

Revised January 2002

Planning Your Building on Faith Events

A RESOURCE GUIDE FROM HABITAT FOR HUMANITY INTERNATIONAL

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY INTERNATIONAL

Habitat for Humanity International is a nonprofit, ecumenical Christian housing ministry dedicated to eliminating poverty housing and homelessness from the earth. Founded by Millard and Linda Fuller in 1976, Habitat for Humanity has built thousands of houses worldwide, providing more than 100,000 families with safe, decent, affordable shelter.

Through volunteer labor and tax-deductible donations of money and materials, Habitat works with families in need--partner families--to build or renovate simple, decent housing. The houses are sold to partner families at no profit and are financed with affordable, no-interest mortgages. Habitat is not a give-away program. In addition to making a down payment and monthly mortgage payments, homeowner families invest hundreds of hours of their own labor--sweat equity--in building their houses and the houses of others. This labor reduces the cost of the houses, increases the pride of ownership and fosters the development of positive relationships.

Habitat for Humanity is organized and operates locally through groups called affiliates. Each affiliate is asked to raise an additional ten percent above the cost of construction of homes in the community. This money, designated as the tithe, is used to help fund construction of Habitat houses in other locations. The tithe joins all Habitat partners together in a worldwide vision of eliminating poverty housing.

Habitat for Humanity is a Christian ministry, and it is appropriate that the church--Christ's body in the world--is Habitat's primary partner in this important work. Churches of all sizes have experienced great blessings by putting their faith into action and building homes in partnership with their neighbors in need.

Habitat for Humanity seeks to build lives, families and communities as well as houses. Habitat empowers families who may have been trapped for generations in the devastating cycle of poverty. By working in partnership with those families to help them realize the dream of home ownership, Habitat helps build self-esteem and self-reliance while restoring hope for a brighter future.

BUILDING ON FAITH

Each year in September, Habitat for Humanity affiliates around the world proclaim the love and power of Jesus Christ by joining with their partner churches to build houses and organize community worship services. Building on Faith is an opportunity for people of God to put their faith into action.

HOUSE BUILDING

Working with church partners on some phase of house building is one emphasis of Building on Faith week. Some affiliates plan huge projects and build one or more houses in a week. In other areas, affiliates plan simpler Building on Faith events to give churches a taste of Habitat. Consider these possibilities:

- Schedule at least part of the work on one or more church-sponsored homes during Building on Faith. Create excitement.
- Blitz frame a home or homes.
- Plan a clergy workday and invite local pastors to participate.
- Ask for volunteers for a specific day of construction.
- Ask for a special offering.
- Organize a prayer vigil.
- Ask a church to host a community worship service.
- Ask local pastors to take turns providing the devotion each day during the construction project.
- Ask for help in preparing and serving food to volunteers.
- Ask for child care facilities and workers, parking facilities and transportation assistance.

WORSHIP

The second focus of Building on Faith is community worship. Since 1983, HFHI has observed the International Day of Prayer and Action for Human Habitat by encouraging churches around the world to set aside the third weekend in September to pray for those inadequately sheltered and to pray about how the community of faith should respond to the need for decent housing. Affiliates around the world are urged to plan services of prayer and praise as a part of Building on Faith. (See Appendices A and B.)

BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATING IN BUILDING ON FAITH

Building relationships with churches can be a slow process, and organizing a major building project is a lot of work. Why, then, would a Habitat affiliate choose to participate in Building on Faith?

Churches are the backbone of Habitat for Humanity. The church is a successful, long-term and reliable Habitat partner. From mega-churches that fund and build numerous homes to small congregations in developing countries, people of faith respond to Habitat's call to help their neighbors in need. That is why affiliates with strong church ties are the most successful. Building on Faith can help all affiliates focus their work on following the example of Christ. This emphasis on putting faith into action can bring new energy to church partnerships. Building on Faith gives affiliates a specific opportunity and structure to involve numerous churches in the community. It is a time to affirm partner churches and plant seeds in the community.

In addition to involving more church partners, Habitat affiliates benefit from the energy that surrounds a major event like Building on Faith. The media attention often attracts new supporters and rejuvenates the faithful.

