

# *Beyond Charity*



A Look at Transformational  
Church-Based  
Community Development

An Educational Series Sponsored by  
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# *Images of God*

The most fundamental statement we likely can make in any ministry effort that goes beyond charity is to say that we are all image-bearers of God. We are not merely reflections of our good or limited parents, or our education or our socio-economic class or fortune. We are not merely reflections of the substances we have taken or the emotions we have or the thoughts we think. We are far more than that. Fundamentally, we are image bearers of God Himself. If we do not understand that, then we serve people from a perspective that tragically limits both them and us.

To begin, let's look at the Biblical passage that points to being an image bearer of God, then unpack that passage. We will reflect on the power of the image bearer throughout our time together today.

*“Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air., over the livestock, over all the earth’, ... So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.*

*“God blessed them and said to them, ‘ Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish and the birds and over every living creature.’...*

*“God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.”*

Genesis 1:26-31

Let's take a closer look at this passage. What does it mean to be an image-bearer of God? What does being an image-bearer suggest for all people because of God's intentions at creation?

To get a feeling for that, let's make a chart and discuss it.

<b>God's Characteristics</b>	<b>Human Reflections</b>
Imagines	
Thinks in details that differentiate	
Intends to do	
Calls into being	
Blesses/Empowers what he calls into being	
Relates his creations to others he created	
Celebrates his creations	

How does our chart help you think about the rights and potentials of everyone God creates? How does this Scripture help you think about how you and your congregation's members can "side" with God's intentions at creation?

## *Incorporating the Image of God into Ministry*

Christians and congregations have vital roles in re-rooting in people and communities the incredible value of being image bearers of God. That is one of the root calls of Jesus. We are His change agents in the world. We witness to God's power to transform and to His intended purposes for humans and our role in His creation.

Ultimately, the changes we seek to make are on the side of expanding the Kingdom of God on the earth. It's about Jesus' "*... thy kingdom come*".

While we wait for God's final order of things, we are in the business of helping people discover what it means to be image bearers of God and, in turn, to live as image-bearing change agents in their communities and world. That's what we want people to understand about themselves and unleash in their neighborhoods and communities.

## *Extending “Relief” to “Development” Ministry*

Doing meaningful ministry is a common thing for congregations. Making differences is not a new thing. However, some ministries and models incorporate the “image-bearer” potentials better than others. “Relief” ministry does not attempt to make incorporation happen; “development” ministry does. Relief is like giving a person a fish. Development is like teaching a person to fish, or to own a piece of the pond.

In the following pages, we will:

- Give real examples of relief and development ministries
- Contrast the two models
- Share tips for adding development ministry components to existing relief ministries.

## A Tale of Two Food Pantries

Relief-Oriented Food Pantry	Development-Oriented Food Pantry
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pantry operators secure food and arrange its distribution. Often they bag food or place it on shelves</li> <li>• Recipients go through line to pick up bags of food or food off shelves</li> <li>• Operators pray for recipients</li> <li>• Recipients have additional food for the week or month</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pantry operators secure food</li> <li>• Pantry operators develop relationships with recipients that includes prayer and self-sufficiency planning</li> <li>• Recipients and operators develop a plan regarding increase in recipient's empowerment - education, employment/career, marriage/family strengthening, homeownership, debt reduction, etc.</li> <li>• Recipients come weekly to pantry to get food and apply funds diverted from food purchases to self-sufficiency plan</li> <li>• To continue receiving food, recipients must prove via documents that funds applied to plan</li> <li>• Recipients who are successful with plans are asked to join the pantry team</li> </ul>

Let's look closer at relief vs. development.

