

Christ's Mission in Akron

A report by
Elder Monte Sahlin
Director of Research &
Special Projects
Ohio Conference
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Members of the Community Assessment Task Force

- Lela Brown
- Tamara Franke
- Lee Kirschbaum
- Sue Kirschbaum
- Susan McCullaugh
- Greg Powers
- Mark Sarokas
- Patti Sarokas
- Pastor Jerry Chase
- Elder Monte Sahlin, consultant to the task force

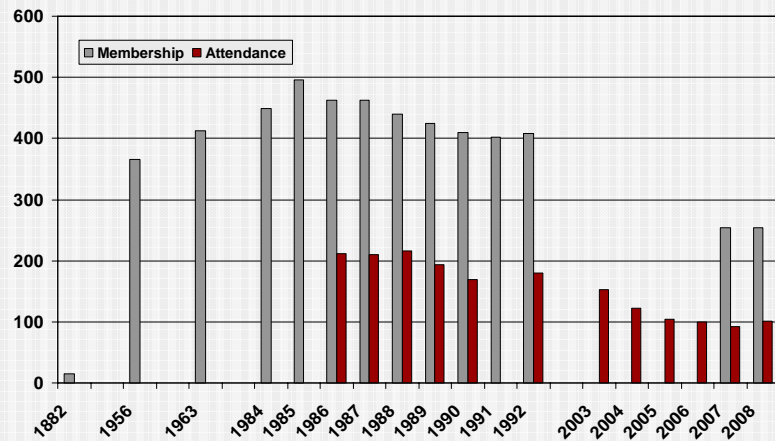
Goals of this Study

- Identify the key demographics and human needs in the community
- Recommend opportunities for gaining visibility and impact in the community

Background

- The Akron First Church was organized on October 14, 1882 with 15 members.
- A church school was begun in 1912.
- T. A. McCoy evangelism campaign during the winter of 1945-46 had attendance of 500 to 900 per night with 1,100 non-members visited.

Membership & Attendance



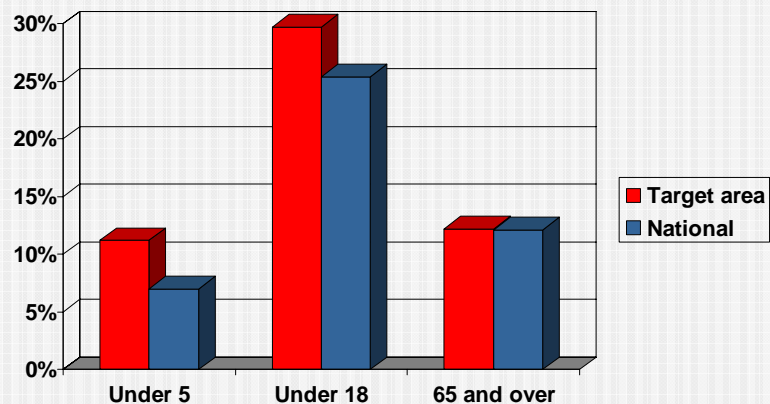
Akron as a Mission Field

- Summit County has a population of 543,000 in 221,000 households
- Zip Codes 44306 and 44301 have a combined population of 42,600
- One Adventist for 440 people (about one to 2,000 in the immediate target area)
 - USA: 1 to 305
 - New Guinea: 1 to 25
 - Zambia: 1 to 22
 - Belize: 1 to 10

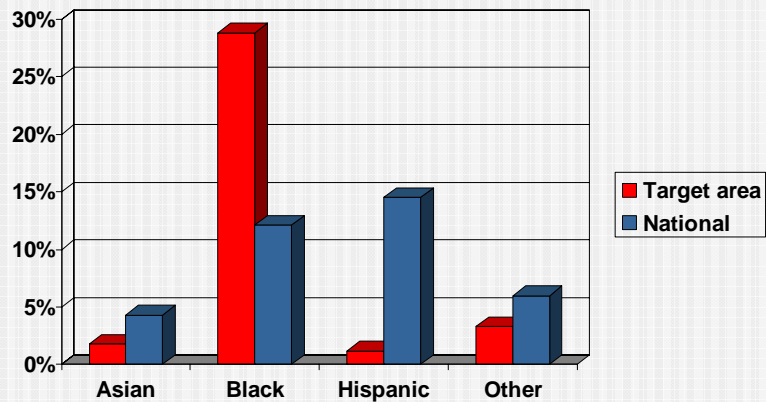
Where Members Live

- 10 in 44306
- 5 in 44301
- 8 in 44319
- 7 in 44310
- 7 in 44312
- 6 in 44313
- 5 in 44305
- 3 in 44311
- 3 in 44314
- 3 in 44333
- 2 in 44307
- 2 in 44320
- 2 in 44321
- 1 in 44303
- 1 in 44304
- 95 outside 443

