2.8). The second mistake is to think that if salvation is a gift, we can now do whatever we like. He rejects this equally forcefully (1 Corinthians 6.12f). We too are called to 'take up our cross' (Matthew 16.24) - n IN A SOCIETY Which has and advance and not distract from, engagement here and not distract from engagement from the inspired of the inspired from engagement from the inspired from engagement from en and love of God. NINE PRINCIPLES FOR LOCAL MISSION If the Church's life is to reflect the Triune love of God 1. Our action must be rooted in adoration 2. relationship-building must be at the centre of our life and work 3, these relationships must involve mutual dependency not condescension If the church's life is to reflect its involve mutual dependency not condescension 2.1.1 ACTION AND ADORATION The Catholic and Charismatic traditions both have a strong sense of God's transcendence churches: worship that both relates to daily life and conveys (by its language, its music and its use of silence) something of the power and mystery of God. Whatever by his Spirit, he is involved in every aspect of our lives. Vibrant worship is a hallmark of many of our inner-city hopes of the both participants. "One-to-ones" come before any programme of action. The experience of churches involved in community organising is that relationship-building is not only of intrinsic value, it also generates the most powerful and effective action. It both fosters a which this can lead on to meaningful face-to-face encounters. At its best, the church can be changed for the better. When people are in relationship, with common concerns, they national alliance with an ongoing set of relationships of trust and commitment studies in this booklet, because these and many other of our partner churches have found it helpful in working with and for their neighbours, 2.1.3 MUTUALITY, NOT CONDESCENSION If our relationships are to reflect the Triune between adults and children. Adults must help children grow into maturity, b o t h physically and spiritually (Luke 2,52; 1 Corinthians 14,20), Children have a distinctive insight into the Kingdom of God, which adults need to be the church must do more than set up Foodbanks. street violence). The testimony of those working in multi-faith areas is that the example of their neighbours can teach them how to be mo faithful Christians. In Tower Hamlets, the immediate contex Community Land Trusts and 'City Safe Havens' (to protect those in danger of practice as Christians: How disciplined am I in my life of prayer? How faithful is my sense of the unity of the 'Body of Christ' to the words of the Gospels and of St Paul? How often do I explain away and 'spiritualis the teaching of the Bible on possessions and in particular o For example, we share with our Muslim friends the conviction that God is compassionate and merciful', but our engagement with them makes us even more aware of the distinctiveness of the Christian belie that God's love is vulnerable as well as powerful. As we con the divine nature," 2.2 THE INCARNATION AND THE LOCAL CHURCH If the church's life is to reflect its incarnate Lord • it must to every social group • it must embody God's love in practical, tangible ways • its' work engage with the world as it is, even as it points to the world as it should be 2.2.1 BEING PRESENT AND ENGAGED In Christ, God noved into the neighbourhood,' and spent most of his year It must CHALLENGE the economic systems neighbours, and share with them in word and deed the love of Jesus Christ. But we must recognise a gap between theory and practic worship and common life is not always accessible to the people who live there. Anglica GOD'S LOVE A truly Christian spirituality must show forth God's love in physical, tangible Foodbanks, where members can donate food which is distributed to people in need. This is but it can only ever be the first step in a much longer journey. A number of inner-city churches are now holding regular the world as it actually is, and accept that transformation of hearts and communities which allow people to HUNGRY enuine love for those in greatest need, rather than our desire to feel righteous. we will care for its victims • it must share the good news of Jesus' death and resurrection • its will inspire, not distract from, engagement here and now 2,3,1 CHALLENGING INJUSTICE In a society which has lending. This is an issue on which The Archbishop of Canterbury has taken a lead in and on which the Church Urban Fund and The Centre for Theology & Community are now helping local congregations God. Our practice needs to be both provocative and loving, which is vet another reason have deep roots in our life of prayer, 2.3.2 SHARING THE GOOD NEWS OF CHRIST'S DEATH AND RESURRECTION our works of mercy and our action for justice each have intrinsic value - for each is an of the unconditional love which flows from the heart of God. Moreover, the way we share our faith must be generous an HOPE - AND ENGAGEMENT HERE AND NOW Christians believe that 'eternal life' begins here and now. It is no call to much more than 'joining our club' and 'becoming like us.' It must be an invitation by calling for a acknowledged and expressed. It knows both the depth of human alienation and the transforming power of our crucified and riser does not evade the suffering of so many human lives. Rather, it allows that pain to be witness to that hope is seen in churches which are truly "with" and "of" the poor. The promise of eternal life is not a distraction we recognize Christ our brother and love him effectively, in word and in deed. By giving witness to the truth, we will share with others the mystery of the heavenly Father's love. As a consequence, men [and women] throughout the world will be aroused to a lively hope—the gift of the Holy Spirit—that some day at last they will be caught up in peace and utter happiness in that fatherland radiant with the glo of the Lord. 3. STORIES Theology emerges from our lived experience. This is why the theology is to help us tell our stories, and to lay them alongside that foundational narrative of faith. That is why this booklet now mov in east London - just a tiny sample of the extraordinary amount of personal and social transformation which God is bringing about through churches in England's most deprived and diverse neighbourhoods. 