Participating in Building on Faith helps the faith community too. By joining with churches around the globe in simultaneously building houses, churches exemplify what it means to be part of the body of Christ. Building houses with the support of a Habitat affiliate offers a ready-made mission project and gives people a hands-on opportunity to experience their faith in new and exciting ways. Churches come alive when they reach out into their communities.

Many Habitat church partners have experienced great spiritual renewal and often the congregation sees new purpose as a result of building houses. Habitat involvement has attracted new and inactive members to many churches, and lives have been changed as people give of themselves. Church members have an opportunity to develop friendships and create a closer sense of community as they work with people they might otherwise never meet. (See Appendix C.)

SHOULD WE INCLUDE OTHER FAITHS AND BUSINESSES?

Building on Faith was designed as a week to highlight faith partnerships. Churches are the focus of this event. However, Habitat for Humanity welcomes people and organizations of all faiths--and no faith--to participate. We do not ask that others change their beliefs, nor do we diminish their importance to the project.

Many affiliates have invited other faith groups to participate in Building on Faith and have used the event to build bridges in the community. That is one of the exciting elements of any Habitat for Humanity project. The “theology of the hammer” proclaims that people who differ on all manner of theological beliefs can rally around the hammer as an instrument of God’s love to build houses with their brothers and sisters in need.

One of the tenets of the Christian faith is to be loving and accepting of all people. By working in partnership with other faith groups, Christians model their faith. Working on a Habitat project gives persons of all faiths an opportunity to put their faith into action by helping the poor.

Businesses and other organizations can provide in-kind goods and services, donations or volunteer labor for Building on Faith projects. This is a week for churches to be at the forefront, but the help of other organizations should be welcomed and acknowledged.

ENERGIZING YOUR TOTAL CHURCH RELATIONS PROGRAM

Building on Faith is intended to be a high-energy, premier event. It requires a lot of time, effort and commitment and utilizes many of the resources of the faith community. However, it should not be the only church relations focus. Affiliates must find the balance between developing a major event for churches in September (or another time) and involving congregations throughout the year. The week should be a catalyst for energizing the community and for setting new levels of commitment.

Some affiliates plan major building campaigns with churches at other times of the year. HFHI supports those efforts wholeheartedly. Habitat for Humanity builds on faith every day.

PLANNING THE PROJECT

PART OF A GLOBAL WITNESS

Regional offices help gather information about Building on Faith plans for each affiliate. By keeping the region informed, affiliates can help Habitat for Humanity publicize Building on Faith as a global witness of God's love.

WHAT ARE APPROPRIATE GOALS FOR BUILDING ON FAITH?

Begin by assessing where you are and how you can increase church support. For example, if you have never built a home before with a church partner or if you have difficulty obtaining land, your affiliate may want to bring together several church partners to build a portion of one home during Building on Faith week.

If you have been building one home a year with churches, consider building two this year. If you have been building two homes a year with churches, consider working on three or four. Remember that not all of your church-sponsored projects have to be a part of Building on Faith week. You can schedule any part of a project as part of this worldwide celebration.

DO WE HAVE TO BLITZ BUILD?

No. One of the big misconceptions about Building on Faith is that affiliates have to do a blitz build to participate. That is not true. Building on Faith presents a great opportunity to do a blitz because of the enthusiasm and attention it will generate. Building an entire home in a week is thrilling and creates a sense of awe among volunteers. Also, it is often easier to recruit and organize volunteers who know their work will be finished in a week. People sometimes find it more difficult to commit to long projects.

Blitz building, however, is not for everyone. Nor is it the primary emphasis of Building on Faith. Blitz building requires the entire affiliate to plan carefully and early. Sites and families must be selected in advance, and homeowner families must have an opportunity to get in all of their sweat equity hours.

SUPPORT FROM YOUR REGIONAL CENTER

Habitat regional staff members who specialize in Church Relations will contact each affiliate to discuss ideas and answer any questions about Building on Faith. He or she can work with affiliates to offer ideas about building projects and exciting worship services.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Though Building on Faith is an international event, its success in each location depends upon affiliates. The local board of directors and church relations team are responsible for:

- Organizing and promoting a construction project and scheduling volunteers from area congregations.
- Keeping the regional office informed about project plans and possible story ideas for media coverage.
- Planning and promoting a community worship service.
- Distributing Day of Prayer materials to churches and inviting them to shape their worship services on the Day of Prayer around the themes of compassion and loving our neighbors in need.

