

Annual Report 2023

Director's Thoughts

The Father wants all of his children to come home.

The Father wants all of his children to come home. Like most fathers, I want my family to love what I love. I grew up in Alaska around water and love being outdoors by canoe, raft, or boat. So when my wife, Belinda, and I planned a trip to Oregon, it should include a rafting adventure.

Belinda wasn't so sure. We'd lost our youngest daughter, Megan, to viral pneumonia six weeks earlier. The wound was still fresh, but maybe the trip would do us good, so we decided to go. My dad said he would go with us to help. We put two rafts in the water. I had Belinda with me, and we had our youngest son, Luke, with us. He was up for anything, but he was only four years old.

My dad had our daughter Kristen, who was eight, and our other son, Jeremy, who was six with him. My dad was good in the water, but working with two young children soon proved harder than we had imagined.

The river was flowing at a good speed, and it wasn't very long until we were ahead of the other raft. Because of the twists and turns in the river, we couldn't see the raft and could only shout at one another. Soon, we couldn't see or hear the other raft.

Belinda began to panic. We didn't live in a sheltered world any longer where we naively thought nothing wrong could happen to our children. She began to say, Gary, pull over, get us to the side of the shore; we need to wait for the kids. I said we're in the woods. There's no place to "pull over." She got more anxious by the moment and said, let me out. I'm going back for them. I said, remember, you don't know how to swim.

While discussing this, Jeremy's blue KC Royals hat floated around the corner: no raft, no Jeremy, just his hat. Belinda cried out, ready to jump in the water and swim against the current to go after her children.

I said I'll go back. I found a tree limb sticking out into the water. I ran the raft into it and told Belinda and Luke to hold onto the tree limb and not let go. I got into the water, waded to the side, and climbed into the woods. Without a path, I ran through the woods as fast as possible, shouting my kids' names. I was thrashing through trees, crying, and getting torn by thorns. My clothes were wet because I'd been in the water, and my shoes were soggy, but if there was a chance I could save my kids, I would do it, whatever it took!

I ran for what seemed like a mile, and then one of my yells was returned by Kristen. I heard her cry, Daddy, help us. I came around a bend in the river, and there was the raft, Kristen, Jeremy, and my dad. They'd gone aground on a sand bar and were stuck in the river.

I was able to wade out to the sand bar. I had to make them all get out of the raft—something the kids feared doing for my dad. We got the raft unstuck and got back in without losing the raft (which is a minor miracle). We soon made it back to Belinda and Luke. They were right where they were supposed to be, and the story had a happy ending. Praise God!

Here's the point: God wants EVERY one of His lost children to come home. He is NOT satisfied if He has MOST of them.

We have a Father who wants ALL His lost children to come home. If God wants all of His children to come home. He surely has a plan, and we want to find it.

Please pray that everyone in Kansas City will have multiple opportunities to hear the Good News from a friend.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary Kendall". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Gary Kendall



The Hebrew word “shalom” means peace and prosperity. In the biblical sense, seeking shalom involves promoting circumstances that allow people to flourish. Shalom in the city helps people thrive in their families, workplaces, neighborhoods, economies, and government.

The Great Commandments

Love the LORD and love your neighbor, Matthew 22:37-39

The Great Compassion

I was hungry, thirsty, a stranger, in need of clothes, sick, and in prison, and you met the need. Matthew 25:34-36

The Great Commission

Go and make disciples, teaching them to obey all I have commanded. Matthew 28:18, 19

The Great Collaboration

What’s often missing is the center of the circle—collaboration. Collaboration that fuels exponential capacity to the other three circles.

The EVERYperson plan prioritizes collaboration.

Jesus said, by this everyone will know that you are My disciples if you love one another. John 13:35

Our Measure

What if we could establish a baseline and measure progress in fulfilling the Four Greats? You'll see in the next page that we started with measuring progress toward fulfilling the Great Commandments. Fulfilling the Four Greats will positively impact individuals and the city.

At the **Micro level**, Individuals live a contagious Jesus life and know how to lead their friends to Jesus.

