

Mustard Seed Survey Project:¹
A Phone Survey of Inner-City Congregations
Serving Predominately Poor and/or African-American Communities
Concerning Community Outreach Social Service Provision and Institutional Capacity

Ronald Peters
Pittsburgh Theological Seminary
February 16, 2004

Summary

Considerable public attention has focused on the role of faith-based human service efforts in recent years.² Because more than 75% of the U.S. population resides in its metropolitan centers³ much of this public interest been directed toward urban faith-based activities, especially in congregations.⁴ In the Greater Pittsburgh area (Allegheny County), this attention has focused on both congregations and faith-based social service agencies⁵ with the aim of informing local decision-makers, as well as the community at large, about the existing level and future potential of these entities to provide high quality human services in light of the infrastructure and management capacities of these organizations. It was found that faith-based social service agencies compare favorably with their non-religious counterparts overall, but while congregations generally enjoy strong volunteer resources for their social ministries, they do not expect to be able to generate the additional funds needed for the growing demands of their social service programming.⁶ This survey of a specific subset of urban congregations whose memberships are mostly 300 or less (67%) and predominately African American in constituency (often overlooked in the research) found that these churches generally engage in the same types of social ministries as congregations overall in the Pittsburgh area and experience similar challenges. Yet, there are two important factors that significantly inform the ability of these congregations to engage in and/or sustain social service programming. First, despite their relatively smaller size and limited resources, this survey found that African American urban congregations in Pittsburgh engage in social service provision commensurate with their human and financial resources. Second, a significant number of small congregations surveyed (16%),

¹ The author is deeply appreciative of the generous funding granted by the Forbes Funds of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania that made this survey possible and to the students who conducted the surveys (Eugene Blackwell, Chad Collins, Shanea Leonard). Additionally, the insightful feedback and suggestions made by Gregg Behr, Kevin Kearns, Linda Yankoski, J. Khanh Bui, and Rev. Sharon Washington as well as the assistance of Herman Jones and Angela Foster is gratefully acknowledged.

² Canaan, Ram A. (1999). *The Newer Deal: Social Work and Religion in Partnership*. New York: Columbia University Press; J.J. Dululio, Jr. "Godly people in the Public Square," Review, *The Public Interest* (Fall 2000): 110-115; Hodgkinson, Virginia A., and Weitzman, Murry S. (1993). *From Belief to Commitment: The Activities and Finances of Religious Congregations in the United States*, 1993 ed. Washington, Independent Sector.

³ United Nations website: <http://www.un.org/unsd> , Jan. 21, 2004.

⁴ For example, Bakke (1987), Canaan (1999), Harper (1999), and Schaller (1993).

⁵ Gregg S. Behr and Melanie DiPietro (2002). *Social Services in Faith-Based Organizations: Pittsburgh Congregations and the Services They Provide*. Pittsburgh, PA: The Forbes Funds and Kearns, Kevin, Park, Chisung, and Yankoski, Linda (2003). *Comparing Faith Based and Secular Human Service Corporations in Pittsburgh*. Pittsburgh, PA: The Forbes Fund.

⁶ See results of the above research, www.forbesfunds.org.

MUSTARD SEED SURVEY PROJECT REPORT – February, 2004

have no regularly installed clergy leadership, a critical factor in congregational infrastructure especially in black churches.

Introduction: Defining Urban Ministry

Although most people in the United States live in metropolitan areas and churches are found in abundance throughout the city, questions about urban ministry remain in the minds of many people. What is urban ministry and how does it differ from ministry in rural areas or in cities where some faith-based activities are not characterized as such? Why should urban ministry be examined as a special subset of congregational ministry in general with regard to matters of infrastructure and organizational capacity? Also, why is urban ministry so frequently associated with visible racial/ethnic groups and/or among the city's most socially challenged populations? Dudley and Roozen remind us that in social research (surveys, focus groups, etc.) regarding faith-based organizations, it is important to remember these groups come together in the first place because of relational values grounded by beliefs that are not objective.⁷ In attempting to address issues of infrastructure and capacity assessment in faith-based urban ministries it is important to understand, first of all, the particular faith assumptions of this type of social service provision.

