

A Framework for Grassroots-Initiated Strategies for Transformational Impact

(The LC2C Framework)

“Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people....” (Matthew 9:35)

As our Lord has called us to a unity that draws people to Christ and as the Church has been filled by the Holy Spirit to enjoy and express that unity, we present this document as a means by which the 21st Century Church of Jesus Christ throughout America may pursue a strategic dialogue and discussion toward that end.

This framework has been developed for the Mission America Coalition, which is dedicated to “the whole Church taking the whole gospel to the whole nation and to the world.” Since its inception, leaders from 81 denominations, over 350 ministries, hundreds of city and community movements, and dozens of ministry networks have been involved in the Coalition. This framework is meant to be flexible in its application so that every team of local leaders may customize a long-term view of community transformation, praying for God's Spirit to accelerate the process and sustain gains in advancing the Kingdom of God. This document is an invitation more than an initiative—an invitation to collaborative conversations in our cities and communities that produce customized, locally initiated and owned strategies, goals, and action plans. The macro-vision (Loving Communities to Christ) requires a unique mezzo (regional, metro) and micro (every community, neighborhood) adaptation and implementation.

Following the example of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, we desire to recommit ourselves, our congregations, and our ministries to His mission. Therefore we are:

Calling God's people together to love our communities to Christ.

Biblical Basis

“...But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, ‘The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.’” (Matthew 9:35-38)

As we look through His eyes, we envision the hearts of God's people truly broken for the lost. We share His compassion for the people in our communities and share His vision for personal redemption and cultural change.

The Bible tells us that Jesus came “to seek and save that which was lost.” (Luke 19:10) And with one of His last commands, He gave us the same Commission to:

“Go into all the world...preach the gospel” (Mark 16:15)
“...and make disciples of all nations.” (Matthew 28:19)

Thus, in His final high intercessory prayer recorded in John 17, He could say to the Father: "As You have sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world..." and then model for us the first step in effective evangelism by saying "...I do not pray for these alone, but also for all those who will believe in Me through their word." (John 17:18, 20)

His sense of urgency was apparent and so it should be for us: "Do not say 'There are still four months and then comes the harvest.' Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest." (John 4:35) Hence, in His very first resurrection appearance to His assembled disciples, His very first words were "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." (John 20:21)

We understand our calling in Christ and that part of our redemption is demonstrated in healthy, loving relationships with one another. Therefore we are not asking the Church to send out lone ranger individuals or solitary organizations, but to come together as Jesus prayed in John 17:20-23 so that our witness is strengthened in love and God is glorified as together we demonstrate and declare the love of Christ.

Therefore, we prayerfully commit ourselves as partners in the Coalition, to mobilize our pastors, staff, volunteers, and members—using our services and resources—to saturate our communities with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Purpose Statement

Our purpose is to call God's people together to love our communities to Christ.

Values

- Christ Centered
- Church Based
- Community Focused
- Collaborative Approach
- Christ-like in Word and Deed
- Cultural Transformation

Leadership

Local leaders initiate the process. This is not top down. Resourcing, equipping, and encouragement are available from Mission America Coalition partners. Mission America Coalition National Facilitators seek to serve local leaders by connecting them with national and regional leadership of church and parachurch ministries. Local Christian leaders should reflect the diversity of their community and include:

- Local pastors, lay leaders and denominational area, district or association leaders.
- Facilitators of city reaching efforts.
- Local parachurch ministry leaders including:
 - Campus ministries
 - Ministries to the poor
 - Men's ministries

- Women's ministries
- Youth ministries
- Children's ministries
- Prayer ministries
- Marketplace ministries
- Community care groups
- Family ministries, and others
- Leaders with Christian influence from:
 - Ethnic communities
 - Media and communications sector
 - Marketplace sector
 - Civic/government sector
 - Education sector
 - Healthcare sector
 - Legal/justice field
 - Arts and entertainment sector, and others

Approach

At each local community's initiation and direction, a customized strategy is created. By engaging the "whole Church" in each community, we express spiritual unity and strength of purpose and benefit from all the unique gifts and evangelistic styles God has assembled together in each place. At the same time, we recognize, honor, and engage the spiritual power God has bestowed upon each of His children as His ambassadors and His witnesses—to "shine as lights in the world"—and call them together to strategically fulfill the Great Commission.

The strength of the body of Christ is multiplied as we come together with a single purpose. We recognize that each community has distinct needs and a varied array of Christian churches and other ministry organizations already at work. Even so, when we serve together our witness is more effective in building:

- a foundation of prayer,
- a lifestyle of care, and
- a willingness to share God's love and message in every sphere of influence (neighborhoods, workplaces, schools, and more) given by God.

These three emphases—prayer, care, and share—form the essential building blocks for effective evangelism and a cultural change process in churches that will both enable and sustain God's continuing outreach in each community in the years ahead. This is a grassroots effort consisting of locally chosen initiatives as well as community-wide events (e.g. prayer concerts, community care initiatives, harvest events). Individual churches develop their own approach to each initiative; drawing from the resources of Mission America Coalition partners, but they also come together for stronger impact in community-wide events. Participating in a series of key joint events maintains our collective focus, reinforces our spiritual unity, and magnifies the impact of the Church toward transformation.

Invitation

This framework has been presented to leaders from denominations, ministries, and cities who have overwhelmingly committed themselves to serving together in loving their communities to Christ. We acknowledge that this framework only goes forward as God leads local leaders to prayerfully respond to the challenge. If you would like to respond, or if you have any questions, please email the Mission America Coalition at lc2c@missionamerica.org or visit www.missionamerica.org.