MISSION STATEMENT
As a ministry of Jesus Christ, Light of Life will provide a home for the homeless and food for the hungry, and will build disciples for the Kingdom of God among the poor, addicted, abused and needy.

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AT LIGHT OF LIFE IN 2015
8,000 emergency shelter nights were provided for homeless men

125 people are sheltered every night

held over 800 chapel services for those in need

over 192,000 meals were provided for those in need

476 Thanksgiving dinner baskets were provided to families in need on the North Side

24 men and women graduated our long-term recovery programs

12,000 meals were provided for Urban Impact’s after-school programs
In Christ,

Dear Friend,

Recently I was asked if I have a strategic plan. After some quick consideration I answered “no.” In those short moments, what I failed to consider is a vision God laid on my heart several years ago, prior to starting at Light of Life. The plan, God’s plan, seems to be underway at Light of Life here in 2016. So if you want to call His plan a strategic plan, I’ll take some time here in this letter to unveil the beginnings of “a strategic plan” for Light of Life 2016 and beyond.

The premise is that God cares for the poor and He also wants his children to unite and work together in brotherly relationship as He ordained the Body of Christ. If the Body can demonstrate His will in our community in Pittsburgh, the country and perhaps the world will take note and God will be glorified. So you may ask, as I did, when God tugged at my heart to follow this path, how exactly is that going to happen?

It officially started in 2015 when I shared this plan with Don Foster, our then Board Chair, who now sits, along with Tunch Ilkin, as an honorary board member. Don encouraged me to pursue the vision and when he stepped down, our newly elected Chairman of the Board, Glenn Graner, put his full support behind the vision. In fact, Glenn emphatically led the charge with the Light of Life Board to put the wheels in motion. It begins by putting a proverbial stake in the ground and claiming a community for Jesus Christ, that stake is a cross and the community is Pittsburgh’s Northside.

Those we are serving are the poor and the homeless, the young and the elderly, the sick and impoverished and those who are hungry…including those who are hungry and may not realize their need for the real food which is Jesus Christ. We will reach those with these needs, working directly alongside other like-minded Christ-centered organizations. Together, we will serve and create opportunities for others in the Church to act on the command that God gave all of us to “love our neighbor.”

Working together we can be more efficient and God can use us to be more effective. The Body of Christ will come together where good ministry is sustainable and God will have the glory! Examples of what has been happening thus far include:

– Light of Life has nearly doubled the number of meals served in the last four years to 190,000 annually, primarily by mobilizing food to those with a need out in the community, like thousands of meals that are fed to the kids that participate in the programs of Urban Impact.

– Plans are in place to direct significant meals to the summer campers and at-risk kids of the Pittsburgh Project; support is already in place for the project’s new wrestling program for kids on the Northside.

– Light of Life has begun a deeper relationship with The North Side Christian Health Center, including the addition of our medical officer on their board; I personally received quality care there that included prayer. We have plans in place to promote their services for our staff and clients. Additionally, Young Life now finds headquarters at The North Side Christian Health Center as a result of the connection we made.

– Light of Life is now making room to host Family Guidance staff in our offices in an effort to bring them into the urban community where they will flourish in their mission to serve at-risk kids and families. The move will also help Family Guidance financially and direct the strong Light of Life Development and Administrative team to invest in and expand that vital ministry. Light of Life clients and staff have benefitted immensely by utilizing the wonderful Family Guidance Camp and Conference Center and in the summer of 2016 it is our hope that all 50 kids in the Light of Life program will attend camp at Promise Camp.

– This month Young Life’s Metro Director Mike Chilcoat and I will travel to the airport to pick up an incredible candidate for the Young Life Urban Coordinator position for the Northside. We will visit Promise Camp and make other visits to Northside partners that include Brad Henderson of the Pittsburgh Kid’s Foundation; Brad’s team has supported and befriended the Northside’s homeless and addicted population on numerous occasions for which we are thankful. We’ll also meet an Urban Impact and Pittsburgh Project leader to make the introduction to help foster future relationships for the good of the overall community in the name of Christ.

It is too early to document all of the action steps and we certainly don’t want to get ahead of God but I’ll close by saying God’s plan is exciting and as it develops there will be numerous opportunities to invite you, the Church, God’s Body to come invest, partake and praise Him for the transformation that occurs!

In Christ,

Craig