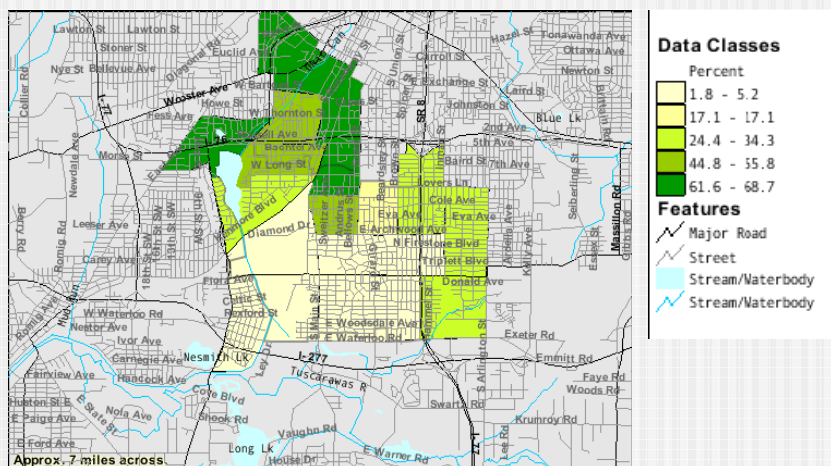
Age Groups



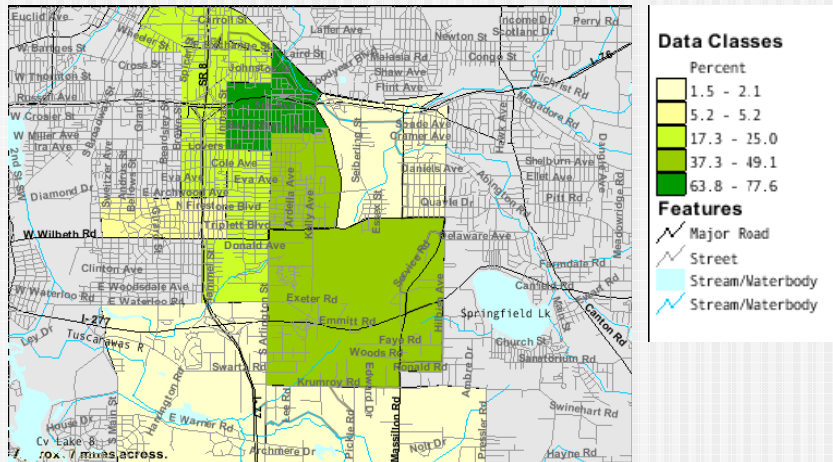
Ethnic Minorities



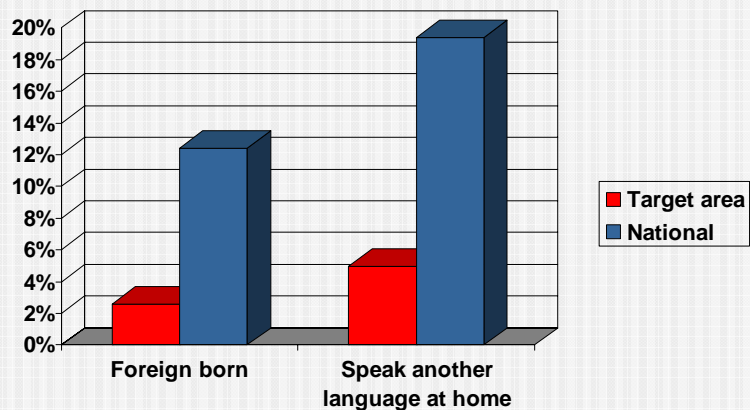
African American residents in Zip Code 44301