Relief Ministries	Development Ministries
Addresses Crisis situations	Addresses chronic situations
Short term	Long tern
Event oriented	Relationship oriented
Presenting need addressed by giving something	Actual need addressed when participant gains knowledge, skills, abilities, and/or access to information for purposes of solving problems or increasing self-sufficiency
Focused more on what we do for participants	Focused more on what participants can do for themselves
Tend not to be focused on alleviating sin effects	Tend to focus on alleviating sin effects 0 personal, corporate, and systemic
An often unintended outcome: fostering dependency, not ask why people use ministry.	An intended outcome is empowerment - convincing people they have ability to take charge of parts of their lives
Aids directed towards specific needs. We see hunger, we provide food.	Aid tends to be directed at specific opportunities. We see community full of renters, we provide opportunities to develop homeowners
Church members do not have to confront their fear or mistrust of participants	Because of critical place of relationship building, fear and mistrust often are confronted and healed.

# Transitioning a Ministry or Program from Relief to Development

Key materials you will need as you work through transitioning a program from relief to individual development include:

1. A clearly written, one-page description of the ministry you want to transition that includes:
  - A. Ministry title
  - B. One to two sentences describing the ministry's purpose
  - C. A brief profile of the kind of participants served by the ministry
  - D. A brief listing of the key recurring steps that implement the ministry
  - E. A discussion on decisions about the ministry are made, including by whom (specifying any role participants have)
2. A stakeholder analysis should be made
3. Some examples of ministry descriptions for ministries that do incorporate participant self-sufficiency into their ministry design

## **Example: Ministry Description**

**Ministry Title:** Deacons Fund/Benevolence Fund

**Ministry Purpose:** To assist eligible church members and neighbors meet some of their emergency housing or utilities expenses they would not otherwise be able to meet. This assistance is intended to help them through crisis periods.

### **Profile of People Served:**

1. All church members and church neighbors who live within a five block radius of our church who meet low- to moderate-income guidelines
2. Have not received Deacons Fund/Benevolence Fund assistance within the past six months
3. Have received a written termination or shut-off notice

### **Key Recurring Steps:**

1. Requestor brings to designated church member copy of written termination or shut-off notice
2. Requestor completes church's request assistance form
3. Designated church member discusses in person with requestor:
  - A. The nature of the crisis
  - B. Encourages the requestor to resolve the problem for the future and prays to that end with him or her
4. Designated church member consults with another person assigned to implement this ministry and, if concurs, calls vendor to arrange payment assistance if possible. If no concurrence, or of no funds are available, informs requestor the church is unable to assist at this time.
5. If vendor will cancel termination or shut-off notice, designated church member arranges for payment up to \$350, and initiates process for church financial official to send check to vendor
6. Church financial official sends check to vendor
7. Designated church member reports action to Deacons as scheduled.

**Persons to be involved in decisions about increasing requestor self-sufficiency in Fund activities:**

1. A Committee of the Deacons/Trustees who will develop recommendations and report them to Deacons/Trustees
  - A. Two church members who do this process on behalf of the church (may be Deacons/Trustees)
  - B. Two Deacons/Trustees not generally involved in Fund activities
  - C. Two requestors
  - D. A church member whose work involves helping participants become more self-sufficient
2. Deacons/Trustees who will adopt changes and re-write ministry descriptions and procedures.

## Steps Your Group Must Go Through to Complete the Exercise

The chart below suggests some steps for adding development dimensions to a relief ministry.

Key Actions ↓	Sequential Steps to Implement Actions →		
<b>Assess the program as it is now</b>	What happens to a participant now?	What do we want to have happen to a participant in the future?	Make a list of who needs to be part of the design change, including a few participants
<b>Define what needs to change (include participants in the step)</b>	Define success: A participant in this program is successful when ... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•passes GED</li> <li>•Saves \$40/mo. toward asset</li> <li>•Removes \$500 in debt</li> </ul>	Gather a group of stakeholders and design program to achieve the changed behaviors you want to see.	Test the design ideas by running them past some additional past program participants and getting their feedback
<b>Make the changes</b>	Recruit the people and set the times and places to try the new program design on a small scale	Evaluate and modify the program based on this experience	Based on what works, develop new policies and procedures. Get formal approvals.
<b>Scale up</b>	Creates budget and raise funds	Add staff as needed	Constantly go through ongoing evaluation and feedback

## After the Transition...

Programs change and improve when there is a process of evaluation. Evaluations ask hard questions such as:

- Is this program doing what it was designed to do?
- Is this program doing what we want it to ?
- What is best about this program?
- What is most fruitful about this program?
- How can we increase program performance and effectiveness?
- All programs and ministries should have some time set aside for evaluation. This process should include community stakeholders in addition to ministry actors.