Urban areas are typically defined in one of three ways: *spatially* (in terms of the uniqueness of geography and/or environmental characteristics), *socially* (identifying realities that shape the context and caliber of social interactions: population demographics, etc.), or *symbolically* (referring to the ethos or metaphorical meaning assigned to the metropolis based upon its perceived or projected characteristics, i.e. "the Big Apple" or "the Holy City").⁸ While all three meanings can connote aspects of *urban ministry*, the most common uses of the phrase focus on the *social* and *symbolic* meanings.⁹ In this study, although the social meanings of urban ministry are emphasized, both the social and symbolic meanings of urban ministry are employed.¹⁰

Essentially, urban ministry is a branch of theological inquiry and practice that focuses on life in the city and its diversity from the perspective of society's most vulnerable populations. While its theological assumptions do not significantly contrast with non-urban contexts, unlike the predominately homogenous social orientation of life in rural or ex-urban settings, urban

⁷ Carl S. Dudley and David A. Roozen (2001). *Faith Communities Today*. Hartford, CT: Hartford Seminary, p. 18.

⁸ Peter Marcuse and Ronald van Kempen (2000) approach the spatial considerations of global urbanization while Lowell Livezey (2001) examines urban ministry in its social dimensions and Robert Lithincum (1991) is a good example of a symbolic focus on the city.

⁹ See Bakke (1987), Conn and Ortiz (2001), Linthicum (1991), Scott-Meyers (1992), and Wallis (1981).

¹⁰ According to this social definition of urban ministry, not all congregations physically located in the metropolitan context participate in urban ministries. In socially and economically challenged urban neighborhoods, frequently social services are provided by secular and religious agencies or community groups whose policy-making, administrative, and service-delivery personnel do not reflect the areas where those receiving the services reside nor are the "helpers" typically connected socially, economically, culturally, or ethnically with service recipients. By contrast, urban ministry is more frequently characterized by service providers who are indigenous to the areas they serve (Harper, 1999; Shaller, 1989; Scott-Meyers, 1993; Livezey, 2001). Issues of socio-economic class, culture and ethnicity, therefore, are involved in the distinctions that characterize congregations doing *urban ministry* from congregations located in the city, but whose social ethos and religious experience is different from that of indigenous urban ministry practitioners. As such, social location (Wilson, 1996) is a factor in defining urban ministry. See also Bakke (1987), Harper (1999), Peters (2001), Scott-Meyers (1992), and Villafañe (1995).

MUSTARD SEED SURVEY PROJECT REPORT – February, 2004

ministry views the socio-economic, cultural, and ethnic pluralism of the city as indicative of divine presence. As such, urban ministry interprets negative social and political challenges as obstacles to faith that are best addressed through worship rituals and social activities which reflect a bias in favor of the city's most vulnerable populations. Generally, urban ministry addresses one or more of at least seven public issues in city life: economic development, education systems, family life, public health, restorative justice advocacy, ethnic/race relations, and the environment. Few urban ministry practitioners will address all seven, but most will address some combination of these.

In most U.S. cities, visible ethnic/racial groups (African, African Americans, Arabic, Asian, Latino, etc.) are more vulnerable to subtle and overt forms of social or racial discrimination and, as such, their social location often defines them within the scope of urban ministry. This is true also in Pittsburgh. While it is certainly true that poverty and African-American ethnicity are not synonymous, the fact is that in the City of Pittsburgh there is a disproportionately high correlation between these two factors. One assessment found that as much as 75.6 percent of African-American households in Pittsburgh earn less than \$25,000 annually.¹¹ Other arbiters of quality of life (employment, housing, public education, or incarceration)¹² reveal the unique social and political challenges to this population. Given the unique challenges of this congregational subset, faith-based social service provision by African American congregations was examined to see how these urban ministries contribute to Pittsburgh's social service infrastructure.

Methodology and Limitations

Congregations were selected from three sources: the Metro-Urban Institute's (MUI) database of 158 predominately African American congregations in the Greater Pittsburgh/Allegheny County area (after updating and purging obsolete entries), Christian Associates (an ecumenical association of denominations), Renaissance Publications of Pittsburgh (which maintains one of the region's largest listings of predominately African American congregations), and the Yellow Pages. Lists were cross-referenced against denominational lists and addresses and phone numbers were checked for accuracy. A list of 302 African American congregations was compiled from these various sources. Since all congregations did not identify their specific official denominational connection (i. e. National Baptist, American Baptist or African Methodist Episcopal or United Methodist, etc.), the faith traditions of responding congregations are reported by the generic denominational affiliation given by the churches (i.e. Baptist or Methodist). Although there are some historically Euro-American churches that are engaged in significant urban ministries in African American communities, because the focus of the study was on historically African American churches in urban neighborhoods, predominately Euro-American congregations located in these areas were not included in the survey.¹³ Also, Islamic congregations and other non-Christian faith traditions in Pittsburgh's Black community were not included in this survey. Phone surveys were conducted by Seminary students from April 25 -

