



Your twice-a-month e-newsletter from Citygate Network

Useful news and information for members

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 Feedback

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CITYGATE NETWORK'S
DC FORUM
A VIRTUAL EVENT
MARCH 15-16, 2021



Once You've Gotten Vaccinated...

As more and more of our members have been securing inoculations for their staff and guests, we've been fielding questions about what protocols and restrictions still need to be followed, now that there is an increasingly vaccinated population. According to our CDC contacts, the answer is to continue the prevention measures, just as you have been doing throughout the pandemic—at least for now. Here is why: (1) Research and testing is still trying to discover whether, and to what degree, the vaccine prevents transmission. That is still not clear. (2) The CDC is trying to determine what level of vaccination coverage is required to make other prevention measures (i.e., protocols) unnecessary. Citygate Network continues to talk with the CDC and will keep you apprised of any new developments. In the meantime, keep up the good work to maintain healthy and safe environments for everyone you serve and employ. And please [let Citygate Network know](#) if you are vaccinating this week.

Registrations for DC Forum Climbing

With everything that has happened in the last ten months—and now, in the last ten days—we're getting a huge influx of registrations for our March 15 – 16 DC Forum. This is our event that delves deeply into the places government and ministry intersect. The forum is online this year, so attendees don't have to contend with air travel and Washington hotel prices. If you haven't been part of this annual gathering in the past, consider engaging this year: The cost – benefit ratio makes it an incredible deal. Check out our [DC Forum web pages](#) to see the schedule and speaker list. We'll be adding a few more speakers later this week. Who will be attending from your organization? It will definitely be worth your time. You can register right there on the website.

New Faith Connections at the White House

President Biden signed an [executive order re-establishing the Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships](#), reverting from the Trump administration's Center for Faith and Opportunity Initiatives to the name used under the Obama administration. The office collaborates with church and local ministry leaders throughout the country to expand and advocate for their initiatives at the federal level. Melissa Rogers has now been appointed to serve as the Executive Director. She held this same role during President Obama's second term. Some of you who attended the 2015 DC Forum might remember her meeting with us in the White House complex. Melissa will simultaneously serve as Senior Director for Faith and Public Policy in the White House Domestic Policy Council. Josh Dickson, who served as President Biden's White House Senior Advisor for Public Engagement and as the National Faith Engagement Director during the presidential campaign, will fill a newly created Deputy Director position, necessitated by the larger staff that comes from combining the Office of Public Engagement and the Domestic Policy Office. (Incidentally, Citygate Network President John Ashmen will be meeting in-person with Josh Dickson tomorrow.) Trey Baker will serve as the Liaison to Black Communities for the Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships. Together, they will reach across ten federal agencies.

Love to Temporarily Lead USICH

With the recent resignation of Dr. Robert Marbut from the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH), it appears that [Anthony Love, formerly a USICH deputy director](#), is filling Marbut's position on an interim basis. An advocate for Housing First, Love has spent most of his career dealing with homelessness and poverty

issues. It's doubtful that Love will be appointed to the role full-time since the person the White House taps to lead such an office is generally not a career bureaucrat. But, then again, it's not out of the question.

Equality Act Causes Great Consternation

This past Thursday, the House of Representatives pushed through the Equality Act (H.R. 5) on a 224 to 206 vote. The senate is now debating it. This is the bill that is blowing up social media. Citygate Network President John Ashmen thoroughly addressed the Equality Act in a message to members on Friday. If you didn't see that [you can sign-in to read it here](#). A compromise bill called Fairness for All (FFA) was reintroduced on Friday by Representative Chris Stewart (R-UT). Both bills would outlaw sexual orientation and gender identity-based discrimination, but only [Stewart's bill would expand legal protections for people of faith](#). Pundits don't give FFA much of a chance, but that remains to be seen. Significant time will be given to the discussion about the Equality Act during our upcoming DC Forum.

Charitable Giving Legislation Update

Senators Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) and Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH) have signed on to the reintroduction of Senator James Lankford's (R-OK) Universal Giving Pandemic Response and Recovery Act (UGPRRA) legislation, targeted for Senate presentation in March. Having the support of these two Democrat senators should boost the possibility of passage. The UGPRRA will have a bearing on donations to your mission or ministry as it would increase the cap on the charitable deduction for non-itemizing taxpayers from \$300 to \$4,100 for individuals and from \$600 to \$8,300 for couples, plus extend the charitable deduction for non-itemizers through 2022. Citygate Network supports the UGPRRA and has been a leading advocate to keep this legislation moving forward through the efforts of our Faith & Giving Coalition.