3.1 THE CATHOLIC PARISH OF MANOR PARK 'In the past it didn' matter which church you went to, as long as you attended mass somewhere. Now the culture is that we go to this church, in this particul UVING Wage istened to the stories and needs of the congregation the church has begun to join up with other institutions in London Citizens to start to bring about real change on local issues of shared concern. In particular, ther the East London borough of Newham. The average age is 29 and migrants make up 12.95% of the population. The religious diversity is considerable, the largest single group being Muslin British, 29.3% White, and 23.9% Black or Black British. The area is also marked by Fr Sean Connolly When Fr Sean Connolly arrived in Manor Park, he was just one 800 people. It was hard to see how he would have a meaningful relationship with them all. However, through a long, patient process of one-to-one conversations, a relational culture serving a congregation of around CONTEXT Manor Park is an extremely diverse neighbourhood in the East London borough of Newham. The average age is 29 and migrants make up 12.95% of the population. The religious diversity is considerable, the largest single group being Muslim, followed by Christians, with significant Hind Afro-Carribean heritage, as well as white Britons and Eastern Europeans. The building a more relational church community has transformed the congregational experience of the Mass. Fr Sean observes that 'In a sense, it didn't matter which church you went to before, you just had to attend ma ngregation became much more engaged in the church's common life. Two meetings were held to identify some issues on which the congregation might have both an appetite and capacity for action. To Fr Sean's surprise, over 120 people attended. Two core issues emerged at the how they might improve the quality of life for people of all ages in their area. Their ranged from small-scale community fun days, to finding ways to stop build relationships within a congregation of 800, less work has been done to build face-to-face relationships with neighbours may be part of broader, lasting changes. CHALLENGES Because it takes so much time to neighbouring Forest Gate. The course, called People of Power, included Bible study and the sharing of personal testimon neighbours of other faiths, and included a visit to their nearby Hindu temple. Two years later, the church held a joint Lent course with members of ARC - a Pentecostal church in the number of children and young people in the church was a top priority. THE CONTEXT Bethnal Green is an area of contradictions. The Sunday Times described it as the coolest place to live in the UK! Columbia Road flower market sits in the heart of the parish and is one of the 'must-see' in the top one of St Peter's, their first task was to listen. Adam explains: "This was our way of expressing the centrality of face-to-face relationships, and the building of genuine mutuality. The idea was that we wanted to really know what the concerns of the local community were, rather than simply issues emerged from this process of listening and discernment. Firstly, that many members of the ongregation and the wider community felt unsafe on certain streets, While older members reported this Andy Walton (a worked with London Citizens on a wider listening campaign, with help from young people in danger. The CitySafe Campaign built relationships, and it also built confidence. Peter's has tried to follow that principle - combining works of mercy with action for justice - in helping parishioners in debt above reminds us, the Christian approach to poverty needs to be both immediate and strategic. St became clear that there are families and young people in the parish who don't have enough to eat action occurs in order to convert people. Rather, social action and sharing oractical expressions of the church's faith and love. The church runs regular Alpha courses, and has been helped by a week-long missi youth work authentically, there'll always be a need to be involved with young people whose workshop. This time the church approached local schools and twenty-two young people from different backgrounds attended, JUSTICE Having developed deep friendships with many in the community, the church was keen to address the root causes as well as the symptoms of the challenges they faced — low incom to-ones" being conducted with people outside the congregation) Stepney Salvation Army have taken action on a series of issues. These include affordable housing, street safety and the "Living Wage." To take just one example, the congregation were at the heart of a campaign to get a local housing association to put of the congregation were at the heart of a campaign to get a local housing association to put of the congregation were at the heart of a campaign to get a local housing association to put of the congregation were at the heart of a campaign to get a local housing association to put of the congregation were at the heart of a campaign to get a local housing association to put of the congregation were at the heart of a campaign to get a local housing association to put of the congregation were at the heart of a campaign to get a local housing