At the **Macro level**, The cumulative impact turns into a flourishing city. As you'll see later, we believe a regional approach best serves the diversity of the people and the culture.



The Human Flourishing Program

at Harvard's Institute for Quantitative Social Science

Flourishing in the City

Tyler VanderWeele, Harvard, offers a groundbreaking study on human flourishing. There are five characteristics of human flourishing.

1. Family and Friendship

Loving relationships support relational health and positive outcomes in life.

2. Religious Communities

Belonging to a faith community supports mental, spiritual, and physical aspects of life.

3. Work and Well-Being

Work and workplace policies contribute to flourishing and, in turn, affect work productivity, engagement, and turnover.

4. Meaning and Purpose

Significance, coherence, and purpose are critical factors that affect meaning in life and drive toward a sense of vocation and/or calling.

Character

5. Virtue expressed towards self and others, especially the ability to forgive, leads to human flourishing.



Love God

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and all your strength.

Matthew 22:37

When our love for God grows so does our capacity to love others. A great book to inspire you to love God more is *Enjoying Prayer* by Gary Schmitz. Gary is a “father” to Kansas City. He envisioned “village fires” across KC where lovers of God gathered to pray for God’s presence, revival, and city transformation.

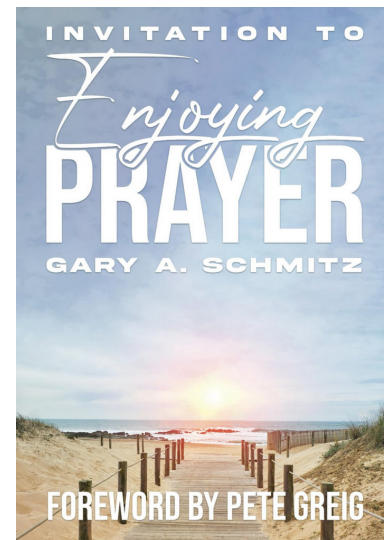
Regional Prayer

We join Gary’s vision in establishing prayer gatherings in the five regions of the city. Some regions have multiple gatherings. Check out the offerings: Lovekc.net/events

Love Your Neighbor

...and...love your neighbor as yourself. Matthew 22:39

Disciples live on mission where they live, learn, work, and play. In addition, we suggest you become a Light who adopts your neighborhood to pray, care, and share. When you open a free Light account, you receive a daily reminder to pray for five of your neighbors. You can also add family, friends, and co-workers to your prayer list; they will appear in your daily five.



Join the 4,100+ in KC who’ve already signed up to be a Light. Go to: <https://blesseveryhome.org/lovekc>

The City Dashboard

- 2.1M people live in greater Kansas City within a 41-mile radius of downtown KCMO.
- 4,100+ Lights each adopting 40 homes = 16,406 neighborhoods in KC = 10%.
- 73,137 (Net) homes adopted, with 190,156 people living in those homes.
- 131 of the 168 Zip Codes have a Light = 78%
- 308 of the 340 Grade School Districts have a Light = 91%
- 1404 of the 1432 Census Block Groups have a Light = 98%

We grow at an average of +50 Lights per month.

Our goal: Reach 5,000 Lights by the end of 2024



<https://www.everykc.org/>

Love your neighbor

Adopt the BLESS Rhythms to love your family, friends, and neighbors.

B - Begin with prayer

L - Listen to God and others

E - Eat together

S - Serve

S - Share your story

There is a reason God led Moses to bless Israel. Something happened in the spiritual when Moses prayed in Numbers 6:22-27. Moses combined his will with what God already wanted to do. Blessing brings heaven to earth, and earth becomes more like heaven.

