



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

Useful news and information for members

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### **Second “Hidden Trace Retreat” Kicks Off Tomorrow**

Since the mid-September release of the 14-minute movie from our first retreat, this tool has been elevating the Citygate Network brand in circles of influence and helping many of our member organizations tell their story. ([You can use this video on your website](#), if you aren't already.) There has been a steady flow of enthusiastic feedback...and it's still flowing. On Tuesday, Citygate Network and Willow Bend Creative will be back at Amy Grant's farm in Franklin, Tennessee, to welcome 16 participants from KARM (Knox Area Rescue Ministries) for “Hidden Trace Retreat II.” The program has been expanded to include some new elements and additional songwriters and musicians have been added. We would appreciate your prayers for another powerful event. Be watching for the next video.

### **San Antonio Early-Bird Registration Opens November 15**

The ball is already rolling for our 2022 Annual Conference and Exposition in Texas. The 8-page early-bird brochure will be bound into our November/December *Instigate* magazine and will be online starting November 15. Get ready to check out all of the great speakers and program features, including a last-day district festival at SeaWorld. So, if you haven't already, put June 1-4 on your calendar. And remember, the early-bird deal (for the best rates) ends December 15.

### **Send Us Your Seminar Proposals...ASAP!**

Speaking of the 2022 Annual Conference and Exposition, the Citygate Network staff will soon be finalizing the seminars for this big event. [Mission/Ministry members](#) and [business members](#): You have two weeks to send us your presentation proposals. The week of November 15, we go to work.

### **Members: We Need Your Vote**

Very shortly, all Citygate Network classic members will receive election e-ballots. Everyone will vote for a member-at-large. Additionally, those in the Rawhide, Sierra, and Northern Lights Districts will also elect a board representative for their district, plus a district president and vice president. And this year we are asking a ballot question. We are seeking permission to allow the board to make future structural and procedural changes (e.g., location of office of registered agent, number of standing committees, length of board member terms, etc.) to the bylaws—except where it pertains to anything related to the Statement of Faith. That will still require a vote of the entire membership with an even higher percentage needed to make any changes. Voting closes on Friday, November 19, at midnight (providing we have received e-ballots back from at least five percent of all eligible voters—so we need your vote). We will announce the results in the December 1 issue of *Street Smart*.

### **Professional Development Opportunity**

Abuse is very common in the personal history of people experiencing homelessness. In an effort to equip frontline staff to facilitate healing from abuse, our partners at Abuse Recovery Ministry Services (ARMS) offer Christ-centered training. The ARMS virtual training lineup is both affordable and accessible for Citygate Network members. Sign up for one of the two upcoming training opportunities available:

- Nov. 15-16, 2021 – [Two Day Mankind and/or Virtue Facilitator Training](#)
- Jan. 5, 2022 – [Domestic Violence Recovery Training](#)

### **New Legislation Pending**

Just last week, the administration announced their framework for the much-debated [Build Back Better Act](#), which will need to pass both houses of Congress before it can be signed into law. This historic bill addresses numerous topics that should be of interest to faith-based rescue missions and ministries, including the Child Tax Credit and Earned Income Tax Credit, housing, pre-K and childcare, and the Medicaid coverage gap. While controversial in many respects, some Christian leaders in the nonprofit sector believe the legislation has potential to help reduce poverty for the nation's most vulnerable. You'll want to follow this closely.

### **ACA Marketplace Open Enrollment**

Beginning today, your uninsured guests can sign up for health coverage available through the American Rescue Plan. The COVID-19 pandemic elevated the need for health coverage, and this program offers an affordable option. Millions of uninsured individuals and families can find coverage for \$10 a month on the Affordable Care Act (ACA) Marketplace. Check out these sites to provide timely information for your guests, including how to [access in-person enrollment assisters](#), [digital toolkits](#), and [social media content](#).

### **Podcast Interview Available**

In September, Best Christian Workplaces Institute co-founder, Al Lopus, welcomed Citygate Network President John Ashmen to his *Flourishing Culture* podcast for an interview on *How Rescue Missions Are Overcoming Key Leadership Issues*. [You can listen to the 35-minute segment here](#).

### Annual Mattress Fundraiser Kicks Off

Denver Mattress Co., LLC (DMC) just announced their 19th annual charity partnership with Citygate Network. For every mattress sold during the month of November, DMC will donate \$15 to local Citygate Network member missions (the ones in the city/area where stores are located) in the 26 states where they do business. DMC will again match up to \$150,000, marketing the program with in-store point of purchase materials, a social media campaign, and local promotion by Citygate Network members. Last year's efforts generated an abundance of community support in participating cities, resulting in a total contribution of \$150,000 by DMC.