Finally, let's talk about how this transition might help people discover  
they are  
IMAGE BEARERS OF GOD.

# *Community Development*

In our previous section, we learned a lot about how being an image bearer of God works out regarding individual development.

In this section, we will imagine what the vitality of being image bearers could be like in an unleashed community development setting.

To this, we shall:

- Review a Scripture
- Learn about three models of church-community alignments
- Describe asset-based community development
- Discuss a method for making early engagements with a community

## A Scripture Underpinning Community Development

*"Go up and down the streets of Jerusalem,  
look around and consider,  
search through her squares.*

*If you can find but one person who  
deals honestly and seeks the truth,  
I will forgive this city."*

Jeremiah 5:1

## Let's discuss this Scripture.

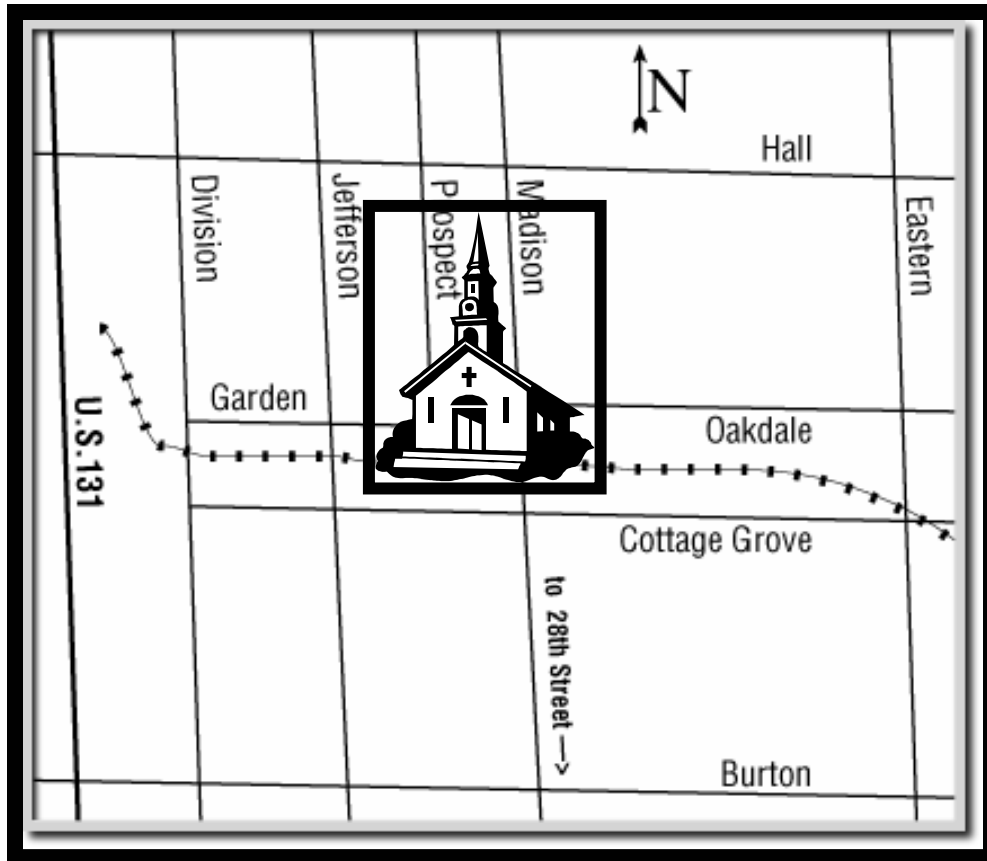
1. What does the Scripture suggest about God's involvement with the city?
2. What task does God give to the prophet?
3. What is the prophet's role or work?
4. What are some things we can learn about how God might want to work with us as His people?

