

## **Sharing my Experience in working/developing homeless missions**

I am going to share my own experience of working with and/or developing a homeless mission. No one told me how to do it. I had never read a book or attended classes or workshops on how to start the homeless mission or even on community development. Therefore, as far as development of homeless mission was concerned I was a lay person. But one benefit I had was some experience as a social worker or mental health counselor in working with lepers in Korea and mentally ill homeless people in the U.S., at several mental health centers and homeless shelters: St. Clair County Community Mental Health Center in East St. Louis, Ill in 70s, Harborview Community Mental Health Center, Angeline Day Women's Center, Lutheran Compass Women's Shelter and YWCA Women's Shelter in Seattle in 1980s. So I knew some homeless men and women and where they were coming from their issues. I had lots of positive rapport with them. In other words, I had already learned and experienced how to relate to them. I was already their friend. However, as far as developing a program was concerned I was on grade school level but those with experience helped me to develop homeless missions at a later date.

### **1. Leper colonies in Korea**

Perhaps I need to share why I was motivated to develop a homeless mission outside of my professional duty as mental health practitioner or counselor at various mental health settings. By now readers might have sensed that I came from theological background when I started to work at mental health centers. This story is connected to my other stories: that is; in 1959, I graduated from theological seminary with the highest honor (summa comrade) in coed graduating class but didn't choose to serve a church because women were forbidden from ordination as ministers. Instead, women were to serve male pastors assisting them with house calls or caring for individual church members. Women weren't even given a title such as "assistant/associate pastor." Women weren't called "pastor" but named "jondosa." The closest translation at best would be "evangelist." My pride of being an academic leader in the whole class, who used to help male students with study and test, didn't allow me to accept that lower/inferior position for women in the church system. In my heart I resented and rebelled that discrimination. I decided to model after Jesus who was a street minister, best counselor and social worker in his days as well as a spiritual leader.

Instead of applying for a church job, I went to U.S. social service agencies stationed in Korea in post-Korean War era to help people who were suffering from the aftermath of the war. Here is another story that I didn't want to work for any Korean employer because I was carrying distorted, preconceived prejudice that Korean men can be abusive and could treat me as an inferior to male staff. This notion was coming from my abusive father, who used to abuse my mother severely although personally I wasn't abused by him. But growing up watching and witnessing the abuse was enough to damage my spirit that developed fear, prejudice and judging all other male figures.

To make a long story short, this is the reason why I ended up working for U.S. social service agency and I became a self-made social worker. In those days, there was no social work courses at the seminaries or even at any colleges in Korea. I performed my social work in the spirit of Jesus (love) as I learned in the Bible how he served the poor, sick, abused, marginalized social outcasts in his days. In the post-war era there were too many needy people in Korea – orphans, widows, homeless beggars, homeless elderly and homeless lepers. There were a lot of work to do. **The longer work I had done was for CARE**-Korea which was one of the U.S. social service agencies. After working with those needy people, I was assigned to develop rehabilitation program for 12 leper colonies. In those days, the positive/infective lepers were confined in a leprosarium. Many negative cases were released from the leprosarium. Families wouldn't welcome them home. They joined beggar groups and ended up begging on the streets and showed up at the doors of homes. They became a nuisance and threat to

passerby on the streets and people at home as well Koreans in general had a tremendous fear of lepers. So the Korean government had thrown them out as a group to uninhabited mountainside, a remote countryside on a small piece of land and nothing else.

CARE-Korea stepped in and distributed medicine – because negative cases had to keep on taking meds – and decided to develop self-help rehabilitation program. I who knew nothing about community development or program development was assigned to do what I had never learned and done before without any training, because there no one in CARE-Korea office who knew how to do it and train me.

In those days and even today this is the thing I do and had done: I just went there and talked to people. First I learned who they were, how they were, where they were coming from and what they needed. That was that simple – who, how, where and what – I didn't know what else I could do except hearing from them about their situations. First thing was my learning from them about them. They were my teachers. They were the ones who gave me ideas what to include in my program proposal. I ended up writing proposals for their rehabilitation. Of course that was written in English, perhaps in broken English. My English is still broken today. Thus, my writing of program proposal from the scratch started in early 60s. So I have come a long way.

Those days few students were able to scribble English like me. See, I mentioned I was a good a student at the seminary. I am a graduate of Ewha Girls High School too which was the most prestigious private high school established by U.S. Methodist missionaries. We didn't have much chance to learn speaking but teachers were hard and cruel in teaching us English grammar. Don't I appreciate their hard work today! Their hard teaching prepared me to scribble my proposal in English. Then the CARE office forwarded it to their New York main office. Mr. Phyllis, CARE-Korea Director signed the proposal. Without fail, the grant was approved to fund the project I had submitted for leper colonies.

Then I would not give them any cash because I didn't trust them, but bought items for them such as seeds, baby pigs, chicks, tools to do farming as well as dig wells, school supplies for children, etc., as far as I can remember. This is how I became a self-made social worker. My conviction in those days and even today, "If you love people, you can do anything and you can be anything you want to be." It was a very naïve and brave motif that I claim to learn from Jesus of the Bible.

## **2. St. Clair County Community Mental Health Center**

After I immigrated to the United States in 1970, my husband whose English was short had to do his own small business. Whenever I helped his business we were making more money. That scared me. As I mentioned in preceding pages, "From American Dream to Jesus Dream" whenever I was making good money I stopped helping him and looked for my own career in the area of social work.

I ended up going to St. Louis University's School of Social Work and got my Masters in Social Work (MSW) degree. I focused on mental health. I had my practicum at Wohl Memorial Mental Hospital for one year.

The first job I got was at ***St. Clair County Community Mental Health Center*** in East St. Louis as a Day Treatment Coordinator. While I was living in St. Louis, I had never visited this area. It was entirely – except a few whites – an African American community and close to a ghetto of poverty. It was an area with frequent news casts on "who killed who and who raped who." But I wasn't scared at all. They were all God's people created in the image of God. Didn't I, however, regret that I hadn't taken any courses on community development which were offered then at social work school, because I wasn't interested in that at all. I didn't even know what that was. But my job from the beginning included program development. This was again a brand new thing for me and I had no idea how was I going to carry out my duty as day treatment coordinator. How in the world had this agency hired an unexperienced woman like me for this position? No one taught me in that agency how to do it either. In my day treatment program, of 100 daily attendees 50 percent was the mentally ill (called MI) and

the other 50 percent was the developmentally disabled (called DD in those days). There were 10 staff and a driver of van supposed work under me. Except one, the rest of 10 were African Americans whom I had seldom dealt with while I was living in St. Louis, MO. “Oh my God, how am I going to do this job with these many people?” I screamed.

Again, like a minister, I did many house calls at shelters or low income housings (called project). And I began to learn about the people I was serving and their circumstances and met their families and relatives. I treated people I serve warmly with Christ’s love. I supported staff who also worked with these individuals and ran a group therapy. My staff might have known better than myself on these tasks. I wrote a grant proposal, got the grants, filled the food pantry with lots of non-disposable food items, filled the storage with many resource items for the day program and invited Southern Illinois University faculties to lead educational training courses for the staff – called “In-service.” People in the photo were my staff. One white staff is missing. I am a very short person. I cannot imagine there were ones shorter than me! I was 42 then. All of them were younger than me.

