



The Evangelical Covenant Church

LOVE MERCY DO JUSTICE

LMDJ Community Development Ministry Grant

Matthew/Micah Framework

Matthew 25:35-36; Micah 6:8

The Matthew/Micah Framework exists to help churches hone their vision for LMDJ ministry. One of the significant challenges churches may face as they enter this work is the many options available to them as they attempt to discern ministry direction. Many possibilities can create a sense of missional paralysis or a situation where churches jump from cause to cause without creating lasting impact through specific ministry initiatives. Our desire is for churches to discern a compelling vision for mercy and justice in their community and to develop a ministry plan that is sustainable and impactful.

Using **Matthew 25** as a biblical vision for LMDJ provides a *focus* for establishing a compelling agenda and a *rallying point* for major initiatives. This work will establish us as a network of churches following the call of **Micah 6:8** and stepping into this work with intentionality and concrete pathways of “doing justice, loving mercy, and walking humbly with our God.”

³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, ³⁶ I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.

Examples of Matthew 25 cause connections: (These are *examples* only. It does not represent the full list of possibilities nor would this exclude local causes that congregations might pursue based on their context.)

- ◆ **Access** “*I was hungry...I was thirsty*”
 - Engaging spectrum issues related to access to basic needs for human flourishing and thriving communities, such as:
 - Food security
 - Clean water
 - Education/Technology
 - Community/Belonging
- ◆ **Immigration** “*I was a stranger*”
 - Legal clinics – Virtual services
 - Communication technology tools
 - Refugee resettlement
 - ESL/Resource Centers



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- ◆ **Poverty** *"I needed clothes"*
 - Homeless resources
 - Affordable housing
 - Micro-enterprise
- ◆ **Healthcare** *"I was sick"*
 - Health screenings/education
 - Health clinics
 - Nutrition/Fitness
- ◆ **Criminal Justice** *"I was in prison"*
 - Letter writing campaign with incarcerated
 - Mass Incarceration
 - Prevention/Intervention/Re-entry
 - Community/Police Relations

Each of these cause connections could be expressed in a number of ways:

- ◆ Awareness campaign
- ◆ Local community ministry partnerships
- ◆ New community development ministry initiative through the local church
- ◆ Enhanced existing community development ministry initiative
- ◆ Creation of for-profit or non-profit entity dedicated to addressing a specific issue
- ◆ Movement that organizes for reform

It has been said that people tend to over-estimate what they can do in the short term and under-estimate what they can do in the long term. Imagine what could happen over time if we systematically moved through Matthew 25, knowing we were setting in motion ministry that would endure well beyond us. It is our hope that this framework serves to not only aid in discernment and strategic planning but also to open our eyes to the vast field of ministry opportunity available to us as the church.