Habitat for Humanity International and regional staff members can also offer support by:

- Consulting with affiliate leaders in person or on the phone.
- Providing promotional materials for Building on Faith.
- Creating bulletin inserts (available at www.habitat.org and in the third quarter issue of *Church Relations News*) to distribute to churches for the Day of Prayer observances.
- Publicizing Building on Faith in Habitat publications and by encouraging major media outlets to cover events in various locations.

Contact your regional office to find the name of the church relations contact person for your area.

RECRUITING CHURCHES

Obtaining support for Building on Faith is much like seeking church partners throughout the year. The church relations team should identify in as many congregations as possible someone who is “on fire” about the idea of building homes with families in need. Call or make personal visits to invite contact persons to a kickoff rally to announce your Building on Faith plans.

The “big event” nature of Building on Faith may make it easier to recruit churches. They may be more likely to respond if you present an organized plan that seeks to involve many churches in the community.

ESTABLISHING GIVING PROGRAMS FOR CHURCHES

Churches will provide varying degrees of financial support for Building on Faith. Your church relations team should develop several strategies and should determine exactly what you will seek from each congregation. Churches are much more likely to respond if they know a specific cost and time frame. Making the project personal also helps. When you make a presentation, show a small model of the home or a diagram of the neighborhood. Create a detailed map indicating the site of a specific home and present details about the homeowner family. Helping audiences picture the partner family in a particular home can instill a sense of ownership in the project early in the process.

Create several levels of support such as these to allow congregations of all sizes and means a chance to participate.

Sponsorship--Determine a sponsorship price for churches. Note that this may not be the actual cost of construction. For example, you can reduce the church sponsorship price by crediting in-kind contributions and by applying major gifts to the cost of church-sponsored homes. (Make sure everyone understands that this will not reduce the family’s mortgage. It simply makes sponsorship more affordable for churches.)

Ask medium to large churches to raise all the money and provide all the labor to build a house. Be very specific about how much money must be available when, how many volunteers you will need, when you will begin the project, what days you will work and when the project will end.

Co-Sponsorship--Congregations that do not feel they can raise the funds for an entire house may wish to share the expenses with other congregations. Churches may wish to partner with congregations in their neighborhood or with other congregations of their denomination. However, Building on Faith provides a wonderful opportunity for congregations of varying traditions to come together to help their neighbors in need. Smaller churches that might not otherwise be able to participate can be paired with larger churches. Members of different ethnic groups and churches from different neighborhoods can form new bonds during a Building on Faith project. Use this event to bring together the faith community.

If some churches are not able to bear an equal share of the cost or are not able to provide as many volunteers as others, be sure they are treated as equal partners. Every church partner should be treated with dignity and appreciation.

Partial Sponsorship--Churches that want to support a project but that may not be able to sponsor or co-sponsor an entire house can partner with other congregations and provide the funding and/or labor for a specific part of construction. They may, for example, provide all the funding and labor for a roof, or they may purchase all the supplies and paint the interior of the home. Create a written description of the costs for various construction tasks.

When you speak to churches, acknowledge the possibilities for fund-raising events but be clear that most of the money usually comes from individuals. Note that some people may give large gifts but stress that most funds will come by obtaining pledges from individuals who give what they can.

Churches can also participate in Building on Faith by forming prayer groups and housing study groups, by planning and hosting worship services, by providing meals and snacks, by offering parking and transportation and so forth. Encourage as many congregations as possible to participate.

PERSEVERANCE

Some churches may immediately be excited by the idea of funding and building a home. Others may need a little encouraging. The time may not be right for some groups. However, where there is a glimmer of interest, be persistent. Pastors and

church leaders change. Congregations become revitalized and hearts are opened. Ask for support and then ask again. One individual who becomes excited about Habitat might be the key to attracting the entire congregation. A pastor who is asked to lead a devotion may become so fired up that he or she leads the congregation to become a vital church partner. Be alert to opportunities and inroads into any congregation.

