

This Month: Vocation

I was having a conversation recently with a friend of mine about jobs and vocations. This friend of mine is tired of her job and is looking for a new one. She told me that she loves doing God's work through Circle of Hope. She finds it so satisfying that she is willing to put up with her nine-to-five, so that she can keep doing it. That saddened me! To be miserable for most of the week, so that we can ultimately do what makes us happy? I think life's too short to hate your job! Nathan addresses this in his article about working for The Man. Tim questions the value of labor, period.

Some of us do have very satisfying (but difficult) jobs. Our jobs aren't glorifying The Man, they are rewarding, but it never seems easy. Melissa had conversations with Nate, Joshua, and Rod about the vocation of pasturing; a job where one is always on the clock. Shelley talks about what its like to manage a thrift store. And C.J. writes about urban teaching (and according to him, it's nothing like).

Many of us may also be wondering about labor, employment, and jobs because ours is being threatened. The media does such a good job of painting a grim picture of the U.S's financial future (you've heard of this, yes?). Many of might be staying in jobs that are draining us, exhausting us, or compromising our values because we are worried we won't have a job otherwise.

This issue may raise more questions than it answers, but I hope we can keep looking to God to help us dialogue and discern these conundrums. Let's keep the conversation going. —ED.

What if I work for "The Man"?

The world of money is dominated by corporate greed, which seems to be the embodiment of greed itself unfettered. The injustice caused by this situation is not measurable, but we see evidence of it everywhere. We can point to things like sweat shops or coffee plantations, genetically modified foods or the unsanitary meat industry. We turn on the TV, open a magazine, walk down a bill-boarded street and see how "they" manipulate us with advertising and so-called entertainment, spreading their consumer disease by feeding our lust, our gluttony, and our sloth. We can look at our current economic crisis, the call for bailouts. All of these things, and so much more we can detest, be disgusted by, and chalk it up to corporate greed. Nevertheless, the sad fact is that most of us need money to survive.

When we here a phrase like working for "The Man" it is easy to think of all those poor deluded people who have been drawn into the corporate dream, from the lowly fast food employee to the CEO of a major company, who have agreed to join the rat race. They partake in a dream of deception. Instead, we seek out jobs where we can do some good in the world. We become teachers, social workers, counselors, artists and librarians, to name a few. I have had such jobs myself, and I would like to contest that even in these do-gooder jobs, The Man still pervades.

This article is about vocational conflict, which is a term that rarely

occurs in daily conversation. Perhaps for this reason it is difficult to define. Let me first state, that in this case the word vocation does not refer to a religious calling per se, but instead to "the occupation for which a person is best suited" (as provided by the American Heritage Dictionary). As Christians we might still interpret this definition as a religious calling if we believe that God has endowed each of us with gifts that are more applicable to certain types of work. The "conflict" part of the title refers to when we find ourselves in a job that presents us with a moral conflict. We don't seem to be doing any good.

Let me give an example. I once worked in a homeless shelter as a case management assistant. This job should have provided ample opportunity to be a good person, but instead I felt like a cog in a bureaucratic mechanism. The

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requirements of The Man for my particular position robbed me of much of that expected opportunity.

Often times I felt that more harm than good was being done. Feeling helpless there, I eventually left. Though I don't believe that job was really my "calling" I believe that what I experienced there is something like what I'm trying to describe as vocational conflict.

There are many jobs that have a tremendous potential for goodness, and yet these jobs can have an equally negative impact. The actions of teachers will affect children for the rest of their lives. Medical professionals can become desensitized to the suffering of others upon seeing it all day, resulting in that

they treat their patients like objects on an assembly line. Freelance artists need to choose carefully, who they take a commission from. Politicians... let's not even go there. In my own journey, I am now pursuing a job as a librarian. This may sound like the noblest profession on the planet, however, the idea of my paycheck coming from the government doesn't really appeal to me. As I said before, The Man pervades.

