

First Baptist Church • Calvary Episcopal Church • Christian Outreach Church • Friends Meeting • Fellowship Baptist Church • Brethren in Christ • Hutterites • First Assembly of God • First Presbyterian Church • Newbirth Holiness Church • Saint Andrews Lutheran Church • St. Luke Baptist Church • United Pentecostal Church • African Methodist Episcopal Church • Pentecostal Church of the Apostolic • Bethel Baptist Church • Central Baptist Church • Russian Orthodox Church • Fellowship Baptist Church • Beechy Amish • Greek Orthodox Church • Congregation B'nai Israel • Union Tabernacle • Friendship Baptist Church • Alliance Bible Church • New Ebenezer Baptist Church • Amish Mennonite • Zion A.M.E. Church • Pleasant Grove Baptist Church • Union Tabernacle Baptist Church • St. Mary's Catholic Church • First Christian Church • Church of Christ • Conservative Mennonite Church • Heritage Church of God • Calvary Episcopal Church • Holiness Deliverance Church • Brethren • United Holiness Church • Berea Mennonite Church • First Mennonite Church • Morningside United Methodist Church • First United Methodist Church • Associational Church • Christian Fellowship Church • Church of the Open Door • Cornerstone Church • Faith Deliverance Church • Freewill Church of Jesus Christ • First Love Seventh Day Adventist Church • First Church of God • Freewill Baptist Church • American Pentecostal Church • Guildfield Primitive Baptist Church • Seventh Day Adventist Church • First Wesleyan Church • Central Church of Christ • Trinity Evangelical Free Church • New Song Church • Fellowship • Church of Christ • Christ Church • Methodist Church • Westminster Presbyterian Church • Holy Family Catholic Church • Cornerstone Community Church • Colonial Cumberland Presbyterian Church • Lakeshore Christian Church • Unitarian Universalist Congregation • Northside Church of Christ • Church of the Brethren • New Life Assembly of God • St. John's Catholic Church • First Church of Christ, Scientist • Mayfield Church of God • Hamilton United Methodist Church • Alliance Bible Church • Southside United Church of Christ • Trinity Evangelical Free Church • Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints • Bells Chapel A.M.E. Methodist Church • First Church of the Nazarene • First Baptist Church • Holy Trinity Episcopal Church • Christian Outreach Church • Friends Meeting • Fellowship Baptist Church • Brethren in Christ • Hutterites • First Assembly of God • First Presbyterian Church • Newbirth Holiness Church • Saint Andrews Lutheran Church • St. Luke Baptist Church • United Pentecostal Church • African Methodist Episcopal Church • Pentecostal Church of the Apostolic • Bethel Baptist Church • Central Baptist Church • Russian Orthodox Church • Fellowship Baptist Church • Beechy Amish • Greek Orthodox Church • Congregation B'nai Israel • Union Tabernacle • Friendship Baptist Church • Alliance Bible Church • New Ebenezer Baptist Church • Amish Mennonite • Zion A.M.E. Church • Pleasant Grove Baptist Church • Union Tabernacle Baptist Church • St. Mary's Catholic Church • First Christian Church • Church of Christ • Conservative Mennonite Church • Heritage Church of God • St. Peter's Episcopal Church • Holiness Deliverance Church • Brethren • United Holiness Church • Berea Mennonite Church • First Mennonite Church • Morningside United Methodist Church • First United Methodist Church • Associational Church • Christian Fellowship Church • Church of the Open Door • Cornerstone Church • Faith Deliverance Church • Freewill Church of Jesus Christ • First Love Seventh Day Adventist Church • First Church of God • Freewill Baptist Church • American Pentecostal Church • Guildfield Primitive Baptist Church • Seventh Day Adventist Church • First Wes-

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY'S

CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLES

CHURCH RELATIONS DEPARTMENT OF
 HABITAT FOR HUMANITY® INTERNATIONAL

REVISED 10-00

P R E F A C E

When we consider the homes that have been built, the neighborhoods that have been transformed and the individuals who have been touched through the work of Habitat for Humanity, we must stand in humility and awe. God has blessed this work.

Early leaders in the housing ministry movement imagined such blessings when they built their plans on Christian principles. Clarence Jordan, Millard Fuller and others who had a vision for building homes with their neighbors in need, saw their work as a means of practical Christian discipleship.

