



Church Spotlight

Urban Mission, Spartanburg District

Reverend Darrell McNeill, Pastor

Promoting Food Justice for Sustainability

Three years ago, Reverend Darrell McNeill was appointed to begin a Missional Congregation for underserved communities in Spartanburg. Since then, he has brought people together to improve the health of those living in the community. Urban Mission does not resemble a typical church – it is a house church with Holy Communion services, class meetings, street evangelism, and monthly Love Feasts. Rev. McNeill embraced FAN and has found unique ways to promote the FAN goals of increased healthy eating and physical activity in community settings.

Urban Mission, which is in a “food desert” with limited access to affordable and good-quality food and healthy produce, promotes healthy living across races and income levels. Rev. McNeill believes FAN has played a key role in sustaining the mission’s activities and getting the message out about healthy living. The mission offers a community garden as an asset building program to teach individuals and families principles of gardening and harvesting. Families receive a double investment for their time when they take part in the physical activity that comes with gardening!



Rev. McNeill shares FAN resources with chefs, including tips for planning a healthy menu. Many are now eager to prepare dishes using locally-sourced foods. Changing the menu and working with chefs has improved Urban Mission’s monthly “Love Feast” where they serve a free and healthy meal to those living in the community. The meal features a healthy fruit or vegetable centerpiece at each table. Attendees look forward to the monthly “Love Feast” and enjoy spending time together over a nutritious meal. Community members have shared their appreciation for the mission excitement about having youth learn about growing their own food and eating a healthy diet.

Urban Mission recently established a community development corporation, is planting an herb garden, and even has an eagle scout candidate building a chicken coop for raising hens. They also hope to launch a Community- and Church-Supported Agriculture program, giving individuals an added opportunity eat healthy by receiving a box of locally-grown foods. Rev. McNeill looks forward to continuing to minister and serve the community in new and exciting ways. He praises FAN’s support of helping Urban Mission improve the health of people in the community and plan for future activities.



Congratulations to Urban Mission for your success and commitment to the health and well-being of your community!