association to put of the congregation were at the heart of a campaign to get a local housing association to put of the congregation were at the heart of a campaign to get a local housing association to put of the congregation were at the heart of a campaign to get a local housing association to put of the congregation were at the heart of a campaign to get a local housing association to put of the congregation were at the heart of a campaign to get a local housing association to put of the congregation were at the heart of a campaign to get a local housing association to put of the congregation were at the heart of a campaign to get a local housing association to the congregation of the congregation were at the heart of a campaign to get a local housing association to get a local housing as a congregation of the c ong-term unemployment and inadequate housing provision. Therefore, in 2007, the church joined London Citizens. A significant proportion of the church's members are now actively involved in community organising. Through the same processes of listening described at St Stephen's (but with far more of the "one THE CENTRE FOR THEOLOGY & COMMUNITY many characteristics with the other wards in the borough. The average age of the population is 28, and there is a 7% unemployment rate which is concentrated among 16-24 year olds. 12.86% of the population are migrants, and the levels of religious and ethnic diversity are pronounced. In Forest Gate no single ethnic roup constitutes a majority. With respect to faith, 45,5% say they are Christian, and 23,4% Muslim. Not unlike other wards in the borough, 34,2% of the ward's population are white, 28,3% Asian or Asian British, and 25,3% Black or Black British. In socio-economic terms, Forest Gate is poor, 24,38% of benefits claim t and eat together. The (Black-majority) congregation now numbers more than 250 with young people making up at least a fifth of the congregation, Many come to church independently of their parents. A significant number of church members come from deprived and challenging backgrounds; so man, in street violence) has led to acute awareness of the need to target and welcome this group of individuals. RELATIONAL Although Sunday worship is the main focus of planning and attention, ARC works with a range of institutions during the week. As Pastor Peter explains, 'We are a sunday of the sunday worship is the main focus of planning and attention, ARC works with a range of institutions during the week. As Pastor Peter explains, 'We are a sunday of the sunday worship is the main focus of planning and attention, ARC works with a range of institutions during the week. As Pastor Peter explains, 'We are a sunday of the sunday worship is the main focus of planning and attention, ARC works with a range of institutions during the week. As Pastor Peter explains, 'We are a sunday of the sunday of the sunday of the sunday worship is the main focus of planning and attention, and the sunday of the sunda *Equipping churches to transform* encourage their young people, and to take part in Sunday services. YFC NEWHAM (YOUTH FOR CHRIST) Pastor Peter sits on the trustee board and ARC partners and serves with this exciting organisation to impact youth. OM (OPERATION MOBILISATION) Arc partners with OM to carry out its vision for missions and has led teams to India and helps to train missionaries for the mission fields. THE CENTRE FOR THEOLOGY & COMMUNITY (CTC): Through the Near Neighbours programme (a small grants giving programme their communities NEWHAM: ARC is involved in Transform Newham's "Redeeming Our Communities" initiative to tackle the personal, social and spiritual causes of gang violence. LONDON CITIZENS: Young people at ARC have also worked with London Citizens on sect to helping those who have had experience of gang culture. The daughter of one of ARC's pastors lost her life through gang violence, in a tragic case of mistaken identity. This motivated the church community to think about the nature of violence and wi JUST CHUKCH talents. Over 500 young people have attended each year, and now a recording studio is owned and used in partnership with other local organisations as a place where mentoring is provided for young people. Members of Stop Da Violence offer provided by its founder and Senior Pastor, Peter Nembhard. Sharing leadership and responsibility is a key priority for the years ahead - but it is not easy when, for many of the congregation, life is chaotic and insecure. Another priority d reinforce the message of the first part of this booklet. For all four churches, prayer and worship is absolutely central. For all relationships come before action; there is a strong commitment to mutual responsibilities. pressed in practical, tangible care as well as in the sharing of the Christian faith. And for all, there is a willingness to live with the tension at the heart of the Gospel, and not to collude with injustice. Each case study ended with a Park - that of journeying out beyond the church community - there is much that can be learnt from the example of Stepney Salvation Army, Likewise, in meeting the challenge identified by Adam for St Peter's - that of more focused Deepening the bonds of love and mutual support between the churches is part of their witness to the world. There is a second motivation for ending each case study with a section on "challenges". These stories are told to inform Churches which show MERCY, act JUSTLY and share FAITH are GOOP NEWS for their neighbours This poster presents every word of our booklet Just Church: Local congregations transforming their neighbourhoods. It is a call to every church to be involved in the kind of mission which transforms communities. A more conventional copy of Just Church can be found on our website.