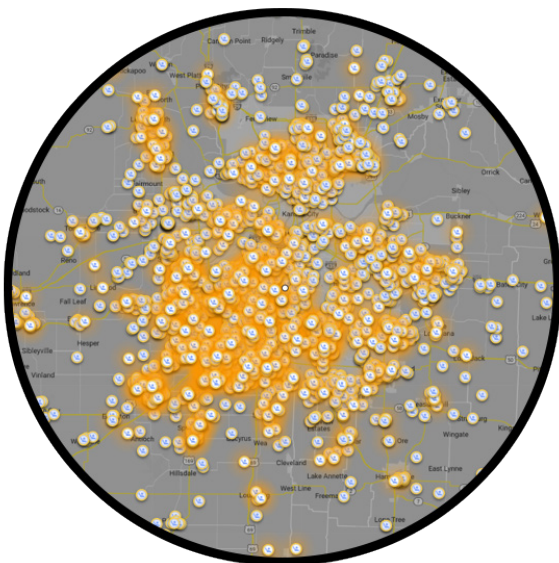
You can be a source of blessing to your family, friends, neighbors, and city.

Pete and Lyssa pray for their neighbors regularly using blesseveryhome.com. Pete reached out to his next-door neighbor with acts of kindness and stayed in conversation with him whenever possible. When his neighbor had a need, he said to Pete, "You're the one who prays." It was the start of a new level of relationship and could lead to opportunities to share faith.



We at KC Underground, are in this with you for the long haul.

-Ron Wegner, Director, KC Underground



Bless and be a blessing

Pray a blessing over your family. Walk your neighborhood and pray for the shalom of God. Circle the school in your neighborhood. Your friends will feel the effect of your blessing even if they don't know why. Watch God work and be ready to be part of the answer.

Here is a graph of the 4,100+ Lights in a 41 mile radius of Kansas City as of 11-8-2023.

Great Compassion

*I was hungry, thirsty,
a stranger, ...and
you met the need.*
Matthew 25:31-46

Compassion and justice go together and take a variety of forms. At the micro level, it looks like a disciple choosing a place of passion to serve. At the macro or city level, mission ministries, not-for-profits, churches, and networks combine their efforts to serve the city.

Circle Schools in Prayer

Love KC joined Caring for Kids, Claim Your Campus, All America, and Pray KC to see schools circled in prayer. The goal is to see every school in Kansas City, all 850, claimed by a disciple who will circle the school praying for blessing and protection.



PRAY KC



Fun Facts

- 308 of the 340 Grade Schools in KC have a person who agreed to be a Light living within their school district.
- 250 Schools were circled in prayer in the fall of 2023. There are 850 schools in greater Kansas City. What would it require for every school to have a Light and to be circled in prayer in 2024?

The Power of Prayer

Pastor Dennis Lester, Family Worship Center in Kansas City, Missouri, mobilized his church to prayer walk Ruskin High School after their Sunday service at least once a month. Some members prayer walk around the school during the week. Several weeks into the school year, the principal told Pastor Lester. The difference between this school year and the number of fights between students and last year is remarkable. We believe the prayers your church is praying for our students is the difference maker.



Stop the Violence

We have the authority to pray for students to thrive in school, for safe learning environments, for peace, protection, and truth to win the day. Pray with us that drugs, gangs, and sex trafficking will stop. Support principals, teachers, admins, and para's in their important role in preparing students for life. Pray for parents and students. Pray for marriages to be blessed and families to stay together.



Shouldn't happen on our watch

The number of U.S. school shootings in 2023 surpassed last year's record-breaking number of 305 school shootings on Thursday, November 10, according to a count by the K-12 School Shooting Database. The number of incidents this year has reached 306 — yet another record high for the third consecutive year. The

number puts it on track to likely land somewhere between 360 and 400 by the end of the year, according to a prediction made by school shooting expert David Riedman, who founded the database.

Prayer Walk

When you prayer walk, pray for crime to go down and human flourishing to go up. Pray that the parents will love the children, and the children will love the parents. Pray families will stay together. Pray for the nearest school to be a safe place of learning. Ask God if gangs, sex trafficking, and violence would stop. Bless your neighbors and ask that other Christians join you and be light in the neighborhood. Invite God to speak to you as you pray.