¹¹ Esther L. Bush in the "State of Black Pittsburgh" address to the Urban League of Pittsburgh, Inc. Annual Meeting, October 23, 2003, p. 4

¹² Ralph Bangs (2000). Statistics from the University Center for Social and Urban Research, University of Pittsburgh. Pittsburgh, PA

¹³ East Liberty's East Liberty Presbyterian Church and Christian Alliance Church in the North Side neighborhood are representative of this group of congregations.

MUSTARD SEED SURVEY PROJECT REPORT – February, 2004

May 20, 2003 and from July 24 – August 01, 2003. These included day and evening calls to churches and, in some cases, to the pastor's homes where these were listed as preferred contact places. Seventy-four successful contacts were completed (24.5% of the total). Subsequent to the survey, four follow-up focus group meetings were convened. However, the results of those meetings are not contained in this report since some of the issues raised in those focus groups did not relate to those raised in the questionnaire. See also *Working Assumptions of the Mustard Seed Project* (Appendix A).

Summary of Findings and Policy Implications

- Most African American urban congregations involved in the survey (67%) have memberships of 300 or less. Congregations reported memberships slightly smaller than Black churches nationally as well as congregations in general in the Allegheny County area. 50% of all U.S. churches report regular attendance of less than 100¹⁴ while among Black churches nationally, 26% are churches with less than 100 attending.¹⁵ Among congregations in this survey, 32% reported memberships of less than 100. While 25% of all churches in Allegheny County have 500+ members,¹⁶ among Black urban congregations, 17% reported memberships of 501+ (see Table 1).
- 61% of African American urban churches in the survey are served by a solo pastor. Most churches reported having either full or part time secretarial support (60%) and 36% depend on volunteer church staff support (Tables 2, 3).
- It was found that 16% of the responding congregations reported having no pastor. This leadership challenge poses a serious problem for these congregations in attempting to engage in community oriented social service provision as the role of the pastor in African American culture is very significant (Table 2).
- Unlike non-religious as well as faith-based agencies providing social service, the age of a congregation is no indicator of its membership size, budget or level of activities. The two largest congregations in this survey, one having been in existence for 100 years and the other for only 22 years, both reported having 3,000 members (Tables 4, 5)
- All of the congregations in this survey reported some form of community outreach social service activity. Economic needs are the most frequent social service ministries of the urban congregations surveyed. Food, clothing, and emergency financial assistance, and senior care ministries dominated (all relate to economic issues). Most churches do not charge fees for the social services they provide (see Table 6, 7, 8).
- The majority of churches in the survey collaborate with other churches in some way regarding the provision of faith-based social services (73%) and most work with non-

¹⁴ Carl S. Dudley and David A. Roozen (2001), p. 8.

¹⁵ C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence H. Mamiya (1990). *The Black Church in the African American Experience*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, p. 143.

¹⁶ Behr, Gregg S. and DiPietro, Melanie (2002). *Social Services in Faith-Based Organizations: Pittsburgh Congregations and the Services They Provide*. See www.forbesfunds.org.

MUSTARD SEED SURVEY PROJECT REPORT – February, 2004

religious community agencies also (64%) in the provision of community outreach social ministries (Table 9-10).

- Most churches (60%) reported an interest in seeking to expand or develop new social outreach services. However, only 12% of the churches surveyed indicated an interest in seeking government funds to support their social outreach programs. Of the nine churches that expressed interest in applying for government funds, four were congregations with memberships of 200 or less and five were congregations with less than 100 members (Table 11).

Policy implications:

It is clear from these responses that African American urban congregations, regardless of their size, are responding to community social service needs in a variety of ways. One of the most pressing policy concerns to be faced is the matter of clergy leadership and stress. In order for these churches to expand existing social service delivery or expand these services in addition to their basic religious functions, this issue must be addressed.

