

Congregations Engaging in Economic Revitalization: A Compendium

The most effective way to turn around poverty, economic distress, and injustice is by expanding opportunity for people to develop and deploy their God-given productive potential in communities of exchange, especially through entrepreneurship.

—Oikonomia Network, [Twelve Elements of Economic Wisdom](#)

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ASSISTING JOB SEEKERS

Living Hope Church

<https://www.livinghopechicago.org/>

Where: Chicago, IL

Description: Living Hope started its very closely related CDC, Hope Works, in 2014. Hope Works focuses on personalized case management and programs that foster economic and employment development. Its M.A.P. P. initiative (Mobility Action Partners Program) matches job-seekers from the neighborhood one-on-one with “Advocates” (usually social work students from one of the Chicago universities) to help them find, land, and keep the job they need. The Advocates tailor their service based on the needs of the individual client, often working on writing resumes, finding and applying to open jobs, and preparing for interviews. In 2017, Pastor Brad Beier reported that 82 individuals completed the M.A.P.P. program and 74 secured employment (a 90% job placement rate).

Greater Praise Church of God in Christ

<https://www.greaterpraisecogic.com/>

Where: Milwaukee, WI

Description: Pastor Jerome Smith launched [The Joseph Project](#) primarily to address the needs of unemployed African-American men in the city. Jobs are available, but most are in the outlying counties. Partnering with Wisconsin Senator Ron Johnson’s office, Smith was able to launch a “boot camp” job training program to prepare job seekers for positions in companies in Sheboygan County. Job seekers complete a one-week class focused on soft skills and interviewing skills. The church uses its two vans to provide free roundtrip transportation to the job sites for the workers’ first 30 days. (After that the employees are charged \$6 per day). Other churches have also been mobilized to help provide transportation. As of 2017, over 200 individuals had completed the class. The Project boasts a 60% job retention rate and graduates are earning on average \$15/hour.

Christian Temple

<https://www.christiantemplefresno.com/>

Where: Fresno, CA

Description: This church’s aid for the unemployed is less programmatic and more organic than the above examples, but suggests an approach that any church can adopt. Pastor Elias Loera, a former Army Ranger who worked doing job placement for the Washington State Migrant Council, has experience helping people to land jobs. While working as a youth pastor he learned that five members of that church owned a trucking company and needed employees. Eli decided to help other congregants earn their commercial driver’s license (CDL) so they could be qualified. First he studied for and passed the test himself, then encouraged others to imitate him. By the end of his time as a youth pastor Eli himself had decided to launch his own trucking company to create more jobs. As the current senior pastor of Christian Temple, Eli recognized that the church is a great resource for networking/advocacy, connecting

job seekers to opportunities. He has created a “culture of work” within the congregation, preaching on the importance of work and connecting faith and work. He started the church’s prayer meetings for the unemployed. He encourages employed members to become advocates for unemployed ones, telling them to diligently watch for job openings, communicating openings through the church, and volunteering to provide transportation to new hires.

Flourish Now Job Fairs

Multiple Churches in Southwest FL, Jacksonville FL, Phoenix, and Southern CA

<https://flourish-now.org/>

Description: Churches partner with Flourish Now and local employers to host Job Fairs on their church campus. In addition to providing space, church volunteers serve as greeters, host on-site workshops, review job-seekers’ resumes, conduct mock job interviews to prepare seekers for the real ones, and host a Prayer Table to offer emotional and spiritual support. Often congregations will also have a “career clothing” center on-site with free, used business clothing. Started in 2015, Flourish Now has 51 church partners across the locations listed and have served nearly 10,000 job seekers. Their informational video cites a 66% rate of seekers participating in the Fairs receiving job offers.

Grace Church

<https://grace.church/>

Where: Eden Prairie, MN

Description: Grace sponsors the [Crossroads Career Network](#). This is a job club for “displaced and misplaced” workers. The monthly meeting offers a time for networking, prayer support, and speakers on job search topics. The ministry also host 8-week job search skill classes; one-on-one coaching; a quarterly gathering offering full-day workshops; and a Jobs Board.

BUSINESS ACCELERATORS

Crossroads Church

<https://www.crossroads.net/>

Where: Cincinnati, OH

Description: Through its annual Ocean (formerly “Unpolished”) Conference, the church aims to offer a “home base for faith and business” and to “engage, energize and inspire the entrepreneurial spirit.” In addition to hosting speakers and training sessions, the conference includes a highly funded pitch contest, in which entrepreneurs compete for investor capital, as well as a spot in the church’s business accelerator program. The program consists of Ocean Capital, a “for-profit angel-investment wing,” and Ocean Accelerator Inc., a non-profit designed to equip entrepreneurs to “increase God’s presence in the marketplace.” Led by Scott Weiss, a retired CEO who now volunteers his time, Ocean offers entrepreneurs a training ground for ministry through innovation, weaving business mentorship with Bible-based discipleship.

Macedonia Baptist Church

<http://macedonia-la.org/>

Where: Los Angeles, CA

Description: Macedonia is the oldest African-American Baptist church in the Watts community of Los Angeles. It incorporated a CDC in 2015 to serve as a catalyst for neighborhood development. It sponsors the [Watts Entrepreneur Business Accelerator](#) (WEBA). WEBA provides technical assistance (e.g., identifying business needs, help with procuring licenses and permits) and capital to new and existing business in the Watts area.

Salem Baptist Church

<http://www.sbcoc.org/>

Where: Chicago, IL

Description: This predominantly African-American mega-church launched the A.R.I.S.E. accelerator program in 2002. It is a 7-week entrepreneur-training program designed to equip individuals with the education, resources and preparation necessary to launch or grow successful businesses. A.R.I.S.E. offers specialized training in creating a business plan, financing and marketing the business, networking, and other topics. The program concludes with a Business Expo & Career Fair, which provides a platform for the official launch of the new A.R.I.S.E. businesses.

BUSINESS INCUBATORS

Luther Place Memorial Church

<https://lutherplace.org/>

Where: Washington, DC

Description: This ECLA church received a three-year grant from We Raise Foundation to help launch the incubator. Its goals are to cultivate the growth and development of worker-owned and social businesses. The church is in the process of incorporating the incubator as a separate 501(c)(3) nonprofit. The efforts is being spearheaded by eight church members. The first cooperative has been identified: a women-owned house cleaning cooperative. It will be established as a separate limited liability company. To support this first cooperative, the incubator will convene listening and teaching circles, as well as provide training, technical assistance, and administrative services. As the project evolves, the incubator will evaluate what support is required to help create living wage work in traditionally low-wage service sectors that are in high demand in a gentrifying context.

First Baptist Church North Indianapolis

<https://firstbaptistnorth.org/>

Where: Indianapolis, IN

Description: The church launched [The Grindery](#) in 2012 to support entrepreneurs and contribute to the economic revitalization of the near northwest side of Indianapolis. The Grindery offers a business training course. Upon completion of their business plan, Grinders, those “grinding out a plan for the rest of their lives,” are provided a mentor and other applicable leads toward resourcing and fortifying sustainable businesses. The Grindery’s 8-week curriculum covers instruction on creating a business network, developing a core idea, business 101, branding and marketing, and fundraising. The “Hustle & Grind,” the incubator’s version of Shark Tank, tops off the course. Prizes range from the opportunity to utilize free office space at The Grindery to possible micro loans offered by the businesses and leaders listening to the pitches. Ideas have included start-ups in upholstery, lawn care, catering, barbering and security firms.

Grace in Action Church

<http://www.graceinactiondetroit.org/>

Where: Detroit, MI

Description: Grace in Action states that the church believes that the core of the Gospel is creating and offering people a better life, which “includes not only spirituality and community but also economics.”

[Grace in Action Collectives](#) is a network of worker owned cooperatives and youth run collectives.

Together the network provides skill training, back office support and cooperative business incubation. Thus far four businesses have been launched:

- [Radical Productions Youth Technology Collective](#)
- [Stitching up Detroit Youth Print and Design Collective](#)
- [Cleaning in Action Women's Cleaning Cooperative](#)
- [Equitable Internet Initiative Southwest](#)

Real Life Church

<https://www.reallifechurchrva.org/>

Where: Richmond, VA

Description: Real Life Church is a church plant in Richmond, Virginia. Its vision is to integrate faith community, entrepreneurial leadership education, and small business incubation in order to affect transformational community development. The church co-locates a business incubator and the pastor, Svetlana Papazov, who has launched four small businesses, teaches workshops relevant to entrepreneurs.

Vineyard Church-Sullivan Campus

<http://www.thevineyardchurch.us/campus/sullivan/>

Where: Sullivan, IL

Description: The church recently acquired a 35,000 square-foot former big-box retail store and is in a discernment phase, with hopes of launching a business incubator.

Antioch Missionary Baptist Church

<https://antiochaug.org/index.php>

Where: Augusta, GA

Description: The church's sister organization, [AMI Development Corporation](#), is engaged in real estate development, property management, and training for business entrepreneurs. Its business incubator equips founders in bookkeeping, marketing, insurance, finance, and personnel management. It provides low-cost office space and back-office support.

CHURCH-RELATED CDCs CREATING BUSINESSES

Christ Church-Lake Forest

<http://christchurchil.org/>

Where: North Chicago, IL

Description: In 2012 the church launched [ReNew Communities](#) as a related CDC to implement housing and jobs development programs. Sr. Pastor Mike Woodruff serves as the CDC's Board Chairman. The CDC's "Matthew Houses" program has purchased and rehabbed three homes. The program's goal is to increase the home ownership rate in community by 15%. Renew Jobs, the business consulting arm of the CDC, offers consulting and training seminars to local business owners desiring to increase their businesses (in order to create more jobs). Unemployment in North Chicago hovers in double digits. Consultants are matched with clients needing assistance in finances, marketing, human resources, and business planning/quality improvements.

CHURCHES STARTING SOCIAL ENTERPRISES

Grace Chapel

<http://www.grace-chapel.com/>

Where: Mason, OH

Description: Business-oriented pastor Jeff Greer has created an entrepreneurial culture and celebrated/empowered lay leaders at Grace to create Biznistries. Biznistries are for-profit, self-sustaining enterprises commissioned for a kingdom purpose, operating according to biblical principles, integrating ministry at every level, and releasing a flow of funds for further ministry advances. Some of the Biznistries, including the ORCA Center (a new co-working space) and Crossfit Superfly gym, are located on the Grace Chapel campus. The church's sister "venture capital organization," Self-Sustaining Enterprises (SSE), is also hosted on the campus. SSE provides training, coaching, and start-up capital to entrepreneurs launching new Biznistries. To date, 28 Biznistries have been launched and 26 have survived. Some examples of the Biznistries include:

- Elements Pro Landscaping (has created 12 jobs)

- Amazing Grace Kettlecorn (hires youth so they learn about work as worship and gain job skills)
- Trinity Salon and Spa (profits support global orphan projects)
- GC Archery (earned \$17,000 in profit in 2018 to support youth ministries)

Bible Center Church

<http://www.biblecenterpgh.org/new>

Where: Pittsburgh, PA

Description: Bible Center Church has launched two social enterprises to generate job training/employment opportunities and meet felt needs in the Homewood neighborhood. **Oasis Transportation Services** (OTS) was launched in 2013. Its mission is to “Transport Our Community to Opportunity.” The company is owned by the church and it sports two 28-passenger buses and two large vans. OTS transports children served by the Homewood Expanded Learning Pipeline organizations (e.g., Homewood Children’s Village, YMCA) and other not-for-profit services providers in Homewood and beyond. The low-cost transportation OTS offers has enabled local nonprofits to both save money and increase opportunities for children. OTS is self-sustaining and generated about \$11,000 profit in 2017 that supported other Bible Center youth programs. **Everyday Café** arose out of the community’s need for its own gathering place, where people could meet, connect to WiFi, and enjoy a cup of coffee or a light meal. Since its opening in November 2017 Everyday Café has provided employment to 12 young adults and three high school interns. Currently, Bible Center Church is in the development stages of three additional social enterprises, including a commercial kitchen and a property maintenance firm.

Tabernacle Community Church

<http://tabernaclecommunity.org/>

Where: Grand Rapids, MI

Description: Tabernacle is one of the founding members of the [Grand Rapids Center for Community Transformation](#) (a small collaborative promoting social enterprise). Through this partnership Tabernacle has assisted in developing and growing [Building Bridges Professional Services](#) (a landscaping, construction, and janitorial services firm offering employment to young adults from the inner city who face employment barriers) and [Rising Grinds Café](#) (offering job training and employment to local teens). Both enterprises teach employees critical life skills as well as job skills.

On Ramps Covenant Church

<http://www.onrampschurch.org/>

Where: Fresno, CA

Description: Located in the economically challenged Lowell neighborhood in Fresno, On-Ramps has church and community members in need of job experience and jobs. With start-up funding from the Center for Community Transformation at Fresno Pacific University, it launched Say Hello! advertising company. Though currently dormant due to lack of leadership, the firm formerly employed young adults in the community and congregation in jobs delivering fliers house-to-house and conducting market research.

Grandview Calvary Baptist Church

<https://www.gcbchurch.ca/>

Where: Vancouver, BC (Canada)

Description: The church launched JustWork in 2006 to develop **social enterprises** to meet our mandate to offer dignified, meaningful work opportunities to people facing barriers to work. Their three social enterprises employ about 25 people annually. JustRenos focuses on residential renovations and painting; JustCatering services businesses and families wanting great food for special events; and JustPotters sells handcrafted ceramic pieces.

INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT ACCOUNTS

Note: An IDA is an asset building tool designed to enable low-income families to save towards a targeted amount (typically a down payment on a first home, start-up capital for a micro-business, or money for post-secondary education). IDAs are usually set up in the form of matched saving accounts (where a nonprofit or church matches the savings set-aside by program participants at a ratio of 1:1 or better).

Harderwyk Ministries

<http://www.harderwyk.com/>

Where: Holland, MI

Description: This Christian Reformed Church is a leader in providing financial literacy programs for low-income families, incentivized through a 3:1 IDA. It conducts the program under the nonprofit ([Neighbors Plus](#)) it established to serve as the church's diaconal ministry.

West Angeles Church of God in Christ

<http://westa.org/>

Where: Los Angeles, CA

Description: The church established its [CDC](#) in 1994 to oversee its community development ministries. Its [IDA program](#) is linked to financial literacy programs and offers participants who complete at least the first six months of the program a 1:1 match on their personal savings.

JOB TRAINING

Providence Bible Church

<https://www.providencedenver.org/>

Where: Denver, CO

Description: In 2014 Providence launched a closely related nonprofit, [CrossPurpose](#), to consolidate its community ministries under one umbrella. Senior Pastor Jason Janz is also the Executive Director of

CrossPurpose and church members compose 50% of the board. CrossPurpose's mission is to train and employ adults from 18-55 (who already have high school degree or GED) for placement into jobs that pay sufficiently to lift them out of poverty. Participants receive a modest stipend as they complete the program's initial phase focused on soft skills. Church members (and other volunteers) serve as mentors called Allies. After completing the initial phase, participants can then choose to take certification courses to gain marketable skills in a variety of careers including HVAC, computer repair, medical services, welding, banking, insurance and others.

Sweet Union Baptist Church

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Sweet-Union-Baptist-Church/117550054931334>

Where: Philadelphia, PA

Description: The church seeks to train young adults for sustainable careers in the construction industry through its H-CLIP program. The program focuses on helping young adults develop academic skills, life skills, and carpentry skills. Unfortunately, only two young men in the initiative were able to successfully fulfill all the program's graduation requirements. (They've gone into careers making a living wage.) The church is seeking to revise the program to better attend to the participants' academic needs.

Central Baptist Church

https://www.facebook.com/pg/CentralBaptistChurchOfWilmingtonDe/about/?ref=page_internal

Where: Wilmington, DE

Description: The church's affiliate, Central Baptist CDC (on which the church's senior pastor serves as Board Chairman) partners with LIUNA Local 55, Imani Energy Company and the Challenge Program to provide technical training for Eastside residents and members of the surrounding community in the area of construction as well as solar sales and installation.

Multiple Churches, Multiple Locations

There are at least four somewhat similar church-based job training programs that focus primarily on Biblically based soft skills, life skills, and job preparedness (resume writing, mock job interviewing) in which hundreds of churches are engaged. Each of the models includes a mentoring component using church volunteers. The programs typically meet weekly (or more often) for 6-12 weeks. Church leadership teams overseeing the initiative cultivate relationships with local employers to encourage them to offer program graduates opportunities for "first rung" jobs. These four ministries are:

Jobs Partnership of Florida: <https://www.jobspartnership.org/>

Dallas Christian Women's Job Corps: <https://dallascwjc.org/>

Jobs for Life: <https://www.jobsforlife.org/>

Work Life (a program of the Chalmers Center): <https://www.chalmers.org/our-work/us-church-training/why-work-life/>

MICRO-LENDING

Amazing Grace Lutheran Church

<http://amazinggracelutheran.org/blog/>

Where: Baltimore, MD

Description: The program is part of the [1K Churches Initiative](#) of the Criterion Institute. The Initiative provides churches with a five-week Bible study on biblical economics as well as implementation guides for micro-lending programs. Amazing Grace is located in an economically distressed urban neighborhood in east Baltimore. In partnership with First English Lutheran Church, Amazing Grace provides no-interest loans up to \$2000 to community members and allows neighbors to pay back the loans within 18 months. A leadership team in the AG congregation called Shepherds participate in interviewing candidates, hearing about the plan for repayment, and determining the amount that best suits the need and the recipient's budget. First English initially funded the loans but by 2018 Amazing Grace has also underwritten a few.

Examples of loans:

- A grandmother newly raising her three grandchildren used a loan to secure a vendor license to sell food plates from a grill in front of her house to support the kids.
- A young man who was a licensed electrician had recently been released from prison. He used a loan to buy tools so he could secure employment.
- A painter from the community used a loan to purchase paint and equipment to begin his own painting service.

Church of the Good Shepherd

<http://www.church.goodshepherdruyton.org/community-service>

Where: Ruxton, MD

Description: The program is part of the 1K Churches Initiative of the Criterion Institute. A group of ten congregants completed the 1K Initiative bible study and decided to move forward with a micro-lending strategy. With strong support from the Rector, a retired banker and lawyer co-lead the program. The church business administrator provides accounting support. Some of the initial study group members now serve on the Loan Committee. The loan fund was initially capitalized with \$15,000 roughly four years ago. To date, Good Shepherd has successfully leveraged that initial investment to make 12 loans totaling over \$35,000 (as a revolving fund, monies repaid are then available for making new loans). To keep things administratively simple, the loans are interest free. Potential borrowers are recommended to the micro-loan program by a "Champion"—someone respected by the congregation who knows the borrower(s) well. The Champion is not a guarantor of the loan, but is responsible to work with the borrower if there any are problems with the loan. Champions have typically been leaders at faith-based or secular nonprofits with long experience working in economically distressed neighborhoods. But former loan recipients have also stood in as Champions for new ones.

Examples of loans:

- Loan to a small start-up upholstery manufacturer
- Loans to the owner-operator of a small medical services transportation company; the money has enabled him to add three new employees
- Loan to a female accountant to enable her purchase of new computers and advertising service

Redeemer Community Church

<https://www.redeemersf.org/>

Where: San Francisco, CA

Description: Redeemer is intentionally located in and seeking to bless the Bayview neighborhood of San Francisco. Through its [Neighbor Fund](#), the church makes low-interest business loans to established small businesses in the community for capital purchases that can enable the firm to “get to the next level.” The church describes the program as “a community-based, community-vetted, small business revolving loan fund.” The Fund was initially capitalized with \$30,000 and congregants have added through it through special offerings. Loans are made on the basis of relationships rather than credit scores. Loans are typically in the \$3000 to \$10,000 range and are rarely longer in term than three years. A loan committee composed of church volunteers (and former loan recipients) makes the decisions. Administrative support for the initiative is provided pro-bono by employees from Dayspring, a social purpose corporation in the tech industry that is co-located in the same building as the church (and who’s CEO is an elder at the church). Just over a dozen loans have been made so far. Some examples include:

- Loan to a small bakery owner for a larger oven
- Loan to a construction subcontractor whose niche is providing traffic control
- Loan to a massage therapist for a portable massage chair
- Loan to a videographer for upgraded equipment

PAYDAY LENDING ALTERNATIVES

Wesley United Methodist Church and Lakeside United Methodist Church

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Wesley-Memorial-United-Methodist-Church/117352818290332>

<http://www.lakesideum.org/#>

Where: Richmond, VA

Description: These two churches have partnered with the Virginia United Methodist Credit Union to create the Jubilee Assistance Fund. The Fund is capitalized by donations solicited by the church leaders; this pool of money is then available for loans of up to \$500 to persons in need who have been active members of one of the churches for at least six months. Each loan is individually tailored. The interest rate hovers around 6 percent, and a borrower can have up to one year to repay.

St. James Episcopal Church

<https://www.doers.org/>

Where: Richmond, VA

Description: The church partners with the local chapter of Goodwill Industries and the Virginia Credit Union to offer the “[GoodChoice](#)” program. It is set up much like a payday loan, except that borrowers have 45 days (rather than the usual two weeks) to repay the loan. Only two rollovers are allowed and the fee is \$12 per \$100 borrowed. Though steeper than other payday lending alternatives, it is still only half the cost of a typical payday loan in Virginia. Borrowers are encouraged to take free financial education classes provided by GoodChoice, and those who complete the course can receive a one-time incentive grant (which can be used to pay down their loan). The program also offers borrowers one-on-one financial coaching.

First Lutheran Church of Audubon

<http://flcaudubon.org/>

Where: Audubon, MN

Description: This 200-member church is in the process of working with other local churches to establish the Neighbors Lending Program. One component will be a revolving micro-loan project to offer congregants and community members an alternative to payday lenders. Emergency loans will be interest-free and no larger than \$1000. The funds will go directly to vendors—for example, the car repair shop if the emergency relates to a dead automobile. The second component will involve peer-to-peer loans based loosely on the Kiva MicroFunds model. This will involve lenders offering specific sums to underwrite specific loans (also at zero percent interest). The lender reads information on various individuals’ situations and why the loan is needed and selects a loan to fund. This is anonymous: neither borrower nor lender knows the other’s name. Administration will be handled by the church’s secretary.

University Heights Baptist Church

<http://www.uhbc.org/>

Where: Springfield, MO

Description: The church’s University Hope ministry provides small rescue loans to those trapped in the predatory loan cycle. By working with a local credit union, UHBC is able to guarantee loans at low interest rates to pay off payday or title loans. Program participants must have a payday loan of \$1000 or less at above 36% interest. They agree to join the local credit union and to meet monthly with a mentor from the church.

SHARING SPACE WITH ENTREPRENEURS

Mount Olive United Methodist Church

<https://mountolivetumc.com/>

Where: Arlington, VA

Description: The church shares its commercial kitchen space with La Cocina VA, a Latina-run social enterprise that provides bi-lingual culinary arts training. The program boasts a 95% graduation rate and an 85% job placement rate. The meals created by the students are distributed through La Cocina's Food Assistance program to neighbors in need as well as to various local nonprofits that feed the hungry.

Church of the Messiah

<http://churchofthemessiahdetroit.org/>

Where: Detroit, MI

Description: Pastor Barry Randolph has a special heart for ministry to young urban men. The church has transformed its basement into the Messiah Empowerment Bike Shop, a full line bike repair shop for the community. Here young men gain marketable skills in a mentoring environment. The shop also boasts the "earn-a-bike" apprenticeship program. Through it members of the community who do not own a bicycle have the opportunity to earn one for free by repairing a bike that is in disrepair.

Northwood Christian Church

<http://www.indyncc.org/>

Where: Indianapolis, IN

Description: Given its mission to be a "church in the neighborhood, for the neighborhood," Northwood recently added the title "Center for Faith in Community" to its name. It shares its space with three other small congregations and has turned its commercial kitchen into a "shared commissary." Seven local food vendors who sell at farmer's markets or through food trucks pay affordable rent to utilize the kitchen for their food prep (according to a coordinated master schedule).

Saints Peter and Paul Orthodox Cathedral

<https://www.sppdetroit.org/>

Where: Detroit, MI

Description: This church partners with [Detroit Kitchen Connect](#) to provide commercial kitchen space to a baker named Chloe Sabatier of Chez Chloe, who specializes in French lava cakes. Prior to this the church has started a community garden and opened their banquet hall to rent out for neighborhood events. But the kitchen was only used on Sundays for a homeless outreach program. Now, it's a hub of activity, in use almost daily by Sabatier and two other baker-entrepreneurs.

Haymarket Church

www.haymarketchurch.org

Where: Haymarket, VA

Description: The church is launching [Haymarket Co-Working Space](#) in its building starting in fall 2018. Offers include drop in memberships, day passes, and conference room rental, among others. Costs are negotiable for individuals needing the space to help get them on their feet. Payments are made as donations to the church to further its mission of community building.

White Rock United Methodist Church

<http://www.wrumc.org/>

Where: Dallas, TX

Description: This church hosts [The Mix Coworking and Creative Space](#) in its large basement. In addition to traditional perks such as wi-fi, conference rooms, and desk space, The Mix features six creative rooms including an artists' studio with lots of light and a double-sink, a sewing lab outfitted with a variety of sewing machines, a textiles workroom, a dance studio, and a sound production studio. It recently opened a shared commercial kitchen.

Central Christian Church of Dallas

<http://www.centralchristiandallas.org/>

Where: Dallas, TX

Description: This church has partnered with [Table Coworking](#) to “enliven our campus by welcoming people from diverse vocations and social impact organizations. Its co-working space is called [Synclife](#).

Forest Hill United Church

<http://foresthillunited.org/wp/>

Where: Kitchener, Ontario (Canada)

Description: The church did an inventory of its assets and identified the parking lot as a major underutilized one. They decided to start “Food Truck Frenzy.” In 2016, they started opening the parking lot each Monday to welcome in local food truck vendors. The church has created a picnic area to allow people to sit and eat. The food trucks donate 10% of profits back to the church. Members of the church also intentionally spend time at the Food Truck Frenzy to meet and listen to people from the neighborhood. About once a month, they do specially themed events like Celebrate Families or Celebrate School. Through these thematic events, the church hopes to better connect with the people in the community, build trusting relationships, and discover more about the needs and concerns of the community.

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE COMPETITIONS

Colonial Church

<https://www.colonialchurch.org/>

Where: Edina, MN

Description: Colonial used \$250,000 of proceeds from a land sale to underwrite the [Innové Project](#), an effort to wed the expertise and experience of the Boomer generation with the creativity and energy of Millennials. Through Innové, social entrepreneurs under age 35 in the Twin Cities could submit applications for consideration. A committee of church members winnowed applicants down to several semi-finalists. Each was then matched with a principal business mentor from the congregation (called a Navigator). The Navigator worked with the applicant to develop a strong pitch for funding. All semi-finalists had opportunity to participate in skill-focused workshops offered by a variety of marketplace professionals from the congregation (on such topics as marketing, sales, HR, and legal issues). Winners at pitch night received start-up grants ranging from about \$20,000 to \$50,000 each. The program proved so popular with congregants that it was repeated two years later. To date, eleven social ventures advancing the common good in the Twin Cities and beyond have been launched, and the congregation has experienced spiritual renewal.

First Presbyterian Church

<http://fpchouston.org/>

Where: Houston, TX

Description: With consulting help from [Innové Studios](#) (started by Colonial Church's Brian Jones), First Presbyterian implemented a social enterprise competition called [Project Flourish](#), modeled on Colonial's. The project's mission is to "connect gospel-minded entrepreneurs to the social, intellectual, and financial capital of First Presbyterian Church." The church sees the project as a "social venture accelerator." The church held its first competition in 2018 and funded five ventures.

Redeemer Presbyterian Church

Where: New York, NY

Description: Redeemer's annual [Business Plan Competition](#) has been running since 2008. Overseen by the church's Entrepreneurship Initiative, one of the most active vocational affiliation groups of Redeemer's Center for Faith and Work. The annual competition is open to both those who've started a venture and wish to grow it and those with an idea for launch. Both for-profit and non-profit venture ideas are eligible. Winning entrepreneurs receive a small financial award (via grant or direct investment) and one year of theological and strategic coaching from staff as well as volunteers in the congregation. (Note: the program may be dormant at present.)

Park Community Church

<https://parkcommunity.church/>

Where: Chicago, IL

Description: Park Community is partnering with [Renew Chicago](#) for a 2018 social enterprise competition that will award up to \$5000 to local entrepreneurs in early stage development of their idea.

Upper Arlington Lutheran Church

<http://www.ualc.org/>

Where: Columbus, OH

Description: This church hosts the [O² conference](#), a pitch competition for youth and young adults to win small grants for their entrepreneurial ideas for community betterment. Winners receive grants ranging from \$500 to \$2000 each, and, “even more importantly,” says youth minister David White, are matched with a mentor from the congregation. Mentors agree to meet 2-4 hours/month for six months with the young entrepreneurs to help them turn their ideas into reality.

SUPPORT FOR BUSINESS OWNERS/LEADERS

Crossroads Church (MTF-affiliated)

<http://www.crossroadsbluefield.com/>

Where: Bluefield, WV

Description: Travis Lowe, who was a banker before becoming a pastor in an Appalachian town, knew his church needed to address the economic despair felt by many in the community. He began gathering a network of local business owners from inside and outside the congregation who met monthly to share a meal, pray for the peace and prosperity of the community, network, and hear a business-related message. Today the network has grown to over 110 owners and meetings typically see 50-60 participants. As a result of the relationships built in the group, some firms have grown, new deals have been made, and new businesses have been launched. The group is now called Rebuild.Revive.Thrive and Lowe calls it “a local business owner think tank for the common good.” Today the group is in the process of developing a “Fab-Lab,” a digital fabrication facility based on the model pioneered at MIT. The group decided on this particular project because of their recognition that many Bluefield residents are “makers” but only have training in “yesterday’s tools.” “Our FABLAB,” Lowe says, “will begin to train and resource makers to make in the modern economy and then turn them loose to create.”

Gateway Church

<http://gatewaypeople.com/ministries/business-leaders>

Where: Dallas, TX

Description: Gateway is a large multi-site church in the Dallas metroplex. Pastor Robert Morris and Gateway’s elders are committed to serving the business leaders of Gateway Church. The church offers the [Kingdom Business Leaders](#) program featuring events, small groups, training, and resources to empower and support business leaders. The program is directed at both business owners and corporate leaders (C-level leaders).

South Bay Church

<http://echo.church/>

Where: San Jose, CA

Description: Pastor Andy Wood is well-known for his support for business entrepreneurs. Annually the church hosts the ECHO Entrepreneurship and Leadership Conference for Silicon Valley entrepreneurs (Christian and non-Christian). ECHO is unique among tech conference in the Valley. Instead of talking fundraising, pitching, or the X's and O's of running a company, it focuses on something more fundamental: leadership.