## Three Pictures of Church-Community Alignment

Rev. Robert Linthicum described three basic ways that congregations interact with their communities by using the prepositions "in", "to", and "with". Congregations can minister or serve:

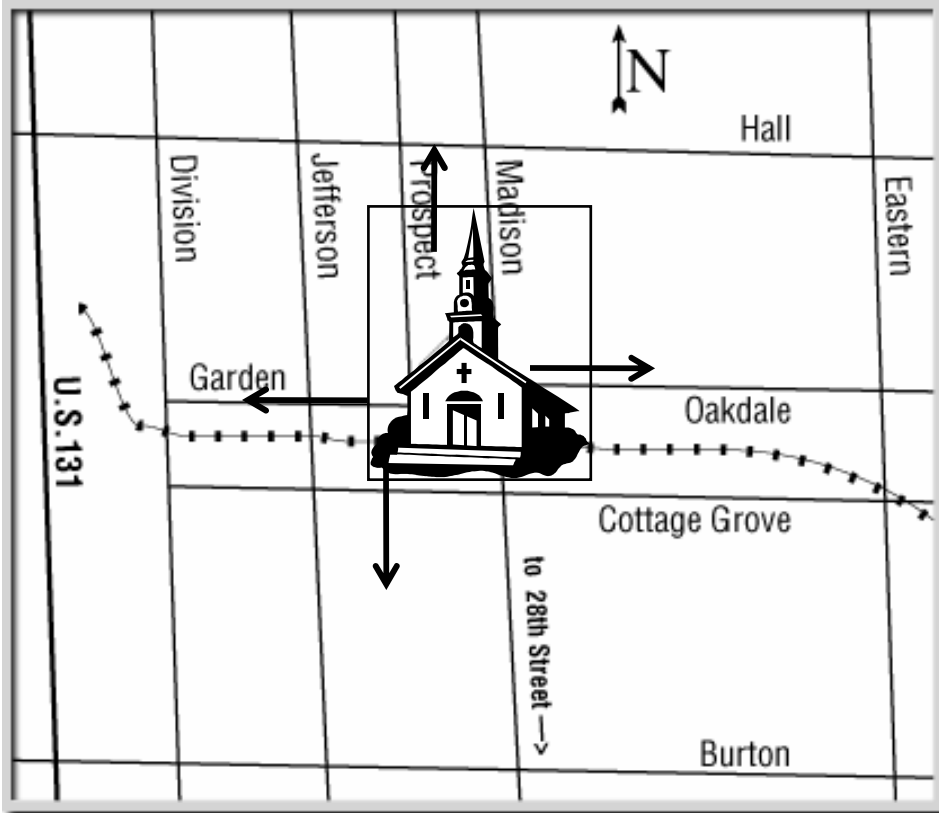
*In* the community or  
*To* the community or  
*With* the community.