REACHING OUT TO THE ENTIRE FAITH COMMUNITY

Be sure to invite as many churches as possible to participate in Building on Faith. Include Protestant and Catholic churches, suburban and urban congregations, affluent and less affluent churches. If you limit your contacts to a particular area or group, you may be limiting potential support.

Knowing how to approach various congregations is important. Learn about their traditions, their beliefs, their styles of worship, their leadership structures. Emphasize how their partnership with Habitat for Humanity can benefit the congregation. (See Appendix C.) Make contact with someone who can help you in each congregation. This person may be a member of the church, a denominational leader or someone who has a relationship with leaders in the church. Ask for help in setting up meetings or ask someone familiar with the workings of each church to go with you for the initial conversations.

Be sure to involve churches in the neighborhoods in which you build. Talk with pastors and church leaders. They can help you understand the needs of the community, they can give you credibility and they can open doors. Neighborhood churches can also be a tremendous help in site selection, in selecting families and in providing services and support for homeowners.

When making plans to visit any group, make the spirit of partnership and community apparent from the beginning. Do not feel, for example, that only those of the Catholic faith should talk with Catholic parishes or that you must send only African-Americans to initiate conversations with African-American churches.

Building on Faith is opportunity to involve the entire faith community. For example, the September event occurs each year near the Jewish observance of Rosh Hashanah. In October, Jews celebrate *Succot*, also known as the “feast of

tents” or “feast of tabernacles.” This emphasis on shelter provides a natural connection to Habitat for Humanity. Invite Jewish congregations to participate during an appropriate time in relation to the high holy days.

Other faith groups may also be excited about participating in Building on Faith. Persons who hold a variety of beliefs can join together to build houses as a response to their particular faith.

ORGANIZING VOLUNTEERS

The church relations team cannot operate independently to plan all your Building on Faith events. They will need support from the board and other committees. Members of committees such as **Family Selection, Family Support** and **Site Selection** must do their work well in advance of the project. Building on Faith can generate the most media coverage that your affiliate will receive all year. The **Publicity Committee** must be prepared to promote the event.

The **Resource Development** or **Fund-Raising Committee** must work closely with the church relations team to make sure adequate funds are available for each home. Particularly if the sponsor price is below the actual construction cost, this committee must raise or designate additional funds for the project.

Organizing volunteers is one of the biggest tasks involved in coordinating a build when several church partners are involved. The skills inventory in Appendix D can be a terrific beginning for getting the right people on the site each day.

INVOLVE AS MANY PEOPLE AS POSSIBLE

Soliciting help for specific tasks can attract new supporters and can strengthen relationships with faithful partners. For example, each day invite a different pastor to lead the morning prayer before construction begins. Plan special construction projects for individuals or groups. Organize a clergy workday. Ask people to place Building on Faith signs in their yards to publicize the event. Urging this level of participation will involve more people from the community of faith and will help keep the focus on the churches.

COMMUNITY WORSHIP SERVICE

In addition to the focus upon building homes, Building on Faith also places great emphasis upon community worship. Consider these suggestions for your service.

- Focus on celebration and thanksgiving for God's great blessings.
- Worship services should be Christian, but persons from other faiths can participate. For example, a rabbi can lead a prayer or read Hebrew Scripture.
- When determining the location of the service, consider the size of the crowd you expect. Fifty people can be a nice group in a smaller church, but they will appear sparse in a cathedral. After determining what size facility you will need, ask one of your church partners to be the host congregation.
- The pastor of the host church should be asked to participate in the service but should not be the primary speaker. Who would be able to deliver your message to a broad-based audience? Consider inviting a guest speaker.
- Involve as many people as possible. Have children carry worship banners. Create a joint choir. Ask youth to participate.
- If your worship service is at the end of a week or period of building, incorporate a slide show or other presentation to share the excitement.

PLANNING THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

- Create a printed order of worship similar to the one in Appendix B.
- Acknowledge as many people as possible in the bulletin. Include participating churches, contributors, committee members, homeowner association officers, members of the board of directors, the affiliate staff, members of the Building on Faith committee, worship organizers, ushers, volunteers and so forth. Be shameless in passing out thanks and recognition.
- Aim for diversity. Consider having one scripture read in another language. If your affiliate has a tie with an international project, ask someone to read scripture in the language of that country.
- The opening hymn should be a song of praise and should be reasonably easy to sing. Do not violate any copyright laws by photocopying hymns. In some

cases you can reprint words, but make sure you have permission or choose pieces that are in public domain. Try to select hymns that will be familiar to many worshippers.

