

“Congregation social work is not limited to Christian congregation, there are Jewish congregation social work including rabbis and other Congregation social workers who serve in other religious traditions as well, such as Imams in Muslim mosques and priest in Buddhist temples” (Garland & Yancey, 8). Congregation is an assembly of persons, a body which is assembled for religious worship or habitually attending a particular church (google). My paper will focus on my own local congregation Metropolitan Baptist Church.

The Metropolitan Church (MBC) is a multi-ethnic congregation church in Bensonhurst Brooklyn. We have three congregations, English, Chinese, and South Asian (Punjabi, Urdu, and Hindi). The church is getting ready to start a Spanish Speaking congregation. Our Sunday English worship experience brings blended worship music led by worship team and band. We are reformed in theology, passionate about truth, strongly concerned with reaching out into the community, with specialized ministries for children, middlers, senior high school, young professionals and many opportunities for discipleship and ministry (google).

The purpose of Metropolitan Baptist Church is to create “passionate pursuit of God’s glory that leads to active workshop, profound fellowship, hungering discipleship, purposeful ministry and the enthusiastic spreading of the good new”, (google). The intention of the church is to create a passionate pursuit of God’s glory. The purpose of the Scriptures and the church is to recognize and most reveal the glory of God. MBC centers its ministries on proclaiming God’s glory so that those who participate seek to pursue and have an understanding of God’s supremacy and become passionate for God’s glory.

The history of the Metropolitan Baptist Church was formerly known as the First Evangelical Friends Church which consisted of German Lutheran Congregation. In September, 1975 the church became known as Metropolitan Independence Church. The meaning of the Metropolitan church was to reach the population of NYC city wide and it was not known as a denomination church. In 2007, the Metropolitan Christian Church became known as a denomination church.

On March 31, 2022 I interviewed Pastor Chris from the Metropolitan Church. Pastor Chris is married to Karen, and been MBC pastor since 1994. Pastor Chris has a BA in Biblical studies from Taylor U Mar and MDiv Westminster Theology Seminary. Pastor Chris teaches Bible & Church History NYSB, a branch of Lancaster Bible College. Pastor Chris has two daughters, and three grandsons.

“Ministry” connotes that the service is done in response to the Christian mission to love others as an expression of devotion to Jesus. “Ministry is motivated primarily by a desire to care for others as a way of loving God and not by a public mandate to meet needs”, (Garland and Yancey, 25). The internal mission is caring for the people who are coming to church to be enlightened. Some of the outside missionaries are going into the community to do Evangelism, going out into the community to teach about God. Pastor Chris states that he supports 10 missionaries one of which is the Faith Dugan, who teaches little kids about bible studies through child Evangelism fellowship. This program teaches the unchurched children about God and his word. Ms. Dugan has been teaching this program for 26 years. Pastor Chris states Carol

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Larsen Wycliffe a bible translator is another missionary. Pastor Chris states that the short term missionary is sending out their own missionaries from Metropolitan church for a week or Summer, and sending them to Ireland to teach bible school to people there. Our church has also sent some of our missionaries to Texas to help clean-up from the hurricanes there. Our church also works with the Bowery Mission NYC Mission and special missionary at the pregnancy center for women who are expecting babies in Staten Island.

The term “services” suggest we are identifying a human need. Service programs are usually preceded by community assessment, with the expectation that implies the organization is conducting the needs assessment that has some responsibility for addressing identifying needs (Garland & Yancey, 24). The public social services agencies often conduct needs assessment and have a public mandate to address the needs of the community. Service is used by the helping professional in all kinds of settings, public and nonsectarian as well as religious. Services at the Metropolitan Church includes the nurse ministry, Children’s church, Metro Praise. The Metro Praise is where the 3 years old to 5 years old learn songs about God and sing in the church. My daughter was involved with several of the services at the church when she was young, which included the Metro Praise ad Kids club. Sunday preschool and vacation bible leaders teach the church children to use their hands as a model: Put your hands together, lacing your fingers together and pointing down to your feet, with your fingers pointing up to the sky and makes the thumbs touch each other”, (Garland & Yabcey, 21).

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Some of the other services at the church are the youth challenge club, which is a club for 7th grades to 12th grade that meet every Friday for fellowship among their peers. There are the Kids club that meets every Friday who are the 1st graders to 6th grade. The women ministry meets twice a month and where they meet and knit together. There is also Women bible study that meets every Wednesday from 10:00 am to 11:30 am. The men's bible studies meet every Friday from 7:00 to 9:00 pm.

The special services at the church include Thanksgiving dinner, Jesus Birth party, and decorating the church which is called the Hanging of the Greens. The Thanksgiving dinners is where everyone brings a dish, which I usually make yellow rice and baked ziti. On Thanksgiving we come together as a community in the church to have dinner and fellowship. The Hanging of the Greens is where everyone has part in the church to decorate the church. During the Christmas holiday we celebrate Jesus's birthday and have a vigil candle lighting and sing Christmas carols among the special services, there is the Christmas shoe box which is one of my favorite activities. For the Samaritan First Operation Christmas Child shoe box it is filled with tooth brushes, tooth paste, soap, pencils, crayons small toys and a bible which is then shipped to poor countries to provide a Christmas gift and also to spread the word of Jesus. Another favorite activity at the church is the Meta Café where we meet with other members in the church twice a month for snacks and fellowship.

