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I go to Remsen Ave Church of God located in Brooklyn. It is a Haitian creole speaking church. My pastors are Bishop Brugard and Pastor Reyyette Brutus. The Church of God believes in the verbal inspiration of the Bible. It believes in one God existing as a Trinity. It believes that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born of the virgin Mary. It also believes in Christ's Death, burial, resurrection, and ascension. I serve as a youth leader at my local church which tremendously impacts my view of the social work practice. I work closely with youth ages 13-23. Our youth group is called FRESH NYC. Fresh stands for firmly renewing, evangelizing and shaping hearts. I serve a dual role as the creative director of graphic design as well as event specialist.

I started my undergrad education at Parsons: The New School for design where I majored in fashion design for two years. Much of the courses were based in graphic design. I now use the tools I learned then to make flyers on our social media pages. We use our Instagram page as a bulletin to create awareness of our activities. We also post images and videos of our gatherings. I have found that social media can be an effective tool for evangelism. We have gained new members and guests through our social media pages. I also mentor some of the youth one on one which has been very rewarding so far. Serving at my church is one of the main reasons I got into the field of social work because much of what I do there is social work related.

I work together with my team members to create events for the youth as well as the community. We do a back to school outreach every year. We hand out backpacks filled with

supplies and give free food and giveaways to the students from our community. The church also has a food pantry every Saturday morning, but I would like to do more. Other social workers and I from my church have been working behind the scenes to plan events that will better serve our community. I came up with the idea to have a coat drive this winter but unfortunately, the pastors thought it would be better to have it in November, closer to Thanksgiving. This brings me to my next point which is there is a bit of a divide between the older generation and this generation. We have people in the current generation that want to do more for the community and have innovative ideas and then there is the older generation that can sometimes stifle growth because of resistance to change.

We have concluded that although it would be nice to hold these events at church because it would draw more people in, we may have to move to other locations to ensure that the work gets done because there are people that really need help. I believe the mission to defend the needy has been lost in some churches. Many congregations focus on the advancement of the church and push the message of self-development, which is great, but we should not forget to focus on helping those in need. We can evangelize to hungry people and tell them the gospel but if we forget to feed them it defeats the purpose. The bible says in Isaiah 1:17, “Learn to do good; Seek justice, reprove the ruthless, defend the orphan, plead for the widow”. The core values of social work are correlative to Christianity. Service, social justice, the dignity and worth of our neighbors, competence, integrity, and the importance of human relationships are also effective practices for followers of Christ even though the purpose of social work is different than Christianity.