### Looking Down the Street

- Michael Brown, CEO at the **Kalamazoo Gospel Mission** (Kalamazoo, Michigan) received a Distinguished Veteran Award from the Kalamazoo branch of the NAACP last month during their 42nd Annual Virtual Freedom Fund Event. They honored Michael as a career United States Navy Veteran who now serves the community as a champion for the dignity and rights of the homeless.
- A fire destroyed the historic downtown home where **The Light-house Recovery Program** (Fresno, California) housed 12 women going through their holistic and education curriculum. Everyone is safe, and nearby Citygate Network members **Fresno Rescue Mission** and **Evangel Home** (Fresno, California) have jumped in to help provide housing and assistance in the wake of the disaster.
- Speaking of **Fresno Rescue Mission** (Fresno, California), they will attempt to break the World Record for the longest line of socks by connecting more than 80,000 pairs over six-plus miles! The fundraiser demonstrates the mission's commitment to going the distance and making an impact in their community, "one pair of socks at a time." Donors are participating by contributing new socks or matching dollars based on sock pairs gathered.
- **Union Gospel Mission** (Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada) will open their new Women & Families Centre this fall. The stellar facility will provide a complete, compassionate continuum of care from the streets, through recovery programs, transitional housing, and aftercare.

*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*



### Tracking Homeless People with Technology

An organization called Homeward Pikes Peak can find and follow where those experiencing homelessness are in Colorado Springs by using an [interactive heat map](#). With that information in hand, they send an outreach team out twice a week to interact with people living on the streets. They take notes from each interaction and record the status of the individuals they talk to for their database. Over time, their goal is to work with the people they encounter to find stable homes and solutions for each of

them. They add close to 600 people to their map every year and have found homes for about 80 in the last 18 months.

### **Glorified Homelessness**

A [different kind of housing crisis](#) has hit some exclusive resort communities around the country. In remote locations where they can't rely on suburban workers commuting in for their shifts, there are limited affordable housing options available for employees. Both home sales and rentals costs have skyrocketed, and due to the limited inventory in these areas, homelessness has become a real thing for workers at hotels, restaurants, bars, and tourist attractions. Even when workers hold multiple jobs, they often can't afford the limited housing options available. At the Grand Imperial Hotel, a historic establishment in downtown Silverton, Colorado, owner Jim Harper has 11 open staff positions. To provide a few affordable options for his workers, he has converted an old storage area into employee housing and made two of his guest rooms available to employees at \$400 a month. Up to two-thirds of his employees' earnings come from overtime as they try to cover the worker shortage, and he believes he could fill his openings if only housing were available. *Consider: What opportunities has your ministry found to reach out to non-traditional people experiencing homelessness in your community?*

### **National Homeless Youth Awareness Month**

Since 2007, November has been a time to specifically recognize the scope and serious impact of youth homelessness. An estimated 2.5 million youths per year find themselves in these circumstances. A number of Citygate Network member ministries support kids—both alone and within families—who are encountering homelessness. These organizations understand that when children are trying to survive on the streets, the exposure to countless dangers, an increased likelihood of substance abuse, early parenthood, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, and vulnerability to being trafficked are very real challenges faced each day.

The National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN) has compiled a list of helpful resources. Find these and others on the [NCTSN website](#) today.



### **Addressing Addiction in the UK**

Catherine, Duchess of Cambridge, gave a speech to [launch the Taking Action on Addiction campaign](#), sponsored by Forward Trust, a British charity she supports. “No one chooses to become an addict,” she said. “But it can happen to any one of us. None of us are immune.” She went on to stress the severity of addiction as a serious mental health condition and the importance of recognizing “what lies beneath addiction.” The campaign states their desire to “reframe existing perceptions of addiction and build awareness of the causes and nature of addiction.” The duchess referenced more than one-and-a-half million people in the UK who have developed a drug or alcohol addiction as a result of the lockdown or other side effects of the pandemic, and about two million who have relapsed for the same reasons. Kate also expressed concern about the alarming increase of one million young people exhibiting addictive

behavior in the year-and-a-half since the world has been dealing with the Coronavirus. In closing, she thanked organizations like Forward Trust for helping people turn their lives around.

### **Record Numbers of Workers are Quitting their Jobs**

The U.S. Department of Labor revealed in a recent [report](#) that 4.3 million Americans left their jobs in August—the highest number on record since the pandemic started. Termed the “Great Resignation,” the phenomenon seems to be driven in part by workers who are less willing to take on inconvenient hours or compensation that they view as too low. With some 11 million job openings in the U.S., workers have leverage as they seek out opportunities. The report reveals that the largest increase in the number of quitters happened in Georgia, with 35,000 more people leaving their jobs. Overall, the states with the highest rates of workers quitting their jobs were Georgia, Kentucky, and Idaho. Citygate Network’s *2022 Compensation Report*, due out in January, will be one tool you can use to adjust compensation and benefits appropriately. Members that [complete the survey](#) will receive the report for free.

### **Child Tax Credits Being Used Appropriately**

According to analysis of Census Bureau data, over 90 percent of low-income families (<\$35,000 annually) all over the U.S. have applied their new monthly Child Tax Credit [payments towards very basic household expenses](#) like food, clothes, shelter, and utilities, or even education, as intended. Several organizations are investing a lot of time and energy to convince Congress to make the new tax credits a permanent measure for children in families with the lowest incomes. Not quite as high a percentage of households earning more than \$35,000 a year spent their credits on necessities, but those numbers still reflect a majority, and comparing these findings to data from Canada indicates the same tendency there to spend their child allowances on essentials and education.



