



We value the city

It is evident through scripture that God has a heart for the city.

Jeremiah 29:7 says, *"Seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper."*

We are committed to people and place. We seek the physical and spiritual renewal of both and are fully committed to spreading the good news of Jesus to people for their salvation while working to create positive, permanent city change. Lexington can be a place of relationship, opportunity, and grace for all.

Zechariah, chapter 8, is a prophetic picture of how God will restore the city of Jerusalem to a "faithful city." In this beautiful description of what a city will be like when God reigns over it and in it, Zechariah declares what the Lord is intending for the city. In **verses 4-5** he says that *"Once again, men and women of ripe old age will sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each of them with cane in hand because of their age. The city streets will be filled with boys and girls playing there."*

We believe that this is what the Lord intends for Lexington. That the most vulnerable of populations (the elderly and the children) will be cared for, safe, and full of joy and promise.

We value the vulnerable

We see God's unrelenting concern for the poor, widowed, migrant, sick, prisoner, homeless, and oppressed.

The example Jesus set for us to seek and serve the least, the last and lost is our model as we value all people, no matter their gender, race, sexual orientation, religion, ideologies, or socioeconomic status. And we believe Jesus when He says "Whatever you did for the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me," (**Matthew 25:40**).

Therefore, it is worship unto the Lord when we value and serve the vulnerable. To that end, we work in partnership to build opportunities and a better life for those who live in the margins.

We value leadership

It is evident through scripture that God has a heart for the city. A community's diverse leadership will need to be engaged.

We value a Biblical view of leadership that seeks the welfare of others. **Isaiah 61:1-4** paints a picture of how cities will be restored through indigenous leaders:

"The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn,

and provide for those who grieve in Zion – to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendor. They will rebuild the ancient ruins and restore the places long devastated; they will renew the ruined cities that have been devastated for generations.”

We value the church

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The establishment of the Church as the means to advance the Kingdom of God on the earth is evident in the New Testament. The whole church in a city has tremendous resources to bring to bear. The greatest of those assets are the people of God.

We believe that if the Church were to move in the same direction that there is nothing that we can't accomplish together. The importance of the Church is expressed throughout the New Testament, but a foundational scripture for LLF is found in **1 Corinthians 12:12-20**:

“Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many. Now if the foot should say, ‘Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,’ it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. And if the ear should say, ‘Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,’ it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body.”

We value empowerment

One of the mantras of LLF is that “we empower passion.” In our work to develop leaders in our city, we try to help them discover, develop, and deploy passions in their lives that will have positive affect on themselves, their families, and their communities.

We help leaders identify and nurture the skills, assets, and networks to live abundant lives and to maximize their impact for the Kingdom. We believe this is one way to help people live out what Jesus intended for them when he said that *“He came that we may have life and have it to the full”* in **John 10:10**.

Galatians 5:1 says, *“It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.”* So, for our empowerment work with people to occur fully, we believe a relationship with Jesus Christ is essential. This means that we strive to share the good news of Jesus Christ as a part of our programming and leadership development efforts.

We value reconciliation

This work requires the whole church and community.

Strengths need to be tapped; divisions healed. We understand that we have been called and are motivated to live out Paul's exhortation in **2 Corinthians 5:18**, which states, *“But all things are of God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and gave unto us the ministry of reconciliation.”*

To live this ministry of reconciliation out is more than a notion. So, LLF strategically connects, unifies and mobilizes

people across racial, socioeconomic, theological and political lines. We believe Jesus that being reconciled, or unified, will *“let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me”* Which is what Jesus teaches through his prayer in **John 17:23**.

We value risk

It is evident through scripture that God has a heart for the city.
Creativity, innovation, and courage will be required.

We believe any effort to make significant change in our city requires great faith, which we as ministry entrepreneurs interpret as risk.

As stated in **Hebrews 11:1-2**, *“Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. This is what the ancients were commended for.”*

Therefore, LLF is not risk averse. We have and will continue to step out of the boat. We balance this with calculated strategy, as we also believe the teaching of Jesus in **Luke 14:28** that urges us to not build towers without first considering the cost.