So what is the solution? In the gospels, Jesus calls his disciples out of the lives they know. We are given the examples of Peter, Andrew, James and John, hard at work on their fishing boats. They are told to leave their nets and follow him, and their new life is inspired by a profound mission in which personal gain, comfort, and stability, are exchanged for trusting in the Lord. Their new vocation is a holy one of self-sacrifice.

This can be a challenging message to all of us, the idea that Jesus can and should change our whole lives, make us new people, and give us new employment. For many, the call of Christ may require us to do something as drastic as leave our jobs. This is not a bad thing, but is it for everyone? Fortunately, chapter 19 of the gospel Luke gives us another example. Zacchaeus the tax collector encounters Jesus and changes his life as well. "Look, Lord!" he says, "Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount." Jesus replies that the Son of Man has come to seek and save the lost.

Jesus' response is absolute genius, and a great message to all of us. Zacchaeus was lost not because he was a tax collector, but because he allowed himself to fall into the habits of every other tax collector creating an unjust situation. Jesus inspires him to rectify this injustice and do his job right. Similarly, we can feel lost in our own job. We can become accustomed to the complacent norm, rather than allowing Christ to transform us into agents of

change, putting a halt to the norm.

Vocational conflict is practically inevitable for most jobs that we take. In our world we must encounter The Man in almost anything we do. Will we submit to his demands at the cost of our conscience, or will we become cogs in a transcendent mechanism, seeking a kingdom that replaces greed with redemption? This will look like something different for each of us. Some will change our jobs; others of us need to just change our attitudes. In either case, it starts with Christ as the center of lives.



—Nathan Leonard

Rod, Nate, and Joshua: On the calling of a pastor

Many Americans often define their lives by the work they do. Many of us enjoy having a job and feel some sense of purpose in working.

Through my own job-related struggles, I've come to realize that relying only on a job to give me a sense of purpose in my life is rather misguided. Having a job and the dignity that comes with it is essential to my own life, but it is not the only thing I need.

I've considered the specific work that I'm interested in and the correlation to my spiritual life. I think about whether or not my specific career choice is actually serving God in some way. Maybe it is sometimes and other times not so much. But what I'm finding out through prayer and talking with others is that our specific jobs do not necessarily have to serve God, as long as we're keeping God in mind while we work.

Three people in our network do hold

jobs that directly serve God on a daily basis. These are our pastors, the people who lead and serve our congregations. Here are the stories of our pastors: Joshua Grace, Nate Hulfish and Rod White.

Grace is the pastor of the Frankford and Norris congregation and began as pastor at the congregation's public meetings in January of 2004. He said his desire to serve as a pastor started when he became an apprentice in his cell group.

"I think all of our cell leaders are pastors, so when I was a Cell Leader Apprentice I began to understand a bit more of what that meant and felt a drawing toward loving people intentionally like that. When we were looking to multiply our congregation in 2003, I was part of the first version of the Apprentice Pastor group. We had some ideas about starting an MCC thrift store with the next plant, and I went and asked a bunch of people if they would start a congregation with me. The Apprentice Pastor recommended me to the Cell Leaders and the Bishop affirmed the direction," Grace said.

Hulfish, the pastor of Tuckahoe and Yorkship in Camden, New Jersey, said he realized his call to be a pastor in high school. In college, he said, he studied Biblical Literature and Christian Education and wanted to pastor the next generation. He was a youth pastor during his four years of college and continued for six years after graduation. Hulfish said he was unsure of what he was doing at the time and wanted a to go in a slightly different direction.

"My vision for the church wasn't a great match for the church I was serving in and I resigned before I burned out.

I connected with Circle for about two years and was called into the apprentice pastor process. Cells had been forming in NJ before I was a part of Circle, but because of my pastoral giftedness, I

"Because of my pastoral giftedness, I functioned as pastor and leader of many of those in New Jersey in a lot of ways already."
—Nate Hulfish

functioned as pastor and leader of many of those in New Jersey in a lot of ways already,” Hulfish said. “I sensed God’s call to plant in Camden and this was confirmed by the pastors, coordinators and apprentice pastors.”

