

2009 Year In Review



2009 was another strong year of development and growth as the Community Faith Partnership organized its ministry outreaches into three distinct areas of service — our Life-ExChange efforts with the addicted and those re-entering the community from jail or prison, the CARE Network of volunteers with home repair skills willing to help seniors and those with handicapping conditions do simple home maintenance, and our growing Student-Connections partnerships with other organizations that serve high school students.

THE CARE NETWORK: Our CARE Network (Construction And Repair Experts) grew naturally from engagements we have had with older women in the community who encounter home maintenance challenges which, if left unattended, would lead to further damage and expensive repairs possibly threatening their ability to remain in the home. In 2009 we began to mobilize the volunteers from 9 area congregations who attended our first vision meeting in December '08. We decided to look for a project that was manageable and could provide a growth opportunity for our vision.

Someone heard the Ithaca Salvation Army had purchased a large house next door, on State Street between them and Planned Parenthood, and that the front porch of the building had serious foundation decay. The porch was beginning to tilt dramatically and would only get worse. Moreover, the new Major was welcoming of our interest and said they would be able to purchase all the equipment and materials we would need... and provide lunches. On April 24 and 25 volunteers from 7 congregations began the renovations which would span 3 weekends and involve everything from transplanting bushes to cleaning and painting. That Saturday turned out to be a volunteer day at Cornell so our team was supplemented by 20 college students eager to help. By the end of the first weekend we had completely excavated and built a new foundation (complying with city building codes) and the porch was straightened. By the time we finally finished, the work included the skilled reconstruction of an old post that had rotted over the years. We succeeded in growing both our project skills and our relationships.

Our next project came to us by word of mouth. A call from a friend at the county Office for the Aging made us aware of a multiple-handicapped woman who lived alone in a dwelling with significant roof leaks. Agencies were standing by to help her with insulation, kitchen improvements and new windows, but nothing could go forward until the roof was repaired and none of the agencies could accomplish that. Again, with all our building materials supplied, we mobilized volunteers in several shifts on September 26th and completely replaced the single-story roof in just one day. Neighbors turned out. So did the woman's son and daughter and work that began at 8am was completed by 6:05pm. At the end, a hot meal was provided by Christians across the street. Lunch had also been supplied by the Salvation Army.

For our third CARE mobilization, the team decided to create an event that allowed the greatest number of volunteers to get involved. So on the day after Thanksgiving — Black Friday for shoppers — three teams of volunteers deployed to three locations to clean, prune and rake the properties into a much improved condition. Our "Day of Caring" was a success in many ways, including allowing families to work and serve together, allowing people to be engaged at all skill levels, and in building partnerships that will help us in the future — with the Salvation Army, Ithaca City officials, and newly engaged congregations. We expect the CARE Network to be an exciting ministry in 2010.



LIFE-EXCHANGE: Life-ExChange is what we decided to name the longest-running efforts of our ten-year history. For many years, volunteers from several congregations have been visiting the Tompkins County Jail on a weekly basis to share our faith and lead those who voluntarily attend



REBUILDING: 20 Cornell students came out and joined many other volunteers from several congregations to clean and completely rebuild the foundation of the front porch for the Salvation Army Music Academy. The Salvation Army had purchased the house next door as a home for its music ministry but the decaying foundation needed to be fixed. Our CARE team took on the project as a way to grow its skills and organizational experience.

“Uniting Christians to improve

in Bible teaching and discussion. Of course we are there to build meaningful relationships with the men and women, and that leads us into fairly deep engagement in their lives as they return to the community. Our team that visits the jail regularly has grown on a consistent basis through 2009 to include men from 4 congregations and women from 4 as well. Beside the men and women inmates returning to the community, some are sentenced to state prison and for them we have begun a letter writing ministry. Volunteers from 6 congregations keep up correspondence over questions about Christian faith and the events of life. Life in a state prison is difficult, but the prisoners write inspiring letters about facing challenges with their faith in Christ.

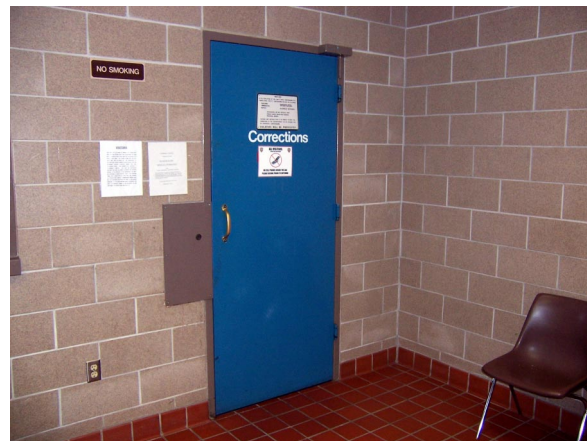
In the spring of 2009 we helped to settle a man in a Groton apartment that was provided by the County Department of Social Services. He had been homeless in Ithaca for many years prior to going to jail. For several weeks a volunteer visited for fellowship and to walk him through lessons from the Holistic Hardware life-skills training. We helped him find furniture from thrift stores and private individuals who heard about his needs. We connected him with leaders of 2 Groton area congregations and went with him to make introductions. In the end, he moved for a job opportunity but he knows our door is open to him.