Frist I tore down all the partitions in the large hall we were in and I scrubbed the stove which was stain-filthy. We used to cook lunch for 100 clients on daily basis. I cleaned the whole house. I began



to learn about African American culture. They resembled to Koreans in many areas; they were emotional, warm and direct. They liked food called “soul food” which was similar to Korean dishes. While Korean people are known to keep “Korean-time” they seemed to keep “BP time (Black People’s Time). Both cultures had difficulty with punctuality. However, I was exceptionally punctual person unlike many Koreans. I grew to

love them all dearly. We worked together well. We were like a family. They seemed to respect me a lot. My supervisor (the Center’s Director) once said, “You are God-sent angel from heaven for our Center.” I still think about them a lot even today.

### **3. Harborview Community Mental Health Center**

When I moved out to Seattle, I was hired by the Harborview Community Mental Health Center in Seattle, Washington. Frist year I worked for the in-patient ward with mentally ill and substance addicted patients. The center was part of University of Washington Medical School. Our job gave us U/W and state employee status. There, I met patients who were frequently admitted for suicide attempts. Then I thought to myself that if these people had God in their life they didn’t have to attempt to take their own lives. Although we offered excellent mental health treatment, we couldn’t offer hope in God to men and women who felt profoundly discouraged carrying damaged negative self-esteem and inferiority complex about their illness **and were destructive**. As a theology graduate I was interested in helping them to find meaning of life in faith. But except the hospital chaplain no one was allowed to talk about God. Again I said to myself that a person like me who had rich background of theology, social work and mental health must have something to offer. I sat on the vague vision without knowing concretely what that could be, and several years passed by.

### **4. Intensive Community Support Treatment Program**

I was transferred to an outpatient program called, “*Intensive Community Support Treatment Program*” within the same hospital system. This was a pilot program developed in the State of Washington to maintain and treat the most chronic and non-compliant mental patients in the community and to reduce or stop revolving door syndrome – getting in and out of emergency room and inpatient unit. The whole purpose was prevention of hospitalization of these chronic patients by maintaining them in the community. The Center hired 6 nurses and 6 social workers on Master degree level and formed 6 teams. Each team constituted of one social worker and one nurse. The state mental health system gave us a job title, “Mental Health Practitioner.” We did case management treating these patients in the community offering 24 hour services including crisis intervention. Each team took a turn responding to their crises regardless of the time of the day or night. Jobs and clients always taught me instead of my bringing knowledge and experience to the jobs.

### **5. Olive Street Social Club (1980s)**

While I was working at Harborview Community Mental Health Center’s Intensive Community Treatment Program, clients came to us for prescriptions, meds and counseling and therefore, we always met them at the clinic setting unless I did outreach and then met them in the community. I thought that we were too much in the hospital setting and wanted to take clients out to the community to have a breathing space. So I conceived a vision of developing a day program so that clients can meet once a week in the community. My supervisor, a Psychiatrist, liked and approved my vision.

I contacted a Lutheran Church in the area. I used to know the pastor from my peace and justice movement. He was very supportive. I received permission to use the church’s social hall every Wednesday all day. Then I invited 120 clients in our case management program. More than half showed up each week. I ask them to name our group. They named it “Olive Street Social Club” because the church was located on Olive Street. We all liked that name. I then contacted Union Gospel Mission and asked if they could share some of their food with us. They delivered us uncooked grocery items for 50-60 people every Wednesday. Fortunately there was a kitchen in the social hall where we were meeting so I could prepare lunch.

Every Wednesday we ate a fresh hot lunch and clients enjoyed it so much. I added games, readings, handicraft projects, and other projects to keep the clients busy all day. –This was far better than roaming around the streets, getting referred to mental health center because they had nothing constructive to occupy them or sitting at home base. The Olive Street Social Club lasted a long time even after my time at the clinic. Again, it wasn’t that hard. All you need is motivation and willingness. Then the rest will fall into place if God is happy with what you are doing. That’s what I always thought!

### **6. Health Care for the Homeless**

Several years later I was transferred to the Pioneer Square Clinic, again in the same hospital system, to work with Health Care for the Homeless team. I was assigned to three women’s shelters –Lutheran Compass Women’s Shelter (now it is called just Compass Center), Angeline Women’s Day Center and YWCA Women’s Shelter – as the first mental health practitioner to treat mentally ill women. We treated men and women at an inpatient unit, Intensive Community Treatment Program, and Pioneer Community Health Center. The three days a week while I was assigned to the three women’s shelters I treated only women patients.

While I was working for these three women’s shelters, I went back to theological seminary, did some more study, was ordained (1987) as a minister and worked as a part-time campus minister at the University of Washington. I also continued part-time serving mentally ill homeless patients.

## **7. Church of Mary Magdalene (homeless women's church in Seattle (1991))**

On the night of 1988 Easter I had a dream. God placed me inside a church building and spoke to me out of non-burning huge fire, "Plant a cross here and it will grow through the roof." I struggled to understand the meaning of this awesome dream. I kept pondering on that dream, praying and asking about the meaning. One day while I was hospitalized, I asked God what the meaning of the dream was. In my hospital bed, half dozing state, the meaning of the dream dawned on me mysterious way to develop homeless women church. After discharge from the hospital, I resigned from mental health job and developed a homeless women church while still working part-time at the UW Campus Ministry.

Why a church for women? "Homeless women get less attention than homeless men do, even though women face the same difficulties men do plus hardships unique to them - the risk of rape or assault, child-care concerns and, in a majority of cases, histories of domestic violence or sexual abuse."<sup>1</sup>

How did I develop the homeless women's church? Did I have a concrete plan? Did I have a budget? Did I know how to do it? The story goes like this: With a vision and decision to develop a worshipping congregation with homeless women, I approached a very close friend of mine – Jan Cate - and told her that "*I have conceived a vision for a long time of developing spiritual program for homeless women. It is about time to deliver this baby. Would you be a midwife?*" She was more than willing to be a midwife for me to give a birth to this baby, the Church of Mary Magdalene.