ECFA Webinar Forecasts 2021 Giving

What was the state of charitable contributions in 2020 and what is the outlook for donation income in 2021? What additional trends have researchers identified as impacting nonprofit ministries and churches in the coming months? ECFA will host a webinar called 5 Predictions About Charitable Giving in 2021 on March 4 at 1:00 p.m. ET. If you are an ECFA member,* [click here to register](#) for the research-based presentation, which will include the first release of findings from a 2021 survey of their members. (Citygate Network got a sneak peek at these findings in which rescue missions and homeless ministries figure prominently.)

* Remember that ECFA waives the \$500 application fee for Citygate Network members that apply. To take advantage of this cost savings, enter the code **AGRM500** on your ECFA application. On the offline application, write this code at the top of the form. Alternatively, through Citygate Network, members could participate in one free ECFA webinar (free to ECFA members). When you decide on a webinar that you would like to participate in, enter the code **AGRMweb** on the webinar registration form to have the fee waived.

Board Training Opportunity

Ripple Effect, Citygate Network's top-rated program for ministry boards and CEOs, will be offered ONLINE in April. This virtual event includes expert instruction on policy governance, the board and money, godly decision making, succession planning, inspiring meetings, and more. Participants receive access to an online repository of governance resources as well as personalized coaching, provided either on-site or virtually. More than 70 member organizations have already taken advantage of Ripple Effect with recent attendees rating the content "Excellent," fully expecting a positive, permanent impact on their board governance. [Click here for more information or to register](#) for the next Ripple Effect training.

Looking Down the Street

- **Union Rescue Mission** (Los Angeles, California) CEO Andy Bales was on the [front page of the L.A. Times' California section](#) on Saturday with this headline: *On Wednesday, his leg was amputated. On Thursday, he was back at work with the homeless.* Actually, this was the second amputation for Andy. His other leg was taken off several years ago. But Bales, a Citygate Network board member, is known nationally for his passion for the poor and his stamina, despite having multiple health problems.
- Friday was the [ribbon cutting ceremony](#) for the new North Side facility at Light of Life Rescue Mission (Pittsburg, Pennsylvania). This 23,000 square foot three-floor building will allow the mission to serve four times the number of people. It is the first phase of a \$22M capital campaign under CEO Jerrell Gilliam.
- We touched base with all our Texas and Oklahoma members because of the recent deep freeze that shut down roads, powerlines, and establishments across the south. Don Johnson, CEO at **Campus of Hope** (Conroe, Texas) shared about some heartwarming connections he and his wife experienced when they lost power. Overall, everyone made it through the unusual cold snap with minimal complications.
- The local branch of the University of Colorado just teamed up with **Springs Rescue Mission** (Colorado Springs, Colorado) for their quarterly foot clinic, inspecting and treating feet and distributing new shoes. This was especially appreciated by those who had just endured a stretch of below zero temperatures.

TELL US: Do you have news to share with other network members? Send a blurb to [Alice Gifford](#). Include as many details as possible. We'll handle the editing.



Japan Addresses Rising Suicides

In February, Japan created a [new cabinet position called the Minister for Loneliness](#) in direct response to the increased number of suicides for the first time in more than a decade. Tetsushi Sakamoto was appointed to the position to address national matters, including the suicide rate coinciding with the pandemic. He stated his desire to examine the issues and put together a comprehensive strategy to promote “activities that prevent social loneliness and isolation and protect ties between people.” The Japanese government has also established an isolation/loneliness countermeasures office to address not only the suicide issues, but also child poverty, which has also increased since the pandemic.

Do Cash Payments Really Help Homeless People Long-term?

The Stanford Social Innovation Review recently posted an article examining the effects of unconditional cash transfers (UCTs) on the poorest households in rural Kenya. The lasting [impact on the lives of those who received a one-time large sum](#) was compared with the lasting impact of a regular, small sum given over a three-year period. Results indicated that although receiving cash in either form positively impacted both categories of beneficiaries as well as the communities they live in, it's difficult to determine any lasting impact or life transformation as a result, although marginally more significant for those who received a smaller sum consistently. But does that constitute development or transformation? Can it change a family or individual's long-term trajectory? What happens when the cash flow turns off? These questions remain unanswered.



More Money for Those Working Through Your Programs

You don't have to be a tax expert to help working families learn about and claim the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and the Child Tax Credit (CTC). These tax programs provide refunds and credits for employees earning low to moderate wages and can help put eligible workers on the path to securing better housing, obtaining dependable transportation, paying for quality childcare, or pursuing higher education. [Click here to obtain outreach materials and resources](#), including flyers in 24 languages, infographics, the EITC Estimator, frequently asked questions, and information on additional federal credits. Claiming the EITC will not affect eligibility for other benefits like SNAP, SSI, Medicaid, cash assistance, or public housing.

The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) offers a free alternative to paid tax preparation for those claiming the EITC and CTC credits. Sponsored by the IRS, the VITA program coordinates community-based organizations, providing training to meet IRS guidelines and requiring participants to pass an annual exam to prepare tax returns. All tax returns undergo a quality review before submission to the IRS. [Click here to find a local VITA site](#) to help your clients file a return.