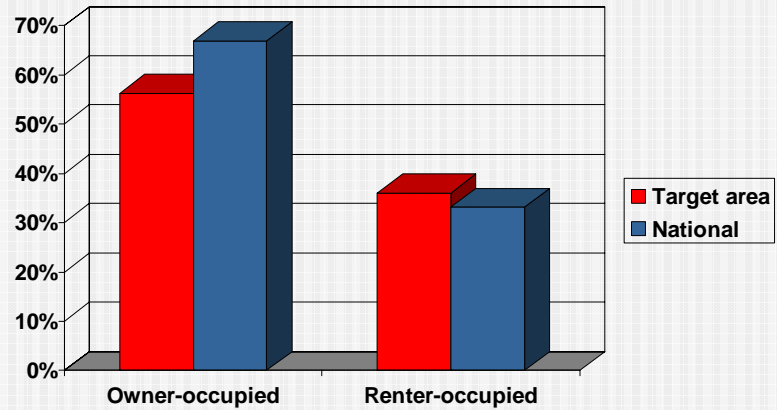
African American residents in Zip Code 44306



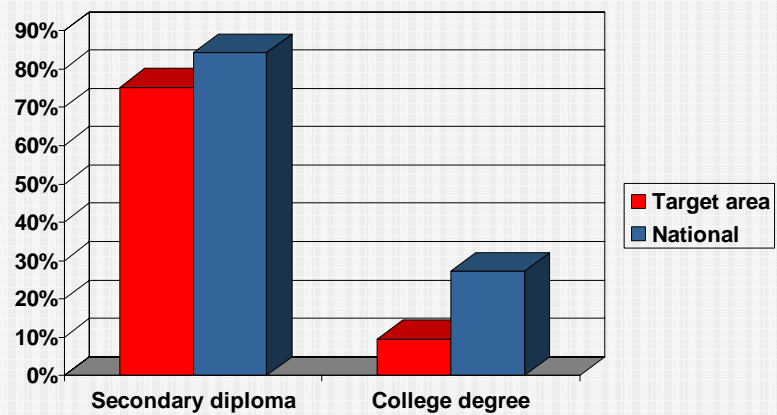
Immigrants



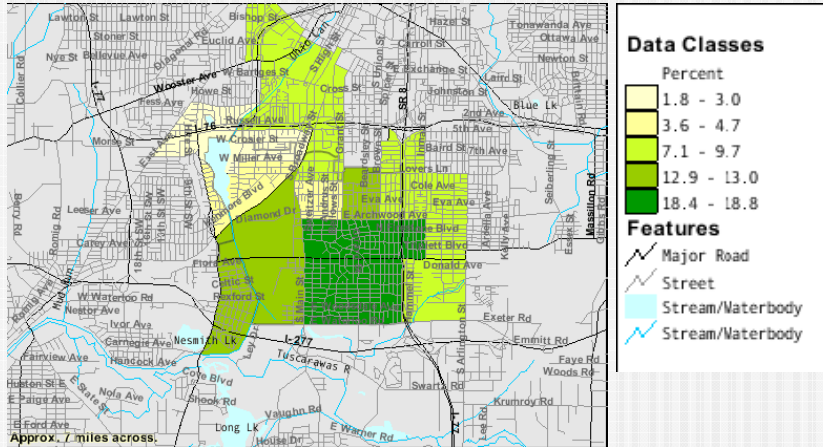
Housing



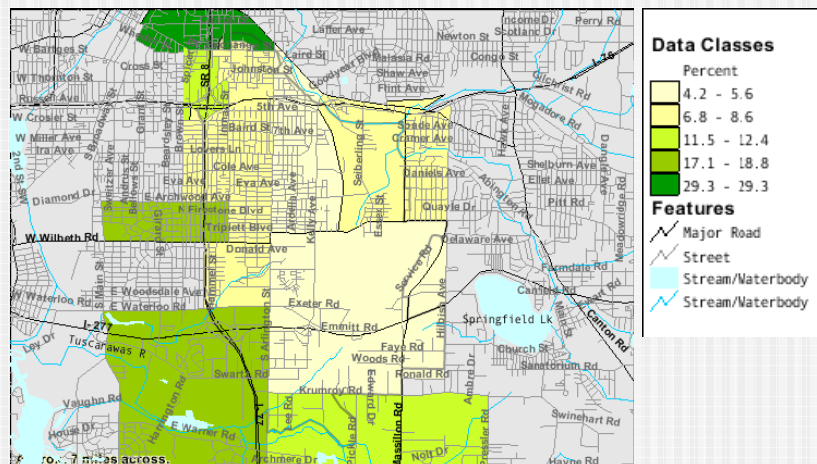
Education



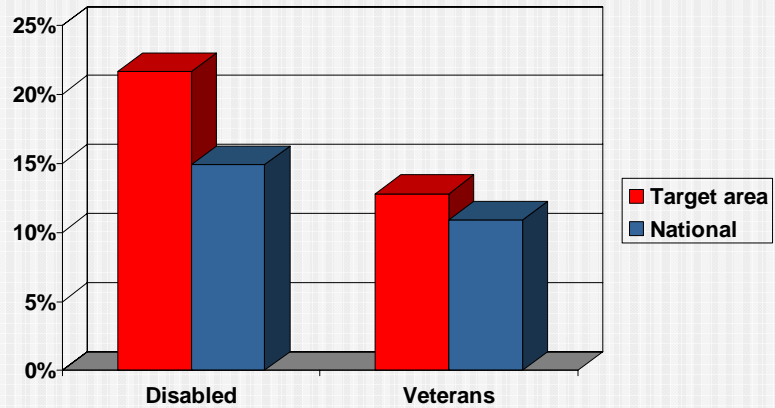
Adults with a College Degree in 44301



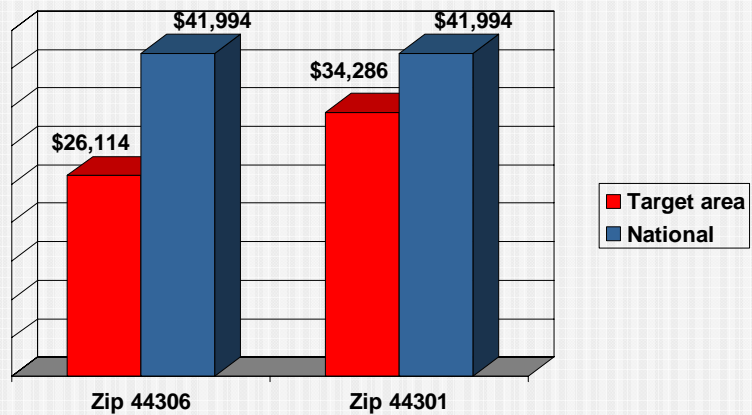
Adults with a College Degree in 44306