- Most urban church clergy in African American communities are solo pastors whose congregations serve communities with severe social challenges. Although this survey did not investigate whether paid clergy worked exclusively with the congregations employing them or if they had additional non-church related occupations in addition to their ecclesiastical responsibilities, it has been documented that this is a wide-spread practice among African American clergy.¹⁷ This fact is probably related to negative economic realities impacting inner-city communities and the indigenous religious institutions serving them. Given these considerations, the potential for high stress and emotional burn-out among these urban clergy leaders is a major concern.
- Among the congregations surveyed, 16% had no pastor. The ability of these churches to engage in effective and sustained social service provision in light of this leadership challenge is questionable.
- All congregations, regardless of membership size, indicated involvement in some form of social service provision (Tables 6, 7, 8). The survey did not analyze the different social service patterns between the larger (300+ members) and smaller (299 < members) congregations. It is probable that, like the faith-based agencies,¹⁸ the larger the congregation the more likely it will be able to support sustained community oriented social service provision. Further analysis is needed to determine if these larger congregations would benefit from additional capacity enhancement support. Caution should be taken not to automatically assume, however, that smaller congregations are unable to engage in effective social service delivery since many strong programs are currently being sponsored by such congregations. Nonetheless, because of their limited human and financial resources, the long-term viability of some of congregation-based

¹⁷ Lincoln and Mamiya (1990), p. 132.

¹⁸ Kearns and Park (2003).

MUSTARD SEED SURVEY PROJECT REPORT – February, 2004

services may be open to question, especially in light of the potential stress currently faced by African American clergy leadership factors.

Decision makers should consider cooperating with these congregations in a manner that would provide some form of in-service training opportunities or other support for clergy leaders as a means of strengthening the long-term viability of these congregations to support outreach community social service.

In addition to the pastor, most churches (60%) indicated having either full or part time secretarial staff while 36% depend on volunteer non-clergy staff to support their religious and community outreach programs. For the majority of these congregations, this is the extent of their staffing patterns. This suggests that for many congregations, paid staff for social service provision will be a challenge without some form of funding apart from congregational revenues.

MUSTARD SEED SURVEY PROJECT REPORT – February, 2004

Table 1: Congregational Membership

# of Members (N = 69)	1-50	51-100	101-150	151-300	301-500	501+
Respondents	14	8	10	14	11	12
%	20%	12%	15%	20%	16%	17%

Table 2: Pastoral Staff¹⁹

#of paid clergy (N = 74)	0	1	2	3	4	5+
Respondents	12	45	9	3	2	3
%	16%	61%	12%	4%	3%	4%

Table 3: Paid Church Non-Clergy Staff²⁰

Respondents (N = 74)	#	%
Paid secretary	40	55%
Part time	4	5%
Other paid staff *	2	2%
None (volunteers only)	26	36%
No response	2	2%

Table 4: 10 Oldest Congregations

	Years	Membership
1.	217	850
2.	200	150
3.	195	500
4.	174	40
5.	166	100
6.	157	100
7.	153	400
8.	138	200
9.	135	365
10.	128	2500

¹⁹ This survey did not ask if paid clergy serving these churches were full-time or if they also had additional non-church related employment. In one of the most comprehensive national surveys of African American churches that included 1,439 clergy nationwide, Lincoln and Mamiya found that 38.2 percent of urban clergy held jobs in addition to their pastoral relationships with their churches. Lincoln and Mamiya (1990), p. 132.

²⁰ Other paid staff refers to non-clergy staff, i.e. musicians, administrative, custodial, etc.

MUSTARD SEED SURVEY PROJECT REPORT – February, 2004

Table 5: 24 Largest Congregations (300<)

	Membership	Years			Membership	Years
1.	3000	100		13.	500	50
2.	3000	22		14.	460	13
3.	2500	128		15.	450	40
4.	1500	100		16.	400	153
5.	1000	118		17.	400	81
6.	900	114		18.	400	13
7.	850	217		19.	397	107
8.	700	100		20.	365	135
9.	700	82		21.	300	106
10.	500	195		22.	300	100
11.	500	80		23.	300	30
12.	500	75		24.	300	28