White, the pastor of the Broad and Washington congregation, discovered his desire to be a pastor early into his college career.

“I was a sophomore in college and realized that I WAS the pastor to a few of my friends. I had an argument with God for a while about that and he won,” White said.

The pastors agreed that they feel the work they do as part of Circle of Hope is more than just a job.

Hulfish said he does feel like he is doing God’s work at his job, but added that, for him, that’s not the only time God’s work needs to be done.

“But for me, all of life is service to God and others. Being a pastor is fulfilling and it is doing God’s work but it’s not just a job. It’s who I am and how I live. I don’t really feel like I “go to work everyday”...there’s plenty of work to do, but it’s an overflow of who I am,” Hulfish said.

White said his job does provide him with more opportunities to serve God.

“It is a wonderful luxury to have my opportunity to serve as I do,” he said.

Grace added, “I don’t have much of the ‘going to work’ experience most days but I am quite fulfilled in the sense that we are trying to do God’s work.”

The pastors each said they were called to serve God and others in some capacity and agreed that it was hard for them to envision themselves doing something different in life.

“My path in life is following Jesus, so if I wasn’t doing that, I guess I’d be following myself,” Hulfish said. “I’d probably have a lot more money or something, but I’d probably have a lot less joy and a lot less fun.”

Grace said that he’s been interested in pursuing other areas in the past such as community development, affordable housing, learning a craft as well as writing and performing music. He said though that he is ultimately doing what God has told him to do.

“I’m just trying to go with Jesus,” Grace said. “Most of my paths that I feel like I may have chosen had to

I’m just trying to go with Jesus... I have been shaped very much by my experiences and connections with people here. —Joshua Grace

do with moving to Philadelphia or making the connection with that first cell group. I have been shaped very much by my experiences and

connections with people here.”

White said he is satisfied with the path God has lead him on.

“I have trouble imagining choosing another path, since I feel like I was chosen for the one I’m on. Had I not chosen it, my life would be disobedient and frustrating,” he said.



—Melissa DiPento

The life of an urban teacher: Anything but Hollywood

When I was six I watched Bernie the carpenter build my parents a deck and I knew I wanted to be a carpenter. As I got older I veered slightly off course and ended up as a furniture maker in Fishtown. It put me through college, but having to listen to Rush Limbaugh every day drove me to leave the job. After that I thought about going to clown college, being a full time musician, and becoming a priest. None of those panned out and I ended up graduating from college with a degree in English. This degree, while making you sound smart, does not yield a whole lot of career opportunities.

I’ve worked a lot of different jobs

since I started following Jesus and have always found a way to follow him in all of them. However, selling incense at a hippy store in the mall or carpet at Home Depot didn’t provide an opportunity for the depth into people’s lives that I felt God was calling me to.

Then in an afternoon discussion with my aunt she brought up the possibility of my becoming a teacher. Teaching is something I had never thought of doing. It was too homogenized. Too routine. But the more I thought and prayed about it the more I felt God was calling me to the job. I went back to school and was quickly offered a job at Camden Academy Charter High School in the Cramer Hill Section of Camden. My first year was extremely difficult and I often wondered if I had made the right choice. Many of my students were failing my class and I didn’t have a very impressive grasp on classroom management.

I know this story sounds familiar. Hollywood has done a great job making heroes of young white people going into classrooms on the wrong side of the tracks and changing lives. What Hollywood doesn’t tell you is that those teachers only stayed in those schools for a couple of years, before moving onto something else. I think building the kingdom with Jesus is not only done on short mission trips and two year stints in rough urban schools, but in long-term commitments. It is only in the long term that we can see things through fully. It was only in the long term that I would really get to know my students and learn what it even meant to be a good teacher. As one of my favorite teachers, Rafe Esquith, says, “There are no shortcuts.”

Teaching has provided the opportunity to love and serve people where they are. A chance to share what I had learned in school and in life and to learn from students and parents how to be a better follower of Jesus in a community.

