



PREPARING THE WAY

Bricks and Mortar PLUS Hearts and Minds

A Guide for Using *Building Belonging* by John Cleghorn

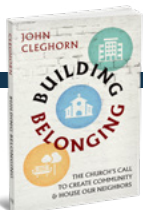
“With a focus on housing neighbors and building community, the church is uniquely positioned to respond. The call to heal the nation with more housing and enriched communities comes from within and beyond the church.”

—*Building Belonging*, p. 10

These words in the opening chapter of *Building Belonging: The Church's Call to Create Community and House Our Neighbors* by John Cleghorn provide the foundation for this guide intended for congregations and communities. The five steps outlined here are meant to be a starting point for those looking to implement the strategies from Cleghorn's book after they first consider how their financial needs and goals can be addressed in a development initiative. As Cleghorn writes regarding why congregations decide to undertake development projects, “Some describe a purely missional call to build housing. Other congregations get close enough to the tomb to take a long look inside and then decide it's time to trust God in altogether new ways” (p. 25). Once your congregation has done the work to determine your missional call and/or how your congregation's financial needs can be met by such an investment, you can then begin the work outlined in the five steps of this guide. This initial planning should also include determining the specific financial metrics that need to be met by a project: whether you need an up-front, lump-sum amount; ongoing income; or a combination.

After this initial step is taken, and as your church evaluates its next step in addressing the housing crisis in your neighborhood, this guide will help your group identify its guiding values, determine the information needed to begin, assemble team members and community partners, build a budget, and construct a project timeline.

You'll notice that the guide is divided into steps rather than sessions. The call to create community and house neighbors is an ongoing process; each step will require multiple meetings, and you'll need to revisit them throughout the journey. As you work through this guide, refer to Appendix B, “Principles of Discernment” (p. 159), as a touchstone to guide you through the process. Additionally, for resources to deepen your understanding and help define your project as listed in Appendix D (p. 162-69), visit the [website for Caldwell Presbyterian Church](#), the author's congregation. The site includes videos of their conversations and sermons, as well as lists of other resources.



A note on the prayers included in this guide: those at the end of each step are from the *Glory to God* hymnal and have been chosen in part because the copyright holders have given permission for churches to print the words in bulletins or other worship resources. Please consider using these prayers not only with your team but also with your larger congregation as you incorporate this new ministry into your weekly worship.

If you are using this book in a group or congregational setting and want to save money on a bulk purchase, note that most Westminster John Knox Press books are available at special quantity discounts when purchased in bulk by churches and other organizations. For more information, please e-mail SpecialSales@wjkbooks.com.



STEP 1

DEFINING OUR VALUES: BUILDING FAITHFUL VISIONING (PART 1)

Opening Prayer

Loving God, help us to invest the time and energy needed to understand the hearts and minds, challenges and circumstances, and hopes and dreams of our neighbors. Show us how each neighbor is an individual child of God with distinct and personal needs and goals so we may meet, know, and love each neighbor individually. Amen.

Defining Values

As described in chapter 6 (see pp. 149-53), Caldwell Presbyterian Church spent two years preparing for their neighbors to move in. Their team created the church's learning track by beginning with the values that rooted their mission. As you consider your team's project and mission, take time to define your team's values.

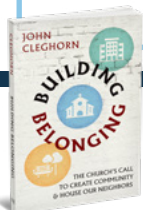
VALUES

Brainstorming Building Blocks of Faithful Visioning

Using the first two "building blocks of faithful visioning" as described on page 129, explore your community and context, as well as your assets, resources, strengths, and weaknesses.

COMMUNITY & CONTEXT

- What is the history of your community?
- Who has been displaced, excluded, or overlooked?
- Who is suffering, vulnerable, powerless, or underserved?
- What is the history of the church? Has it done harm to others in its community that needs repair?
- What is the church's passion?
- What population is the church called to serve?
- What services currently exist for those in need?
- Is there a gap the church can help fill, one that no one else will step up to address?



ASSETS, RESOURCES, STRENGTHS, & WEAKNESSES

- What resources does the congregation have to offer?
- What professional skills and lived experiences do church members have that can be harnessed?
- Does the church have social capital on which to draw?
- Does the church have the stamina for what will inevitably be a yearslong and, at times, arduous undertaking?
- What blind spots might limit its vision?
- What shortages might hinder a big undertaking? Can they be overcome?

Building a Research Library

What additional resources (books, workshops, panels, meetings with experts) do you need to further engage this step? Start your search at: <https://www.caldwellpresby.org/easter/>

RESOURCES

Closing Prayer

Here in this sacrament we see God's grace unbound, for all, for me! May we respond with joyful praise in loving service all our days. . . . Now we our vow of faith renew, stretch wide our sights to global view, and claim with Christians far and near a larger family held dear. Amen.