Table 6: Local Community Ministries

	Community Ministry	#	%
	Women's Ministry	49	66%
	Men's Ministry	39	53%
1.	Food Pantry	36	49%
2.	Clothing	29	39%
3.	Emergency Food	23	31%
4.	Emergency Financial Assistance	22	30%
5.	Senior Care	22	30%
6.	Counseling	20	27%
7.	Mentoring/ tutoring	18	24%
8.	Sub/Abuse Program	17	23%
9.	Parenting education	15	20%
10.	Parenting Support	15	20%
11.	Childcare	12	16%
12.	After school care	9	12%
13.	Soup Kitchen	9	12%
14.	Health Ministry	8	11%
15.	Senior Services	8	11%
16.	Child Welfare	6	8%
17.	Medical Services	6	8%
18.	Mental Health	6	8%
19.	Developmental Disabilities	4	5%
20.	Temporary Housing	2	.03%
21.	Legal Assist.	1	.01%
22.	Vocational/Job training	1	.01%
	Foster Care	0	0
	Respite Care	0	0
	No services	0	0
	Other services*	9	12%

MUSTARD SEED SURVEY PROJECT REPORT – February, 2004

Table 7: Services Provided²¹

N = 74	All those in need	Community residents only	Congregation only	Referred parties	No Response
Respondent	55	17	10	6	4

Table 8: Fees Charged for Services and how these fees are determined²²

N = 74	Sliding Scale	Set Prices	Other	N/A (no charge)	No Response
Respondents	6	3	2	55	8
%	8%	4%	3%	74%	11%

**Table 9: Church Collaborations:
Working with other congregations to deliver
Community outreach services**

N = 74	Respondents	%
Yes	54	73%
No	9	12%
Unsure	4	5%
Other	1	1%
No response	6	8%

**Table 10: Community Collaborations:
Working with other community agencies
To deliver community outreach services**

N = 74	Respondents	%
Yes	47	64%
No	12	16%
No response	15	20%

²¹ Five churches (#18, 19, 20, 22, 24) responded to more than one selection.

²² Two churches gave two answers (slide scale/other; set price/no fee).

MUSTARD SEED SURVEY PROJECT REPORT – February, 2004

Table 11: Seeking to Develop Community Ministry with Government Aid

N = 69	Yes	No
Seeking to dev. Cmty min.	45	3
A) Interested in gov. funds:	15	1
B) Planning to apply:	9	0
C) Previously applied:	0	10
D) Turned down:	0	8

Table 12: Denomination

Denominational Tradition (N = 74)	# of Churches
Baptist	19
Methodist	19
Non-Denominational	10
Church of God in Christ	8
Presbyterian	5
Catholic	4
Episcopal	2
Assembly of God	2
Church of the Nazarene	1
Seventh Day Adventist	1
Lutheran	1
Ascension	1
Disciples of Christ	1

MUSTARD SEED SURVEY PROJECT REPORT – February, 2004

APPENDIX A: WORKING ASSUMPTIONS

The Forbes Funds' efforts to promote the strengthening of institutional capacity among non-profits can be of great benefit to Allegheny County's faith-based social service providers who have recognized this need in their organizations and desire such assistance. Urban churches in Pittsburgh's predominately African-American neighborhoods are no exception to this rule. Accordingly, the Metro-Urban Institute's Office of Applied Religion (MUI-OAR), has made the following assumptions in planning its survey concerning faith-based social service provision among congregations serving predominately African-American communities:

- A. ***Ethnicity impacts the experiential reality of African-Americans in Pittsburgh Disproportionately as compared to Euro-Americans and influences the social service provision of its religious community.*** It has been demonstrated that within predominately African-American communities in Pittsburgh, for example, disproportionately high unemployment, substandard housing, poor educational outcomes, negative health statistics and higher crime rates are found more frequently and with greater severity than in more racially diverse or predominately Euro-American neighborhoods.²³ By contrast, Hindu populations in Pittsburgh tend to be found in higher income levels. This reality suggests that different social service goals might be expected between these divergent religious and ethnic populations.
- B. ***Even within the same religious tradition or denomination, there are significantly different expressions of faith that impact social outreach.*** Theological perspectives vary within the same denomination/faith tradition (Anglican, Baptist, Catholic, Methodist, Muslim, etc.) from fundamentalist, conservative, or liberal to radical and such variances impact how that congregation or religious organization approaches public ministry.
- C. ***Limited resource ministry in the African-American community requires that special care be given to brevity in the information gathering instrument and process.*** While this is important in all cases, it is crucial in working with African-American churches due to multi-task demands on the pastors and limited staff resources in these churches. Because the constituents served by African-American churches are less affluent than the wider Pittsburgh population generally, the churches themselves are less wealthy than the city's Euro-American churches. Consequently, African-American church staffs tend to be limited and, usually, the pastor is the only paid staff (he or she may not be full-time). Typically, support staff is volunteers (secretary, janitor, musician, etc.) and competing non-church/ non-direct ministry attempts to claim pastoral attention detract from the church's mission. MUI seeks to limit the number of its contact to small churches and their pastors as much as possible by making sure that each contact is succinct and covers as much material directly related to congregation, parishioner, or community needs as possible.
- D. ***This project must deal with communal suspicion of institutional research among the socially disadvantaged.*** Without question, research institutions (colleges and universities)

²³ Benchmarks Reports 1994-2001. Urban Research Institute, Univ. of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA.