In the first section of this document, we hear the voices of some of those early leaders, entreating us to follow Christ and his example of care and compassion for the poor. In the second section, we discuss the importance of maintaining Habitat's Christian identity in all that we do.

May we, like the first generation of Habitat supporters, be bold enough to say "yes" to Christ and his way.

HFHI Church Relations department
121 Habitat Street
Americus, GA 31709-3498
(229) 924-6935 or (800) 365-7990
fax: (229) 924-6541
e-mail: church_relations@hfhi.org

N O T E S F O R R E A D I N G T H I S D O C U M E N T

Habitat for Humanity is a Christian ministry, and our language reflects beliefs and practices of the Christian tradition. Understanding our usage of the following terms may be helpful to those of other faith groups who read this document.

In this material, the term **Christian** includes Protestant, Catholic and Orthodox faiths.

Bible—The Holy Scriptures of the Christian faith. The Bible is divided into two major parts, the Old Testament, which tells of God's love for and relationship with human beings before the birth of Jesus; and the New Testament, which tells of the life and teachings of Jesus and of the early Christian church. These two sections are made up of 66 separate books, each of which is also divided into chapters and verses. Specific teachings in the Bible can be located by the chapter and verse number in a specific book. For example, the first sentence in the Bible can be found in Genesis 1:1—which notes the Book of Genesis, the first chapter and the first verse.

Tithe—All that we have and are comes from God. In gratitude, the people of God return the first fruits of their labors. Our biblical ancestors, Abraham and Sarah, set the pattern of giving 10 percent of what they had. Generally speaking, a tithe is considered to be 10 percent of one's income. Habitat for Humanity asks its affiliates to tithe 10 percent of their income to build homes in another country.

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sacrament—An outward and visible sign of an inward grace. There are seven sacraments in the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches, including the two recognized by most Protestants—baptism and the Eucharist or Holy Communion.

baptism—The sacrament whereby a person is incorporated into the community of faith and claimed by Jesus Christ. Depending upon which Christian tradition is involved, the person is either sprinkled with water, dipped in water, or immersed in water to signify that he or she will walk in newness of life, following Jesus Christ.

Eucharist or Communion or Lord's Supper—On the night of his betrayal, Jesus gave bread and wine to his disciples, explaining that when they ate this bread and drank this wine, they were receiving his body and blood. Following the command of Jesus to “do this in remembrance of me,” Christians have gathered through the centuries to receive the bread and fruit of the vine during Holy Communion. (Grape juice or water are sometimes used instead of wine.) Through this sacrament, Christians recall the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Kingdom of God—Refers to the gracious rule of God. In the Lord's Prayer, Christians pray that God's kingdom might come “on earth as it is in heaven.” In other words, we pray that God's gentle rule of justice, reconciliation and peace might come more fully among us. Christians are called to be “signs of the kingdom.” When the people of God show forth generosity and compassion, they are showing forth the rule of God that will some day come for all people.

prayer meeting—A prayer gathering often less formal than the primary worship service and often held mid-week.

Holy Spirit—The Christian faith teaches that the Holy Spirit is the power of the risen Christ at work in the hearts of people. The Holy Spirit is fully God which calls, gathers and enlightens people. In both of the original languages of the Bible (Hebrew and Greek), the word for Spirit also means “breath” or “wind.” The Spirit is like breath and wind—intimate, life-giving, powerful.

Lord—refers to Jesus Christ.



Habitat for Humanity is built on the Biblical principles of obeying God, loving one another and caring for the poor.

THE BIBLICAL WITNESS

When we trace the original vision for the ministry of Habitat for Humanity, we find that our principles are rooted in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. Our source is the Bible, which teaches us that through the grace of God, freely given in Christ, we are given new life. As people made new in Christ, we joyfully follow the path he has laid before us. This path leads us to realize that all persons have value because all are created by God. God intended that we live in relationship with one another and that we care for one another, particularly the poor. Over and over, the Hebrew scriptures talk about God's solidarity with the poor.

The part of the Bible known as the Gospels (the first four books of the New Testament which tell of the life and teachings of Jesus) reports that when Jesus began his public ministry, he deliberately recalled the words of the Old Testament prophet Isaiah about bringing good news to the poor, release to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind and freedom for the oppressed. (Luke 4:18)

Jesus' relationships show us a life of concern and compassion. He freely touched the untouchable. He ministered to those rejected by society. He lifted up the poor. In Matthew 25, Jesus proclaims his identification with those in need. He is disguised among the hungry and thirsty. He comes as the stranger, as the sick, as the prisoner. It is here, among these whom Jesus described as the "least of these," that Christ is present in the world.