1) I began by constructing a Church of Mary Magdalene on a paper. It was a proposal as to how and what I would do. 2) I invited half dozen women friends to the Campus Ministry building and I presented them my proposal. They liked my proposal. 3) I suggested to name the church, "Church of Mary Magdalene" and also asked them to suggest different name. My rationale for the name was that Mary Magdalene was a woman in the New Testament who was caught by 7 demons and healed when Jesus came into her life. In the biblical days, multiple difficulties or physical or mental illness or personal tragedy were all called "demon." I hoped homeless women who were experiencing multiple difficulties including homelessness could experience healing as Jesus comes into their lives as Mary Magdalene experienced. They could arrive where she arrived, witnessing not only meeting Jesus but to their own restoration from past hurts, wounds, and homelessness. No one came up with different name. We ended up naming the church "Church of Mary Magdalene." 4) We then formed the first board of Mary Magdalene Church with half dozen women who came to our first meeting. 5) It was the fall of 1990, I took Jan Cate along to see Pastor Hierholzer of the First United Methodist Church at the 5th Avenue and Columbia St, Seattle downtown across from the beautiful Columbia Towers and next to the exclusive Rainier Club. 5) I told him that I needed a little space to have worship service with homeless Women. He said that he had to run it through his committees. I remember challenging him saying that "*I haven't got time for that; homelessness is an urgency. Homeless women are dying out there on the street. God commanded me to plant the cross in a church, which became apparent to me that I was to develop a church with homeless women; I just needed a little corner in that giant church building.*" Praise God for him who did give me a little coffee room without running it through the committees. I also remember him asking me "when do you want to start the church?" I named the date, "January 19, 1991, Saturday. He said OK. 6) As soon as I secured the space I went out and announced to homeless women at the three shelters that we will start a worshipping group. I passed out small flyers with date and place to have our first service. Ever since I did outreach – visited them where they were including streets, restrooms of department stores, parks, libraries, under the viaduct, homeless women's day centers, evening

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<sup>1</sup> The Seattle Times, March 24, 1996

women's shelters and low income housing if they had one. 7) First day, January 19, 1991, Saturday, 5 women came to our first gathering with my little flyer in their hands. 8) I also invited a few friends including a clergy friend – Donna Frye Decou to be with us and lead music for us. I conducted our first service in a choir practice room at the First United Methodist church upstairs.

9) The whole purpose of this homeless women's church was drawn from the reality that service agencies, medical professions and Christian churches divide the whole person into separate parts according to their problem areas and needs. The purpose of the Church of Mary Magdalene was based on the strong belief that human spirituality, psychosocial and physical needs must be integrated because they are integral parts of the whole. The conclusion was that low self-esteem, negative self-image, hopelessness and homelessness may result in developing destructive behavior, to self, others and to society. Acting out in this desperate state could cause further illness emotionally, physically and spiritually.

The purpose of the church was also based on the belief that God created women in her/his own image and blessed them equally to enjoy the abundance of the earth and to have a home in which to live. This is God's justice. By restoring the lost pride, self-worth and the image that God created originally, women can begin to feel better about themselves. This new image will enhance motivation to live, to get better, to get up and work, to produce and to regain hope and healing.

The purpose of the church was based on the belief that the Christian Church must offer a profound ground of hope and healing in God by enhancing the woman's image instead of damaging it. If many traditional churches contributed to lowering a woman's image causing them to feel inferior, the ministry of Church of Mary Magdalene must undo this damage done by the wider church community.

The Ministerial Purpose of the Church was therefore "empowering women to restore their pride, self-worth and dignity by experiencing a positive, loving and forgiving God instead of a judging, condemning and punishing God; to find a fundamental ground of hope and meaning of life by having faith in God; to seek experience of healing from previous as well as present wounds; to end homelessness by developing emotional, spiritual and physical homes.

With such comprehensive purposes we created a Saturday program for holistic healing that included music/singing, worship, a balanced hot meal for breakfast and lunch, lingerie ministry, healing ritual, conversational sermon, prayer, medical/nursing care, massage, exercise, clothing, food pantry, crisis intervention, case management, and more. We also offered programs during the week that included outreach, bible study, housing search group, job training (Arts & Crafts / crocheting/sewing, filling up bean bags, stuffing envelopes, gardening (peapod patch), women's support group, counseling, computer class, internship, community outreach, picnics, special events celebration such as mother's day, Anniversary, Easter, Thanksgiving, Christmas), and more. There are more details in volume. 4.

### **8. Cherry Street Social Club (1990s).**

In those days, there were only a few programs for the homeless in downtown Seattle. Angeline Day Center opened five days a week during the day. Due to funding problems they couldn't open on week-ends. The Church of Mary Magdalene program was open all day Saturday, from 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The First United Methodist Church wouldn't allow us to use church space on Sundays because every room was in use on Sundays. There were no other programs for homeless women Sundays in Seattle. The homeless women I was serving had no place to sit on Sundays. They were roaming the streets and using the bathrooms of department stores.

I had a vision to create something on Sunday and looked for a

space. There was a huge store front that had been empty for long time on the corner of 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave. at Cherry St., Seattle downtown, with their main entrance on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave. The location was prime spot for business in Seattle. Perhaps it was too expensive or due to some unknown problem the empty store space had been there for a long time. To get that space, I needed to talk to Pioneer Preservation Board which consisted of residents, business owners and a few service providers, which also had control over stores in Pioneer Square area which is historic area of Seattle. I attended their Board meeting (Michele, a colleague of mine accompanied me) and presented idea of using the space for homeless women to sit in during the day. The Board was furious about the idea and flatly opposed and didn't allow any further comment on it. That was it! Of course, asking such an expensive space free for homeless women was an absurd request.

I never wanted to give up on the idea. I prepared a good proposal and went to Pioneer Preservation Higher Board which was one step higher than Pioneer Preservation Board. I attended their meeting and Michele went with me again, and I explained what I was going to do with homeless women in that space just until some other agencies offer some program on Sundays. And I argued:

"1) those homeless people are not coming from out of the city. They are residents of the Seattle's downtown community just as everyone else although they sleep outside. 2) Basically they are good citizens of this society although they are poor and some are sick; 3) they are not going outside the city to spend their public assistance check and come back in to the city, but they spend the whole check and every penny in your stores, and therefore, they are your customers. 4) Isn't it better for me to have them all at one place with dozen different healthy programs including food and clothing on Sundays rather than having them all over the city including the doorway of your store?" They have already been aimlessly walking around your stores, bathrooms of department stores. On rainy days in Seattle, there is no space for them to sit during the day. 5) Instead of keeping the space empty why not use it for such a good cause. I will keep the space clean and well.

They seriously looked at my written proposal and listened to my challenges. The Higher Pioneer Preservation Board gave me permission to use that expensive store space rent free with a comment "We have never seen such a good proposal before." As we were leaving the Board meeting Michele and I screamed for joy, praising God, and wanted to dance around the busy Cherry St. and 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave.

I set up a Day program. I created several rooms in one area for naps because many women were so worn out in their homeless life. The women took turns taking a nap for 2 hours each. In the large room we set up sewing and knitting as a job training. I offered groups work, arts & crafts, games, reading, hot meals, coffee. I carried out this social club with secular volunteers because it was Sunday. I forget other small details. I asked a Korean Senior Club that offers meal programs for seniors twice a week and food bank to bring us hot lunch. They did. I went to NOW organization and explained what we are doing and asked for volunteers. Since we had worship service on Saturdays, we did not conduct a worship service. That attracted many young women from NOW to volunteer. Most of them were not Christians and they were willing to participate.

I ran the Cherry St. Social Club for about a year. The Angeline Women's Day Center received an extra grant to open their Center on weekends. I went back to the Preservation Board with a complete report on how many different programs and how many women in total were served during the time I was allowed to use the space. The Board was very happy with our accomplishments.