Some of the social roles in the Congregational life includes, director of emergency assistance, director of ministry to the neighborhood. "Most roles are shaped not by one or the other but by a combination of the expectation of others including the congregation, the profession, the larger culture-and those of the social worker. It is the interaction of these expectations over time that shapes the role of a congregational social worker (Garland & Yancey, 57). Some of the leaders of the church are the elders, which includes Enrique who handles the spiritual issues of the church. The responsibilities of the elders are to preach, teach, preside at the celebration of the sacraments, and administer the church through the pastor guidance and lead the congregation under the care in service ministry to the world. Sean-worship leader/ordained to the pastor. Michelle and Griest are the deaconess and they assist elder. The deacons takes care of the physical property and visits with the people who are sick. Nico and Daniel are deacons, who helps take care of the sick. Clergy is the body of all people ordained for religious duties.

"Social workers not only can be but need to be engaged in all aspects of congregational life including worship, Christian education, fellowship/community and ministry (Garland & Yancey, 55).

The church policy is that Marriage is one women and one men. LQBTQ are allowed to attend the services but are not allowed to be a member. The church policy states that one should not have sexual contact before you are married. All members of the church but take a child safety

course which focuses on extensive child abuse and learn why it is important to report child abuse.

“Pursuing the glory of God is not an intellectual exercise but a dynamic activity that brings forth a new life and desires within a discipline. Discipleship produces results. Christians are not saved or simply dust pews in the as they slide in and out on a Sunday morning. Our faith in Jesus Christ affects every aspect of our lives transformatively incarnation: Active worship, profound fellowship, hungering discipleship, purposeful ministry and the enthusiastic spreading of the God News”, (google). Having God in my life has been wonderful because there been many times in my life when I felt despair. For instances, when I was younger and in foster care I felt alone and helpless and never thought I will be working with the organization called the Administration for Children’s Services that deals with child abuse. I have been working with ACS for 24 years investigating child abuse, assisting families with getting the help they need such as Individual and family counseling. In addition, as a Child Protective Specialist I am in contact with the schools, medical doctors, and program providers and responsible for court reports. It is easy to lose sight of yourself and have burnout and become easily depressed. This is why self -care and having the love of Jesus and relationship with God is important.

Without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and He rewards those who earnestly seek Him. Hebrews 11:6. I believe in my heart that without faith and pray and not having God in my life I would not be able to do the things I do. I would not be able to do a fulltime job as a Child Protective Specialist, attend

graduate school and maintain my household. I recently went to Barnes and Nobles about two weeks ago and came across a book called *The Life Map Devotional for Women* which provides weeks of inspiring readings. I really enjoyed reading this particular book because it has provided me with a "Life Map spread that can help with the weeks of focused on devotional time: (Stanford, 7). Throughout this book and the 140 entries and accompanying the life maps, it will encourage and guide me to grow in the varied areas of life, faith, family work and health (Standford, 7). Social work brings together the knowledge and skills and group and community development to lead in the congregation's task of weaving itself into a strong new relationship. "That weaving involves connecting the nodes of kin and friends to one another so no is left "dangling" or unconnected. "The heart of the work of the congregational social workers we interviewed in forming relationships with the congregants, clients, volunteers, community members, community leaders and among other community organizations", (Garland & Yancey,108). In order to become a member of Metropolitan Church you must take the following classes; class 101, class 202, class 301, class 401 and class 501. Class 101 has to do with membership and spending 1 hour and half for five weeks, and class 202 has to do with Spirituality maturity. Class 301 has to do with learning the ministry, class 401 has to do with evangelism and mission and teaching about Jesus. Finally class 501 has do with the teaching about worshipping in the church. I have chosen to talk about these bible verses below because I think it describes how a Christian person or Christian social worker, or staff in the church helps out with the congregation. I have proclaimed glad tidings of righteousness in the great

congregation; Behold, I will not restrain my lips, O Lord, You know. I have not hidden your righteousness within my heart; I have spoken of your faithfulness and your salvation; I have not concealed your loving kindness and your truth from the great congregation.

Psalms 68:26 (google). Through google I looked up what the bible verse means which Lord my lips are not silent I do not hide your goodness in my heart, I speak about your loyalty and salvation. I believe a human being and as a social worker we should respect, love and be kind to one another and would be in a better place in this world.

Building partnership with both congregating and social services agencies in the Community makes sure that most resources are being used more effectively. This “kind of communication and experience with community partners leads to greater trust that social services could better provide emergency assistance and could better provide emergency assistance than could the volunteer leaders in the congregation”, (Gayor & Yancey, 114). The Metropolitan Baptist church has helped my family in the past with paying rent arrears, which I was grateful. I also had to go to another church in the past for assistance with food because income alone could not support us.

Through the class discussions, speaker John Ashmen, the movies Democratic Promise and Entertaining Angels: The Dorothy Day Story I have learned about the congregation and the significant roles that God plays in our everyday lives. Through the movie Entertaining Angels, The Dorothy Day story illustrates the struggle with the Catholic ecclesiastical establishment and

Show's Dorothy Day's incredible struggles over the years for social justice, civil rights and demilitarization. The documentary The Democratic Promise talks about Community Organizing and its history was very interesting. Saul Alinsky played a significant role in the Democratic Promise, he was known as the father of community organizing. "The key to community organizing is that it is not about creating broad coalitions, and training community members to conduct hardball campaigns that let them win on a lot of issues, Professional organizers focus on building community and power", (Matthew, 2).

In the class we also had a presentation that was given by John Ashman from Citygate Network I found it intriguing because he provided an overview of how his mission helped the homeless, people with addiction, and mental health issues move from human suffering to human flourishing. As you see having the opportunity to watch the documentary of speakers who provided a presentation that had to do with social work, healing of people to organizing in the churches/congregations to the communities.

Bible Verse:

Above all, love each other deeply, because love cover a multitude of sins. 1. Peter 4:8 niv

Articles:

Saul Alinsky (Wikipedia)

Matthew, Dylan 2016. Who is Saul Alinsky and why does the right hate him so much

Book:

Garland and Yabcey (2014) Congregational Social Work Christian Perspectives