- Use the “Prayer for Shelter” from the Day of Prayer bulletin insert as your responsive reading. (This is included in the sample order of worship.)
- Include at least one scripture reading that focuses on discipleship. Two or three are preferred. Include one from the Hebrew scripture and one from the Christian scripture. If you use three passages, include one gospel reading and one selection from the New Testament letters.
- Plan special music. Possibilities include a community choir created for the service, a choir from a participating church, small instrumental groups, a soloist, a gospel choir, and so forth. The best places for special music would be before the service begins, after people sit down before the scripture reading, after scripture readings or while the offering is being collected.

PROMOTE THE WORSHIP SERVICE

You must promote the service. It is not likely that you will have a large attendance simply by announcing the event. Consider these ideas:

- Publicize details as soon as you establish a time and place. Mention the service in every affiliate publication. Promote a particular aspect of the service, such as a speaker or the special music.
- The importance of involving as many people as possible cannot be stressed enough. If children carry in worship banners, grandparents and aunts and uncles are more likely to come. If several choirs join together, members of many congregations will more likely attend. Also invite public officials, affiliate leaders and homeowners to participate.
- Stress that board members and staff are expected to attend.
- Send out at least two announcements to churches in the community and follow up with a phone call to the pastor or principal contact asking him or her to encourage people to attend.
- Send invitations to homeowners and volunteers. Make follow-up phone calls.
- Send a news release to local media.
- Distribute Building on Faith offering envelopes and posters to churches.

PROMOTE THE MINISTRY OF HABITAT

Prepare sign up cards to distribute during the worship service. On the cards, invite people to participate in the ongoing ministry of your affiliate. Be sure to ask for names, addresses, phone numbers and the church affiliation. These cards can be invaluable in soliciting church support afterwards. You may also want to have available applications for homeowners.

If you already have ideas for the next year or if you want to issue a challenge to churches, make the announcement during the service. Look ahead and imagine what more you can do in partnership with the faith community.

MEDIA RELATIONS

One of Building on Faith's great benefits to an affiliate is its potential to generate tremendous exposure through local and sometimes national media coverage. The following information can help you package the event as newsworthy and can help you determine what steps need to be taken when. Early in the process, think about what would make a good story:

- Which homeowners have a touching story?
- How have volunteers been moved by this event?
- Who are the unlikely participants?
- What partnerships have broken down barriers or generated excitement?
- How have children/youth been involved?
- What other "people stories" could you highlight?

Providing leads such as these to local media outlets will give you the best opportunity to get coverage. Contact television and radio stations, newspapers, regional magazines, local religious publications and any other media in your area.

You can also help promote Building on Faith on a wider scale by providing the same information to the Church Relations staff member at your regional center.

Continue to identify story possibilities as the event progresses. A good story is the hook that will attract media attention. When contacting local media, keep these ideas in mind:

- Know your audience. What information can you offer about Building on Faith that would interest the community?
- Get to know the reporters. Work with their schedules and requests. Return their calls promptly. They have deadlines to meet.
- Send out complete, accurate and timely information.
- Invite the media to be a part of the event. One year, for example, a television station did weather reports from the Building on Faith construction site.
- Hold groundbreaking or house dedications at times that will encourage media coverage (early in the afternoon, for example).
- Provide reporters with a knowledgeable person who can answer questions. Also identify homeowners and volunteers who are willing to be interviewed.

IDENTIFY HFHI

In all information you distribute to the media, include a description of HFHI and how it works. You may wish to summarize the information under “Habitat for Humanity International” found at the beginning of this manual.

DEVELOP A MEDIA PLAN

The following tools may help you prepare media information.

PITCH LETTER

In July, consider sending a one-page pitch letter to inform the media about your Building on Faith plans. Summarize the idea in one paragraph. Then offer a few details to pique interest and make it clear why this event is important to the community. Provide the name and telephone number of someone who can provide further information. See the sample pitch letter in Appendix E.

NEWS RELEASE

Early September is a good time to send follow-up news releases highlighting specific events. Be sure to cover the main point of your release in the first

paragraph. Answer the questions Who? What? When? Where? How? Why? Subsequent paragraphs should contain details. See the sample news release in Appendix F.

You may send several news releases to promote various Building on Faith events. For example, you may wish to announce each of the following:

- The groundbreaking (invite the media for photos and video).
- Celebrity/VIP participation—If you have invited special guests to be a part of your celebration, announce his or her appearances and availability for interviews.
- Good stories. Again, look for new angles. What makes this event different from other builds?

MEDIA ALERT

Your chances of obtaining good coverage increase when you continue to announce Building on Faith events. Three to five days before a groundbreaking, press conference, photo opportunity, worship service etc., fax a media alert that highlights the specific event—even if you have included the information in a previous release. Fax a reminder early on the day of the event as well.

Please send a report of your media coverage and a copy of any newspaper or magazine articles to HFHI's Media Relations department, 121 Habitat St., Americus, GA 31709-3498.

CONCLUSION

Certainly Building on Faith is an opportunity to bring God's love to persons in need of decent housing. It is also a chance for people to get out of their pews and put their faith into action. Include plenty of time for celebration, recognition and thanksgiving. Building on Faith can be the energy boost that stimulates your entire church relations program. Take advantage of the media exposure and build on the enthusiasm surrounding your events. Praise God for the blessings of this ministry.

Appendix A

SUGGESTIONS FOR OBSERVING THE DAY OF PRAYER

To make housing a matter of conscience, Habitat for Humanity International has designated the third weekend in September as the International Day of Prayer and Action for Human Habitat. At this time the entire Habitat community is urged to come together to pray for those in need of shelter and to seek God's guidance in determining how they will respond to this need. The Day of Prayer also provides an opportunity for thanksgiving and celebration.

Individual worship celebrations and special events, such as dedications, groundbreaking or a community worship services can make the Day of Prayer an extraordinary event. Other possibilities include organizing a walk from several congregations to the building site, inviting guest speakers to churches, providing time for homeowner and volunteer testimonies and so forth. Bring faith and action together on this day. Have a celebration!

BUILDING ON FAITH AND THE DAY OF PRAYER

In 1995 HFHI organized Building on Faith to coincide with the Day of Prayer. The intent was to encourage churches to take action as well as to pray for persons in need decent shelter. During the week prior to the Day of Prayer, Habitat affiliates are urged to mobilize the churches in their communities to fund and build homes.

The Day of Prayer can be a perfect ending for a job well done. It can also serve as the beginning of a new year of ministry. If we seek God's direction, we must be willing to follow where God leads us.

HOW AFFILIATES CAN PLAN FOR THE DAY OF PRAYER

- Plan early and make personal visits to churches and synagogues.
- Be enthusiastic. Emphasize the biblical mandates to help the poor.

- Obtain Day of Prayer bulletin inserts (see below). Urge all congregations in your area to use the inserts during their worship services the third weekend in September.
- Plan a community worship service that involves as many people as possible --invite people to sing in the choir, carry banners, lead prayers and so forth. Publicize the event heavily, urging partner churches and newcomers to attend.

HOW CHURCHES CAN OBSERVE THE DAY OF PRAYER

- Plan worship services during the third weekend in September around the themes of loving neighbors and helping those in need.
- Use the Day of Prayer bulletin inserts during the worship service.
- Select Scriptures and develop sermons that proclaim God’s messages of compassion, mercy, justice and action.
- Encourage church leaders to help plan the community worship service.
- Encourage members of the congregation to remember in private prayer those in need of shelter and those who work to help build decent housing.

DAY OF PRAYER BULLETIN INSERTS

Bulletin inserts are available at www.habitat.org and also in the third quarter issue of *Church Relations News*. Paper inserts from previous years are also available.

Bulletin insert	Item # 3500 FREE (Over 1,000; \$6 per thousand)
Bulletin insert Spanish	Item # 3636 FREE (Over 1,000; \$6 per thousand)

To obtain the older inserts, call Order Entry at (800) 422-5914. Shipping and handling charges are added to all orders, including free publications.

Appendix B

DAY OF PRAYER SAMPLE ORDER OF WORSHIP

PRELUDE

ALL CHURCH BANNER PROCESSIONAL

HYMN OF PRAISE

WORDS OF WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

GREET ONE ANOTHER/PASSING OF THE PEACE

PRAYER FOR SHELTER

Leader: Create in me a clean heart, O God,

People: And put a new and right spirit within me.

Leader: Create in me a compassionate heart, O God,

People: That yearns to love you by tending your sheep.

Leader: Create in me a caring heart, O God,

People: That remembers how you went in search of the one that was lost.

Leader: Create in me a merciful heart, O God,

People: That reaches out to those in need this day.

Leader: Lord, help us open our eyes to those who live in disrepair and overcrowding and amidst violence.

People: Let us remember those who yearn for a simple, decent, safe and healthy place in which to live.

Leader: O God, we confess that we have ignored the cries of your children

People: Or we have responded only when it was convenient.

Leader: But you, O God are merciful.

People: We pray that your grace may flow through us and give us strength.

Leader: Create in us clean hearts, O God,

People: Hearts of compassion and loving service,

Leader: Hearts that are moved to action so others may see hope.

All: That together we can rejoice and pray, “Fill me with joy and gladness.”

From Scripture texts: Psalm 51: 1-10; Luke 15:1-10 and 1 Timothy 1:12-17

SCRIPTURE

Jeremiah 29:4-7

HOMEOWNER TESTIMONIAL

MUSIC

SCRIPTURE

John 8:12

MESSAGE

OFFERTORY INVITATION

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

DOXOLOGY

PRAAYER OF DEDICATION

CLOSING HYMN

BENEDICTION

Appendix C

BENEFITS OF BEING A HABITAT FOR HUMANITY PARTNER

Many churches begin their partnership with Habitat for Humanity out of a desire to help other people. They are delighted to discover how working with Habitat benefits them. Being a Habitat partner:

- Provides a way for churches to engage in ministry with an established Christian housing organization that has an excellent reputation.
- Allows a church to participate in a ministry that has a beginning and an end.
- Provides church members with a tangible opportunity to put faith into action both locally and globally.
- Leads many people to grow in their faith and desire to serve God.
- Builds community within the congregation and among all who work on a Habitat project.
- Provides for important and meaningful connections among Christians.
- Offers people a comfortable way to share God's love.
- Gives people with a variety of skills the chance to respond to the needs of others.
- Often attracts new members and involves inactive members by providing people with an opportunity and to see tangible results of their faith efforts as they work side by side with other people.
- Has stirred enthusiasm among members of many congregations who have then sought more opportunities for ministry.
- Communicates the message of being a caring and compassionate congregation called to action.
- Makes a congregation step out in faith and rely on God when the inevitable and unforeseeable problems arise.
- Helps generate a healthy pride within congregations.

Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I; send me!"--Isaiah 6:8

Appendix D

SAMPLE CONSTRUCTION CREW VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

Name _____

Telephone _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Indicate your skill level for the tasks listed below.

Crew or Skills	Very Experienced	Some Experience	Can Learn
Framing			
Sheathing			
Installing windows			
Hanging doors			
Roofing			
Installing vinyl siding			
Trimming			
Painting			
Constructing a deck			
Installing insulation			
Wiring/electrical			
Plumbing			
Landscaping			
Providing first aid			
Cleaning up			

What days and times of day are you available?

Appendix E

SAMPLE PITCH LETTER

Date

Name of person receiving letter

Name of media outlet

Address

City, State ZIP

For more information:

Affiliate Contact Person

Telephone #'s (for contact person)

Dear xxxx:

During the week of Sept. (*insert dates for this year's Building on Faith events*), (*your affiliate's name*) will join with Habitat for Humanity affiliates around the world to simultaneously build homes and conduct community worship services as a part of Building on Faith. Begun in 10 locations in 1995, Building on Faith has grown to include thousands of churches worldwide that put their faith into action by donating their money and volunteering their time to build homes.

Add local details. Members of your staff are invited to join us to cover the event or to participate in it. (*Invite broadcasters to present live reports from the construction site.*)

(*Name of affiliate*) is also organizing a community worship service (*where and when*). *Insert information about special music, speaker, etc.*

Habitat for Humanity International is a nonprofit, ecumenical Christian housing ministry dedicated to eliminating poverty housing and homelessness. Since 1976 Habitat has built houses worldwide providing more than 100,000 families with safe, decent, affordable shelter.

Through volunteer labor and tax-deductible donations of money and materials, Habitat works with families in need--partner families--to build or renovate simple, decent housing. The houses are sold to partner families at no profit and are financed with affordable, no-interest mortgages. Habitat is not a give-away program. In addition to making a down payment and monthly mortgage payments, homeowner families invest hundreds of hours of their own labor--sweat equity--in building their houses and the houses of others. This labor reduces the cost of the houses, increases the pride of ownership and fosters the development of positive relationships.

If you would like more information, please contact me at (*day and evening phone*).

Sincerely,

Media Relations Volunteer

Appendix F
SAMPLE LOCAL NEWS RELEASE

Congregations Put Faith into Action with Habitat for Humanity

For Immediate Release

Contact Person

Date

Phone

Describe a specific aspect of your Building on Faith events. For example: The “First” churches (First United Methodist, First Baptist, . . .) in the Parkersburg area will build two homes in a week as part of Habitat for Humanity International’s annual Building on Faith event, Sept. (dates).

Habitat for Humanity affiliates around the world will join with churches to build, renovate and repair houses. Building on Faith was organized to give people an opportunity to put their faith into action by building homes in partnership with families in need.

Include details about local involvement, including worship service and speaker. Add suggestions for story ideas--interesting twists, volunteer or homeowner stories.

Habitat for Humanity International is a nonprofit, ecumenical Christian housing ministry dedicated to eliminating poverty housing and homelessness from the earth. Since 1976 Habitat has built houses around the world providing some 100,000 families with safe, decent affordable shelter.

Through volunteer labor and tax-deductible donations of money and materials, Habitat works with families in need--partner families--to build or renovate simple, decent housing. The houses are sold to partner families at no profit and are financed with affordable, no-interest mortgages. Habitat is not a give-away program. In addition to making a down payment and monthly mortgage payments, homeowner families invest hundreds of hours of their own labor--sweat equity--in building their houses and the houses of others. This labor reduces the cost of the houses, increases the pride of ownership and fosters the development of positive relationships.

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Appendix G

TOOLS FOR PLANNING/ PROMOTING BUILDING ON FAITH

BUILDING HELPS

Congregation's Guide to Sponsoring a House Item #3261

PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

Posters Item #3114 10 for \$3.00

Name tags Item #3177 100 for \$2.00

Offering envelopes Item #3093 100 for \$2.00

What Is God Asking Your Church to Do? *video* Item # 1051 \$8.00

STUDY TOOLS AND RESOURCES

Partner churches may want to plan special opportunities for study and discussion about adequate housing during their Building on Faith campaigns. The following resources may be helpful.

The Theology of the Hammer

Describes the biblical foundations upon which Habitat for Humanity was founded.

English Item #1411 \$9.95

Spanish Item # 1411S \$9.95

Theology of the Hammer Study Guide

Offers suggestions for individual consideration and group discussion of the material in *The Theology of the Hammer*.

English Item # 3289

Spanish Item # 3281

Habitat for Humanity's Christian Principles Item # 1532

Helps focus your affiliate and communicate to churches who you are.

Building a House of Love--Family Devotional Activity Guide and house banks

Children can be a part of Building on Faith campaigns by participating in daily devotions and by collecting money in their house banks.

Building a House of Love Item # 3802 \$1.00

House Banks Item # 1600 \$.25 ea.

DAY OF PRAYER RESOURCES

Bulletin inserts are available at www.habitat.org and also in the third quarter issue of *Church Relations News*.

Paper inserts from previous years are also available.

Bulletin insert

Item # 3500 FREE
(Over 1,000; \$6 per thousand)

Bulletin insert Spanish

Item # 3636 FREE
(Over 1,000; \$6 per thousand)

To order any Day of Prayer Resources, call Order Entry at (800) 422-5914.
Shipping and handling charges are added to all orders, including free publications.