For several years, CFP has been a part of the County Jail Re-Entry Program, a partnership between the Sheriff and Social Services, and led by a corrections officer the Sheriff assigns to full time efforts with those leaving the jail. That has led to a close collaboration with the jail staff and other agency personnel in joint efforts to give men and women the environment and supports they need to succeed in a new path. We concentrate our efforts on building their Christian faith and linking them with a local congregation they can feel at home in. At the end of 2009 we began offering some inmates a month of weekly lunch appointments at a favorite restaurant as an incentive for staying connected over the critical first few weeks of return to the community.

STUDENT-CONNECTIONS: Through 2009 we continued to build our vision for an outreach to high-school students that would help them discover their God-given gifts and abilities — and raise their academic and career horizons. For several years, we have partnered with the Village at Ithaca in the “Path of Success” seminar (www.pathofsuccess.org) delivered every fall at Ithaca High School. Path of Success was created by Alfred Watts, a Cornell graduate who believes God lifted him from an upbringing which lacked direction and promise and gave him a scholarship, a purpose and many other blessings. Alfred came to understand the power of someone really believing in your potential and dedicated himself to speaking to students about personal vision, planning ahead, and making careful choices to achieve dreams. Each year Alfred’s seminar attracts a crowd of students who come to listen and stay all day, on a Saturday, to absorb his lessons.

In previous years we explored creating a follow-up group to keep discussions going which the seminar began, but in 2009 we tried a different approach. We discovered the StrengthsQuest on-line personality and talent assessment developed by The Gallup Organization (www.strengthsquest.com) — through a process of 2 million interviews with people who enjoy their jobs and work in settings that use their strengths. We then learned that our own Tompkins-Cortland Community College (TC3) is a national leader in implementing the benefits of StrengthsQuest on a campus-wide basis. (Students are introduced to StrengthsQuest and take the assessment in orientation sessions.)

Several of us personally took the StrengthsQuest assessment and then began a discussion with TC3 staff over how the program might be made available to high school students. As a result in September, following another successful Path of Success seminar, 12 high school students enjoyed a wonderful StrengthsQuest



Men and women use this door from the Tompkins County Jail on their way back to the community.



Twelve high school students met for three Saturdays in the fall to take the StrengthsQuest individual skills and personality assessment offered by TC3, the Village at Ithaca & Community Faith Partners

the welfare of our neighbors...”

opportunity, made up of the on-line assessment followed by group discussions led by TC3 students and staff. Three Saturday sessions were well attended. That will likely become a model for our helping students in the years ahead.

COMMUNITY LINKAGES: As we build our Faith Partnership, we are doing it with ever expanding linkages to the Christian congregations on the one hand, and local helping agencies on the other. Our new collaboration with the Salvation Army is an obvious win-win connection for the Christian community, and so are so many others. This year we got to know new folks in the Ithaca Youth Bureau, Ithaca Building Department, and the Community College. Scripture tells us to “Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.” (Matt. 5:16) The Christian community should be the most serving, caring, and vision-propelled element of our various neighborhoods and social structures. Our partnerships should help us to envision the needs better and to serve with better resources and results.

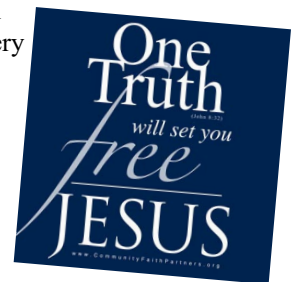
Significantly, we also need to make our partnerships within the Christian community broader and deeper. Each year we encounter folks from different congregations who expand our circle of joint-effort. Working with individuals and their own unique connections brings this about naturally and we benefit from it as we seek to help folks in their variety of needs. But we still need to make our partnerships deeper and more meaningful within the congregations already connected — some over many years. To that end, we are looking for individual members of many congregations who are willing to act as key “linkage people” within their congregation, bringing the various ways we are able to serve (and create service opportunities) to the attention of the congregation — and helping us better fulfill our Christian mission as well.

One new joint initiative that holds great promise is the summertime “Festival of Life” spearheaded by the Ithaca Pregnancy Center. In 2009, the Community Faith Partnership planned and catered a meal for those who attended, helping create an opportunity for sharing and testimonies about the work of different Christians organizations in front of a multi-congregational audience.

THE CHRISTMAS MESSAGE PROJECT: As we have over several years, in 2009 the Faith Partnership produced and distributed attractive outdoor yard-signs and car magnets in the Christmas season containing a hopeful message about Christ. Each year participation in that project grows and this year 500 signs and magnets were distributed through 30 congregations throughout the area. This year the Salvation Army made prominent display of the signs in their high-traffic downtown Ithaca location, but they also could be seen throughout the countryside and in obscure side streets. And many of the signs are staying up all year long. That was not envisioned when we started, but it does provide a friendly statement of faith for neighbors and those driving by. What began 6 years ago, offering the signs for a small donation to cover the costs, has become an opportunity for business sponsors and a totally free distribution. We’re very pleased to see so many messages about Christ on cars and in lawns throughout our area, and throughout the year.