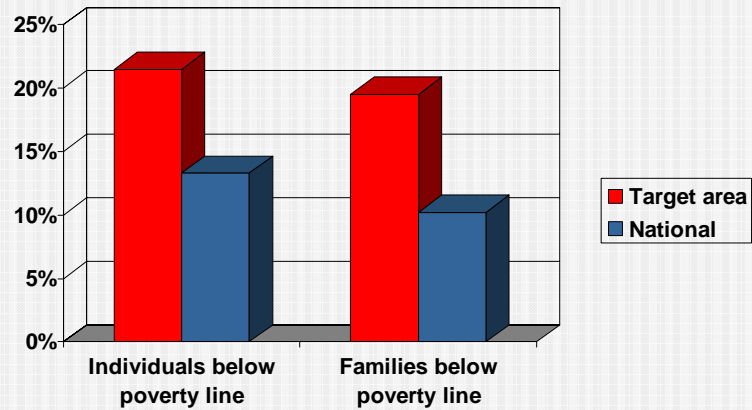
Special Needs



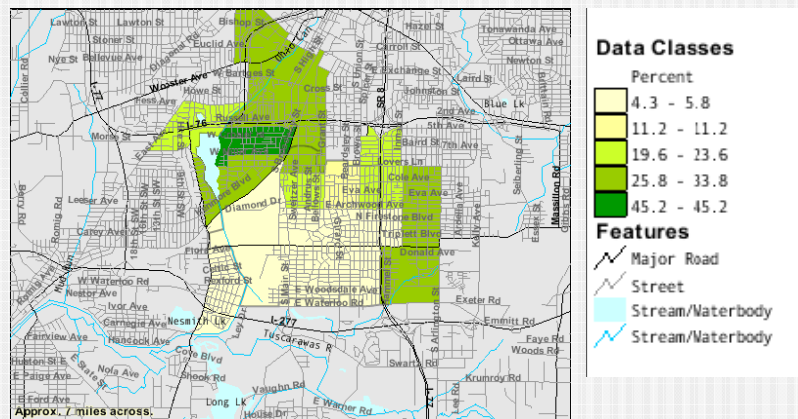
Median Income



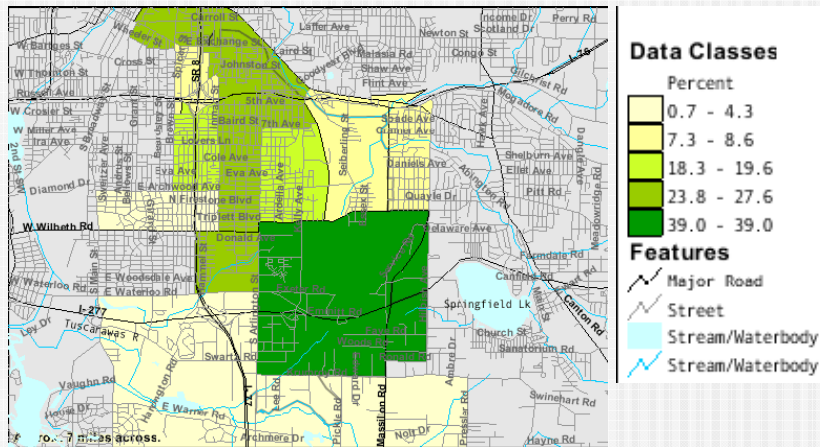
Poverty



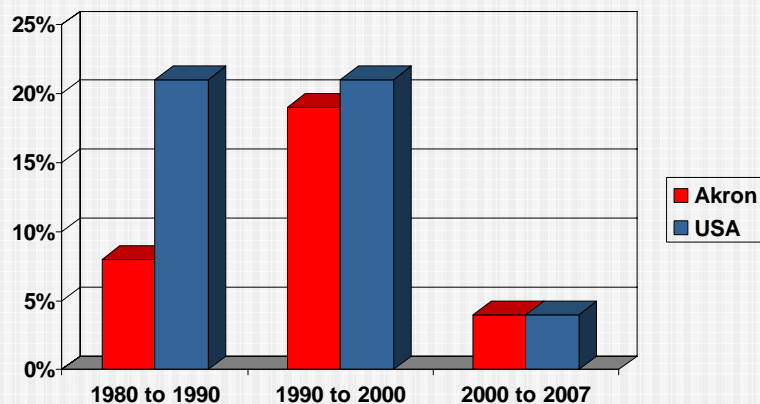
Percent of Families Below the Poverty Line in 44301



Percent of Families Below the Poverty Line in 44306

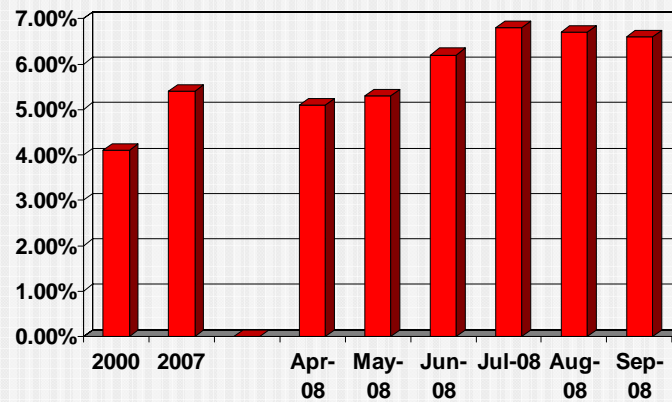


Increase in Jobs



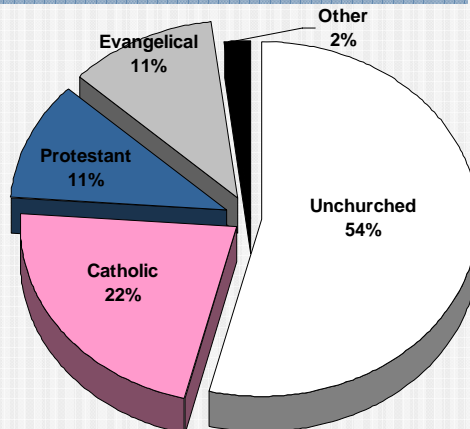
Source: Brookings Institution

Unemployment in Akron



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Religious Profile



Source: Religious Congregations and Membership 2000

Interviews with Civic Leaders

- The members of the Akron First Church community assessment task force personally interviewed 21 civic leaders from Summit County and the neighborhood around the church; leaders in government, education, nonprofits, business, the media and religion.