—from *Glory to God*, #489, “Wonder of Wonders, Here Revealed”



STEP 2

DEFINING OUR VALUES: BUILDING FAITHFUL VISIONING (PART 2)

Opening Prayer

God of preparation, guide us in creating a home—a space and place where true community can form—for our neighbors. Remind us of the need for education and preparation as we seek to form healthy, respectful, and informed relationships. Amen.

Reaffirming & Defining Values

Throughout this process, ensure that you are keeping the values guiding your preparation in the forefront. Remind yourselves of the values you have designated so far and update them as needed.

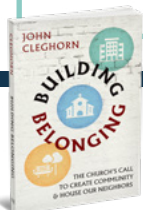
VALUES

Brainstorming Building Blocks of Faithful Visioning

Using the third through fifth “building blocks of faithful visioning” as described on pages 129-30, take the time to explore your neighborhood, government and public policy, and partners and partnerships.

NEIGHBORHOOD

- What connects the church to its immediate neighbors and neighborhood?
- Does the church have insights into how its neighbors would receive the idea of housing (or any other bold public witness)?
- How many members live near the church? How many live in other parts of town, and how might that matter?
- Who will advocate for the church’s vision, and who won’t?
- How can the church turn “Not in my backyard” (NIMBY) into “Yes in God’s backyard” (YIGBY)?



GOVERNMENT & PUBLIC POLICY

- Is local government focused on affordable housing? If so, how?
- What initiatives has it launched and why?
- Has it considered houses of faith as part of the solution?
- What financial resources are available through national, state, and local governments?
- How is your land zoned, and would that have to be changed?
- What's involved in changing zoning if that's needed?

PARTNERS & PARTNERSHIPS

- What nonprofit organizations currently serve those in need of affordable housing in your community?
- What do they offer, and how do they work together? Talk to their leaders at length! Listen to their ideas about where there are gaps, hurdles, and opportunities.

Building a Research Library

What additional resources (books, workshops, panels, meetings with experts) do you need to further engage this step? Start your search at: <https://www.caldwellpresby.org/easter/>

RESOURCES

Closing Prayer

Where cross the crowded ways of life, where sound the cries of race and clan, above the noise of selfish strife, we hear your voice, O Son of Man. In haunts of wretchedness and need, on shadowed thresholds fraught with fears, from paths where hide the lures of greed, we catch the vision of your tears. . . . Till all the world shall learn your love, and follow where your feet have trod; till glorious from your heaven above shall come the city of our God. Amen.

—*Glory to God*, #343, “Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life”



STEP 3

ASSEMBLING THE PROJECT TEAM

Opening Prayer

God of community, engage in us the principles of community organizing: fostering relationships, achieving consensus, and building grassroots power. Kindle in us a motivational joy, giving us the versatility, resilience, and insight needed to carry on. Amen.

Reaffirming & Defining Values

Remind yourselves of the values you have designated so far and update them as needed.

VALUES

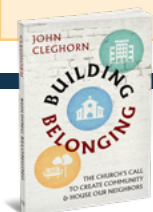
Brainstorming Team Members

Using the eight-point list on pages 131-32, brainstorm who should be part of the project team. As Cleghorn notes in the section on pastoral leadership (pp. 134-35), the team's membership will change throughout the years of the project. Keeping this document at hand will help those remaining on the team reach out to new members as needed.

ROLE	NAME	SPECIALTY	CONTACT
LAITY/ MEMBERSHIP			
LEGAL (OBJECTIVE, THIRD-PARTY)			



ROLE	NAME	SPECIALTY	CONTACT
SOCIAL SUPPORT SERVICES			
FINANCIAL (OBJECTIVE, THIRD-PARTY)			
COMMUNITY CONNECTION			
LIVED EXPERIENCE			
NEIGHBOR RELATIONS			
ARCHITECT			



FINDING A DEVELOPER (see pp. 132-34)

List of Questions During Interview Stage:

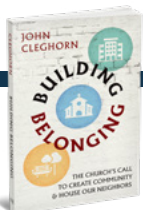
NAME / CONTACT	CHURCH EXPERIENCE?	PROS	CONS

Closing Prayer

May the God of hope go with us every day,
filling all our lives with love and joy and peace.
May the God of justice speed us on our way,
bringing light and hope to every land and race.
Praying, let us work for peace;
singing, share our joy with all;
working for a world that's new,
faithful when we hear Christ's call. Amen.

