



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

Useful news and information for members

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 Feedback

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Don't Panic but Be Cautious

No doubt some of you are already discussing precautions and procedures should the Coronavirus somehow sneak into your mission or ministry in the weeks ahead. Citygate Network can help with that, via a new toolkit for members. Before we go there, we want you to know that we join the many public figures who are calling for calm and perspective. Consider that so far in this “flu season” [the CDC reports](#) that there have been 32,000 cases with 18,000 deaths. The number of deaths usually reach as high as 25 thousand. The number of cases of Coronavirus in the U.S. and Canada combined is as of this morning was 114. That's about .0000003 percent of the population of both countries combined. Yes, that number will go up and sadly, there will be more deaths, but composure and vigilance is warranted.

It's wonderful that telecommunication advancements can deliver up-to-the-second information. But we all know that mass media is business driven. Stories that generate fear or anger increase viewership, causing people to tune in often to see what or who they should fear or loath. That's when things can spiral out of control. You can expect the Coronavirus to dominate the news cycle until it runs its course, in one way or another. In the meantime, [check out our new toolkit for the Coronavirus](#). We will update it, as needed.

It's Now or Never for the DC Forum

We have less than a handful of seats left for Citygate Network's annual Washington pilgrimage. Sign-ups have been brisk this year. We just got word that Secretary Ben Carson has changed his schedule so he can join us. If you want to be there too, [you can still register on our website](#). You will need to figure out your own accommodations as our room block is sold out.

Other DC Meetings on Ashmen's Schedule

Citygate Network President John Ashmen will be in Washington before and after the DC Forum to attend the board meeting for the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) and then for a retirement event to honor ECFA (Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability) CEO Dan Busby. ECFA has partnered with Citygate Network for many years. News about Dan's successor will be forthcoming.

TAKE NOTE: Deadline Approaching for Conference Price Break (and Drawing)

We can't wait to see you in San Antonio for the Citygate Network Annual Conference and Exposition, May 27 – 30. On March 16—just two weeks away—our registration prices will increase; and you will no longer be eligible for the drawing to win a Stetson cowboy hat after that. Gather your team and talk about getting those registrations in. [You can check out the program and register online.](#)

And don't forget, we're [looking for your “Don't Fence Me In” song video submissions](#) by March 16, too.

Annual Conference Scholarships Available

A limited number of scholarships will be available for the Annual Conference again this year. Because funds are limited, [please review the criteria carefully](#). Highest priority will go to those who have never attended our conference before, and/or missions or ministries that have never received a scholarship. For assistance with registration or travel, apply between March 2–13.

Here's What They Had to Say...

Here are some more comments from individuals who attended last year's Annual Conference and Exposition in Palm Springs. Hopefully the quotes (taken directly from our post-conference evaluations) will inspire you as you consider attending this year's conference May 27 – 30 in San Antonio.

The rebranding to the Citygate Network concept is powerful and promising. I've been in rescue ministry executive leadership for more than 33 years, participating in both IUGM and AGRM events: This conference in Palm Springs was the best I've ever attended. I believe the enthusiasm and synergy experienced at the conference will continue to promote the growth of a collective impact among Christ-centered ministries that is desperately needed throughout North America.

I'm a new member. It's a blessing to be part of Citygate Network. You perfectly balance the spiritual and professional aspects. This organization will have a special place in my professional and spiritual development in my mission from here on out.

Three Bills to Support Charitable Contribution in the Works

Efforts to get a Universal Charitable Deduction into law continue moving forward. More than 50 congressional representatives have now signed on as cosponsors to one or more of

three bills that would restore or partially restore the tax benefit for all Americans donating to charity, regardless of how much they give. Bills by Mark Walker (R-NC), H.R. 5293; Danny David (D-IL), H.R. 1260; and Henry Cuellar (D-TX), H.R. 651; are currently making the rounds in Capitol Hill hallways. Please write or call your representative to encourage him or her to co-sponsor one of these bills. [You can use this sample letter](#) as a “cheat sheet” when connecting.

Citygate Network Involved in Census 2020 Kickoff in D.C.

Herb Smith, CEO of the **Los Angeles Mission** (Los Angeles, California), represented Citygate Network at the kickoff of a 2020 Census event at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., held two weeks ago. The event highlighted the Faith Communities Census Weekend of Action, scheduled March 27-29, 2020, and intended for [faith leaders to promote participation in the 2020 Census](#). The Citygate Network [board passed a resolution](#), calling American members to action regarding the census.