## Church "in" Community



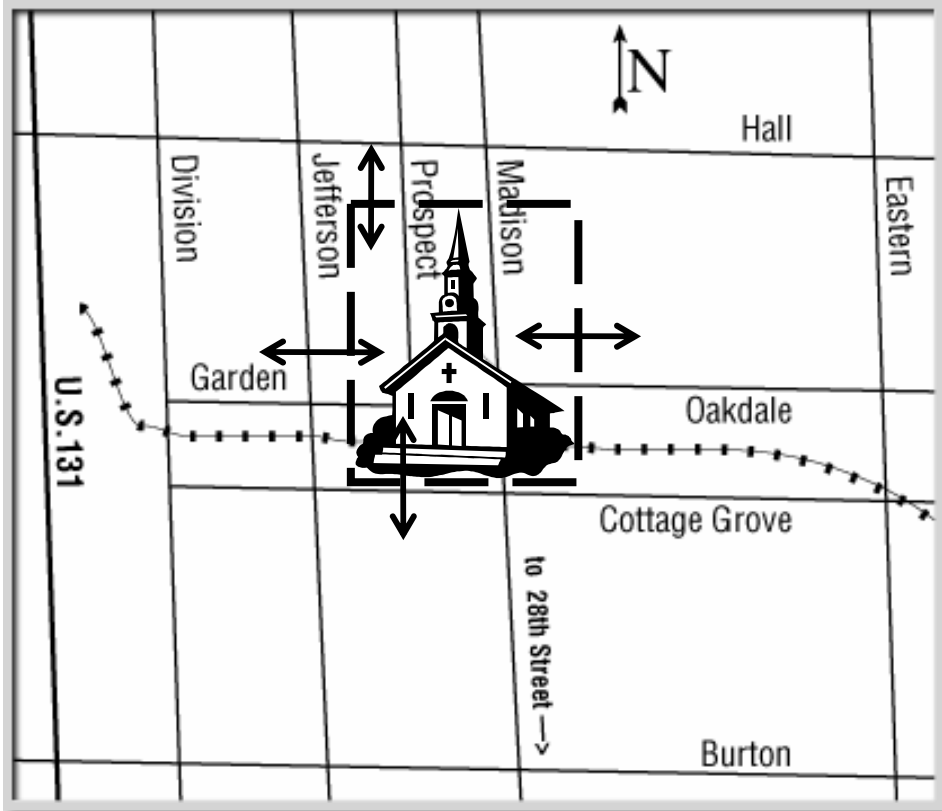
- Does not desire community stakeholders to impact it
- Does not desire to impact the community
- Does desire to invest as close to 100% as possible of its resources on its own members
- May be described as a fortress, holding back the world (notice the thick walls around the church in the picture)
- Suggests Christ is against culture, and the church always must be about the business of rescuing people from culture

# Church "to" Community



- Does not desire community stakeholders to impact it
- Does desire to impact the community
- Divides resources in varying percentages between the corporate lives of its members and the community
- Limits or does not allow community stakeholders to impact planning or evaluation processes
- Serves community for reasons and with methods the church prefers and assumes they know what is best for the community
- Suggests Christ is over culture, and the church must always be about the business of making everything "Christian"

## Church "with" Community



- Does desire community stakeholders to influence it (note the porous lines and arrows between church and community)
- Does desire to influence community
- Divides resources between the corporate lives of its members and the community
- Its planning and assessment processes are influenced by both church members and community stakeholders - Makes decisions based on impacts desired by members AND the community (neighbors)
- Serves and develops the community for reasons and with methods that bring transformational impact to the community and church alike
- Suggests both Christ is of culture and the transformer of culture, and the church must be about the business of both embracing the tensions and discovering balances between itself and culture