¡Dios de la esperanza, danos gozo y paz!
Al mundo en crisis, habla tu verdad.
Dios de la justicia, mándanos tu luz,
luz y esperanza en la oscuridad.
Oremos por la paz,
cantemos de tu amor.
Luchemos por la paz,
fieles a ti, Señor. Amén

—*Glory to God*, #765,
“May the God of Hope Go with Us”



STEP 4

BUDGETING FOR & FUNDING THE PROJECT

Opening Prayer

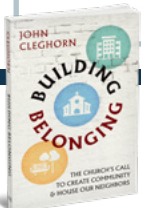
God of understanding, give us the clarity to see the reality of our financial considerations, and allow us to be steady in our commitment to honor your values as we undertake this project. Amen.

Defining the Financial Scope of the Project

Read through pages 134-39 and determine your approach to the project. Below are just a few questions to start with as you begin your planning.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- What type of housing will be built—new construction or adaptive reuse of an existing building?
- Will the project require long-term debt, and how will that debt affect the rental income needed?
- Will the architect and general contractor be responsible to the developer or the church?
- How will ongoing operational finances be managed, including income, expenses, and building maintenance?
- What public funding sources are available and what are the compliance requirements associated with them? How durable and predictable are these sources?
- Are there federal subsidies involved? How do they impact the rental rates and financial sustainability?
- What are the potential risks associated with relying on public funding for the project?
- How will the team ensure transparency and accountability in financial matters throughout the project?
- Are there any ideological considerations that may impact the team's approach to funding sources?
- How will the team balance the financial aspects with the social mission goals?
- What are the trade-offs of different funding sources in terms of project control and sustainability?
- How will the team ensure that the budget aligns with the community's values and goals?
- Are there any alternative funding options beyond traditional sources that could be explored?



Budgeting for housing projects is complex. Your team not only needs to consider the initial financial capacity needed for construction and implementation, but also needs to calculate the ongoing operational expenses. The charts below are meant only to be a starting point. Remember to involve financial experts early on in the process.

Funding the Project

Funding for a housing project can be built from many sources. As Cleghorn writes on page 136, “Sources may include local philanthropic organizations, family foundations, state or local government, and nonprofit agencies. In a few cases, a church’s ecclesiastical body, such as a diocese, presbytery, synod, or conference might offer exploration grants.” As with building your budget, these charts are simply starting points as you research what’s available.

CONSTRUCTION-PHASE FUNDING		
LINE ITEM	TYPE (ONGOING OR ONE-TIME)	AMOUNT
TOTAL:		

ONGOING / OPERATIONAL FUNDING		
LINE ITEM	TYPE (ONGOING OR ONE-TIME)	AMOUNT
TOTAL:		

Closing Prayer

God, your word is still creating, calling us to life made new. Now reveal to us fresh vistas where there’s work to dare and do. Keep us clear of all distortion. Polish us with loving care. Thus, new creatures in your image, we’ll proclaim Christ everywhere. Amen.

—from *Glory to God*, #23, “God, You Spin the Whirling Planets”



STEP 5

CREATING A TIMELINE

Opening Prayer

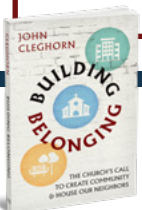
God of hope, guide us in our search for assistance and encouragement as we discern a path forward in our community. Let us know we are not alone and remind us that collaboration is our guiding light. Amen.

Congregational Preparation Objectives & Values

Read through Appendix D (pp. 162-65) and define your congregational preparation objectives and your working values.

CONGREGATIONAL PREPARATION OBJECTIVES

WORKING VALUES GUIDING OUR PREPARATION

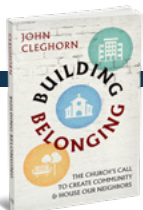


Drafting a Timeline

Continuing to use Appendix D as a model, begin to create a broad-strokes timeline for your project, including what resources you need and who needs to be involved.

TIMEFRAME	OBJECTIVE
GUIDING VALUES	
GUIDING RESEARCH & RESOURCES	
EXPERTS TO INVOLVE	
ACTION STEPS & TEAM MEMBERS RESPONSIBLE	

TIMEFRAME	OBJECTIVE
GUIDING VALUES	
GUIDING RESEARCH & RESOURCES	
EXPERTS TO INVOLVE	
ACTION STEPS & TEAM MEMBERS RESPONSIBLE	



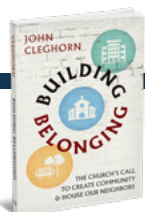
TIMEFRAME	OBJECTIVE
GUIDING VALUES	
GUIDING RESEARCH & RESOURCES	
EXPERTS TO INVOLVE	
ACTION STEPS & TEAM MEMBERS RESPONSIBLE	

TIMEFRAME	OBJECTIVE
GUIDING VALUES	
GUIDING RESEARCH & RESOURCES	
EXPERTS TO INVOLVE	
ACTION STEPS & TEAM MEMBERS RESPONSIBLE	