Looking Down the Street

- February was a busy month for new members. We were pleased to welcome the following six organizations into Citygate Network:
- Stephanie Martin Halley began serving as the new Executive Director of **Westminster Rescue Mission** (Westminster, Maryland) in January. She has spent the last 25 years working in and with the non-profit sector, providing executive coaching, fundraising, and capacity building services.
- Charis Chocolates, a business enterprise set up by **City Rescue Mission** (Jacksonville, Florida) has worked out a partnership with more than a dozen area restaurants to offer their sweet treats as desserts in their establishments. Not only that, but their menus will include [the story of Charis Chocolates](#) and information about addiction recovery.
- The Pensacola Ice Flyers team in the Southern Professional Hockey League conducted an underwear and sock drive to collect hundreds of packages of these basic necessities at their games and then donated the items to **Waterfront Mission** (Pensacola, Florida).
- **Victory Mission** (Springfield, Missouri) has partnered with Springfield Community Gardens to promote sustainable and regenerative farming practices through training and technical-assistance workshops. This 12-month project will teach valuable agriculture practices and provide experience working in both urban and rural areas as participants learn skills to operate successful farms. The project will

become a model for youth and residents of persistent-poverty communities in adjacent counties.

***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.*



Supreme Court to Consider Religious Rights in Philadelphia Same Sex Couples Case

According to a CNN report out of Washington, D.C., [the highest court in the land will hear an appeal by Catholic Social Services](#), a Philadelphia religious nonprofit foster agency in danger of losing its government contract because of their refusal to recruit or certify same sex couples as potential foster parents. The case raises significant religious liberty issues and will be heard next term, which begins in October. The federal appeals court previously ruled in favor of the city, saying that the agency could not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, or natural origin. The Supreme Court ruling will bring to the forefront the question of whether the free exercise of religion—a right which allows actions based on belief—supersedes non-discrimination protections.

Portland Nonprofit Provides Path Out of Homelessness Through Culinary Program

According to an article in the Portland Business Journal, the Pacific Northwest city has gained notoriety for not only a vibrant food scene, but also their growing homelessness population. In an effort to bridge that dichotomy, Stone Soup PDX launched last year to [provide culinary training in conjunction with life skills](#) including budgeting, conflict resolution, and communication in the context of a functioning restaurant. The 12-week program was inspired by the co-founding husband-wife team's background of similar work in developing countries. Stone Soup PDX has gotten some high-profile support from the local restaurant community and hopes to help them offset the ongoing expense of training employees by providing skilled program graduates ready to serve.

New Legislation Intended to Protect the Unborn

A February 24th [ruling by the Ninth Circuit](#) will protect the unborn. Title X of the Public Health Service Act authorizes the Department of Health and Human Services to make grants to support voluntary family planning but does not allow funds to be used for “programs where abortion is considered a method of family planning”—a major blow for Planned Parenthood. The administration is also considering signing into law [two Acts written to protect unborn children](#) (S.3275 — Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act; Senator Graham, R-SC, 47 co-sponsors) and (S.311 — Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act; Senator Sasse, R-NE, 50 cosponsors).



Study Ranks U.S. Cities for LGBTQ Positions

The Municipal Equality Index (MEI) examines how inclusive municipal laws, policies, and services are of LGBTQ people who live and work there. [Cities are rated](#) based on non-discrimination laws, the municipality as an employer, municipal services, law enforcement and the city leadership's public position on equality, not on their atmosphere or quality of life for LGBTQ. The 2019 MEI is the eighth annual edition and rates a total of 506 cities on 49 different criteria from every state in the nation. All state capitals are ranked, as well as the 200 largest cities in the country. The rating scale runs from 0-100 and include 100 standard points and 22 bonus points. In 2019, 88 cities scored a perfect 100, up from 78 in 2018, and just 11 in 2012. Fourteen cities scored zero, and half of the cities ranked scored over 60. [Check your cities MEI ranking here.](#)

Do Christian Churches Still Have a Strong Community Impact?

A recent Barna study found that while [many practicing Christians believe their churches have a strong community impact](#) (66 percent, very positive, 28 percent somewhat positive), it seems that only 27 percent of the rest of the U.S. agrees, and another 27 percent don't think the Christian church has any affect at all. Thirty-nine percent of non-Christians actually believe the churches' local contributions are very negative (30 percent), or

somewhat negative (10 percent). Many U.S. adults feel the Church itself is falling out of style, including 25 percent of practicing Christian Millennials.