It is through the life of Jesus that we understand how God wishes to be known to us. What we see in Jesus is the clearest representation of God's own heart. The way of God is offering a helping hand and showing mercy. Jesus showed us how to extend hospitality to the stranger as he lived a life that demonstrated compassion for all.

God has called us to be like Christ. Regardless of our means, we are to minister as Jesus ministered. If we are to witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ, we must reach out to "the least of these," and we must love one another.



Habitat for Humanity provides a unique and blessed opportunity for thousands of people to tangibly live out their faith. When individuals work together to build a home, the things that make them the same become more important to them than the things that keep them apart.

PART 1

THE CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLES THAT GUIDE HABITAT'S WORK

Habitat for Humanity is a Christian ministry that is organized and operated by local groups in communities around the world. Each of these groups signs a covenant agreement acknowledging that one of Habitat's purposes is to build modest but adequate houses to witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ. The first part of this document examines four basic principles that help shape Habitat as a Christian ministry.

- Faith in action
- Participants in “the God Movement”
- The economics of Jesus
- The theology of the hammer

FAITH IN ACTION

Building homes with people in need is our response to God's love. When we are filled with the power of God's love and mercy, our hearts seek ways in which we can share that love with others. We become willing servants, attempting to model the life and teachings of Jesus by helping our neighbors in need. As the writer of 1 John tells us, “We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us—and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses to help? Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action.” (1 John 3:16-18)

We find the same message in another passage from the New Testament of the Bible. James 2:14-26 mandates that we live out our faith. Our works are our response to God's love for us. This call to action—to care for each person created in the image of God—cannot be ignored. We are to become partners with one another, treating each other with dignity and empowering one another. Clarence Jordan, founder of the Christian community of Koinonia Farm, where the housing ministry of what would later become Habitat for Humanity had its beginnings, was adamant about this fact. Jordan believed that we cannot have any dealings with God unless we care for one another.

Robert G. Bratcher, former HFHI board member, suggests that offering a helping hand to our brothers and sisters in need is a worship experience. “To build a temple for the worship of God is no more holy

than to build a home for a needy person. A house is no less sacred than a sanctuary—perhaps it is even more sacred. To serve others is to worship God; to share a glass of cold water with a thirsty person is as much a sacrament as to share the eucharistic cup of wine.”¹

PARTICIPANTS IN ‘THE GOD MOVEMENT’

Habitat for Humanity provides a unique and blessed opportunity for thousands of people to tangibly live out their faith. As Millard Fuller, founder and president of HFHI states, “If Habitat were primarily a movement of individuals, there would be nothing lasting to it. But this is God’s movement, and there’s nothing that can stop it.”²

Habitat is a part of God’s movement in our time. We are part of the kingdom of God, or what Jordan called “‘the God Movement,’ a revolutionary new order that Jesus was initiating and inviting people to join now.”³ Habitat for Humanity alone is not “the God Movement” or the kingdom of God, but we further the Kingdom and are enriched by it. We are empowered by the Holy Spirit and by scripture as we follow Christ in his revolutionary practices of love.

THE ECONOMICS OF JESUS

Habitat uses the term “the economics of Jesus” to describe attitudes about money and resources that Jesus initiated in this new order. The economics of Jesus teaches us to incorporate scriptural wisdom to guide our work. It sets forth four basic cornerstones for people of “the God Movement.”

1. God blesses what we offer and turns it into the miraculous

Just as Jesus fed thousands with the loaves and fish packed for a little boy’s meal (John 6:1-14), God provides for our needs when we step out in faith.

The late Tom Hall, former associate director of HFHI, reflected on God’s miraculous acts. “Rather than complaining about the meagerness of the resources, Jesus took what was at hand, thanked God for it and put it to work. Wonder of wonders, there was more than enough! I do not know just what happened on that Galilean hillside. I do know that when we take what is given and go to work with it to do God’s will, the job can be accomplished.”⁴

Skepticism and the human desire to be in control often stand in the way of our expecting a miracle, however. Fuller says one of the evil one’s most clever and successful tricks is “to convince us that a problem is too big—that it would be folly to tackle such a major need with such meager resources.”⁵