Decision making, problem solving, faith, being encouraged and

encouraging others, being a listener are some of the things Jesus is teaching me as a teacher. These are some of the things I try to pass on to my kids.

Father Matthew of The Abbey of Gethsemani once asked a group of us how we had made our way to the abbey in Kentucky. "You might tell me that you read about it in a book. Got in your car. Drove down here. But that would be only part of the story. What about the mystical part? You were prayed here." Hearing him say that changed something in me. The idea that we might end up somewhere because we were called or prayed there was wonderful. Now I'm not so presumptuous to think that God called me to be a teacher because of my amazing skill and uncanny ability to identify with children and their needs. I do however, feel that God has called me to this duty for reasons that are still not all that clear to me.

Maybe that why Thomas Merton really hits me when he says "In one sense we are always traveling, and traveling as if we did not know where we were going. In another sense we have already arrived. We cannot arrive at the perfect possession of God in this life, and that is why we are traveling and in darkness. But we already possess Him by grace, and therefore, in that sense, we have arrived and are dwelling in the light."

—C.J. Reynolds



So, I said, "Yes": Confessions of a Circle Thrift manager

A while back in cell group we were talking about where in our lives we feel like we are most our true selves, where

we are living the life and being the person we think God made us to be. I was kind of surprised to realize that for me it's the minutes, hours and days that

I am at Circle Thrift. Greeting, meeting, and getting to know our neighbors of all kinds—art students, retirees, ladies in rehab, old folks, kids, kite-makers, book collectors, cross dressers, you name it. All rubbing shoulders and getting a taste of God's love in the form of me and my co-workers.

When I think of my calling as a Circle Thrift manager, I picture Rod White and Martha Grace's smiling faces, eyebrows raised. That's what it was like the day they sat in my living room and told me they thought I could do it. That meant something to me. I didn't think I could do it, but they did and they are awesome, faithful people. They were smiling so nicely. So, I said, "Yes."

Rod says it's in my blood and after almost two years of it, I think he's right. I grew up in the grimy aisles of my dad and uncle's grocery store (their tagline was, "We love you."—I'm not kidding). I went on to support my college and post college years folding clothes and counting cash drawers at stores like the Gap and Urban Outfitters.

When I was baptized as a teenager, I told the adoring congregation I felt called to ministry and as I entered my freshman year at Malone College in Canton, Ohio my major was indeed Christian Ministry. It didn't take long for me to change my major to Sociology and occasionally, as I wandered through the years of social work and public health research jobs, I questioned what to make of that calling I had felt so long ago. At times I wrote it off as the delusion of someone who had been

manipulated by a very charismatic version of Christianity. At others I just felt pure guilt.

There were lots of years in there where I was barely on speaking terms with Jesus, having felt majorly abandoned by him following the loss of my mother to breast cancer when I was 23. He seemed like a good guy on the surface, but how could I trust someone who never answered my prayers (and those of so many others) for healing? It seemed at times like there was nothing worth hoping or trusting for. Speaking the word "yes" in my living room was an important moment of healing for me and a way back to trusting God to make a way, to protect me, and to give me what I need beyond what I can do or achieve myself.

Passing along the importance and gravity of the "yes" to those I work with is not simple or easy. It takes a while to teach, and a while to learn. Point number one of the orientation for working at Circle Thrift: This is not just

some cake retail job. Then I pass on the wisdom of Martha: Each day take a moment to prepare your heart. You aren't going to be ringing up pristine merchandise for Catholic school girls (O.K., maybe once in a while). You are going to get dirty. Lots of times the folks who come down our steps are already tired, angry, depressed, hassled or worse. Your job is to respond with patience, grace and to treat them with dignity, no matter what. That takes some mental preparation. The calling that our "regular" employee has looks different than mine, but I expect and hope, that they will rise daily to the occasion and take this opportunity to be the hands, feet and mouths of Jesus.