Community Needs Listed by Civic Leaders

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| ■ Children in poverty; basic needs (clothing, groceries) | ■ More space in homeless shelters |
| ■ After-school programs; Volunteer tutors for after-school tutoring | ■ Employment; job training |
| ■ Affordable housing | ■ Activities for teens |
| ■ Foreclosures and related crime | ■ Dental services for adults |
| ■ Middle-aged women who are homeless | ■ Re-entry for prisoners |
| | ■ Furniture bank |
| | ■ Access to health care |
| | ■ Wellness/prevention programs |
| | ■ Assist senior citizens |

Specific Opportunities

- Wilbeth-Arlington Homes
 - 328 units; up to 500 children
- Barrett Academy
 - Some of the poorest families in the city
- Voris Community Learning Center
 - Not much need; could use some tutors
- Pastors need to work together
 - Lay leaders from the churches

Awareness of the Adventist Church

- A high percentage of the civic leaders interviewed have never heard of the Adventist Church, nor had any contact with Akron First Church.

2002 Community Survey

- Random sample of 1,092 people in Summit County conducted for the United Way
- Problems with the public schools (19%)
- Crime & safety (15%)
- Jobs and the economy (12%)
- Too much development (12%)
- Lack of development (12%)
- Moral issues (11%)

Analysis

- Research has shown that growth in Adventist churches comes from:
 - Community involvement
 - Rich spirituality
 - Intentionality (goals, planning)
 - Open, accepting, welcoming atmosphere in the congregation
 - Activities for the unchurched on Sabbath

Recommendations

- Continue to develop the ministry with children and families at Wilbeth Arlington Homes.
 - Camp SonPower June 16-20 had an attendance of 16 to 20 children per day and 10 came for the closing Sabbath program at the church.
 - August 16 event was also successful.
 - Needs a group of volunteers willing to go there every week.

Recommendations

- Continue to develop the relationship with Barrett Academy by providing clothing and look for other opportunities to help. Study the possibility of an after-school tutoring program.
- Develop a ministry at Summit Terrace. Begin by inviting the group over for a meal toward the end of the month (16 to 20 individuals).

Recommendations

- Continue to host and develop the Firestone Area Ministers group.
- Consider raising the funds necessary to have a student missionary come to Akron for a year and work full time in community service ministry. The cost is about \$15,000 but the cash cost can be reduced by half if lodging and meals are donated in kind.

Recommendations

- Conduct a survey of church members to find out who is interest in being involved in various kinds of community services and community involvement. This can create a data base for future reference as programs are implemented.

Recommendations

- Set up a SALT group (Social Action Leadership Team) to coordinate the community initiatives of Akron First Church.
- The Ohio Conference will provide quarterly SALT training events here at Akron First Church, if requested.

Recommendations

- Provide a laundry for Barrett Academy.
- Develop classes for adults at Wilbeth-Arlington homes:
 - Financial management class
 - Housekeeping class
 - Gardening—community gardening project

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- www.creativeministry.org

- (800) 272-4664

Akron First Seventh-day Adventist Church Community Involvement Profile

We need every member to participate in this survey in order to determine how much support there is for the various community initiatives that have been proposed.

Name: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

1. Please indicate your interest in getting personally involved with each of the following community ministries. ***Please respond to each item.***

	I am <i>not</i> interested	I am interested in helping if possible	I have relevant skills.	I am willing to make specific donations.
Program for children at Wilbeth Arlington Homes				
Services to students and their families at Barrett Academy				
Monthly meal for Summit Terrace residents				
Help with the Firestone Park coalition of churches in the Christmas program				
Be a regular representative each month to the Firestone Park gathering church lay leaders				
Help develop a free clinic one night a week at the church				
Teach a seminar on family financial management				
Teach a seminar on parenting skills for parents of young children				
Teach a seminar on parenting skills for parents of teenagers				
Other:				
Other:				
Other:				

2. Are you willing to help on your own schedule with telephone calls, mailings and other clerical work to support one of the ministry teams listed above?

Yes No

3. Are you willing to help on your own schedule with communication, media and public relations work to support our community ministries?

Yes No

4. Are you willing to help on your own schedule with getting donations to support one or more of our community initiatives (in-kind or cash)?

Yes No

5. Do you have any prior experience with serving as a volunteer or employee or on the board of a nonprofit community organization?

Yes No

If "Yes," please list the organization(s) and role(s) you played:

6. Are you the member of any civic club or professional organization in the Akron metropolitan area?

Yes No

If "Yes," which one(s)?

7. If a young adult is willing to come to Akron as a student missionary full time for a year, would you be willing to provide a room in your home for them as well as meals?

Yes No

8. If a young adult is willing to come to Akron as a student missionary full time for a year, would you be willing to make a pledge toward their scholarship at the end of the year when they go back to college or university?

Yes No

9. Other suggestions or questions: