

## You are very important to us!

That's why we love to keep you updated with all that is happening at OneCity.

To ensure that OneCity messages continue to arrive in your INBOX safely, please add [erika.b@onecity.org](mailto:erika.b@onecity.org) to your e-mail address book or Safe Sender list.



Inside the City | OneCity Newsletter | March 2008

### About OneCity

OneCity is an outreach-focused development team that works to help the big "C" Church in Cincinnati multiply its impact by...

#### Making Connections

We work for each church, but more importantly we work for all churches collectively...the Church.

#### Research & Development

We work to explore, create, and pilot new ways for the Church to work together as one.

#### Volunteer Mobilization

We rally people to share the love of Christ in meaningful, everyday ways.



### Inside

#### One Need...

How We Spend Our Time

#### One Love...

Listening and In Sync  
By Mark Stecher

#### One Life...

Outlet Volunteer Touches Lives, Makes a Difference

#### One City...

Are You Ready to Work For Change?

#### One More Thing...

CityLink Will be Built!

### One Need...

How We Spend Our Time - A Look at Some Numbers

**40%**

American parents spent **40% less time** with their children in 1991 than they did in 1969.

**6 Hours**

The average time Americans spend **shopping** per week.

**40 Minutes**

The average amount of time parents spend **playing with their children** per week.

**163 Hours**

Americans spent 163 more hours per year **on the job** in 1991 than they did in 1969. This is the equivalent of **4 work weeks** per year!

And if the above numbers don't point to what we are consumed with, there's this:

**In 1987, the number of shopping centers in the United States surpassed the number of high schools.**

## One Love...

### Listening and In Sync

by Mark Stecher - OneCity President

When I finally yielded to my kids' desires to get a puppy in December, 2005, they entered into a commitment with me to handle all of her care – including feeding her, bathing her and taking her for walks, day or night, rain, snow or shine! Now, two years later when I ask, "Who is going to take the dog out?" my appeals are often met with silence, and I end up taking her out myself. While I hope this is not due to "selective listening", I do know that in order for my kids to hear my request, they need to be open-eared, in close proximity to me and obedient!

In Isaiah 6:3, the prophet Isaiah wrote about hearing the call of the Lord: "Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?'" In order to respond, Isaiah first had to be in proximity to the Lord, and he also needed to be listening. Likewise, if I am to hear what the Lord is prompting, I need to be close to Him and listening keenly. I can best determine the specific challenges and invitations He has for me by spending time just being close to Him and by truly listening to what He says.

Forty churches in and around Cincinnati recently went through a journey to discover what "consumes" us. My wife Laurie and I explored how we're consumed with ourselves, our kids, with activity and with stuff. What I've learned is that I can't hear God's voice when I'm paying so little attention to Him and so much attention to myself.

As I reflect on what distracts me from Him, I find I am not consumed with money so much as I am jamming my schedule to the max. Does this point to an issue with me trying to prove myself day in and day out? Does it smack of misaligned self-importance?

Maybe I'm not choosing my priorities well, or maybe I'm just not listening to how God wants me to spend my days? Unfortunately, I think it's the latter. It always seems easier to just respond to what "seems" pressing. At least then I can "do" something, to produce. What I really hear Him telling me is in order to be in sync with His plan for me and to be able to truly hear, "Who will go for us?" I just need to be quiet and stay close.

What challenges and prompts is He giving you? Are you really listening? Take some time today to find out if you're in proximity and open-eared. You just might hear what you are being called to do. OneCity can help you find that perfect place for your talents and passions to sync up with His plan for you.

(Now, time for me to walk the dog...)





## One Life...

### Chuck Hedges - Outlet Volunteer

Chuck Hedges admits that when he was approached about volunteering at the Outlet he had some initial fears and anxieties. Nearly a year later, he can't wait for the Saturdays he spends touching lives and making a positive difference.

"It has been incredible," says Chuck, who attends Motion Church in Delhi. "In the beginning, I had basic anxieties about being taken out of a place where I'm comfortable and meeting with the homeless who I have had no contact with before, but all that initial apprehension absolutely disappeared when I went down there and found that these people are just like me."

Some of them are more like him than he realized initially.

"Last November, I was playing music and a gentleman was sitting near us watching and he actually came up and played the harmonica with us for a while and hung out for the whole set," recalls Chuck. "We sat down afterward at a table and he said, 'is your name Chuck?' and I said, 'yeah,' and then he asked, 'is your last name Hedges?' and surprised, I said 'yeah' and the man said, 'your father is also Chuck Hedges, isn't he?' and I said, 'yes, he is,' and the man said, 'hi, I'm your cousin, Michael.'"

Chuck found that his cousin had been struggling with drug abuse and other issues and said that was one of the hardest days to walk away from the Outlet, wondering whether to open his home to his cousin or to take other action. Chuck came to the conclusion that his cousin was where he needed to be; getting help, going through the Exodus program and having people to relate to through the Outlet.

In addition to some surprising familiar faces, Chuck makes new friends and builds into relationships while he is at the Outlet, learning about others and asking how they've been.

"Everybody has a story, and I want to know everyone's story," he says. "I want to be able to go down there and say, 'hey, how did that turn out for you,' or 'are you staying clean, do you want me to pray for you?' and let people know someone cares."

Even though he volunteers at Outlet to serve, Chuck says he gets more from it than he gives. "Every time I go down there, I come back with this endorphin high from just helping," he says. "It's such an uplifting experience. It's like following in the footsteps of Christ. You're reaching out to the less fortunate, the least among us. It has been a great experience."

## One City...

### OneCity is Powered by Volunteers Sharing Christ's Love Are You Ready to Work for Change?

OneCity believes that people "working for change" in the city will in fact, see change. OneCity mobilizes volunteers to engage in both life-on-life and professional/skill-based opportunities in order to challenge some of the city's biggest issues.

Below are a few high priority volunteer opportunities for you to consider.

#### Professional

1. **Communications Team** - use your skills as a copywriter, graphic & web designer, photographer, to develop/design OneCity materials.



## Connect...

2. **Research Team** - use your analytical skills to help answer questions to city-wide problems.
3. **Volunteer On-boarding Team** - mobilize people to action and service.
4. **IT/Database development** - build database solutions.
5. **Administrative Support** - assist OneCity staff with office tasks and projects.

**Life-on-Life**

**TEAM WORKS** job mentoring provides members of Cincinnati Works with professional mentors in order to support job placement, retention and financial self-sufficiency.

**OUTLET** is a place where we build relationships through games and recreation with the homeless, providing a friendly environment that makes it easy to meet and engage with positive people.

**Contact Us**

If we can help your church, your organization, or you individually get involved in serving our city in any way, please contact us.

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**One More Thing...  
CityLink Will Be Built!**

Yessss! A key hurdle cleared. A long battle over. A major door opened. My mind raced for the "right" metaphor. Bottom-line: the 2+ year zoning challenge regarding the Bank St. property for CityLink finally ended in our favor with a decision from the State Supreme court to decline hearing the opposition's appeal. This decision is very significant, because it clears the way for the next phase of development.

Just back from several key site visits to integrated service centers across the country, we will now glean best practices and apply some elements from each visit in refining our plans and beginning the hard work of implementing integration efforts. We have been focusing on comprehensive life plans during this time...doing more research, adding important partners, working with local stakeholders, integrating case management approaches. Now the work expands to program development and focusing on the facility.

Please continue to pray now for the development phase of this vital center in offering hope and a track to improve life for so many of our brothers and sisters in poverty.