship with God is first and foremost and what you need to make the transition from incarceration back into what we would call society.”*



PASTOR JOHN’S JOURNEY OF FAITH BEGINS ON THE CHURCH’S FOUNDATION

John was born into the church and grew up in Sunday School. He comes from a strong lineage of godly leaders. His grandmother was a deacon and usher, his grandfather was a deacon, and his uncles were preachers and pastors. *“Deacon McKinley Bolton and Deacon Robert Pitts, they used to tell me, boy, you going to be something when you grow up.”* Pastor John remembers. *“They saw something in me before I even saw something in myself.”*

As a seven-year-old, Pastor John was saved and baptized. On the surface, he matched the respectability of his reputation. He was a military veteran, with a wife and children. *“I was just off the chain, living life recklessly,”* he says. *“Never missing church, singing on the praise team, serving in different capacities.”* But he was also *“living a life of compromise and a life that was not rooted and grounded in the love of Christ.”*

“Prison recalibrated me,” Pastor John says. *“It allowed me to see who God truly was, because when all you have is God, you can’t depend on anybody else.”* He is grateful for this experience. *“Not only did it help me to understand my relationship with God, but it helped me to have a love for the men that I served while behind prison walls.”*



Story continues on page 16

“I think that it’s imperative for us as a church to create an environment where they can not only have access to services but can be a part of a community that’s going to embrace them.”

The church plays an invaluable role in integrating marginalized people into community.

“I want our church to be the ones who former inmates can depend on to make it through whatever transitions [they] may face,” Pastor John says. *“World Impact’s training is a great foundation from which those who are returning can build upon and continue to make that transition.”*

John believes churches serve all underprivileged and marginalized neighbors in our communities.

He says, *“I think that it’s imperative for us as a church to create an environment where they can not only have access to services but can be a part of a community that’s going to embrace them, that’s going to at least try to understand them and then provide them with referrals and resources that can help them along the journey.”*

How do we extend reconciliation and restoration to our neighbors?

1. We create a community of safety and belonging.

“If the church is not transparent, authentic, and genuine, nobody is going to come,” John says. *“The people who need the help, all of them don’t look like us. They don’t think like we do. They don’t care how long this church has been established. What they care about is, do you love me?”*

John also sees a critical need to extend acceptance to each neighbor. *“That doesn’t mean that you compromise what you believe, but acceptance means [anyone] can come in and be a part of what we have going on and be a part of our community,”* he says. *“We’re going to model for you what that looks like.”* God willing, they’ll see something they want to be a part of.

2. We meet tangible needs.

John’s church is intentional about walking alongside people through transitions into stability. *“Once they get housed or once they find jobs, now they have a whole other set of challenges that they have to face,”* John says. *“You think about who’s going to do their taxes, who’s going to help them find childcare, or who’s going to help them with their medical needs should they get a diagnosis.”*

3. We partner with other churches and agencies that provide services for reentry populations.

“And that’s really for me, sharing what it is that we’re trying to do with not only other churches, but connecting with the NAACP and other elected officials,” Pastor John says. *“Who’s the supervisor for the area that your church is in, and are you connecting with the mayor or city council member? Instead of us trying to reinvent the wheel, if there’s someone already doing it, then hey, let’s send them over there. Let’s make a referral.”*

Pastors like John Cunningham, Jr. work tirelessly to walk with neighbors in transitions by connecting them into church communities. *“We can’t wait. The time is now. If we wait, we miss the opportunity to impact lives,”* he says. Your generous support enables them to pursue this critical work of restoration and reconciliation.



Planned Giving

IRA CHARITABLE ROLLOVER



IRA ROLLOVER
FORM



IRA DISTRIBUTION
TO CHARITY

Use your savings to create your legacy by making an IRA charitable rollover gift to World Impact.

Your Savings, Your Legacy

- Avoid taxes on transfers of up to \$105,000 from your IRA to support our cause.
- May satisfy some or all of your required minimum distribution for the year.
- Reduce your taxable income and save on taxes, even if you do not itemize deductions.
- Make a gift that is not subject to deduction limits for charitable gifts.
- Use your rollover gift to make payments on an existing pledge to us.

Take advantage of any employer matching gift opportunities. Your gift can grow and make that much more of a difference.

To learn more about how to make an IRA charitable rollover gift, please contact Marty Sanders at msanders@worldimpact.org, or call (704) 243-1639.

We would welcome the opportunity to answer further questions and work with you.