Dwelling Place Church

<http://www.dwellingplacechurch.com/>

Where: Houston, TX

Description: Since 2013, an “Entrepreneurs and Inventors” group has been meeting monthly. With about 90 members on the rolls, attendance varies widely. Meetings typically consist of a devotional and then a time of discussing members’ particular issues and challenges. Sometimes outside speakers come in to talk on topics related to start-ups. But most of the value of the group, according to leader Mary Kurtz, is the peer-to-peer discussion. Much networking also occurs and members have been able to work together in mutually beneficial business deals. Most members are operating small businesses with less than 3 employees. The group has discussed inviting would-be entrepreneurs from a low-income community near the church to a time of training on “lean” start-ups.

TRAINING/SUPPORTING ENTREPRENEURS

The Village Church

<https://www.thevillagechurch.net/about/art-and-business-fellowships>

Where: Dallas, TX

Description: The church sponsors a nine-month Business as Mission Fellows Program for young adult entrepreneurs. Fellows must first complete the church’s leadership training program. Fellows enjoy includes office space and opportunities for development and networking, and applicants must be able to dedicate 15 hours a week to the fellowship.

Evangel Ministries

<http://www.emergcdc.org/>

Where: Detroit, MI

Description: Evangel established EMERG CDC in 2003. The initiative served the city through job training and conferences; citywide job and resource fairs; business development trainings and pitch competitions; and financial literacy workshops and credit repair guidance. From 2014-2016, EMERG launched the Urban Entrepreneurship Project (UEP). This initiative networked urban pastors, brought them together for training in faith, work and economics, and equipped them to identify and support entrepreneurs in their churches and neighborhoods.

Redemption-Arcadia

<http://www.redemptionaz.com/grants-16-17/>

Where: Phoenix, AZ

Description: Redemption Church believes the entire church is called to bring glory to God by loving their neighbors. Mission is not one department of the church, but the very nature of the church. Redemption believes God gifts each congregant uniquely and calls them to various vocations and locations with the purpose of advancing His Kingdom. The church is therefore committed to seeing new initiatives, organizations and ministries spring up from its members. Congregants can complete applications outlining their ideas and make oral presentations before a Grants Advisory Panel. Each year Redemption offers one-time grants to selected applicants ranging from \$1,000 to \$20,000 dollars.

Parklawn Assemblies of God Church

<http://www.parklawn.org/site/>

Where: Milwaukee, WI

Description: Parklawn's closely related CDC, PRISM, is developing a business incubator for food entrepreneurs in Milwaukee's Sherman Park neighborhood called [Upstart Kitchen](#). This builds on the church's prior history of lending its commercial kitchen to such entrepreneurs (including the successful Chef Landa Carson of the catering company, Fresh & Safe, Inc.) Upstart will have its own building with a robustly equipped commercial kitchen. Food entrepreneurs will also receive training, mentoring and business coaching.

Orange County First Assembly of God Church

(Spanish congregation) <http://www.ocfirstag.com/>

Where: Santa Ana, CA

Description: This church has no formal program to support entrepreneurs. But through preaching on whole-life flourishing and leveraging the congregation's social capital, Pastor Fernando Tamara was able to help an immigrant in the flock to launch his own pool cleaning services business. Tamara connected "Jose" to three church members — a marketing professional, a cleaning company professional, and a financial advisor — who met with him and offered invaluable advice and coaching. Eventually Jose secured U.S. citizenship, passed his pool inspector's test, and launched his business. His clientele includes customers from OCFA's English and Spanish speaking congregations. Business is going so well that he is now looking to hire someone from the church to be his assistant.

Alfred Street Baptist Church

<http://www.alfredstreet.org/>

Where: Alexandria, VA

Description: The church’s Entrepreneurship Ministry connects church members interested in starting their own business or taking their existing business to the next level with other church members and individuals who have had success with self-owned businesses. The primary goal of the ministry is to have the successful entrepreneurs mentor, provide guidance and share best practices on how to launch and perpetuate successful ventures with up and coming entrepreneurs.

Gordon Conwell Seminary’s Church-Based Entrepreneurship Initiative

http://www.gordonconwell.edu/ockenga/faith-work/documents/MM0914.05Church-basedEntrepreneurship_2.pdf

Where: Boston, MA

Description: Gordon-Conwell Seminary’s course “Entrepreneurship in Church and Community” was co-led by Dr. David Gill and Rev. Larry Ward for two years (2013-2014). The course provided a basic, biblically based introduction to business development. Seminarians and local pastors participated. Pastors were charged with identifying an entrepreneur in the congregation who desired to launch a small business. Once identified and vetted according to principles taught in the class, the entrepreneurs joined the rest of the class. Entrepreneurs worked with their mentors (the pastors) to craft business plans and when these were approved the class held a pitch night where entrepreneurs made short presentations on their ideas. Following the three-month course, a four-month business plan development phase allowed everyone to hone their plans. The Kern Family Foundation then provided small start-up grants.

Some examples: **Liberty Church-Shrewsbury** mentored the founder of G1G Clothing. **Bethel AME in Lynn** supported the founder of Jesigns Graphix, a graphic development company. **Park Street Church – Boston** mentored the founder of Life Up Your Voice, a vocal training school.

Gill says: Churches can help entrepreneurial congregants to “turn their skills and abilities and passions into new businesses. At a minimum our churches could create a fellowship for job seekers for sharing and prayer. Then a step further could involve a group study of the basics of starting a small business, along the lines described about. Our churches could recognize these efforts and pray for them in the services, and patronize them during the week. The church could allocate some money for start-up grants.”