So again, I did not need many people or money to start this program. It takes only one motivated person and God takes over the rest if God is happy with what you are doing. This is my life-long experience and lesson I learned. There might be a better or right way to do it by an expert in community development. I don't know my way was wrong or not, but it worked and grew. "Knock and the door will be open; ask and you will receive!" That is my testimony.

## **9. National Presbyterian Initiative to End Homelessness**

In a mysterious way, the national Presbyterian Church adopted an initiative to end homelessness for all women and children as a denominational initiative. The mysterious herstory happens like this: In 1996 I motivated half a dozen churches in Seattle to submit the request to the Presbytery of Seattle to work on an initiative to end homelessness for all women and children which then was supposed to be submitted to the national Presbyterian body called “General Assembly.” It was the time I developed and served a homeless women’s church and felt women’s homelessness was devastating to so many women. I worked with the Presbytery of Seattle to adopt the overture and decided to submit to General Assembly in 1997: I happened to go to the General Assembly meeting that year for the first time in my life. It was held in Syracuse, NY. It is a kind of national Presbyterian annual convention which dealt with many denominational overtures/issues including the one we submitted from Seattle. The purpose of my attending that meeting was to receive –“Woman of Faith” award which was given to women who did outstanding service for the community. I didn’t deserve one but it came down to me any way.

Since a few of us were there and we attended a 50 member committee meeting that initially deals with issues like ours prior to presenting them to General Assembly for final approval. We spoke for the overture we submitted and the committee passed it and presented to the General Assembly of over 200 national representatives. It passed there also without much debate. So we got it in to national attention. I really didn’t know what happens after that. We came back home with a good report to the Presbytery of Seattle.

In the fall of the same year (1997) I happened to lead a workshop on women’s homelessness at a national consultation on poverty in Louisville, Kentucky. A mysterious thing happened there again. One of the participants was Rev. Barbara Dua. Of course I didn’t know her at that time and wasn’t aware who she was either. Here let me quote her own write up about her mysterious event (refer to Dua’s writing below).

In fact, that was two month prior to my retirement at 62 as my chronic asthma was getting worse and I wanted to prepare for my unpredictable future. Therefore I wasn’t planning to assume another job. However, her suggestion to work for her made me rethink about what God might be doing with me – second call? Again, mysteriously I ended up accepting the job determining “to die on my travel journey if it is God’s plan” because my job was a speaking tour to the whole nation carrying the issue of Presbyterian “initiative to end homelessness” which was my own initiative to start with. Who would ever imagine an initiative of little Asian woman became the Presbytery’s and national church initiative! Who would imagine Rev. Barbara Dua’s call on me could become the commission to deliver the initiative to the whole country! Who would imagine my possible death with severe asthma in 1997 was delayed and I am still here in this world today 2014. Dua had just put me on the road, and what I should do was absolutely up to me. The detailed story is included in her writing and appendix below.

Since publicity that –the denomination adopted an initiative to end homelessness for all women and children and availability of Jean Kim to speak on the issue –went out to the whole church, invitation for me to come was pouring in. It was like a powerful Spirit fired up the whole, the first huge Christians’ gathering in the first century to speak in tongues. I flew out almost on a weekly basis. I was all fired up to speak to small and large local, regional, national churches’ or women’s gatherings and events. Initially it was a two years job for Women’s Ministries Program Area but it was extended four more years with the National Presbyterian Hunger Program.

I developed t-shirt and sweatshirts with the message to end homelessness for all women, and later revised for all people, printed on as our national campaign. I encouraged Presbyterians to wear the sweatshirts and to spread the message to end homelessness for all women and children and all people throughout the nation.

I also called upon Presbyterian churches to work with policy makers to create fair and just economic and housing policies, and to create funding to implement those policies, which would benefit every citizen of this nation, including the poor and homeless. All these were the content of the original initiative that I motivated Seattle area churches to put in to the overture that was submitted to the national Assembly. My speeches are included in volume 5, "sermons/keynotes to church communities and sermons to the homeless."

Since there wasn't much workshop resources for me to use, I developed handouts with one page, two pages and it grew to 300 pages. The Hunger Program published it. I titled the book "Jubilee Manual" because it was published in the year of 2000 after two years of my speaking tour. The Hunger Program also recorded my sermons and edited it into a 20-minute video.

The forewords for the Jubilee Manual (year 2000) of my two supervisors – Rev. Barbara Dua representing the national Presbyterian Women's Ministries Program Area and Rev. Gary Cook, representing the national Presbyterian Hunger Program – can bring us the impact of the initiative to the whole church:

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**Foreword by Rev. Barbara Dua**

"Do you know where to find Jesus?" asks the small, five foot tall pastor, The Rev. Jean Kim. After a pause, she boldly states, "Jesus is on the streets. Jesus is homeless. If you go to the streets, there, you will find Jesus!"

My dear friend, Jean Kim, knows where to find Jesus. Finding Jesus so often in the bruised face of a homeless woman, perhaps the victim of years of domestic violence; or in the eyes of a young mother who turned to selling her body as a way to provide food for her young children, Jean Kim discovered a basic search within us all for a home. Jean Kim learned that we seek that place of belonging and being loved as a valuable child of God, emotionally, spiritually, but also, physically. God's dream that we all live "at home", was the call to Rev. Kim to begin a church for homeless women in Seattle. This church, The Church of Mary Magdalene, has become a spiritual home for hundreds of women and from this faith based center, emotional and physical needs have been met for thousands of homeless women over the past thirteen years.

In 1997, I had the privilege as the Associate Director for Women's Ministries to present Jean Kim with one of the three annual "Woman of Faith" awards at the General Assembly in Syracuse, New York. While this award is known as a great honor in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and recipients often come to the celebration breakfast in their finest attire, Rev. Kim received her award in her daily uniform of purple running pants and a purple sweat shirt that reads, "End Homelessness for All Women". Rev. Kim lives her commitment to ending homelessness every day, all day, and even her clothing is a witness to the call she received from God.

It was also during the 1997 General Assembly that the Presbyterian Church accepted an Overture that we would seek as a denomination to "End Homelessness for All Women and Children". At the time, I wondered, what does accepting such an enormous challenge really mean for our denomination.

Several months after the "Woman of Faith" award ceremony, I had the opportunity to attend a workshop Rev. Kim led on "Ending Homelessness". During this workshop Jean mentioned that she was resigning after ten years as pastor of the Church of Mary Magdalene. She said that she felt God was calling her beyond the Seattle streets to spread the urgent word that people of faith much respond to this national disgrace. She also said that while she has no idea what she would be doing next, and even though she was in her 60's and not able or ready to retire, she was confident that God would show her where this new call would lead her.

As the new Associate Director of Women's Ministries, I had been considering for several months what direction God might be suggesting for the women's ministries program area. During the night

after attending Jean Kim's workshop, I had a dream. It was such a powerful dream that it awakened me. I sat up in bed and rehearsed the dream in my mind. Then it became clear to me, in some mysterious way, I felt that I must talk with Jean Kim to see if it might be possible that her call to challenge the church in concrete ways to end homelessness might be a program from women's ministries. Feminist theology, could be put into action in an important way as we served the often voiceless and marginalized among us. The following day Jean Kim and I talked and it was clear to both of us that her sense of call to the larger faith community and my sense of God's direction for women's ministries could be realized in her joining our staff with this mission before us.