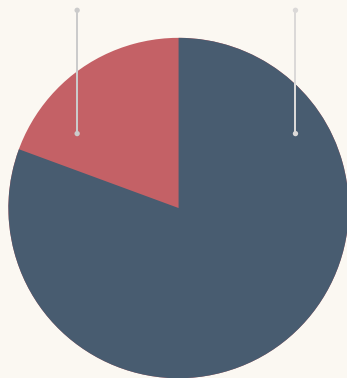
World Impact empowers urban church leaders around the world to reach their communities with the Gospel.

OUR CORE PROGRAMS: CHURCH-BASED SEMINARY, CHURCH PLANTING, PRISON MINISTRY, AND TRAUMA HEALING ARE VITAL TO BUILDING AND MAINTAINING HEALTHY CHURCHES IN ANY COMMUNITY EXPERIENCING POVERTY.

PARTNERS

A ministry engaging in a World Impact program with its costs covered

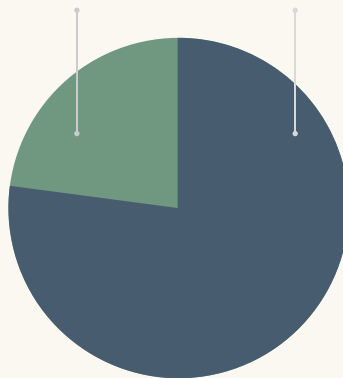
FY24
633 **SINCE FY18**
3,204



TRAINERS

A worker equipped to provide a World Impact program to other workers

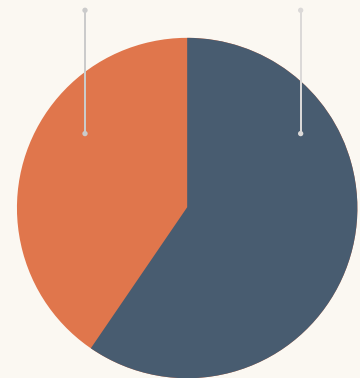
FY24
957 **SINCE FY18**
4,096



WORKERS

A person who has participated in a World Impact program

FY24
26,168 **SINCE FY18**
64,688



FY24 TRAINED & COMMISSIONED BY PROGRAM



CHURCH-BASED SEMINARY

109 PARTNERS
151 TRAINERS
23,748 WORKERS



CHURCH PLANTING

292 PARTNERS
105 TRAINERS
680 WORKERS



TRAUMA HEALING

132 PARTNERS
520 TRAINERS
570 WORKERS



PRISON MINISTRY

97 PARTNERS
181 TRAINERS
1,170 WORKERS

WHERE WE WORK (FY24)

BANGLADESH
CAMEROON
COLOMBIA
EL SALVADOR
GREAT BRITAIN

HONDURAS
INDIA
KENYA
MEXICO
NIGERIA

PAKISTAN
PAPUA NEW GUINEA
RESTRICTED COUNTRY
ROMANIA
RWANDA

SPAIN
TANZANIA
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
ZAMBIA

Our Financials

\$7.3M

TOTAL OPERATING REVENUE IN THE PAST FISCAL YEAR (ending 6/30/2024)

ALLOCATION OF TOTAL EXPENSES

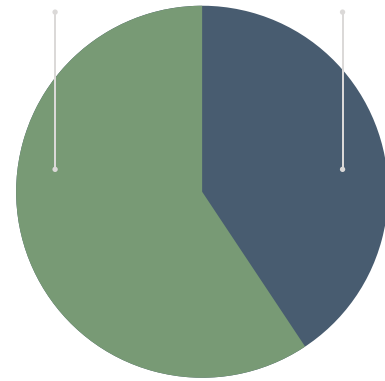
- 10% Administrative Costs
- 2% Capital Expenditures
- 1% Insurance
- 7% Other Ministry Costs
- 8% Property Expenses
- 5% Public Relations
- 67% Staff Pay & Benefits

IN FISCAL YEAR 2024, WE SPENT

69% 31%

in Ministry Programs

in Operating Expenses



100% of your donation goes directly to World Impact's ministry programs, not administrative costs. This provides the critical training and resources needed to create lasting change. Thank you for your generosity.



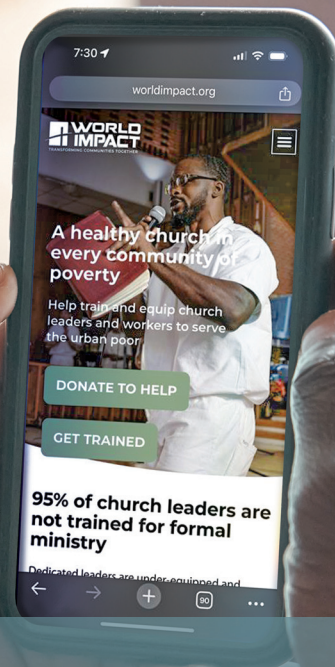
Your Kingdom Come: Friendship for the Great Commission participants (June 2024)

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