Having said that, I have to admit that there are plenty of times that I feel that I am half-assing this calling. There is a long list of things I could be doing. I have come to realize there always will be, and that I will have more time for

this never-ending and ever-growing list. I am just beginning to get comfortable with the idea that I have a long time to answer this call. Jesus isn't going anywhere. And neither am I.



—Shelley Crognale

Do we have to work anyway?

At this point in my life, I have worked few jobs that I would call “rewarding.” My work has always been a means to an end, not so much a vocation as a capitulation to society. In order to get what I want out of the system, I have to put so much in. I work to pay for school, to keep a roof over my head, to feed my cat, and to contribute to the mission. Some work because they feel that they are directly benefiting humanity: e.g. the teacher, the social worker, or the community organizer. Waiting tables in Fishtown, however, does not seem to fit that list. Should I finally give up on the “free labor” system, don some camel skins, and head into the wilderness to proclaim the kingdom a la John the Baptist?

What system am I participating in anyway? We live in a world that

has a marketplace of labor. Workers are commodities whose services are purchased by others in order to produce goods and services for the rest of society. Some of these goods and services are more obviously beneficial to the whole, medicine for example, while others are less obviously beneficial, such as Big Macs. It is easier to justify participation in the production of goods and services that one deems more beneficial for society. This is the benefit of a “free labor” system.

It might be hard to deny that free labor, opposed to the alternatives of “slave labor” and “serf labor” (contract labor), is preferable. This system gives us freedom to choose how we will contribute, assuming that we have the necessary skill set. However, “choice” is not always a given. In reality, “free labor” does not offer the heavenly side of hellish slave labor. Right now, we are experiencing a recession. In the month of November, the unemployment rate rose 1.7 percent and there are no signs of this trend abating. Those who can choose jobs search for a vocation that will give them the greatest sense of fulfillment. The laborer who cannot find work in the marketplace, however, has inherited the disadvantages of freedom with little

of the benefits. What good is freedom to choose without the ability to put food on your table or pay your mortgage? What is the freedom to choose with no choices?

One option for Christians would be to buck the system entirely and create self-sustaining societies. In reality, we should wish to emulate the community expressed in Acts 2:42-47: “All believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to everyone as that one had need.” Certainly, following Christ should change our economics. This idea fits well with one of our Circle of Hope proverbs: “In an individualistic age, being the church is a counter-cultural statement.” The individualism of our age leaves people uncared for and out of work despite their “human right” to freedom of choice.

The foundation for being able to speak against injustice is to live in a way that demonstrates justice in the midst of the world.

Let's be counter-cultural! Let's define value by one's intrinsic worth in God's sight not by how valuable she or he is to production.

For some, this has meant creating a separated society. I have to admit that the idea of breaking away from a world that leaves people isolated and fending for themselves to truly live lives of devotion to each other and God is incredibly appealing. This could express or contradict another of our Circle of Hope proverbs: “Whether rich or poor we are united in demonstrating the gospel through justice, not merely talking about it.” In creating such an alternative society, we demonstrate the justice of the gospel in our lives together. In another way, we run the risk of making ourselves an irrelevant witness to the rest of the world by cutting ourselves off from it. A universal call for Christians to go start communes may not be the best option.

However, this is not what happened in the Acts 2 community. They lived in Jerusalem and preached the message of salvation. They were aware of their

About Circle Thrift

A project of Circle of Hope and the Mennonite Central Committee, Circle Thrift is a mission team of Circle Venture dedicated to share God's love in practical ways by providing our neighbors with inexpensive items in a dignified shopping environment, raising money for local and worldwide aid through our partners. Come shop, donate, and volunteer!

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Philadelphia, PA 19125
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Mon-Sat: 9am-7pm
Sun: 11am-5pm

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mission and more or less were faithful to it while living together and taking care of each other's needs. As a community, we share a feeling of responsibility to society. Thus, we affirm a third Circle of Hope parable: "We are obliged to speak out against unjust laws and practices that oppress people and ruin creation." The foundation for being able to speak against injustice is to live in a way that demonstrates justice in the midst of the world.