In the Great Commission we see three of our finish lines represented:

1. Evangelism
2. Bible engagement
3. Multiplication/discipleship.

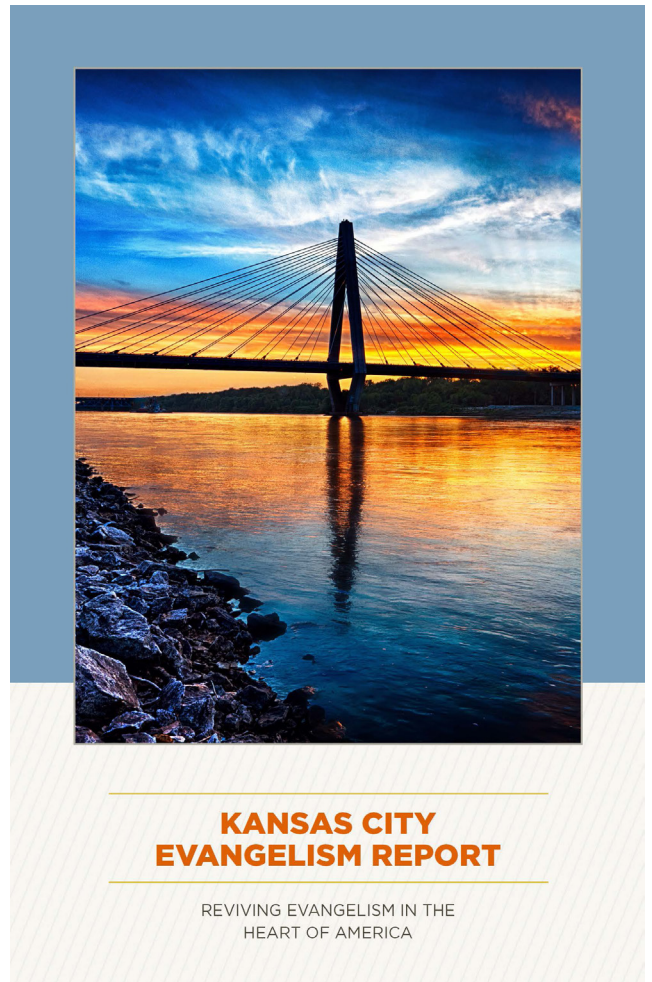
Evangelism is our priority for 2023. We need to revive Jesus' call to "Go make disciples."

The State of Evangelism in KC

Andrew Adudu, Love KC Associate, completed 46 interviews with pastors, mission leaders, and business leaders over the last year, asking 12 questions to learn what's working and where we are stuck. We employed a research specialist, Stacie Michaelson, to study the data, and the Luis Palau Association supported the layout and design to match their studies in other U.S. cities.



Gary Kendall, Stacie Mickelson- Director of research and consulting, Emmanuel Gospel Center, Boston and Andrew Adudu



If you'd like to order a paper copy you can do so. Email Gary@Lovekc.net. The cost is \$10 per copy plus shipping.

Read the report and join the conversation as we implement these learnings.

<https://cdn.lovekc.net/uploads/2023/12/08110524/KC-State-of-Evangelism-report-electronic-v2.pdf>

Summary of the Eight Primary Findings

1. The centrality of prayer
2. Maintaining a lifestyle of evangelism in a culture of business
3. The power of our stories
4. Unity and collaboration in the evangelistic community
5. The power and limitations of tools, resources and technology
6. Youth engagement
7. Cultural engagement in a diverse community
8. Gospel informed optimism

Prayer

One of Stacie's observations that Andrew conducted was all 46 of the interviewees talked about the importance of prayer.

Alpha

Alpha was the tool most often mentioned in the interviews. Nine times a leader referenced the value of Alpha. You can learn more about Alpha at Alphausa.org

Blesseveryhome

The technology most mentioned in the interviews was Blesseveryhome. Three leaders referenced the value it provided in disciples living on mission. See Blesseveryhome.com

Big Difference

When it comes to sharing their faith, Christians think of telling their story and the story of Jesus. What non-Christians think of when it comes to entering a conversation about faith is, will I be judged, and will there be true listening that leads to two-way dialog.