Over the past two and a half years, Jean Kim traveled endlessly, visiting churches, shelters, homeless programs, and soup kitchens. From coast to coast Rev. Kim took her message of ending homelessness and offered concrete ways every Presbyterian Church could participate by offering one room in each church to be used for child care, job training, health assistance, shelter, etc. Her proposal was simple, "Every church, One Room". As she preached from church to church she would look out at the congregation and ask, "How many rooms are in your church buildings?" When it was obvious no one knew, she would encourage this thought, "If you do not even know how many rooms you have, surely one could be put to use to end homelessness!"

Many churches, presbyteries, and women's groups and individuals have heard Rev. Kim's challenge and have responded in creative ways. Jean has visited many of these new initiatives to end homelessness as well as the many existing programs she visited on her travels these past few years. This book (Jubilee Manual) is the result of her call to accept God's dream that there are ways to end homelessness. We are people of hope and God has given us the abilities to work creatively in communities of faith to offer a home for every one of God's children.

As you read this book and discover the many incredible ways Presbyterians are responding to this urgent need of our time, I invite you to participate not merely as a detached reader, but to allow Jean's experience to work within you. I believe Jean is right, that if our churches go into the streets, we will find Jesus.

I conclude this forward with deep gratitude for the inspiring and hope-filled ministry of my colleague and friend, The Reverend Jean Kim .

Barbara E. Dua

Former Associate Director

Women's Ministries Program Area

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**Foreword by Rev. Gary Cook:**

I remember seeing, as a child, old newsreel images of breadlines and soup kitchens – realities that I was comfortably assured belonged in the long-past Great Depression. It is one of my greatest disappointments in life (and in my country) that my children have now grown to adulthood thinking of soup kitchens and homeless shelters as a normal part of American life.

In a time of unprecedented economic strength, it should not be this way, but there is a growing segment of our population to whom the benefits of prosperity have never trickled down. The rising economic tide that was to "float all ships," has left many of our sisters and brothers swamped in poverty, hunger, and homelessness.

How the church responds to this situation says much about our true commitment to the Christ who identified directly with the poor and the marginalized. Do we look the other way? Do we cast a disapproving glance? Do we exempt ourselves from concern because of our busy-ness or because the problems are "too complicated?" Or do we find ways to join Jesus in reaching out to the "untouchables" of our society?

Jean Kim has chosen to follow Jesus. And in two years of traveling across the United States, she has found many Presbyterian congregations who have chosen that route as well. Drawing from her

many years of experience and the inspiring stories of programs she has visited, Jean shares her learnings and her commitments in this Jubilee Manual which the Presbyterian Hunger Program is pleased to make available to the church.

One note of warning, however: don't read any further if you expect to sleep comfortably tonight. Like the Jesus she follows, Jean calls for decision and commitment. And there is no escaping her 77 ways that your congregation can respond. . . not because your church is too small, or too poor, or too suburban, or too busy. There is something you can do, and Jean Kim's words will haunt you until you find it.

As Jean points out, provision of services to homeless people, no matter how lovingly they are provided, is only part of the needed response to homelessness. We also need to ask "why?" "Why are so many people left out or left behind in this era of prosperity?" "Why are so many people with jobs numbered among the homeless?" "Why has our government passed laws that exacerbate the problems and at the same time discontinued programs that help prevent or remedy homelessness?" I invite you to join the Presbyterian Hunger Program and many Christians across the country in seeking answers to these questions – and an alternative public response that begins to put an end to homelessness.

It is my prayer that my children's children will grow up in a world where widespread soup kitchens and homeless shelters are once again relics of the past. Until that day, I give thanks for the efforts of faithful Christians who reach out in the name of Jesus to provide shelter, food, and hope to those in need.

Gary R. Cook  
Associate for National Hunger Concerns  
Presbyterian Hunger Program  
World Ministries Division  
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

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While I was in cities to speak, I visited 127 programs in a two-year period. After that I visited more, revised and created volume 4. Anyone interested in 155 program models may read vol. 4.

During my speaking tour, I observed three models of the Christian Church: 1) **A “country club” model** that is very exclusive, self-serving, self-comforting, self-righteous, focusing on personal spiritual salvation and the “other world,” The build and protect their gorgeous church buildings. These churches wouldn’t allow poor and homeless people to come near them. 2) **A “send a check model”** is a semi-country-club model which repeats what the country club model does but sends charity checks. 3) **A “Christ model,”** which is entirely opposite to the country club model in that these churches are doing what Jesus would do. They are inclusive, welcoming and genuinely loving. They do not worship their church buildings and do not fear having their church buildings get dirty. Their congregations have no greed to own things. They do not fear welcoming homeless people.

I observed most churches weren’t looking at root causes and were just offering charity. When I listed the root causes of poverty, hunger and homelessness in the United States people too often chose to ignore this list because root causes involve all of us, our value system, our way of living, and our inaction for public policy change.

I also observed that while many churches do simple charity work, many programs were very comprehensive with grand scale missions such as feeding, emergency shelters, transitional and permanent housing, job training, counseling, case management, health care and public policy advocacy.

During a 6 years period I have spoken to 430 unduplicated groups in 96 unduplicated different cities and 31 unduplicated different states at synod, presbytery, congregation, and Presbyterian

Women's events, seminary classes, national and local ecumenical events and others. The rest of the report will be in Appendix below.

## **10. Agape Church**

Jackie Yu is a Korean-American Christian lay woman in New Haven, CT. As a home maker, she had never worked except some volunteer work. When I met her she appeared to be a very friendly, strong, outgoing active person. She had attended my homeless workshop five times at various locations throughout the United States. She was finally motivated to do something for the homeless in New Haven when she read in the news that a homeless man was frozen to death on New Haven streets. The New Haven winter is known to be bitter and merciless. There are a visible number of homeless roaming around in parks and streets near the Yale University campus.

It took many years for the seed to sprout that was being planted in the heart of Jackie for homeless mission. One day Jackie called me in Seattle from New Haven to announce her interest in doing something for the homeless in New Haven.

Thus, one day, in 2001, I flew to New Haven. On a rainy cold day I took Jackie to a small tent city which was set up on a church lawn downtown New Haven to show her how to start a mission. We greeted a few homeless friends there. We told them we wanted to learn about the homeless situation in the New Haven area. Instead of talking outside in the rain, we met in a restaurant for breakfast and talk. They accepted our invitation graciously. As I expected they taught us all about their lives on the street. That could have been the moment when a small seed of the Agape Church was being conceived. We then invited them to be our friends and partners for our new mission for the homeless in New Haven.

Jackie and I visited several churches in the area for a space with no success. I couldn't stay there too long and left for Seattle leaving a plan with Jackie to be befriended with homeless people who are sitting in the area parks. I suggested that she try simple things for and with them as much as her time allows such as eating with them, buying them simple daily necessities, and trying to learn from them and she and I would consult over the phone. And I also suggested that she follow up with area churches for a space to meet with the homeless. Later I heard Trinity Lutheran Church offered a space for their spiritual home. We praised the Lord. Trinity was a God-sent angel!