# Asset-Based Community Development

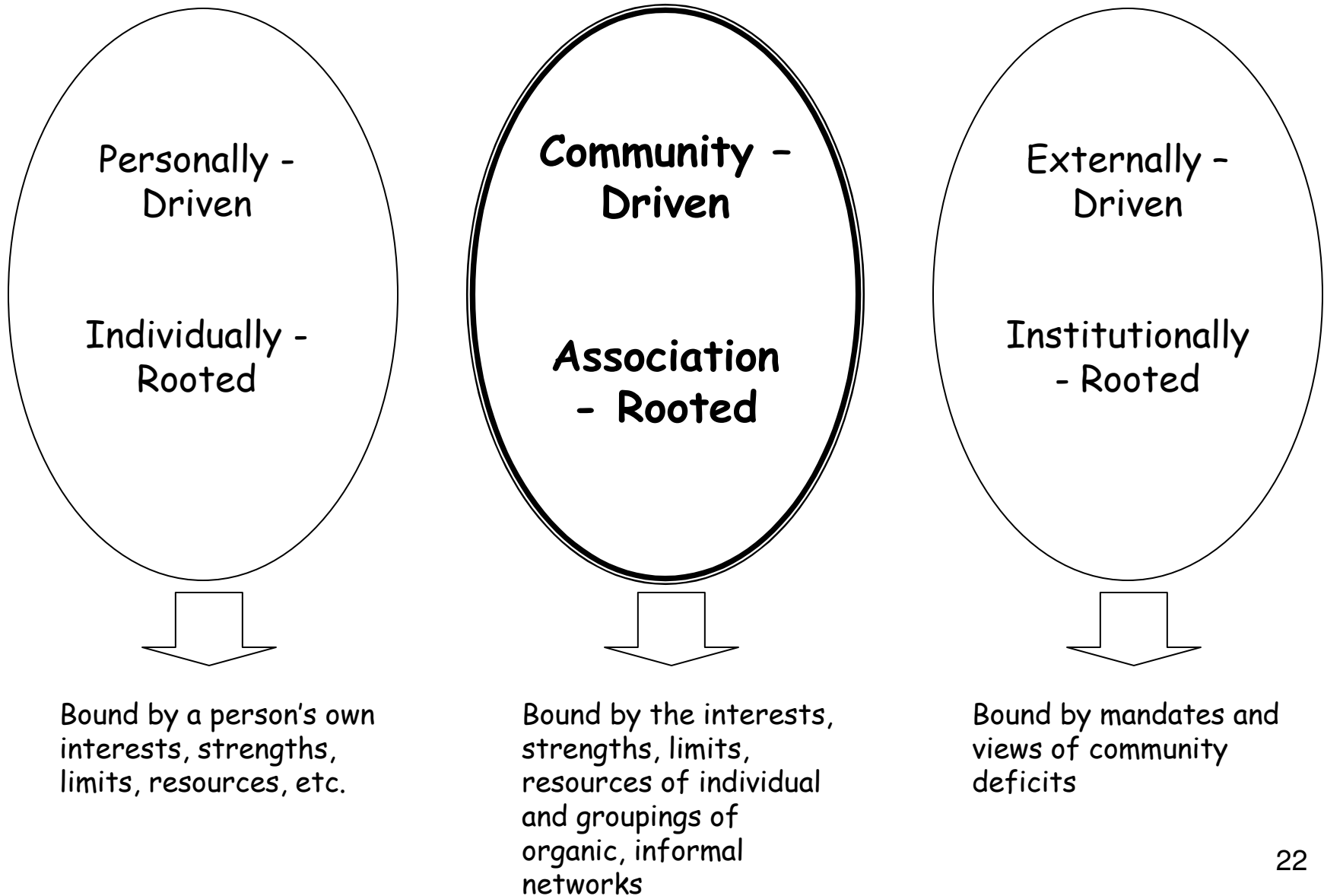
ABCD is an approach to community-based development, based on the principles of:

1. Appreciating and mobilizing individual and community talents, skills and assets (rather than focusing on problems and needs)
2. Community-driven development rather than development driven by external agencies

ABCD builds on:

1. *Appreciative inquiry* which identifies and analyses the community's past successes. This strengthens people's confidence in their own capacities and inspires them to take action
2. The recognition of *social capital* and its importance as an asset. This is why ABCD focuses on the power of associations and informal linkages within the community, and the relationships built over time between community associations and external institutions
3. *Participatory approaches to development*, which are based on principles of empowerment and ownership of the development process
4. Efforts to strengthen *civil society*. These efforts have focused on how to engage people as citizens (rather than clients) in development, and how to make local governance more effective and responsive.