Aspiration versus Reality

Nearly every Pastor spoke with conviction about the need for evangelism. The majority of the churches represented didn't have an easy-to-identify system or program for training or equipping their people to evangelize.

We Need You

Next Spring, 2024, we go to each region, hosting regional roundtables in the city, discussing how to learn, benefit from, and apply the findings to fan the flame of evangelism in Kansas City. You can find the details for the Round Tables at Lovekc.net/events and Everykc.org. We need your voice in the conversation and your passion in sharing the love of Jesus in word and deed.

**NON-CHRISTIANS
AND
LAPSED CHRISTIANS
VALUE JUST TWO QUALITIES
IN A CONVERSATION PARTNER**

**1.
LISTENING
WITHOUT
JUDGMENT**

**2.
NOT
FORCING A
CONCLUSION**

Great Collaboration

Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

1 Corinthians 12:21, 26-27

We are members of one body and we gain synergy when we work together.

The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you.. that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another...If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together. Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. 1 Corinthians 12:21, 26-27

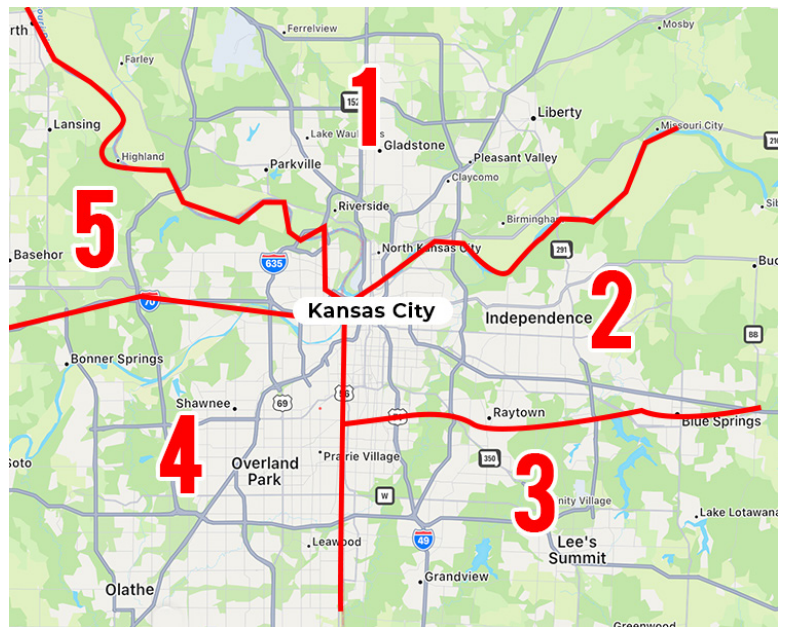
Question: What is it that we cannot do separately but can only do together in KC?

The Five Regions

- Region One is north of the river
- Region Two is downtown KCMO
- Region Three is SE KC (south of 95th) on the Missouri side
- Region Four is Johnson County on the Kansas side
- Region Five is Wyandotte County and Leavenworth Co on the Kansas side

A Regional Approach is Best

We see five unique regions in KC. A state line divides us east and west, and a river separates us north from south. The inner city of Missouri is different from Kansas City, KS. Johnson County is dissimilar from Lees Summit.



When we focus on the region's culture and people, we learn important differences, such as Wyandotte Country, region 5, is more than 50% Hispanic. The largest African American population lives in KCMO, region 2. North of the River operates as if it likes being separate from the city except when they want to take advantage of what the city has to offer.

During the interviews in Region 5, we learned that there isn't a history of the churches in Wyandotte working together. North of the River, region 1 couldn't name one event they did collaboratively since COVID.

Learn from the Missionaries

Missionaries learned that one must understand the culture, history, the positives, and the negatives to implement a strategy that brings effective gospel transformation. We commit to Regional Roundtables and a Regional Prayer Strategy for the same reasons.