In order to model after God's agape (unconditional) love, I suggested that this ministry be named "Agape House." No one challenged that name and it became the name of the church. Later when we applied for 501C we changed it to Agape Church. I flew to New Haven as frequently as I could to work with Jackie. When I was on the East coast to speak to other groups, I dropped by New Haven to encourage Jackie and her board and solicit more supporters for her.

**I wrote the following article to celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Agape Church. I am adding it here so that I don't need to repeat:**

### **A REFLECTION UPON THE LAST 10 YEARS - May 2011. Jean Kim**

Ten years is a long time. I started to walk with the Agape Church with dark hair (age 66) and now my hair has completely turned to white (76). Celebrating the 10th anniversary overwhelms me with my heart-felt thanks to many people: Thanks and congratulation to Jackie and Si Young Yu, her spouse, who served this church sacrificially with all their hearts, soul and might for the past 10 years. ....

However, without the help from the following people, they couldn't have done it alone: thanks to the Agape board members who walked with Jackie and Si Young all these years; thanks to the Korean immigrant churches and American churches that remembered and helped the homeless through the

Agape Church in New Haven, when is so hot in summer and severely cold in winter. Special thanks to Trinity Lutheran Church which opened their space free of charge to provide a spiritual home for Agape Church members. Special thanks to Cheshire United Methodist Church which walked with Agape every single year. Thanks to United Church on the Green that made their space available, free of charge, for Agape members to sit in and rest during the day. Thanks to the Yale volunteer students who are very busy with their study but served homeless brothers and sisters through Agape Church. They didn't only expand their heads with knowledge and scholarships but allowed the heart and compassion of Jesus to grow in their own hearts that they may mature as servants of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Thanks to those who served Agape Church quietly in the past with neither names nor fames. Big thanks to the homeless brothers and sisters who built a community around Agape Church and continue to share, love, support and serve one another.

You all together became the foundation of the Agape community. You watered it to grow, and today, you see the fruit. You couldn't have done it without someone's help. That someone is the Holy Spirit. What we are seeing today is her fruits. We owe our Lord, Jesus our heart-felt thanks and praise. Therefore, today, we give him a huge round of applause for the love and grace he poured out on us. The Holy Spirit blessed empty-handed Jackie and Si Young as God's instruments and created a miracle that we see today. She (Holy Spirit) also caused Jesus' sacrificial love and service to resurrect in the heart of Jackie and Si Young in which homeless brothers and sisters may dwell. Whichever way you may have served the Agape church, you all have been the instruments of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Therefore, we sing and praise his name today.

Jackie and Si Young organized the first board. I helped submit an application to the Connecticut State Government to register Agape Church as a non-profit.

Except for a few recent years, I flew to New Haven every year, preached at many Korean and English speaking churches to thank them for their past support and solicit more future support. Jackie and I consulted over the phone hundreds of times when I couldn't be there physically.

The first few years were full of hardships and afflictions for Jackie. I flew to New Haven to support and comfort her. She experienced more stress from churches than support. She finally announced that she was giving up. I flew to New Haven to revive stress-stricken Jackie. First of all, I revived the Connecticut State's non-profit status which had been cancelled. We decided to file for 501C (3) tax exempt status in order to encourage tax-deductible contributions. In those days, the only financial resource was Si Young's wallet. We had no money to hire a lawyer, and therefore, I decided to prepare the long, many-page documents of a 501C (3) application myself. I couldn't stay in New Haven that long and returned home. I gathered up information from Agape board members and Jackie over the phone. I had to learn how to do it by asking hundreds of questions whenever, wherever and whoever I met including phoning the Federal IRS staff. I finally got the paper together and submitted it. For an amateur like me it was like writing a Doctoral dissertation. We were so happy and jumped for joy when we got the 501C (3) status approved. Jackie Yu was re-energized, rose from her despair, and started all over again to serve. After that, Sang Jin Choi and I, being representatives of the Korean American Coalition for the Homeless, held a ceremony to commission Jackie Yu as our missionary for Agape Church. Ever since she has been called "Missionary Jackie."

For the last 10 years, Jackie has been an unpaid mother for the homeless on the hot or cold New Haven streets. Her purse was robbed several times by those whom she was loving and serving. She found jobs for the homeless and went to work with them. She played landlord for them to help them pay rent on time whenever she put them into housing. She helped get vendor licenses for homeless brothers to earn something. She became manager of their funds by opening up a saving account for them. She visited factories and markets even in New York to gather up food and clothes to fill them and keep them warm. From the dawn till dark, she worked so hard that her back was often literally bent with pain. Too frequently her husband was left with no dinner but ramen noodles. With no

private life, her 10 years were filled with tears, hard work, a broken heart, and stress, but also with never ceasing love for the homeless with all of her heart, soul and might.

When the Korean churches put her down, the Connecticut Governor lifted her up with an award. When churches closed doors on her face, God opened the heaven's gate and sent her more supporters. The last few years Jackie has been crying out to heaven and earth for a space to open a day center for those who are not allowed even to sit on the streets. God heard her heartbreaking outcry and opened the heaven's gate once again and pour out blessings by using the United Church on the Green as an instrument – free of charge. This is the heart of God. While the world sees her outer image, God was seeing her innermost depth of love for the homeless and responded accordingly. There seems to be no power under the sun to stop the God's mighty power and love. God shared all of her heartaches and acted on her behalf. Therefore, we human brings haven't done anything. It was all God's power and free grace.

Therefore, today, we witness God's wonderful gifts. Personally I extend my love, thanks and pride in Jackie who is my daughter/sister and also God's daughter. Today we all give thanks to God who guided us, walked in front of us, beside us, uplifted us from beneath, pushed us from behind and ordained us from above. For many years to come until we have no more homeless in this land, I plead that you all work together and support the Agape Church. I also pray that God's heavenly gate may wide open to shower abundant blessings upon those who support Agape Church, and upon churches that open their spaces for the homeless members of Agape Church, and upon their families, upon their children, upon their works, and upon the churches they serve, and upon all homeless brothers and sisters as always and evermore. Amen.

So again, my point is that it didn't take many people to start this ministry. Just two of us started it and gradually God sent many others to join. As you read, it wasn't easy for Jackie to carry it out as a lay person. She needed lots of support. But she made it. Now I don't need to fly to New Haven as often as I used to. She is doing it all by herself although now and then she consults with me on the phone.

#### **11. Pre-conference at National Korean Presbyterian Council – PC (USA).**

Up until this time I was not associated with Korean immigrant churches much. I was travelling to speak mainly at the Presbyterian Church (USA) because I had to go to any church that invited me. Korean-American churches didn't know about it or they didn't read publicity in English due to language barrier. The National English speaking Presbyterian Women didn't communicate much with Korean speaking Presbyterian women because each of them had their own national association. Therefore, very few invitations came from Korean churches.