Thus, I suggest that our response to a system that turns workers into commodities should begin from the type of society we create in the community of Jesus. We can create a society in the midst of the world that does not assign value based upon one's utility to worldly production but value that comes from the love we have for each other and God's own love for us. This manifests itself in tangible ways. Taking care of the "widow and orphan" as a manifestation of who we are in community is a radical way of life that should cause the world to reevaluate its values. Yet it is not enough to simply live justice in a community. In attempting to live out this justice, we can speak out against the injustice that dehumanizes and exploits the worker.

This article has done little to try and convince its reader that some jobs are valuable and others are not. More concern has been placed upon the value we give to work itself. For some, we define ourselves too much by the job we have, and for others we are devalued by society because of the work that we do not have. The community created by Jesus cannot live with these distinctions. We should not assign value in such a way. Jesus worked to remove social stigma from those who were devalued in society. Being Jesus means finding creative ways to care for and be cared for, while giving he valueless value, and questioning the values the world accepts.

For some of us, our work is more directly rewarding than for others. Those of us who can use our source of

income to directly impact the world for the better are in a lucky position. For those of us who are not so fortunate, we should not fret. Our "occupation" is the justice work of the community of Jesus. This means that I am not defined as "server of tables" but by the love of God that works in me with the community, i.e. his justice. My everyday occupation interacting in a world God cares so much about. Justice is more than providing human rights, freedom of choice, or even a living wage. Justice is a state of relationship with God and community. It is a formulation that is purposefully abstract. There are no easy answers. The question is how do we truly care for one another in a way that humanizes every person, actually provides for their needs, and assigns them true value. This is what with which we we are meant to continually struggle.



—Timothy Reardon

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2008 Goals

5 goals and sets of objectives that express our purpose and advance our mission

Goal 1: Build enough capacity to take the church to the next level

Objectives:

- a. Hire the Director of Operations by March.
- b. Implement the structure outlined in the Operations Manual. Continue to refine the details in the Manual
- c. Expand East's meeting space.
- d. Increase our sharing in our Common Fund.

Liz Einsig Wise began her work last March as the Director of Operations and has been developing our teams. We found a great deal to move Circle Thrift a block up the street and East (now Frankford & Norris) expanded into our whole building at 2007 Frankford.

Goal 2: Take obvious steps to make ourselves known by our compassionate service.

Objectives:

- e. Hire the Director of Circle Venture by April 1st.
- f. Create a way to administer the Compassion Fund well.
- g. Train our mission teams to help people connect with Jesus and His church through their work.
- h. Create more "good business" in Philadelphia through the founding of businesses or partnering with other startup enterprises.

We hired Jeremiah Alexander in May to serve as the Director of Circle Venture. He has been helping to generate new ideas and make new connections.

Goal 3: Plant our next congregation

Objectives:

- a. Receive discernment from our Apprentice Pastor process by May.
- b. Creatively use the time of Rod's sabbatical (May 15 to Sep 15) to advance Apprentice Training.
- c. Deploy our next pastor by November 1.

We deployed Nate Hulfish as pastor and the Public Meeting in Camden began in October. Nate & Tracey got some great training while filling some roles while Rod was on sabbatical.

Goal 4: Support and train emerging leaders

Objectives:

Continue to refine the pastoral training of our Cell Leaders

- a. Create a covenant for Coordinators and deepen their capabilities.
- b. Support our Pastors and Directors as they become the Leadership Core Team.
- c. Define and train the teams that function within the three areas of church planting, compassion and capacity.
- d. Engage new leaders with a diversity of talents. Help people to connect to opportunities that are appropriate to their gifts.
- e. Support Rod as he enjoys a sabbatical and transitions beyond church planter and founder.

- f. Develop our mission to children and teens.

Our training for Cell Leaders has been further refined, Coordinators are continuing to get a clearer sense of their roles. Our teams have a stronger sense of their identity within the Church Planting, Compassion, and Capacity. Rod's sabbatical was richly productive for him as well as the rest of the church.