TIMEFRAME	OBJECTIVE
GUIDING VALUES	
GUIDING RESEARCH & RESOURCES	
EXPERTS TO INVOLVE	
ACTION STEPS & TEAM MEMBERS RESPONSIBLE	

TIMEFRAME	OBJECTIVE
GUIDING VALUES	
GUIDING RESEARCH & RESOURCES	
EXPERTS TO INVOLVE	
ACTION STEPS & TEAM MEMBERS RESPONSIBLE	



TIMEFRAME	OBJECTIVE
GUIDING VALUES	
GUIDING RESEARCH & RESOURCES	
EXPERTS TO INVOLVE	
ACTION STEPS & TEAM MEMBERS RESPONSIBLE	

Additional Prayers for Your Journey

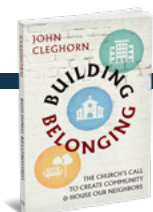
As Cleghorn mentions in Appendix B (p. 159), “Pray in everything! At the beginning and end of meetings, in the middle, in between and whenever needed, to hear the Spirit and lower the temperature of the discussion.” To help you in this goal, here are additional prayers based on hymn 761 from *Glory to God*, “Called as Partners in Christ’s Service.”

Called as partners in Christ’s service, called to ministries of grace, we respond with deep commitment fresh new lines of faith to trace. May we learn the art of sharing, side by side and friend with friend, equal partners in our caring to fulfill God’s chosen end. Amen

Christ’s example, Christ’s inspiring, Christ’s clear call to work and worth, let us follow, never faltering, reconciling folk on earth. Men and women, richer, poorer, all God’s people, young and old, blending human skills together gracious gifts from God unfold. Amen.

Thus new patterns for Christ’s mission, in a small or global sense, help us bear each other’s burdens, breaking down each wall or fence. Words of comfort, words of vision, words of challenge, said with care, bring new power and strength for action, make us colleagues, free and fair. Amen.

So God grant us for tomorrow ways to order human life that surround each person’s sorrow with a calm that conquers strife. Make us partners in our living, our compassion to increase, messengers of faith, thus giving hope and confidence and peace. Amen.



Looking for a Guided Process for Next Steps?

CHECK OUT THE GOOD FUTURES ACCELERATOR!

A Program Created through the Collaboration of
ROOTED GOOD and the **PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)**

The Good Futures Accelerator is a dynamic and proven course designed to help congregations creatively use their church buildings and property to align money and mission. By participating in this program, congregations discover innovative ways to further their mission while building financial resilience.

What is the Good Futures Accelerator?

The Good Futures Accelerator is a self-guided program that empowers congregations to:

- **Leverage Church Property:** Explore creative strategies for using your church buildings and land to serve your community and generate income.
- **Align Money and Mission:** Ensure that your financial practices support and amplify your congregation's mission, creating a strong foundation for long-term impact.
- **Build Financial Resilience:** Learn how to maximize your resources and create sustainable revenue streams that align with your values and goals.
- **Innovate with Confidence:** Access practical tools and frameworks that encourage experimentation, learning, and growth.

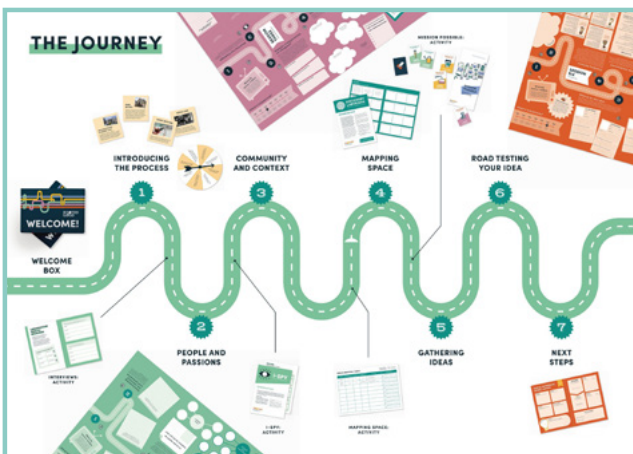


Why Choose the Good Futures Accelerator?

- **Self-Guided Curriculum** allows your congregation to engage with the material on your own schedule.
- **Proven Methodology** offers a proven pathway to aligning money and mission through the creative use of church property.
- **Supportive Community** creates a network of like-minded congregations and ministries that are also on the journey of innovation and transformation.

What's Included?

- **Comprehensive Resources:** Access step-by-step guides, videos, templates, and more.
- **Gamified Learning Journey:** Engage in a dynamic, interactive experience that includes reflection questions and experiential exercises designed to deepen understanding and spark creativity.
- **Tailored Content:** The program is rooted in Reformed theology.



How to Get Started

Visit www.pcusa.org/innovation to learn more, invest in your congregation's future, equip your leaders, inspire your members, and transform your community.