But one day, Rev. Gary Cook, then Director of the Hunger Program suggested that I go to Korean Churches also. So I contacted the NKPC (National Korean Presbyterian Council), discussed the issue, and we agreed that the Presbyterian Hunger Program would host a preconference day before the NKPC began its annual conference. The Hunger Program paid room and board for one day which attracted many Korean pastors. Quite a few pastors and Elders came to this preconference. As I will report below with the Presbyterian Initiative to End Homelessness, of total of 430 groups I spoke to, 101 (23%) were Korean speaking churches. I began to write a handout and it accumulated. In the year of 2008 NKPC published it and it was distributed to 400 Korean churches. Regarding the impact of the Initiative of Ending Homelessness Rev. Gary Cook expressed, *“It's been a real joy to see growing involvement of Korean churches in carrying out the Initiative.”* (More details in my report below in the Appendix).

## **12. National Presbyterian Network to end Homelessness**

Since I was retiring from a 6-year speaking tour, in order to urge and guide Presbyterian churches to continue their work to end homelessness, we created the National Presbyterian Network to end Homelessness under the sponsorship of the Presbyterian Hunger Program.

The goals were: 1) To create a national network that will empower local ministries to end homelessness. 2) To motivate, educate, train and challenge Presbyterian congregations to respond, with their human and material resources, to God's call to end homelessness for millions of homeless men, women and children in the United States. 3) To support the Presbyterian Church as a denomination to keep alive the vision of the earlier General Assemblies and the work begun by the Women's Ministries Program Area and the Hunger Program. 4) To respond to rising poverty and homelessness in this time, when 3 million people have lost jobs in 3 years and a million people, especially families with children, are forced every night in to homelessness. 5) To promote the development of low income housing that will result in providing sufficient housing for all Americans. 6) To deal with root causes of increasing homelessness and respond collectively to eliminate them and to live out the will of our Lord Jesus Christ for justice for the poor. 7) To promote public policies, at the local, state, and national levels, that respond creatively to both the needs of homeless people and the underlying issues of poverty and lack of affordable housing which contribute to their homelessness.

These goals will be met through consultations, resourcing, networking and outreach to synods, presbyteries, congregations, and groups and also through annual national and regional training conferences.

I served as an interim director for one year and turned it over to the new leadership.

The First National Conference of the Presbyterian Network to End Homelessness was held at the Fourth Presbyterian Church in Chicago on March 1 and 2, 2004. The conference was co-hosted by: the Presbytery of Chicago, the Fourth Presbyterian Church, Chicago, McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago, The Inter-faith Council for the Homeless, Chicago, House of Prayer, Chicago, and the Presbyterian Hunger Program.

After serving one year as an interim director I completely retired from it.

## **13. Korean American Coalition for the Homeless**

In time of the last preconference at NKPC (1995) that was held in Anaheim, CA, several of us gathered and organized the Korean American Coalition for the Homeless. It was like the National Presbyterian Network to End Homelessness. This time KACH was with Korean speaking service providers for the homeless throughout the United States although the number wasn't too many. The purpose was to support, strengthen, and share resources as well as hardship and pain with one another. I was elected the first president of the Coalition. Ever since we have met every fall, in a different city where our members do homeless mission. We speak to local Korean churches and Korean news media to solicit support for the Korean-led homeless mission in that particular city where we are meeting. We all are non-profit 501 C (3) owned service agencies that serves homeless people. We as immigrants try to pay back what we owe to this country and to Jesus Christ.

## **14. Local Presbyterian Network to End Homelessness**

When I came back to local community I reached out to seven Presbyteries in the Synod of Alaska Northwest, which included Washington State and Alaska. I visited five Presbyteries in Washington State except two in Alaska, with which I worked on the phone. I met with a number of churches in each presbytery at their presbytery office which supported the formation of the network. I was traveling to each presbytery which had 35-60 member churches that are widely spread out. We organized the Presbyterian Network to End Homelessness on each presbytery level at four

presbyteries with the following background statement and goals; for example, with the Seattle Presbytery;

### **A. Background Statement**

1) The United States is the richest country in the world with more than half of the world's wealth, including 276 billionaires and 5 million millionaires (2005 figure). We possess great military and technological power. However, 45 million people suffer from poverty and 3.5 million experience homelessness every year. Thirty-nine percent of America's homeless population are children; another 25-33% are veterans. There were 20,222 who experience homelessness per year in Washington State. Homelessness is growing rapidly. Many are working poor, physically or mentally disabled, substance-addicted, or discharged from prison system. Homelessness has become a serious issue for the society and for the church. The Church is called to respond to this crisis.

2) In 1997 and 1998, the Presbytery of Seattle championed two overtures to the General Assembly that charged the Women's Ministries Program and Hunger Program of PC (USA) to take the initiative to end homelessness. It commissioned Jean Kim to the whole church for six years resulting in development of the Presbyterian Network to End Homelessness, the National Korean American Coalition for the Homeless, the Washington State Korean-American Christian Coalition for the Homeless and many others. Now we are called to develop a Homeless Network in our Presbytery.

3) A Resolution of the 2006 General Assembly, along with the two previous overtures to end homelessness (1997 and 1998), call for studying comprehensive public policy approaches to end homelessness and making connections with local congregations.

4) The Presbyterian Network to End Homelessness is building a partnership with each presbytery and synod. Therefore, each of its 15 Board members is reaching out to people in as many presbyteries/synods as possible. Many presbyteries have expressed a desire to strengthen their mission. Since homelessness is a critical issue at the local and national level, many presbyteries are motivated to embrace this as part of their mission projects.

5) National and local homeless advocates and even local governments are working hard on a ten year plan to end homelessness. It is timely for the Christian Church and the Presbyterian Church in particular, to respond to such effort.

6) Scripture witnesses that God created all human beings in God's own image. God created the world as a home and all in it as resource for all human beings to live in shalom. Therefore, homelessness is violence to the image of God. The Old Testament prophetic writers witness that Israel was punished into exile (homelessness) under four conditions: a) when they worshipped idols; b) when they trampled on and exploited the poor; c) when they lived a life of extravagant luxury; and d) when temple leaders were corrupted with offerings they received and did not share them with the poor. Greed for wealth and power has always been directly related to worship of idols (Jer. 22:13-23; Col. 3:5).

7) Jesus himself was born, raised, lived and died homeless. He started his mission on the margin himself, at the margin and with the marginalized people of his society. He identified himself with the hungry, naked, sick, imprisoned and homeless (Matt. 25: 31-46). He identified the task of Messiah with what he was doing (Matt. 11:2-5; Luke 4:16-30). His priority was helping the poor, sick and homeless. He called his disciples to join him in his mission. Christ's Church must think like Jesus, smell like Jesus and act like Jesus as imitators of Jesus Christ. This is the time for the Church to hear the call to end the poverty and homelessness in our midst.

