



## *LLF's 20th Year Anniversary to Be Celebrated Throughout 2019*

Do you know what happens as a tree grows older? The tips of every branch sprout new growth which makes the tree grow taller and spread further out. At the same time, the trunk, branches, and roots all grow fatter, making the tree's shape broader. The tips of branches can grow very quickly or can take some time to grow. As the trunk grows, it produces rings. One for each year of growth. LLF is 20 years old and the picture painted is a tree with a thick, wide, trunk with roots that run deep into the earth and vast branches laden heavy with fruit.

**Matthew 13:31** "The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field. It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is larger than all the garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches."

This is the verse that comes to mind when reflecting on LLF's 20th Year Anniversary. LLF started with a mustard seed of faith in 1999 by Dr. John Withers, who still serves as Chair of our Board. John, along with a great many people, mobilized together because they believed that the Body of Christ, working alongside others of goodwill, could collectively use their gifts and talents to work towards transforming Lexington into a city for God.



That was the vision for our first initiative, a prayer newsletter called The Trumpet. On the first Trumpet newsletter is said this: "Lexington: A City for God!" and that is still our vision for today. Through the years LLF has had a good number of different programs and initiatives. Some have already lived their time and no doubt had kingdom impact, and some are still thriving and growing today. Read to Succeed is 20 years old, operating in seven different sites around the city, while Amachi is celebrating 15 years of one-to-one mentoring for children of promise. Urban Impact is celebrating 14 years and is exponentially growing. They are working in-school with elementary, middle, and high school

students, as well as after-school at the Woodhill Community Center. The Fatherhood Initiative is on year 8, equipping hundreds of men each year and currently working with the state to launch a statewide fatherhood coalition. Out of the initial Prayer Ministry grew The Prayer Room, now 5 years old, serving as a gathering place seven days a week for people to worship, praise, and intercede together.

Can you see our tree? What will that tree look like in 20 more years with 20 more rings? We are excited for the future of LLF. We are here to be the hands and feet of Jesus with you, with our community here. Thank you for your support over the years. We are dreaming big things for the city of Lexington. We have faith for a city filled with peace; for streets filled with laughter; for the kingdom being on earth as it is in heaven. Can you see it too? Here's to the next 20 years and many more after that.

### *our mission*

Through Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit we **CONNECT** leaders, **UNIFY** the body, and **MOBILIZE** people to **TRANSFORM** Lexington into a city for God.

## *Amachi Team in D.C.*

Last fall, LLF was awarded a \$500,000 grant from the Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice, to enhance mentoring services for young people impacted by the epidemic of opioid abuse. As an awardee, LLF was able to send two representatives to the gathering for all programs who received this award. CEO Eric Geary and Amachi Program Director Maggie Middleton attended the meeting in late January. As part of the program, Maggie was invited to serve on a panel of experts to share about best practices in the field of mentoring, specifically around the topic of match closure. Maggie was able to share about Amachi's experience with match closure, and she was able to explain why this topic is so crucial in facilitating quality match relationships. Participating in this panel was a tremendous honor and gave Amachi staff the opportunity to share with and learn from many other mentoring programs serving communities around the country.

The rest of the Amachi team met up with Maggie in Washington D.C. for the National Mentoring Summit. The



*Amachi staff*

National Mentoring Summit is the only national convening of youth mentoring professionals, researchers, philanthropic investors, and government and civic leaders. The conference is aimed at collectively strengthening and expanding quality mentoring relationships for young people across the country. The team came back inspired, refreshed, and excited to continue the good work being done at Amachi Central KY.

**AMACHI IS NOW OPENING ENROLLMENT FOR CHILDREN WHOSE LIVES ARE TOUCHED BY THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC, AS WELL AS CHILDREN IMPACTED BY INCARCERATION.** We need mentors now more than ever for these children of promise. We have 27 girls and 32 boys on our waiting list, please consider becoming a mentor yourself or encourage someone you know be one!

**SAVE THE DATE FOR APRIL 20TH FROM 11:00AM- 2:00PM** for our Kendra Gives Back Party at The Summit at Fritz Farm benefiting Amachi! Can't make it? Call the store to place a phone order to contribute to the give back. Kendra Scott: 859-475-1880

### PRAYER ROOM

## *Worship Nights*

From its inception in 2014, The Prayer Room has sought to bring the Body of Christ together to seek the Lord through intercessory worship. Recently, a new collective of worship leaders and musicians called LexWorship has been meeting twice monthly to minister to the Lord through praise, adoration, and prayer. Birthed from a collaborative vision to unite Lexington with worship and intercession, LexWorship features people from a variety of local congregations and ministries who are working together to magnify Jesus with one voice.