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

River City Church/ RCity CDC

<https://www.rcitycdc.org/harambee/>

Where: Chicago, IL

Description: The church works through its closely related CDC (the church’s youth pastor is also the CDC’s Partnerships Director). RCity’s apprenticeship program, Harambee CityBuilders, teaches high school students the trade of tuckpointing (repairing/restoring masonry). This prepares them not only for

union trades careers, but also for hard work in any field. Youth learn this profitable skill by providing free work primarily for low-income homeowners within the church’s Humboldt Park neighborhood.

Rose City Church

<http://www.rosecitychurch.org/mondayfriday#mondayfriday-1>

Where: Pasadena, CA

Description: When Pastor Dan Davidson came to Rose City Church in 2009 he became concerned about the group homeless teens who camped out on the church’s grounds. He began by offering food and clothes, but this increased the number of youth coming—and that upset the neighbors. Realizing he had to help in a better way, Davidson found an old coffee cart on the church property and began training the youth to get jobs in the area’s growing gourmet coffee industry. That led to a small, traveling coffee cart business and eventually to Rosebud Café. Today homeless teens are taught job skills in a caring, hands-on mentoring environment. Rosebud pairs one barista to volunteer his or her time with a youth, anyone from 18 to 25, who then trains at the brick-and-mortar location for four to six months. Through the training, Rosebud works with its partner nonprofits to help find housing units to keep the young employees off the streets and to identify additional vocational training opportunities.

Holman United Methodist Church

<http://www.holmanumc.com/>

Where: Los Angeles, CA

Description: The church’s CDC operates the Jobs For Kids program (JFK). It provides job training and part-time summer employment opportunities for youth ages 14-18, fall and spring jobs for high school seniors. Its employer/partners are non-profits, local small businesses and government officials and entities. Community youth are encouraged to submit applications, participate in a rigorous interview process, and are selected by a committee comprised of business owners and other volunteers.

YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Abundant Life Church (MTF affiliated)

<http://alccambridge.org/>

Where: Boston, MA

Description: Pastor Larry Ward is a trained facilitator for NFTE (National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship) and partnered with Dr. David Gill at Gordon-Conwell Seminary to offer business classes the seminarians and for local pastors. Early in his ministry at Abundant Life, he reframed the typical summer VBS youth program into “BizCamp.” At the two-week BizCamp, kids learned about entrepreneurship, developed business plans, and launched their own small enterprises (e.g., walking dogs, babysitting, selling candy). BizCamps helped participating youth develop many life skills: problem-solving, negotiation, planning, social skills, and public speaking skills, and inculcated a strong work ethic.

Ward also found that as he continued youth entrepreneurship programs participated academic performance also improved.

Bible Center Church

<http://www.biblecenterpgh.org/new>

Where: Pittsburgh, PA

Description: Field to Fork is BCC's six-week food-focused social entrepreneurship program for teenagers. In summer 2017, fourteen students learned about urban agriculture, innovative food growing methods, food preparation, and nutrition. The program's business curriculum covered topics including lean startup methods, finance, market research, and sales. Students also learned about the distance commercially grown food travels from the field to the fork and the challenges (and business opportunities) of living in a food desert. Students were presented with various business challenges as well as the rewards of entrepreneurship. The church partnered with the University of Pittsburgh in the development of a solar-powered greenhouse that opened in early 2017. Students in the Field to Fork program were thus able to gain hands-on learning experiences in aquaponics and hydroponic growing systems. Students collaborated to conduct market research, grew microgreens, created recipes and featured their products at Bible Center's Everyday Café (see earlier entry on BCC).

Columbia Presbyterian Church

<http://www.columbiapresbyterian.org/>

Where: Vancouver, WA

Description: Youth pastor Matt Overton, with enthusiastic support from the church's elders, launched Mowtown Teen Lawn Care in 2015. To be a Mowtown employee, youth must complete a series of training workshops. These are taught by church members and they cover such topics as employer expectations, goal setting, and personal finance. Teens don't have to be members of the church to be considered for jobs. Mowtown Teen Lawn Care is a for-profit business. Overton used his own money for start-up capital. There's no financial or liability risk for the church. Every six months, a team from the church reviews the company's financials and ensures that the enterprise is advancing the mission of the church.

LISTING OF CITIES

(bold signifies MTF-affiliated city)

Arlington, VA*

Alexandria, VA*

Augusta, GA

Audubon, MN

Baltimore, MD

Bluefield, WV

Boston, MA

Chicago, IL

Cincinnati, OH

Columbus, OH

Dallas, TX

Denver, CO

Detroit, MI

Fresno, CA

Grand Rapids, MI

Haymarket, VA

Holland, MI

Houston, TX

Indianapolis, IN

Kitchener, Ontario (Canada)

Los Angeles, CA

Milwaukee, WI

New York, NY

North Chicago, IL

Pasadena, CA

Philadelphia, PA

Phoenix, AZ

Pittsburgh, PA

Richmond, VA

San Francisco, CA**

San Jose, CA**

Santa Ana, CA

Seattle, WA

Springfield, MO

Sullivan, IL

Twin Cities, MN

Vancouver, WA

Vancouver, BC (Canada)

Washington, DC

Wilmington, DE

**MTF Washington DC area Network*

***MTF Silicon Valley Network*