2. God expects us to share our resources

Acts 20:35 reminds us of Jesus’ words that it is more blessed to give than to receive. The early Christian community modeled this lifestyle when members sold their possessions and used the proceeds to care for one another. Many of us have difficulty thinking about giving up our possessions. We have not developed what Fuller calls a “theology of enough.” He explains that we keep striving and scrambling for more things because we are too immature spiritually to see the futility of that type of grasping lifestyle.⁶

We must create a balance, Fuller says, and be assured that God does not mean for us to go hungry or to do without adequate clothing and shelter. He suggests that the biblical messenger John the Baptist clearly explained how we bridge the gap between poverty and affluence: “Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise” (Luke 3:11). “This [principle] is outrageously simple,” says Fuller. “And it is the only solution that will work.”⁷

When people make a gift to a Habitat project, they begin a process that keeps on giving around the world. In accordance with the biblical model of tithing, leaders of each Habitat project are asked to give a 10 percent tithe on the money they raise to help build homes in another location.

3. Charge no interest and seek no profit

The Old Testament, which Jesus knew intimately, offers this admonition: “If you lend money to my people, to the poor among you, you shall not deal with them as a creditor; you shall not exact interest from them.” (Exodus 22:25)

Fuller writes in his book *Love in the Mortar Joints*, “The concept of no profit and no interest is absolutely essential in building homes for the poor. Interest is a burden that keeps poor people locked into their situation. It is a great barrier that they cannot climb over to escape. But Jesus’ followers don’t have to make a profit—they are more interested in people than in profits... The economics of Jesus puts no value on profit or interest—but tremendous emphasis on meeting human need.”⁸

4. Grace and love abound for all, equally

In Matthew 20:1-16, Jesus tells the parable of the landowner who paid laborers in his field the same wage no matter how many hours they worked during the day. This act is one of the most difficult principles in Jesus’ economics for the world to understand. Jesus was not concerned with the laborers’ comparisons and ideas of fairness. Each of us is called to serve at different times. Fuller explains, “In Kingdom economics, the needs of people are paramount, and the response to those needs is not connected in any way with people’s usefulness or productivity.”⁹

THE THEOLOGY OF THE HAMMER

Habitat has given the name “the theology of the hammer” to the final principle we shall examine. The theology of the hammer teaches us to put aside our differences and to work in partnership with one another. Fuller explains it this way:

*This theology is about bringing a wide diversity of people, churches, and other organizations together to build houses and establish viable and dynamic communities. It is acknowledging that differences of opinion exist on numerous subjects—political, philosophical, and theological—but that we can find common ground in using a hammer as an instrument to manifest God’s love. Even though there may be strong differences on all sorts of things—baptism, communion, what night to have prayer meeting, and how the preacher should dress, for example—we can agree on the imperative of the gospel to serve others in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.*¹⁰

The Old Testament prophet Isaiah describes this spirit of cooperation as well: “The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them.” (Isaiah 11:6)

When we respond to God’s call to help our neighbors, it is amazing how easily we forget our differences. As we focus on working together to build a house, we realize that the things that make us the same become more important than the things that keep us apart. Putting the theology of the hammer into practice will help us eliminate poverty housing and will also glorify God. Fuller describes his hopes for individuals, churches and others coming together in God’s service:

My fervent prayer is that our combined lights will be so bright that millions of people will see our good work and God will be glorified as never before. We will make shelter such a matter of conscience that we will, in fact, eliminate poverty housing and homelessness.

Maybe, just maybe, God wants to use the theology of the hammer as a means to draw His divergent family closer together. Perhaps God is calling us to issue a joint invitation to “the strangers” of this world to come in and enjoy the abundant life that Jesus said he came to bring.¹¹

The Kingdom principles outlined in this section are the reasons that Habitat for Humanity works. The world tells us these ideas are foolish, but we know differently. We continue to reap God’s blessings through obedience to the Lord’s call for acceptance, selflessness and service.

NOTES

¹ Robert G. Bratcher, “The Biblical Mandate for Habitat,” *Kingdom Building: Essays from the Grassroots of Habitat*, edited by David Johnson Rowe and Robert William Stevens (Copyright ©1984 by Habitat for Humanity, Inc.), p. 32.

² Millard Fuller with Diane Scott, *No More Shacks!* (Waco: Word Books, 1986), p. 22.

³ Dallas Lee, *The Cotton Patch Evidence* (Copyright © 1971 by Koinonia Partners, Inc.), p. 191.