Additionally, at The Prayer Room every Wednesday at noon, Curt Vernon leads a multi-generational gathering in worship and prayer. Also, on Sunday evenings, a college and young adults crowd meets at 6:30 to honor the Lord through worship and prayer.

Please join us for any of these gatherings or for one of the upcoming LexWorship nights on March 30th at 6pm, April 6th at 6pm, and Good Friday April 19th at 7pm.



*LexWorship Night at The Prayer Room*

**“That together you may, with united hearts and one voice, praise and glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 15.6).”**



## NFL Player Invests Time with Urban Impact

Urban Impact received a call on January 29th and 10 days later, Kenny Stills had arrived at the Woodhill Community Center! Kenny is a wide receiver for the Miami Dolphins and a dear friend to Urban Impact. We met Kenny in 2018 during his first self-proclaimed Civil Rights Tour.

Kenny was able to revisit the students in our in-school mentoring program at Henry Clay, as well as speak in two JAG classes at Frederick Douglass. After school there was a special open gym for 75 of our young men and women, at which Kenny connected with our young people over a meal and some basketball. Over 140 students were present to interact with Kenny and his friends Mike, Max and Kelsey. Group discussions covered many different topics from the traumas they have experienced, to their take on social injustices in their communities and around the country. They talked about police brutality and the importance of listening to others before we judge them. Kenny shared with our students about how meditation has impacted the way he lives and plays the game of football. The students and staff always have the same word to describe Kenny and the crew when they are around: "humble." Kenny's passion for social justice and connecting people who are already doing good work really hit home with our staff, kids, and partners. Urban Impact is thankful and excited to be part of the journey with him. We are looking forward to ways we can further the conversation with him and the groups that he has connected with along the journey.



*Kenny Stills speaking to Urban Impact teens*

## DCBS Room Makeover



*A bright and happy DCBS Room*

The Fatherhood Initiative greatly values its partnership with the Department for Community Based Services (DCBS). In a meeting downtown at the Courthouse DCBS expressed a concern that their visitation rooms for families were very uninviting. David Cozart, Director of our Fatherhood Initiative, suggested they offer the rooms up for "adoption" by the community to make them more enjoyable. The idea was quickly embraced and Fatherhood adopted a room.

Erin Callahan, with one of LLF's partners, Lexington Overstock Warehouse, lead the charge to make one of the visitation rooms pop with fun for the families. A group of fathers gathered one Saturday morning to paint the room and then Erin connected with a contractor friend for the build. He came another Saturday morning with a group of men from his church to raise the barn.

Steve Malott, a Fatherhood facilitator, and Erin put the finishing touches on the room on a Friday. It is so exciting that this labor of love truly brought our community together, to serve our community. Fathers from our classes, fathers from the community, business partners, church partners, and Fatherhood facilitators all rallied together to bring a mighty ray of Christ's love to a room that will be filled for years to come with laughing children and their parents.

**The Fatherhood Initiative has been awarded a \$10,000 grant by Center for Policy Research, a Colorado non-profit. The grant provides resources to establish a statewide coalition composed of those involved in activities to strengthen fathers and promote fatherhood across the Commonwealth of Kentucky.**



## *Volunteer Opportunities*

There are many ways to get involved volunteering with LLF and our initiatives. For more information about volunteer opportunities visit our website at [lexlf.org](http://lexlf.org), email [volunteer@lexlf.org](mailto:volunteer@lexlf.org), or call us at 859-277-3087.

### *Give*



Lexington Leadership Foundation is on the 2020 ballot for Good Foods "Give Where You Live" program. Each time you shop at Good Foods, you have the option to round up to the nearest dollar for charity! If you are a Good Foods owner please consider voting for LLF, if you are not an owner and want to vote, you can sign up and get benefits (like the ability to vote) as well as many others! Vote online here: <https://goodfoods.coop/about-the-co-op/online-voting/> thank you in advance!

### *KY Gives Day*



KY Gives Day is a statewide, 24-hour, online giving event raising funds for participating KY nonprofits. KY Gives Day is a special opportunity to celebrate the important work of nonprofits! This year all gifts to LLF will go towards programming for Amachi Central KY. Mark your calendar for May 14 and show Amachi some love at s.

Please see our website at [lexlf.org](http://lexlf.org) for upcoming LLF events.