BOARD DEVELOPMENT: In 2009 we also launched a new website to better present ourselves and our mission to the community at large. We hope and trust it will make us more accessible to those who might want to join our efforts in prayer or in person. At the end of 2009 we produced a short DVD about the Faith Partnership to better explain our projects in an visual way to individuals or congregations. The DVD is available to anyone by request.

Finally, as we start a new year, we have added new members to the Faith Partners Board of Directors. We are pleased to welcome Nathaniel Wright, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Ithaca (and one of our founding partner congregations), and Phil Robinson who serves as CIO of a large Ithaca business and attends Christ Chapel. We are sure that Pastor Wright will help us develop better engagement with the congregations we serve, and Phil will help us take steps of business development as we grow the mission and organization God has given us.



Visit our website

www.CommunityFaithPartners.org

Financial Summary

2009 Income:

Donations-Business/Organizations	1,050.00 ¹
Donations-Congregational	8,941.00 ²
Donations-Individuals/Families	16,855.00 ³
Donations Subtotal	\$26,846.00
Fundraising Income	2,464.12
Total 2009 Income	\$29,310.12

¹ Business/Organizations:

11 Business/Organizations gave from \$50-\$150

² Congregations:

8 Congregations gave from \$50-\$5,575

³ Individuals/Families:

37 Individuals/Families gave from \$5-\$4,810

2009 Expenses:

Program Expenses	481.16
Postage	290.35
Printing	459.86
Administrative Expenses	335.10
Fundraising Expenses	2,623.38
Non-Salary Subtotal	\$4,189.85
Staff Salary	23,179.99
Total 2009 Expenses	\$27,369.84

Financial Partners:

In 2010 we would like to invite all our friends and supporters to become financial partners in our mission by pledging \$10/month (or more) to the work of the Faith Partnership. We welcome you into a growing network of Christians across Tompkins County — and many local congregations — who partner with and invest in this ministry. You may copy or clip the donor slip below.

If you wish, you may direct your support to specific aspects of our ministry. Any funds you designate will be dedicated to that specific purpose. Simply send us a note with your designations. Here are the dedicated funds we have established so far.

• **Lunch-a-Week Fund:** buys lunches with a mentor for inmates back from jail or prison, after time served, to cultivate the relationship.

• **StrengthsQuest Fund:** funds the acclaimed online personal strengths-discovery assessment for underserved high school students.

• **CARE Materials Fund:** helps to purchase materials for skilled repairs done by CARE-volunteers when maintenance issues threaten senior or handicapped owner-occupied homes.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Uniting Christians to improve the welfare of our neighbors through:
Relationships across organizational, racial and economic barriers;
Discovery of personal vocation through spiritual growth; and
Service which demonstrates God's care for every individual.

OUR 10 CORE SERVICES

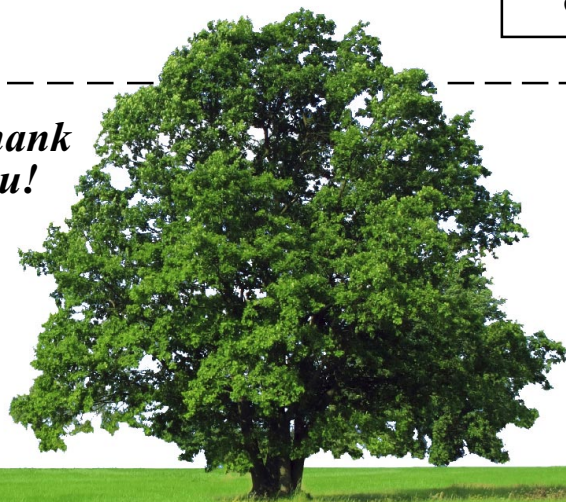
Personal Friendship & Mentoring • Weekly Fellowship •
Jail Visitation & Outreach • Referrals to Local Pastors &
Congregations • Community Service Projects • Holistic Hardware
Character Training • Inter-Agency Cooperation • Prayer In The
Community • Free Bibles • Faith Community Mobilization

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Barry Segal (Chair)
Chuck Tompkins (Vice-Chair)
David Johnson (Treas.)
John Hummel (Sec.)
Aloja Airewele
Cal Walker
Jim Crawford
Nathaniel Wright
Philip Robinson
Sarah Widercrantz

The Community Faith Partnership is a 501(c)(3) organization. All contributions are tax deductible.

Thank You!



DONOR SLIP (OR ELECTRONIC FUNDS TRANSFER - EFT)

Name(s): _____

___ Here is a one time contribution for your ministry.

___ I'd like to pledge a monthly donation of \$ ____.

___ Please electronically transfer this amount from my bank on the 15th of each month, and send notices to my email address here

_____. (Enclose a voided check or deposit slip.)

Signature (and date) _____

Mail tax-deductible donations to:
Community Faith Partners, Box 4774, Ithaca, NY 14852