Goal 5: Develop our interconnections, both on the smallest and largest levels

Objectives

- a. Further develop our presence online by building on our website, online book, listserv, and social networking websites.
- b. Link our network processes to create labor-saving systems.
- c. Use sabbatical grant money to hold a weekend retreat for our discernment process in October.
- d. Link our Events Teams.

The Discernment Retreat last October was one of the highlights of the year. We plan to do it again.

2009 Goals

Continuing to express our purpose and advance our mission

Goal: Finish the foundation we have been laying for the larger church God is building

Objectives:

- a. Build our Camden congregation up until it meets the criteria for fully-networked congregation.

- b. Construct effective fundraising practices the raise enough money for Circle Venture to pay our CV Director as well as help supply mission team needs.
- c. Put together an Operations Teams that increases our capacity on top of focusing us on maintaining our system.
- d. Develop our website and other communication capacity.
- e. Complete the F/N rehab and build the local financial capacity to pay for it.
- f. Mark the point when the Cells and PMs have grown by another 150 people as a starting line for our next congregation.

Keep checking to see if the time is ripe for our next congregation and plant further seeds for the future.

Objectives:

- a. Create a planning team (primarily from F/N) to present a plan for our next planting by June.
- b. Begin a process to discern our next pastor and secure funding for our next congregation.

- c. Bring interested people together to consider our mission to Spanish-speakers.

Provide tools for people longing for deeper involvement in their neighborhood

Objectives

- a. Provide further one-shot opportunities that help many people get engaged, including disconnected ones.
- b. Communicate how people can get involved with allied agencies.
- c. Expand the knowledge of our many connections by creating a resource list
- d. Follow the lead of our mission teams, since they help us get involved.

Refocus and expand our efforts to protect a place in the circle for children and teens.

Objectives

- a. Hold a series of summits that will help us refine a Children's Plan that bridges congregations.

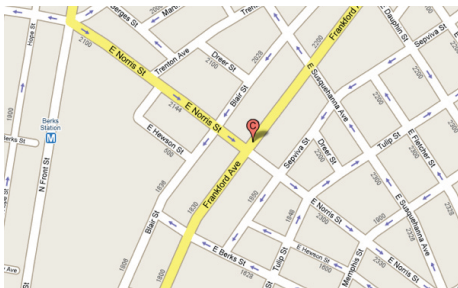
- b. Incorporate older elementary children and teens into our cells and PMs.
- c. Encourage teams that form connections with parents/ children and teens.
- d. Hold a forum on parenting as a community.

Train people who are strong enough to pass on authentic Circle of Hope DNA

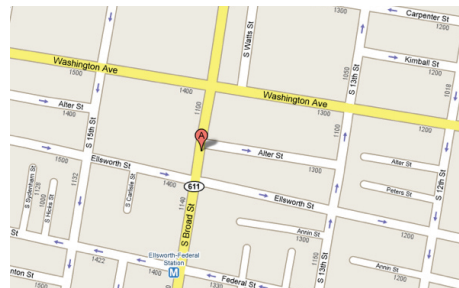
Objectives

- a. Rely on our Cells and PMs as our main training system.
- b. Employ a part-time teaching pastor.
- c. Encourage gifted teachers to serve us in our regular cells and training times and at further events.
- d. Organize training times that help people focus on making connections with those in need.
- e. Hold a conference on living in intentional community.
- f. Explore an international learning tour or service trip.

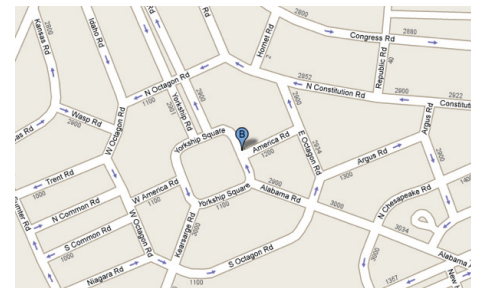
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