We use the **Five Finish Lines** to chart our progress toward fulfilling the Four Greats

- 1. PRAYER: Love God and love your neighbor- Great Commandments**
- 2. COMPASSION AND JUSTICE: Great Compassion**
- 3. EVANGELISM: Go to the world- Great Commission**
- 4. BIBLE ENGAGEMENT: Teach them to obey- Great Commission**
- 5. MULTIPLICATION/DISCIPLESHIP: Make disciples- Great Commission**

We approach each of the five finish lines with a look at what it requires of an individual in the Micro view and what it requires of a city in collaboration, which we call the Macro view.

A growth goal is to determine a baseline to measure growth year over year. We started with Lights and prayer. We will add other measures as we can.

Progress in fulfilling the finish lines serves individual disciples in their personal and spiritual growth and blesses the city where the people live on mission.



Meet the Love KC Team



Andrew Adudu, Associate (apprentice to the Director); Samantha Ling Krebs, Integrator; Belinda and Gary Kendall, Founders; Jasmine Villa, Operations; Tim Stout, Marketing. Not shown Mark Martin, Accounting; Jade Van Slyke, Volunteer.

Board of Trustees

Brent Coonrod, Ben Stears, Eric Chia, Tim Stout, Mark Martin, Gary and Belinda Kendall, Nicole Dinsmore, Chelsea Robbins and Chris Pinion.

Why Love KC?

For individuals, Love KC, equips you to live on mission where you live, learn, work and play. You'll learn how to lead your friends to Jesus and feel the support of a community with you on the journey.

For the city, Love KC, is a backbone org to facilitate collaboration toward the fulfillment of the Every Person Plan and measured by the five finishlines, see Everykc.org

The Big C Church

The "Big C" church is designed to work together by God to create gospel transformation in a city. This requires a collaboration through a decentralized, bottom-up, network of churches, mission orgs, and Christian business leaders.

How to Connect

<https://lovekc.net/>

<https://www.youtube.com/@lovekc1789>

<https://www.facebook.com/lovekctoday>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/LoveKCtoday>

https://www.instagram.com/lovekctoday_

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What Difference does Love KC make?

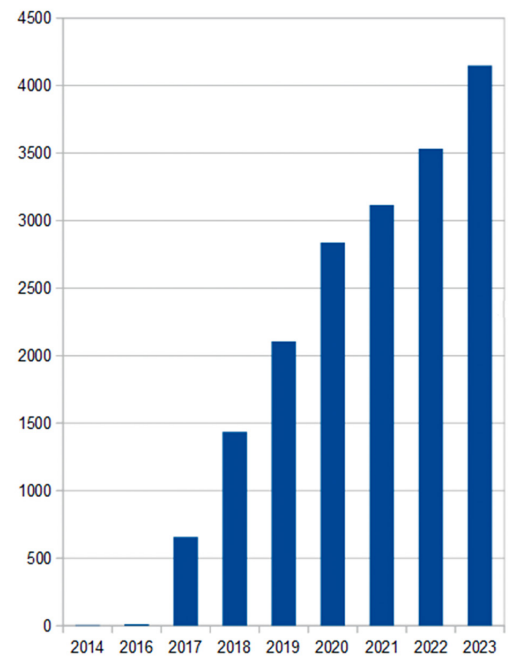
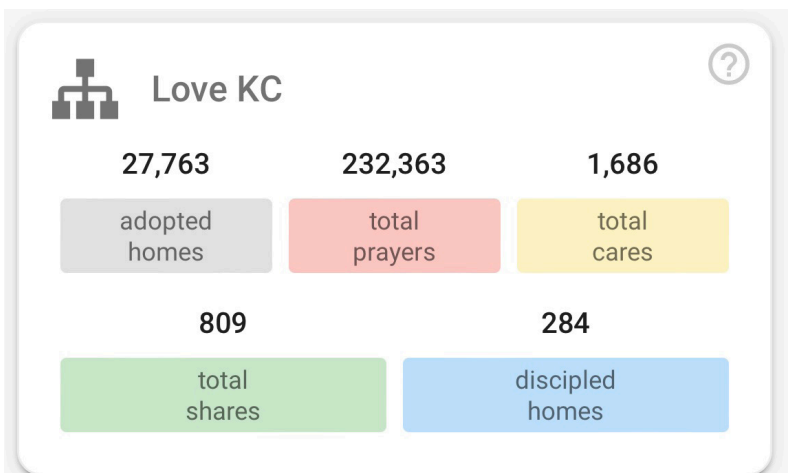
There are multiple churches and networks that encourage the growth of Lights in KC.