Watch for a survey from Citygate Network on the Earned Income Tax Credit and the Child Tax Credit. We'll include a nice incentive for completion.

Educating Teens About Dating Violence

During her recovery from a near-fatal shooting by her husband, Valerie Williams began researching the signs and patterns of domestic violence, realizing how many have misperceptions about abuse. Williams' healing process and newfound awareness led her to write several books, and to found Lovesmart, Inc., a nonprofit focused on [preventing teen dating violence](#). Over 1.5 million teens are abused annually, and one in three women experience physical, emotional, or mental abuse. Williams recognized that many young people get into unhealthy and toxic relationships without knowing the signs to watch for. She speaks around the country to raise awareness and provide resources that help them develop healthy dating behaviors and know what to do if they find themselves in an abusive situation. When speaking to young people, Williams tries to communicate that abuse will only worsen if a victim does not seek help. She also encourages them to spend time focusing on personal growth and gaining self-esteem, acknowledging that abuse can happen to anyone.



Pandemic Benefits to Continue

The federal government is [extending many of its emergency COVID-19 benefits](#) as the pandemic drags on, according to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. Sickness benefits, caregiving benefits, and the Canada Recovery Benefit (CRB) can all be claimed by Canadians for an even longer stretch of time. The Canada Recovery Benefit

and the Canada Recovery Caregiving Benefit both get a 12 week extension, making the new maximum total 38 weeks.

The government has also increased the EI availability to 50 weeks total, reflecting an additional 24 weeks. Trudeau also said the \$500-per-week Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit will now covering four weeks of missed work, rather than the previous two weeks.

Pandemic Hits Canadian Charities Unevenly

Almost half (42 percent) of [organizations that received donations in 2019 got less money in 2020](#), according to RBC data. The combined damage amounted to donations totaling \$60 million less than the previous year. Some charities did fine but more than one-quarter (27 percent) received zero dollars in 2020. The biggest collective hit came in May, when giving plunged by 30 percent compared to a year earlier. In December, donations actually rose 21 percent in comparison to 2019 because many Canadians rushed to make contributions before the end of the tax year. Small, grassroots organizations seemed to be the most at risk, according to a report from Imagine Canada, a non-profit that promotes the work of thousands of Canadian charities. They had fewer financial reserves, and their typical donors got hit hardest by the economic downturn. Because charities could not rely on tried-and-true fundraising methods, like door-to-door canvassing, live auctions, walks and runs, events, and even bake sales, donations suffered. However, religious charities and those focused on health generally saw their receipts increase compared to 2019, and some companies stepped up campaigns aimed at combatting COVID-19 or racial inequality, with average total donation amounts rising by 150 and 215 percent in April and June.



Treasury Nominee to Focus on Economic Inequality

Adeyemo Adeyemo, President Biden's nominee for the deputy treasury secretary, would make history as the first black person to fill the post. He sees [inequality as a top challenge for the U.S. economy](#) for the country as we look to recover from the pandemic-induced recession. As an immigrant from Nigeria who came to the U.S. with his parents, Adeyemo pledged to help "unlock the unrealized potential of marginalized people in this country in order to grow our economy," during his Senate confirmation hearing. The deputy secretary oversees tax policy and financial stability and would manage the nation's \$21 trillion public debt.

Disproportionate Business Ownership

In a recent CNN Business Perspectives piece, a Brookings Institution analysis of the most recent Census data indicated that black people currently make up about 14 percent of the U.S. population, but [only 2.2 percent of the nation's 5.7 million businesses](#) with more than one employee. Research shows that if black businesses matched their percentage of the population, there would be 806,218 more of them. Furthermore, since March of last year, an estimated 41 percent of black-owned businesses have had to close due to the lockdowns, restrictions, and other pandemic-related issues, compared to 17 percent of white-owned businesses. Comparatively, during the Great Recession, 51 percent of black-owned businesses closed their doors compared to 40 percent of white businesses.



[Accounting Online Adjunct Faculty](#), City Vision University, Kansas City, MO

[Addiction Counseling Online Adjunct Faculty](#), Techmission/City Vision University, Kansas City, MO

[Bookkeeper](#), Open Door Mission, Glens Falls, NY

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[Care Support Specialist](#), Light of Life Ministries, Inc., Pittsburgh, PA

[Chaplain/Case Manager](#), Union Gospel Mission, Dallas, TX

[Chief Executive Officer](#), LifePath Christian Ministries, York, PA

[Clinical Director](#), Denver Rescue Mission, Denver, CO

[Coach](#), City Mission of Schenectady, Schenectady, NY

[Controller](#), Central Union Mission, Washington, DC

[Culinary Food Truck and Catering Instructor](#), Portland Rescue Mission, Portland, OR