⁴ Tom Hall, “The Economics of Jesus,” *Kingdom Building*, p. 49.

⁵ Millard Fuller and Diane Scott, *Love in the Mortar Joints* (Association Press, New Century Publishers, Inc., 1980), p. 90.

⁶ Millard Fuller, *The Theology of the Hammer*, (Smyth & Helwys Publishing, Inc., 1994), p. 36.

⁷ Millard Fuller and Diane Scott, *Love in the Mortar Joints*, pp. 94-95.

⁸ Millard Fuller and Diane Scott, *Love in the Mortar Joints*, pp. 91-92.

⁹ Millard Fuller and Diane Scott, *Love in the Mortar Joints*, p. 98.

¹⁰ Millard Fuller, *The Theology of the Hammer*, p. 7.

¹¹ Millard Fuller, *The Theology of the Hammer*, p. 79.

PART 2

MAINTAINING A CHRISTIAN IDENTITY

The first section of this document outlines four Christian principles upon which Habitat was built and thrives. The language was intentionally taken from previously published books in an effort to remain as faithful as possible to the original visions for this ministry.

Being aware of the foundational concepts is not enough, however. Part 2 of this document discusses how we can maintain our Christian identity both outwardly, while we are at work among people of many faiths and people of no faith, and inwardly, as we seek communion with Almighty God.

PROCLAIMING OUR CHRISTIAN IDENTITY TO THE WORLD

Habitat for Humanity is a Christian ministry that builds houses as a witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ. The church is our partner. Working with churches helps keep us focused on our call to Christian discipleship. Sometimes the fact that Habitat is a Christian ministry makes seeking support more complex than if Habitat were a secular charity.

Habitat encourages the development of partnerships outside the church, but we must be clear and honest in doing so. Nearly every affiliate faces a crisis of Christian identity at some point. This crisis usually is prompted by the perceived conflict between the Christian nature of Habitat for Humanity and a secular or non-Christian donor. Habitat's response sets a crucial precedent for the future and for the success of its ministry.

Asserting Habitat's Christian identity is not always easy, but it is possible. Observing the following practices can help us maintain our Christian focus.

Be clear

Habitat's position is clear. Habitat is unashamedly a Christian organization that welcomes people and organizations of all faiths—and no faith—to partner with us. Explicit in our invitation to all interested persons is the understanding that we do not require conversion to be involved in this ministry. Also explicit is the fact that we will not deny our Christian beliefs to recruit or accept support.

Habitat is a Christian organization that involves persons of every denomination. We also reach out to include persons from other religions. Habitat has enjoyed very uplifting support from Christian churches and from synagogues and mosques. However, we do not call ourselves an interfaith organization. Interfaith groups are not organized to be expressly Christian. Habitat is decidedly Christian and exists to witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Be honest

Potential donors and other supporters are entitled to know who we are. Not mentioning that Habitat is a Christian organization in the hopes that no one will notice is akin to misrepresenting the relationship when specifically asked. Honesty requires more than silence; it requires clarity and candor.

Misrepresenting or remaining silent about the Christian character of Habitat will ultimately work against us. Interested persons will, at some point, be confronted with evidence that Habitat for Humanity is a Christian organization. If Habitat has failed to prepare them for this discovery, they will rightfully feel deceived. People who feel deceived typically withdraw their support.

It also is important for Habitat organizations to be honest and direct about our Christian principles as we recruit volunteers, staff and board members. Just as it may be tempting to downplay our Christian identity or weaken our Christian language for financial gain, so too it may be tempting to hire or recruit highly skilled people for technical gain, without clearly informing them of Habitat's Christian principles. As a result, the organization can end up being guided by persons who have no commitment to those principles.

Over time, these leaders may gain strong backing due to their accomplishments but they may not be able to effectively articulate Habitat's Christian position. Everyone involved with Habitat for Humanity, at whatever level, should be fully aware that Habitat is and will remain a Christian organization.

Treat all supporters with dignity and respect

While our words and deeds are intended to witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ, we must be sensitive to the religious practices of other faiths. For example, Jewish congregations, who observe the Sabbath from sundown Friday until sundown Saturday, are invited to do their house-building on Sunday. At some house dedication services, Jewish sponsors have presented a copy of the Torah (the Jewish scriptures) to homeowners along with the customary presentation of the Christian Bible by Habitat. Hindu and Muslim ceremonies also have been included in dedication services where persons of those religions are involved. In such cases, persons from Habitat also prayed, spoke of the love of Jesus Christ and presented the family with a Bible. Non-Christian congregations should be enthusiastically recruited as partners in our work, and leaders of those congregations should be invited to participate in all Habitat functions.