### **B. The goals of the network**

1) To serve the homeless whom our Lord, Jesus Christ would love to serve. 2) To motivate, educate and guide Seattle Presbytery congregations to understand the root causes of homelessness

and to work together to end homelessness. 3) To assist Seattle Presbytery congregations to build partnerships with each other and with ecumenical and interfaith organizations and other efforts toward ending homelessness. 4) To participate in local, national and denominational efforts to end homelessness.

### **C. Tasks to achieve the above goals**

- Motivate Presbyterian congregations to do critical Bible study on the issue of homelessness by providing resources and leadership in order to ground our action in the will of God.
- To create a motivating, educational team utilizing experts within the Seattle Presbytery in order to offer congregations an ongoing leadership training to carry out projects to end homelessness.
- Guide Presbyterian congregations to understand the local and national reality and root causes of homelessness (individual and systemic) by providing or identifying resources and leadership in the local community.
- Share with congregations existing local and national homeless mission models.

Four of five presbytery network went well for a few years. I could attend only three of the four. For me to drive around the long distance wasn't very realistic. Gradually I had to leave the task in the hands of a volunteer director of each presbytery except Seattle Presbytery network because that was the presbytery I have clergy membership with. For the church members to drive long distance wasn't easy either because they spread out so widely. Their motivation to end homelessness wasn't strong or solid. The commitment of the volunteer director of each presbytery network was not solid. With the exception of the Seattle Presbytery, the involvement of the volunteer directors faded away. I was not able to personally take up the gap. The Seattle Presbytery network the directors took turns and were sincerely were committed to ending homelessness. I was able to be at each meeting. It is still going and working with many local churches and local homeless missions.

Reflecting upon the process of the local networks, the major strength for the success and also failure were relied in the committed leadership and committed network board members. Had I been able to be present at each meeting of each network and had there been a committed leadership of each network it could have been different.

### **15. Nest Mission in (2006)**

While the network formation was going on, I also had a vision to develop a homeless mission in Lynnwood/Edmonds area where no services for homeless were existing except a few churches that were feeding the hungry including homeless people. It was also a city where I have been residing. I didn't want to do it in downtown Seattle where more homeless people are but in order not to duplicate the services and not to compete with the Church of Mary Magdalene that I gave birth to it, I served and now remain as the Pastor Emeritus.

Three of us including two other clergy friends met over lunch and decided to do the mission in the area I suggested. They accepted my "End Homelessness" approach as one of our major mission goals. These clergy friends had no experience in direct service with the homeless but had a deep interest. They were willing to learn. Along the way we organized a board of directors and I had never severed as the President of the Board. I always had someone else to serve in that position for the training sake. At each board meeting I had a time to educate the board on the homeless issue.

In the beginning we had no money. No budget. We invited a few more friends (pastors, elders, deacons and lay persons) and formed a Board of Directors. We created a name for the mission, "KACCH – Korean American Christian Coalition for the Homeless. I suggested this name because

our mission decided to include all Korean-American individuals and churches in the State of Washington. Name was very long but no one else suggested other names. We decided to start with rental assistance to homeless people who are being discharged from shelter systems but no money to move into housing and end up losing apartment they found.

I applied for and obtained the Non-Profit status from the State of Washington (December 2006). My experience with the Agape Church helped with this process. Then we obtained 501C (3) Tax Exempt Status from IRS (March 2007).

I started to do two things at the same time: a) Writing letters to many Korean American churches in the state of Washington to solicit funds. b) Writing letters to homeless agencies in the State of Washington to let them know rental assistance will be available. *It was the summer of 2007.* I suggested to set a goal of giving rental assistance to 20 people by the end of the year. My colleagues thought that I was out of mind because we didn't have much money except a couple of thousand dollars from tithes of one of the Board members. The Board reluctantly went along with my dream. Lo and behold, the year-end total of 2007 rental assistance we had given was 23. My conviction was always that if God likes what you do God helps you to achieve more than you can ever imagine. Here my confession comes; the mission is not what you do but God's doing!

My other vision was offering homeless people an opportunity to worship God for the same reason as stated above for the Church of Magdalene. Many were Christians but didn't go to church because they didn't fit into our traditional church setting as they look disheveled and smelled so bad. At the same time some donors and Board members wished to see some people face to face whom we helped with rental assistance. One way of achieving both visions was starting a meal program. I had always encouraged churches to do a meal program as a site where people can gather together and support one another. Other mission projects can be born out of this site.

I approached Maplewood Presbyterian Church, my home church, to be a partner by offering a space as our mission site. They willingly agreed. I prepared flyers, small size to pass out to the homeless, and large size to put on the walls at churches, libraries, markets and meal sites. After securing space, I did outreach to homeless people with my flyers. I began to meet them, talk to them about our program on the streets or where they hang out, or at other meal sites. I began to prepare sermon and preached at the service before dinner. Gradually I invited other pastors on the Board to preach. This year (2014) we will celebrate our 8<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The detail of the mission will be presented in volume 4 for program models. My point is that it doesn't take many people and money to start the homeless mission. We need "the heart and commitment" for it more than anything. I learned to start small and grow big.

I might sound too simple and naïve. But my experience for the past many decades is that if God is happy with what you do, God takes it over and runs. You are just God's hands and feet.

**I want to stress a few points here:**

It did not take many people to start something like this program. In fact, I started it with one other person and added a few more who could share my vision. It wasn't hard at all to find half dozen friends who share the same concern. There are always people who want to do something about homelessness. But there must be "one" faithfully committed leader. I didn't have budget. No money. I started small with no big plan. I started as a volunteer trusting God to walk with me. I always did outreach to people I was going to serve. I had never sat and waited for them to come. I always met them where they were.

- It was important how to relate to them. I developed a simple guidelines:
  - Take your guard off and relax when dealing with the homeless.
  - Accept who they are and as they are.
  - Respect and honor them as children of God who created them in God's own image.

- Trust and love them in all circumstance as God does for us.
- Be compassionate toward them.
- Lower your height –physically, emotionally. Be humble.
- Don't judge them. They have been judged all their lives.
- Don't debate with what they are saying when they speak non-sense.
- Don't preach to them since they have been preached at for all their life.
- Don't ask too many questions. Some are paranoid.
- Listen carefully and empathize with them.
- Be consistent, reliable and accountable because they have been betrayed frequently.
- Lower your expectation for them to change fast.
- Remember that it took years to bring them where they are today.
- Expect to take years for them to come back to the right place.
- Don't be disappointed when things don't happen as you expected.
- Regress or move forward with them at their pace, not at yours.
- Do not criticize for regressing, which we must take as a necessary process/steps to make progress. This is not so easy. But be conscious about it.
- Offer lots of positive strokes for moving forward.
- Slowly and gently apply tough love with caring discipline and limit setting.
- Introduce Christian spirituality slowly, not imposing it upon them.
- Spirituality for homeless people – singing, prayer and reading Bible can help.
- Include them in leadership.
- Give them opportunity to talk about God if they wish.
- They may experience God through our love, care and compassion.
- Handling money – no cash policy is safe from being unfair:
- Develop a saving policy – that will help them learn to save.
- Dealing with anger and violence - refer them to the person in charge of program who should know how to handle anger.
- Develop concrete house rules –
- Discipline in loving way when rules are abused.