# Differentiating Community Development Orientations



# Working with Categories within Civil Society: An ABCD View

*(Categories complement rather than replace each other)*

Individuals	Associations	Institutions
<p><u>There are many ways of trying to elicit individual gifts, skills and capacities.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Ensure people feel that their abilities and contributions are appreciated.</li> <li>•Eventually a "capacity inventory" is developed, listing these capacities in categories such as "community-building skills", "enterprise skills", "teaching skills", "artistic skills".</li> <li>•A simpler approach might be to divide them into skills of the heart, head, and hand.</li> </ul>	<p><u>These relationships are the engines of community action, and are essential as assets.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Start with the core group and ask them what associations and informal groups they belong to.</li> <li>•Once these have been listed, ask the core group to expand the list to include associations they know about.</li> <li>•Cluster this longer list by type and those associations most likely to participate in working together for a common purpose</li> <li>•Expand the list of community leaders as the association list expands.</li> </ul>	<p><u>This includes government agencies, non government agencies and private sector businesses.</u></p> <p>The assets of these institutions could be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Services and programs they provide,</li> <li>•Meeting places they offer</li> <li>•Equipment and other supplies they may have,</li> <li>•Communications links they may have.</li> <li>•Paid or unpaid staff who may be important links in the community</li> </ul>

## Discovering God via Community Walks - ABCD Style

1. Set aside a block of time - an hour or two at least.
2. Lay out at least one route in your neighborhood that you and your team will walk together. You will, if you will, be exegeting your neighborhood. You will be trying to see clearly what is there in terms of strengths and assets, and the potentials for ministry development.
3. In small groups, walk the routes. It would be best if you could take with your team some people who live in the neighborhood including some who might participate in your congregation's ministries. Remember to pray aloud or silently for God to guide your walk and open you to things about what you will see.
4. Take careful note of all the details you see.
5. Imagine, based on what you see, what life might be like and could be like for the people who live there. Try to ignore what you have heard life to be like, and what you think being poor might be like. Remember that people often think of their lives as being the norm until they have significant interaction with others. Be open to a view of normality those residents might have that varies from your view of normality. 24

Upon your return to your starting point, in smaller groups, take 15 minutes to draw maps on flip chart paper of:

1. What you saw (see next slide for ideas)
2. How you interpret what you saw as a potential ministry opportunity
3. Each group's map is discussed for potentials for relationship building, assets, opportunities, patterns, etc.
4. Post the combined map in some place where it can be seen, discussed, prayer over, etc.
5. Augment the map with information gathered from discussions with people and subsequent walks

# What to Look For on Your Community Walk

**Structures:** building types, usage, condition, changes in use, style, materials, who is leaving? Who is replacing them? What's happening?

**"Scraps of Life":** What artifacts do people leave around? What's on the front porches? Are they ethnically or culturally specific? What values can you say people have? What are the local businesses offering for items or services? Are they local or chain stores? What do the costs say about customers? Where are people traveling from or to in the community? Hubs of activities?

**Look of Signage:** What is being sold on billboards? Who are outside companies marketing to? What languages are used? Who is the target audience? What is being sold by business owners and landowners, for how much? What bumper stickers do you read? What does it say about the communities political or religious values? Where do they go to school?

**Look at Space:** How is land being used? What are the "natural" boundaries of the neighborhood: rivers, hills, freeways, etc.? Do you know when you have left the neighborhood? Look at how personal space is treated. Where are cars parked? What are yards used for? Where are the fences? What is public space and what is private space?

**Sound and Smells:** What music is played? What age or group does it cater to? Are there different patterns of language? What do you smell? What do the smells tell you about different parts of the neighborhood?

**Look for Signs of Hope:** Keep an eye out for evidences of God's people at work (they were there before you were). Look for the presence of churches and nonprofits. Look for the small "mustard seeds" of the Kingdom and for what God is already doing in the neighborhood.

**As a separate, but critical, part of your neighborhood asset mapping:**

Discover what people who reside in the neighborhood know, like to do, do for a living, etc. that reflects their knowledge, skills, and abilities

Log their knowledge, skills, and abilities in an easily accessible format

Utilize their strengths when planning, assessing, and performing various projects in the congregation and community

Discover whom the neighbors see as neighborhood gatekeepers and care givers

Develop relationships with the gate keepers and care givers, learning in the process of relationship building what they are passionate about and what their dreams are for the neighborhood

Decide which of their dreams your group can support and do so.

## Use your information to:

1. Develop church plans
2. Help the community develop a vision for itself
3. Assist the community to become stronger
4. Organize to create positive change
5. Determine how to fight for justice through avenues such as creating policies, laws, and systems that work for everyone