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[Director of Family Life Center](#), City Mission of Schenectady, Schenectady, NY

[Director of Human Resources](#), Winston Salem Rescue Mission, Winston-Salem, NC

[Director of Operations](#), Fairhaven Rescue Mission, Covington, KY

[Director-San Fernando Valley Rescue Mission](#), Rescue Mission Alliance, Oxnard, CA

[Donations Manager](#), Bread of Life Mission, Holbrook, AZ

[Donor Engagement Specialist](#), Open Door Mission, Glens Falls, NY

[Driver](#), Seattle's Union Gospel Mission, Seattle, WA

[Executive Chef](#), Open Door Mission, Glens Falls, NY

[Executive Director](#), Fairhaven Rescue Mission, Covington, KY

[Executive Director](#), Geauga Faith Rescue Mission, Chardon, OH

[Executive Director](#), The City Mission of Findlay, Ohio, Findlay, OH

[Facilities Manager](#), Open Door Mission, Glens Falls, NY

[Family Recovery Program Director](#), St. Matthew's House, Naples, FL

[Food Service Manager](#), Open Door Mission, Glens Falls, NY

[Health and Wellness Nurse](#), Portland Rescue Mission, Portland, OR

[Maintenance Manager](#), Bread of Life Mission, Holbrook, AZ

[Maintenance Technician](#), Central Union Mission, Washington, DC

[Major Gifts Officer](#), Sunday Breakfast Rescue Mission, Philadelphia, PA

[Major Gifts Officer](#), St. Matthew's House, Naples, FL

[Manager of Donor Relations](#), Lexington Rescue Mission, Lexington, KY

[Marketing Specialist](#), Open Door Mission, Glens Falls, NY

[Men's 2nd Shift Supervisor](#), City Mission of Schenectady, Schenectady, NY

[Men's Ministry Program Manager](#), Jubilee Ministries, Inc., Lebanon, PA

[Prison Chaplain](#), Jubilee Ministries, Inc., Lebanon, PA

[Prison Chaplain - SCI Frackville](#), Jubilee Ministries, Inc., Lebanon, PA

[PRN Residential Care Mentor](#), Shelter KC, Kansas City, MO

[Program Director: Justin's Place Women](#), St. Matthew's House, Naples, FL

[Program Manager](#), Central Coast Rescue Mission, Santa Maria, CA

[Residential Coordinator Cornerstone Manor Facility](#), Buffalo City Mission, Buffalo, NY

[Security Team](#), Open Door Mission, Glens Falls, NY

[Senior Director of Women and Children's Ministries](#), Seattle's Union Gospel Mission, Seattle, WA

[Sr. Database Manager](#), Central Union Mission, Washington, DC

[Street Outreach Case Manager Assistant](#), Phoenix Rescue Mission, Phoenix, AZ

[Vice President of People Services](#), Seattle's Union Gospel Mission, Seattle, WA

[Vice President of Programs](#), Career Cross Training, Colorado Springs, CO

[Women's Recovery Counselor \(CADIC I\)](#), Portland Rescue Mission, Portland, OR

[Women's Transition Specialist \(Live-In\)](#), Portland Rescue Mission, Portland, OR



Practicing Self Discipline

*But I discipline my body and keep it under control,
lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.*

1 Corinthians 9:27 ESV

The experts say it takes twenty one days to form a habit. After reading that, you may think, “Just 21 days of waking up early to read my Bible and then it will be easy!” But it doesn’t work like that. Spiritual self-discipline isn’t a pursuit that we simply force into habit; if that were the case, we wouldn’t need the Holy Spirit in our lives. Galatians 5 tells us that self-control is a fruit of the Spirit. We wouldn’t have it without the Spirit as it His gifting and work in us.

This realization begs the question then: How do we become more self-disciplined in our spiritual lives? Consider what Jeff Iorg puts forth in his book *The Character of Leadership*: “No fleshly effort will please God or build true discipline. Self-discipline refers to self as the object of discipline rather than its source. Even though discipline is learned, and self is the object of the discipline, the motivation and power to develop discipline comes from the Spirit.”

In order to become self-disciplined, we need to stop trying to take on the Spirit’s role as the source of life-changing power and rely on the strength He will faithfully work in us. Paul told Timothy to be strengthened by the grace of Jesus (2 Timothy 2:1). If our motivation doesn’t come from the Holy Spirit, then we will continue in vain and fail in the practice of self-discipline.

Our motivation will be of an eternal scope when we press into the Holy Spirit, and He will give us the strength to “run with endurance the race that is set before us” (Hebrews 12:1).

Written by Jordan Loftis and used with permission from www.shortdailydevotions.com

To contribute: If you would like to write a devotional thought for StreetLight, please make it about 200 words, include at least one Bible verse or passage, and submit via [email](#).