Focus on God's blessings for all

Too often people think of Habitat as a ministry to the poor. While the poor are the obvious beneficiaries of the *material* blessings of the work, many *spiritual* blessings return to all supporters. Habitat provides a place and a purpose for people of diverse backgrounds, origins and opinions to come together for a common good. It is an undertaking firmly rooted in Christ's admonitions and his counsel to serve the poor. But the blessings aren't just for Christians. Many people who are seeking to serve God by serving their neighbors can grow in faith by giving of themselves to the work of Habitat for Humanity. Just as we should not deny our Christianity to secure funds, we should not let a person's faith, or lack of faith, be the criteria for including him or her in this ministry.

Emphasize similarities instead of differences

Habitat recognizes that many of the world's major religions emphasize caring for the poor. We also know that many corporations and organizations seek to be good neighbors by contributing to the community. We can build on these common understandings and create partnerships that are exciting and rewarding for all.

STRENGTHENING OUR CHRISTIAN IDENTITY WITHIN

Each affiliate maintains its Christian identity and ministry, not only by being forthright about who we are but by creating opportunities for spiritual growth. Habitat for Humanity stresses education, prayer and worship to help keep this ministry rooted in the Christian foundations that enable it to grow.

Orientation and education

Habitat's Christian principles should be discussed with each volunteer and board member new to an affiliate. To encourage growth and understanding, Habitat organizations can provide volunteers, staff and board members with reading and study materials. (See the list of resources available on page 11-12.)

Time may be set aside during board meetings, annual retreats or planning sessions to review Habitat's Christian principles and to allow board members to recommit themselves to embracing them.

Prayer

Though we pray in various ways and use different words and rituals, prayer is simply being in union with God. When we begin each day, each task, each meeting, each construction project in prayer, we are empowered to do God's work. When we see ourselves in the presence of God, rather than in the crippling grip of stress and worry, we can experience the joy that God intended for us. We sometimes worry that the money will not come in. We fret that the materials will not be delivered on time, and we moan over why it had to rain today of all days.

But the donations exceed the expenses. The least likely volunteer shows up with a truck, and the sun peeks through the clouds. God blesses us beyond our expectations.

Prayer also enables us to make difficult decisions. In prayer, we trust that God will supply us with courage to do those things that at first may seem too difficult. We also trust that God will give us the strength to be faithful and obedient servants.

Worship

Worship can empower our work. It is important not only to individuals, but also to Habitat as an organization. Often when we come together as the Habitat community, whether it is locally or in a larger context, we gather for worship. In addition, for each new home that is built, we offer praise and thanksgiving to God during groundbreaking and dedication services.

Habitat organizations also are encouraged to set aside special times for the entire community to rejoice in the work God has given us. While we are not a church, we should eagerly take advantage of the opportunity to gather for worship. A great time to plan such services is in connection with the International Day of Prayer and Action for Human Habitat, the third weekend in September.

Many individual congregations offer their support on the Day of Prayer by shaping their worship services around the themes of decent shelter and helping their neighbors.

These worship services, combined with the simultaneous prayers for shelter lifted up around the world, can radically empower us. St. Luke, the writer of the Book of Acts in the Bible, describes this power experienced by members of the early Christian church. "When they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God with boldness." (Acts 4:31) As a result of this empowerment, St. Luke continues,

“the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common. With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all.” (Luke 4:32-33) May it also be with us.

C O N C L U S I O N

Habitat for Humanity is driven by the teachings of our Christian faith. Habitat’s Christianity motivates and enables its mission. An undertaking as great as eliminating poverty housing from the earth is foolish rhetoric in the absence of divine direction. God continues to bless this dynamic ministry. Let us witness to the power and love of Jesus Christ as we build simple, decent houses with people in need.

RESOURCES

Books by and about Clarence Jordan, founder of Koinonia Farm

The Substance of Faith and Other Cotton Patch Sermons, by Clarence Jordan (Association Press, 1972)—A collection of Clarence Jordan's sermons that connect Jesus' message and the people of Jesus' day with the attitudes and lives of Southern church members.