Graph of the Growth of Lights in KC

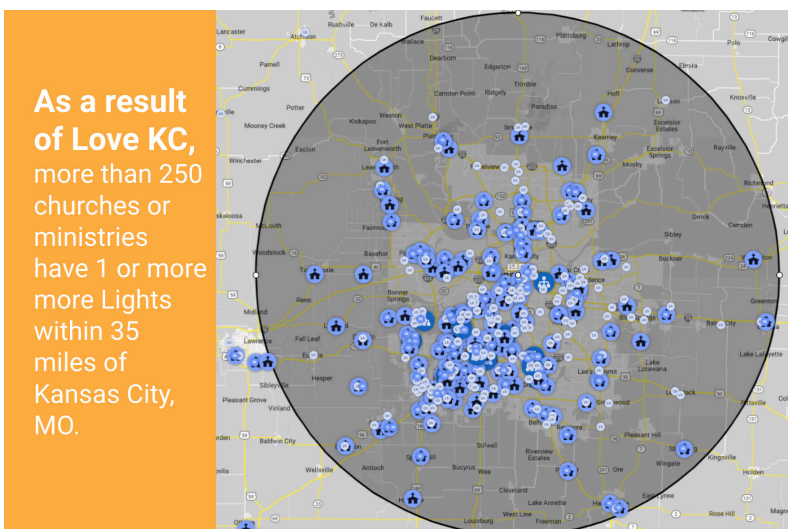
The goal for 2024 is 5,000.

- We added 618 Lights in 2023.
- 253 churches have 5 or more Lights.
- 520 churches have at least one Light.

The numbers below are from people or churches who identified with Love KC's network



The strategy of neighboring is simple, anyone can do it. It is natural because it is a lifestyle. And it is scalable. If every believer loves their neighbor we could reach Kansas City. I like the fact that blesseveryhome.com is a free, effective tool. Gary Kendall and Love KC are leading the charge in KC and I have confidence that working together we will see progress.
 -Randy Frazee, Lead Teaching Pastor at Westside, best selling author, Founder ONEKC



Quote from the Founder of Blesseveryhome

Kansas City is the leader in the nation in Lights primarily due to the work of Love KC and Gary Kendall. Karen and I are excited about this because the idea for blesseveryhome came from our time in Kansas City while working with the Jesus Film project.

-Chris Cooper

ROI: \$1 = 1 person

The lights in Kansas City are now praying for 10% of the people in Kansas City, if they follow through on their commitment. When we broke down the way we invested Love KC donations, at Love KC, we learned that for every \$.62 given in 2023, another 1 person was adopted in prayer. We received \$128,000 in income. We added 618 Lights who prayed for an average of forty homes each and an average of 3.2 persons lived in those homes. For these two: Imagine what happens in the life of the person prayed for when you give one dollar. For one dollar a person's eternal destination could be changed and generations affected.

Economic Impact : $(4100 \times 52) * \$31.80 = \$6.8M$

If each of the 4,100 Lights averages even one hour of care given to their neighbors and/or community a week, the total is 4,100 x 52 weeks or 215,800 hours of care annually. The U.S. government assesses the value of an hour of community service at \$31.80. The economic value of care given by Lights equals \$6,862,440.

Presently the Lights are praying for 10% of KC

Once the duplicated neighborhoods are removed.

How to Give

You can give by check to:

Love KC
13505 S. Mur-len Road, Suite 105, #131
Olathe, KS, 66062

Gary Kendall, Catalyst
Gary@lovekc.net
913-269-1026

For more information on other ways to give, see <https://lovekc.net/donate/>

Love KC is a 501.c3 not-for-profit organization, founded in 2020.