MUSTARD SEED SURVEY PROJECT REPORT – February, 2004

render invaluable service in the analysis of society on a variety of levels and have helped immeasurably in contribution to the work of religious groups. It is a mistake, however, to minimize the significance of the philosophical differences that separate social research from religious endeavor in attempting to analyze religiously-based social service provision, especially among the poor and historically disenfranchised groups in society. The reality is that poorer neighborhoods generally, including those largely populated by high percentages of African Americans, have been over-researched and under-served in terms of economic development political clout, and other quality of life issues. African-American religious institutions, therefore, are often reluctant to engage in extensive collaborative research with predominately Euro-American research institutions. Moreover, most African American clergy-leaders have not been formally trained in graduate theological schools. Although there are certainly exceptions to this axiom, the basic fact is that regarding professional development, churches ordinarily look to theological schools rather than research universities, in effort to improve their programming.

The above are the core considerations guided the design of the survey instrument Mustard Seed survey project.

MUSTARD SEED SURVEY PROJECT REPORT – February, 2004

References:

- Bakke, Ray. The Urban Christian: Effective Ministry in Today's Urban World. Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press: 1987.
- Behr, Gregg S. and DiPietro, Melanie. *Social Services in Faith-Based Organizations: Pittsburgh Congregations and the Services They Provide*, 2002. (Report to The Forbes Funds) Pittsburgh, PA: The Forbes Fund. www.forbesfunds.org.
- Bos, David A. A Practical Guide to Community Ministry. Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox, 1993.
- Canaan, Ram A. The Newer Deal: Social Work and Religion in Partnership. New York: Columbia, 1999.
- Conn, Harvie M., Ortiz, Manuel. Urban Ministry: The Kingdom, the City, and the People of God. Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press: 2001.
- Dudley, Carl S. and Roozen, David A. Faith Communities Today. Hartford, CT: Hartford Seminary, 2001.
- Dudley, Carl S. Community Ministry: New Challenges, Proven Steps to Faith-Based Initiatives. Bethesda, MD: Alban Institute, 2002.
- _____. Next Steps in Community Ministry: Hands-on Leadership. Alban Institute, 1996.
- Harper, Nile. Urban Churches: Vital Signs. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999.
- Kearns, Kevin, Park, Chisung, and Yankoski, Linda (2003). *Comparing Faith Based and Secular Human Service Corporations in Pittsburgh*. (Report to The Forbes Funds). Pittsburgh, PA: The Forbes Fund. www.forbesfunds.org.
- Lincoln, C. Eric and Mamiya, Lawrence H. (1990). The Black Church in the African American Experience. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Lithincum, Robert C. City of God / City of Satan: A Biblical Theology of the Urban Church. Zondervan, 1991.
- Livezey, Lowell W. (ed.). Public Religion and Urban Transformation: Faith in the City. New York: New York University Press, 2001.
- Marcuse, Peter, and van Kempen, Ronald (eds). Globalizing Cities: A New Spatial Order? Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 2000.
- Shaller, Lyle E. Center City Churches: The New Urban Frontier. Abington, 1993.
- Scott-Meyers, Eleanor. Envisioning the New City: A Reader on Urban Ministry. Louisville, KY: Westminster Press, 1992.
- Villafañe, Eldin. Seek the Peace of the City: Reflections on Urban Ministry. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995.
- _____, Jackson, Bruce W., Evans, Robert A. and Frazer, Evans. Transforming the City. Grand Rapids, MI: 2002.
- Wilson, William Julius W. The Truly Disadvantaged. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1987.
- _____. When Work Disappears: The World of the New Urban Poor. New York: Vintage Books, 1996.
- Wallis, Jim. The Call to Conversion: Recovering the Gospel for These Times. San Francisco, CA: Harper and Row, 1981.
- Wallis, Jim. The Soul of Politics. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1994.