Aéropostale Organizes Teens for Jeans

For almost a decade, the popular young adult retailer, Aéropostale has partnered with DoSomething.org to run an annual [Teens for Jeans](#) program to collect and donate gently used jeans to teens experiencing homelessness. Since 2008, homeless shelters have gotten more than 5,000,000 pairs of jeans as a result of the annual month-long winter campaign. Actress Jenna Ortega filmed a PSA at a homeless shelter in her hometown of Indio, California, to raise awareness and inspire action in regard to youth homelessness. Retailers marketing the campaign to teens offer an added incentive by offering participants 20% off their next purchase.



[AOH Counselor- Client Manager](#), Union Gospel Mission, Spokane, WA

[Business Director](#), Coachella Valley Rescue Mission, Indio, CA

[Camp Bennett Maintenance Manager](#), Central Union Mission

[Camp Director](#), Central Union Mission

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

[Chief Administration Officer](#), Rockford Rescue Mission Ministries, Inc., Rockford, IL

[Chief Philanthropy Officer](#), Helping Up Mission, Baltimore, MD

[Controller](#), Light of Life, Pittsburgh, PA

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

[Counseling Program Manager](#), The Rescue Mission Tacoma, Tacoma, WA

[Development Director](#), Home of Grace, Vancleave, MS

[Development Manager](#), Bread of Life Mission, Seattle, WA

[Director of AOH](#), Union Gospel Mission (Spokane), Spokane, WA

[Director of Development](#), City Mission of Schenectady, Schenectady, NY

[Director of Men's Shelter Services](#), Union Gospel Mission, Spokane, WA

[Director of Operations](#), Brunswick Christian Recovery Center, Ash, NC

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

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

[Executive Director](#), Hospitality Ministries, Wenatchee, WA

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

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

[Food Service Support](#), LifePath Christian Ministries, York, PA

[Guest Relations](#), LifePath Christian Ministries, York, PA

[Guest Relations II](#), LifePath Christian Ministries, York, PA

[Guest Services Manager](#), Shelter KC, Kansas City, MO

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

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

[Major Gifts Officer](#), Union Rescue Mission, Wichita, KS

[Mental Health Counselor](#), The Rescue Mission Tacoma, Tacoma, WA

[Nonprofit Management Department Chair \(online\)](#), City Vision University, Kansas City, MO

[Operations Director](#), Salina Rescue Mission, Inc. ,Salina, KS

[Part-Time Counselor](#) (Youth-Focused), Seattle's Union Gospel Mission

[Program Administrator - Bridge Street Mission](#), Bridge Street Mission, Inc., Wausau, WI

[Renewal Counselor \(Full-Time\)](#), Hope Gospel Mission, Eau Claire, WI

[Renewal Counselor \(Part-Time\)](#), Hope Gospel Mission Eau Claire, WI

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

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

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

[Short-Term Living Coordinator Men's Ministry](#), Lebanon Rescue Mission, Inc., Lebanon, PA

[Social Work/Clinical Manager](#), Denver Rescue Mission, Denver, CO

[Transitional Living Coordinator](#), Lebanon Rescue Mission, Inc., Lebanon, PA

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

[Vice President of Ministries](#), Rescue Mission Alliance, Oxnard, CA

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Heart Resolve

*It is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person,
but what comes out of the mouth; this defiles a person.
Matthew 15:11 ESV*

Pharisees were incredibly disciplined. Unbelievably dedicated. And honestly, would put many of our lives to shame—on the outside, at least. Jesus reveals something more profound about character that should transform the way you see it. No matter how well you behave, you can't cheat character. Our behavior is a product of our character and your life will be a product of who you truly are.

So, we can chip away at modifying our behavior, working super hard at cultivating a daily devotional habit, reading our Bible—developing a rhythm of prayer and fasting...even giving large portions of our income...and these are all incredible&—and expected—activities in a believer's life. Obedience, holiness, and spiritual disciplines must happen for us to grow in the image of Jesus.

Rather than starting with behavior, though, Jesus starts with the heart. He reveals that underlying motivations are the real state of our character. It is from our character that true holiness, love, and Christian action flows. As James said, faith without works is dead. And Jesus shows us that works without faith is pointless.

What is the state of your heart? Have you prioritized character, or tried to cheat it with good-looking actions?

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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](#).