

Cuyahoga Valley Church Restores Hope to Slavic Village Community

Restarting the Conversation for Long-range Vision

When it comes to vision statements, many church leaders have lost interest. And for good reason—most vision statements are generic and useless. I like to say that your church really doesn't need a vision statement, it needs a visionary state of mind. Yet, there needs to be a way to cultivate that state of mind. **Your team does need some ideas on paper to become a sort of "mental charging station" for themselves and other leaders.** Think of a vivid vision statement as "base camp" for the team to assemble around, in order to take "vision casting treks" and "meaning excursions" all day long; that is the daily work of ministry.

So how do you get this vision thing right? What does success look like? I answer the question for you in my new book *God Dreams*. More than that, I created a step-by-step guide for church teams.

To inspire you along the way, **here is a case study from Cuyahoga Valley Church in Cleveland, OH, led by Chad Allen, Lead Pastor, and Rick Duncan, Founding Pastor.** Before we jump into their "Slavic Village Restoration" vision, let's clarify what it is we are looking at.

First, it is a vivid description example of a long-range vision or what I call a "beyond-the-horizon" vision. Many have abandoned thinking long as discipline as a result of the constant changes of culture and technology. But for the church, there are many foundational reasons why leadership should think long-range. [Here are twelve of them.](#)

Second, it is only one fourth of what you need to have a complete visionary plan. This is the start – the long-range **context** to visionary plan. There are three other horizons to develop and the plan is eventually anchored in four immediate action initiatives in the next 90 days. To see the model for visionary planning check out [how the Horizon Storyline works.](#)

Cuyahoga Valley Vision: Slavic Village Restoration

Summary: In the next five years we will pursue the radical transformation of Slavic Village, one of America's hardest-hit foreclosure markets, through a kaleidoscope of missional initiatives with the dream of a complete renovation of an entire neighborhood block.

God is graciously allowing us to participate in His work to see a city block in a decaying community restored. Our city-block restoration vision is guided by our mission of inviting people to new life in Christ. We are motivated by the message of Isaiah 61:4: "They shall build up the ancient ruins; they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations."

We have adopted an urban area just north of us, Slavic Village, as a community where we want to focus our resources for restoration. In the words of Acts 1:8, it's our Judea. Why Slavic Village? In the summer of 2007, according to RealtyTrac, Cleveland's 44105 zip code, Slavic Village, was the hardest hit community for foreclosures in the entire United States.

We will seek a holistic approach toward restoration in Slavic Village and issue a full-court press of ministry partnerships, church planting, missional engagement, and community enrichment from tutoring kids to job training for parents to fruit-and-vegetable giveaways for all. We collaborate with many others and mobilize our people to bring stability and hope for the future for hundreds of families in the name of Christ.

In 2016, we hope to be working with many area churches to renovate two to three houses on a city block in Slavic Village. In 2017, our dream is to restore five to six houses. Ultimately we want to see an entire block restored, renewed, and filled with the hope of Christ.

Church: **Cuyahoga Valley Church, Cleveland, OH**

Pastors: **Chad Allen, Lead Pastor and Rick Duncan, Founding Pastor**

Vision Template: [Targeted Transformation](#) by means of [Crisis Mobilization](#)

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