\$5.75 plus \$2.75 shipping and handling

The Cotton Patch Evidence, The Story of Clarence Jordan and the Koinonia Farm Experiment (1942-1970), by Dallas Lee (Copyright © 1971 by Koinonia Partners)—A chronicle of Clarence Jordan's efforts to bring faith to life in the rural South.

Item #1425 \$7.45

Clarence Jordan: Turning Dreams into Deeds, by Henlee H. Barnette (Smyth & Helwys, Publishing, Inc., 1992)—Brings into sharp focus who Clarence Jordan was and what his ministry was about.

\$8.95 plus \$4 shipping and handling

Books written by Millard Fuller, founder and president of HFHI

(Note: 40 percent discount on orders of six books or more of the same title.)

Bokotola (Association Press, New Century Publishers, Inc., 1977)—Building faith and hope while building homes in America and Africa.

Item #1403 \$9.95

Love in the Mortar Joints (co-authored by Diane Scott. Association Press, New Century Publishers, Inc., 1980)—The growing ministry of Habitat for Humanity.

Item #1401 \$9.95

No More Shacks! (co-authored by Diane Scott. Word Books, 1986)—Making poverty housing a matter of conscience and developing partnerships.

Item #1400 \$9.95

The Excitement Is Building (co-authored by Linda Fuller. Word Publishing, 1990)—Stories of volunteers sharing God's love in tangible ways and offering hope for tomorrow.

Item #1416 \$9.95

The Theology of the Hammer (Smyth & Helwys, 1994)—Explanations of the basic Christian principles upon which Habitat for Humanity operates.

English—Item #1411 \$9.95

Spanish—Item #1411S \$9.95

Audio Cassette, set of two—Item #1037 \$6.95

The Theology of the Hammer Study Guide (Habitat for Humanity International, 1995)—Provides information for discussion groups to examine the Christian basics of Habitat.

English—Item #3289 FREE

Spanish—Item #3281 FREE

A Simple, Decent Place to Live (Word Publishing, 1995)—Millard Fuller's personal account of Habitat's first 20 years, including stories of the famous and not-so-famous who partner with Habitat to ensure that everyone, everywhere has a simple, decent place to live

Hardbound—Item #1424 \$16.95

Softbound—Item #1421 \$12.95

More Than Houses (Word Publishing, 2000)—How Habitat for Humanity International is transforming lives and neighborhoods.

Hardbound—Item #1460 \$16.95

Softbound—Item #1454 \$12.95

Mas que Casas (Word Publishing, 1995)—Spanish version of *More Than Houses*.

Softbound—Item #1454S \$12.95

For Further Reading

Kingdom Building, Essays from the Grassroots of Habitat (copyright 1984 by Habitat for Humanity)—A collection of the visions and philosophies about Habitat for Humanity related by current and former pillars of the ministry.

Item #1406 \$1 (limited quantities)

For Family Devotions

Building a House of Love: Habitat Family Devotions—Thirty-one devotional activities that stress the biblical lessons of caring, sharing, celebrating and taking God's love into the world. Targeted for families with elementary-aged children. Each booklet includes stickers and a poster for "building" your own house.

Item #3802 \$3

Ordering Information

All items **except** *The Substance of Faith* and *Clarence Jordan: Turning Dreams into Deeds* are available from Habitat for Humanity International, (800) 422-5914, anytime—24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Order *The Substance of Faith* from Koinonia Partners at (800) 569-4128.

Order *Clarence Jordan: Turning Dreams into Deeds* from Smyth and Helwys Publishing, Inc., (800) 747-3016.

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ABOUT HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

More than one billion people worldwide are inadequately sheltered. Habitat for Humanity International is a nonprofit, Christian housing ministry dedicated to eliminating poverty housing and homelessness from the earth. Since 1976 Habitat has built tens of thousands of houses worldwide, providing some 500,000 people with simple, decent shelter.

Through volunteer labor and donations of money and materials, Habitat works with families in need—partner families—to build or renovate affordable, healthy 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—into building their houses and the houses of others. This labor reduces the cost of the house, increases the pride of ownership and fosters the development of positive relationships.

Tithes collected on money raised locally are sent to help fund construction of Habitat houses in other countries. The tithe joins all Habitat partners together in a worldwide vision of eliminating poverty housing and increases our commitment to support other countries where Habitat is working.

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

Scripture quotations in this publication, unless otherwise indicated, are from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible.



121 Habitat St. Americus, GA 31709-3498
(229) 924-6935 fax: (229) 924-6541
www.habitat.org