### **Vaccination Passports**

Canada has launched a [standard federal proof of COVID-19 vaccination system](#). The passport shows the person’s name, date of birth, and COVID-19 vaccine history, to include which doses were administered and when. According to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, all provinces and territories have agreed to comply with this standardized national proof of vaccination, and the government will pick up the tab. Canadians can download the passport to their phones or print it out.

### **Changes in Assistance Causing Problems**

Rallies in Regina and Saskatoon highlighted the need for changes to the newly introduced Saskatchewan Income Support (SIS) program. SIS replaced the Saskatchewan Assistance Program (SAP) and the Transitional Employment Allowance (TEA) which both ended on Aug. 31, 2021. Apparently, flaws in the system have led to an unprecedented number of people experiencing homelessness. Because SIS deposits money into a tenant’s bank account instead of sending it directly to landlords and utility companies, the money doesn’t always end up paying the bills. Instead, many tenants who struggle with debt, family circumstances, or mental health and addiction issues apply the money in other areas. The Saskatchewan Landlord Association said that 30 percent of tenants on SIS failed to pay their rent in

October, and 12 percent paid only a portion of it, whereas previously that was the case with a mere one to three percent.



### **New Leader at United Way**

Angela Williams is [the first woman and the first African American to take the helm at United Way Worldwide](#). She will need to draw from her strong experience in facing the long list of challenges in front of her, including addressing accusations of a toxic workplace culture and low morale, as well as implementing procedures to prevent and punish discrimination, harassment, and retaliation. Williams has worked at Easterseals, the YMCA of the USA, the Bush-Clinton Katrina Fund, the Senate Judiciary Committee, and spent eight years as a lawyer and active-duty member in the U.S. Air Force Judge Advocate General's Corps. She wants to make United Way a moral leader in equity and workplace culture and make sure corporations don't view their equity efforts as a passing fad.

### **Equity For Disaster Victims**

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) research reveals unsettling evidence that the government agency created to help Americans recover from disasters, [tends to help white disaster victims more than people of color](#), regardless of the amount of damage suffered. Similarly, white, wealthy communities whose residents own property have also been treated more favorably than lower-income individuals and families, who are more likely to be people of color. An advisory panel made recommendations to help the agency address racial disparities more effectively, including creating an "equity standard" to measure whether their grant programs "increase or decrease equity over time," and implementing training programs and hiring practices that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion, and accurately represent the populations they serve.



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

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

[Executive Director](#), Career Cross Training, Colorado Springs, CO

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

[Executive Director](#), G.I.F.T.S. Men's Shelter, Janesville, WI

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[Food Service Coordinator-Center for Women & Child](#), Helping Up Mission, Inc., Baltimore, MD

[Front Line Coach](#), Shelter KC, Kansas City, MO

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[Licensed Child and Family Therapist](#), Phoenix Rescue Mission, Phoenix, AZ

[Life Coach](#), Shelter KC, Kansas City, MO

[Ministry & Marketing Coordinator](#), Abuse Recovery Ministry Services, Beaverton, OR

[Program Administrator \(Men's Recovery Program\)](#), Seattle's Union Gospel Mission, Seattle, WA

[Program Coordinator](#), Southern New Hampshire Rescue Mission, Nashua, NH

[Program Coordinator](#), Good News at Noon, Inc, Gainesville, GA

[Program Director](#), The Path Rescue Mission, Beverly Hills, FL

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

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

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[Volunteer Coordinator](#), Great Falls Rescue Mission, Great Falls, MT

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[Women's Assistant Director](#), Home of Grace for Women, Gautier, MS

[Women's Program Director](#), Modesto Gospel Mission, Modesto, CA

[Youth Program Director](#), Great Falls Rescue Mission, Great Falls, MT



### **Fast Food Faith**

Our busy culture has trained us to expect everything now. Insert a few coins, select a button on the vending machine, and watch a colorful snack package drop into the tray; pull up to a speaker, request a combo meal, and drive forward several yards to pick-up a neatly packaged lunch-on-the-go; or ask your smartphone for directions and simply follow step-by-step instructions to the nearest sushi restaurant or 24-hour pharmacy. We're accustomed to having what we want right at our fingertips.

That can make it harder to invest the time and effort required to truly seek the Lord's guidance. Instead, we run through our "shopping list" of requests during our morning devotions or bedtime prayers. We "place our order" at the counter and expect to pick up what we asked for moments later.

But *The Message* paraphrase of Jeremiah 29:12-14 makes it sound like we need to put a little more effort into our prayers than we do our drive-through orders:

*“When you call on me, when you come and pray to me, I’ll listen. When you come looking for me, you’ll find me. Yes, when you get serious about finding me and want it more than anything else, I’ll make sure you won’t be disappointed.”*

If you really want to hear from the Lord, you’ll need to earnestly invest the time and energy to seek His guidance. That means long conversations with Him, pouring over His Word, and searching out input from wise and trusted fellow-Christians. Sometimes that could even mean fasting or pulling back from something in order to hear His voice. But it’s seldom a drive-through process.

*Written by Alice Gifford, Citygate Network*

*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](#).*