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# HABITAT FOR HUMANITY AND THRIVENT FAITH BUILDS

A guide for local Habitat and Thrivent partnerships

# INTRODUCTION

## **Habitat and Thrivent: Aligned missions**

Habitat for Humanity – a Christian organization – and Thrivent – a membership organization of Christians – are on a journey to engage with Christian churches that want to do good in their community.

Both organizations are committed to:

- Activating volunteers.
- Strengthening communities.
- Doing more good together.

## **Benefits of working together**

Our similar missions create a natural reason to work together through Faith Builds to:

- Increase awareness of our organizations' missions and activities.
- Impact the community by helping provide shelter solutions.
- Build relationships with churches and their members.
- Engage churches and Thrivent members in high-impact volunteer and advocacy experiences.

## **HABITAT FOR HUMANITY**

Habitat for Humanity is a nonprofit Christian housing ministry seeking to eliminate substandard housing and homelessness from the world. Our mission is to put God's love into action by bringing people together to build homes, communities and hope.

## **THRIVENT**

Thrivent is a membership organization that guides Christians on their Wise With Money Journey. For more than 100 years, we've helped our member-owners be good stewards of the gifts they've been given, so they can live content, confident and generous lives.

# FAITH BUILDS OVERVIEW

## Building strong partnerships

Faith Builds open and build relationships with churches and communities for Habitat and Thrivent by demonstrating our shared goals and providing an opportunity to:

- Increase awareness of both organizations.
- Grow church advocates.
- Engage members.

Faith Builds bring together Habitat, Thrivent and local churches to make a real impact on the need for shelter in your community.

Through church partnerships that provide prayer, volunteers and financial support, a family will build a new home.

Together, we accomplish more!

## MAKE THE CONNECTION

Faith Builds provide authentic connections to church leaders and church attendees in your community.



# FAITH BUILDS OVERVIEW



## How do Faith Builds work?

- **A local Habitat office and Thrivent team work together to develop strategies to:**
  - Approach potential church partners and generate awareness and engagement among them.
  - Involve and engage church members on and off the build site.
- **Faith Builds Generosity Challenge:**
  - Thrivent covers up to 50% of the home cost.
  - Churches are asked to raise the remaining 50% of the home cost.
  - The amount of church involvement and commitment is determined by the local partnership.
- **Habitat office:**
  - Signs House Sponsorship agreement.
  - Submits Faith Builds Congregational Commitment Summary and volunteer names.
  - Completes and submits monthly and final project reports.
  - Covers outstanding home cost.
- **Churches:**
  - Provide volunteers to build a house in partnership with a local family.
  - Coordinate faith activities, like prayer, for the volunteers and work being done.
  - Make a financial commitment, based on their involvement.

# RELATIONSHIPS ARE KEY

## Working together leads to success

The relationship between the local Habitat office and Thrivent staff is key to successful Faith Builds.

Because local Habitat offices and Thrivent teams are composed differently, it's important to determine up front who will be involved, and what their accountabilities will be.

## Key roles and responsibilities:

- **Local Habitat office:**
  - Family selection.
  - Construction management.
  - Milestone reporting.
  - Partners with church on volunteer recruitment.
- **Local Habitat office board**—Provides overall direction and strategy for the Habitat office.
- **Local Thrivent team**—Partners with the local Habitat office staff to:
  - Approach churches and generate awareness and engagement.
  - Build awareness and engagement among church members and local community.

## UNDERSTAND THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

It's important for local Habitat offices and Thrivent teams to get to know the Christian community, including:

- The churches and denominations present in your area.
- How they operate.
- How local churches historically have engaged with the community and each other.
- The current churches' relationships with Habitat and Thrivent.

# PLAN FOR YOUR FAITH BUILDS

Be sure to allow a long lead time for Faith Builds projects, since you'll need time to establish relationships and agree on work to be done. **Churches typically plan the next year's activities before the end of the current year**, so be thoughtful in your timing.



# PLAN FOR YOUR FAITH BUILDS

## 1. Gain understanding and align on goals, timelines and tactics.

- Share your knowledge of the **local Christian community**. What churches or denominations are present in your area, and do they have a history of working together?
- Develop a list of **churches to approach**, determine who will approach them and how to do so. Determine the number of churches you expect to participate in the Faith Builds (e.g., 10 to 12).
- Consider the **uniqueness** of each church. How do things, like the church size, staff roles, mission focus and relationship history play into their Faith Builds involvement?
- Determine how you'll introduce the **Faith Builds Generosity Challenge** to churches. Clarify the roles of Thrivent, Habitat and churches.
- Determine **who you'll connect with** at the church and how you will approach that person or group to begin the Faith Builds discussion. Because churches of all sizes can participate, this an ideal opportunity for smaller churches with fewer resources to get involved.
- Determine if Habitat, Thrivent or both organizations should **approach the church**, based on already-established relationships, and who should lead the discussion.
- Discuss how to introduce the local **Thrivent team** and the Wise With Money Journey to the Habitat staff and board, ReStore staff and volunteers.  
See [Resources section](#) for useful tools.



### TIP:

*Don't underestimate the church community! Keep faith at the center of a Faith Build. Expect amazing things to happen.*

# PLAN FOR YOUR FAITH BUILDS

## 2. Plan the church approach and commitment

Although the Habitat office is ultimately responsible for raising the outstanding home cost, Thrivent and Habitat will partner on engaging churches to contribute to the Faith Builds Generosity Challenge.

- Determine the **financial commitment** of the involved churches, such as a set commitment amount, no minimum, etc. *(Note: Fundraising activities will help increase engagement and support for your Faith Builds.)*

**For example:** if the estimated home cost is \$120,000 and you expect 12 churches to participate, each church must raise an average of \$5,000, to cover 50% of the home cost.

## 3. Execute the plan

Decide who will do what and when.

### Align on:

- Team communication and collaboration.
- Meeting frequency.
- How to measure success and hold one another accountable for activities.
- Call and in-person cadence/schedule.

Create a promotion and communication plan to communicate with churches, church members, Thrivent members and the community.

### TIP:

*Consider how much money each church may be able to commit, knowing a variety of factors can affect the amount committed by individual churches.*



# ENGAGE WITH CHURCHES

## Understanding the Christian community is key to success

- **Faith community:** What is the history of churches partnering on projects and their willingness to work together? How will a Faith Builds support the mission of the church? How do churches engage the community now?
- **Nonprofit landscape:** How many established organizations exist? Are smaller ones popping up? What causes do they support? How engaged are their volunteers?

- **Community volunteer culture:** Do people prefer to engage in hands-on activities or make monetary donations? How far will they travel to volunteer?

## Evaluate the relationships of churches involved in the Faith Builds

- Ask the churches what advice they may have for Habitat and Thrivent, as we approach the faith community with this opportunity.
- Consider the uniqueness of each church. How do things, like the church size, staff roles, mission focus and relationship history play into their involvement?



# ENGAGE WITH CHURCHES

## How churches benefit from Faith Builds

- Helping a family build their home is a concrete way church members can put their faith into action.
- People of faith can engage in construction and non-construction activities as they give of themselves.
- Faith Builds partners often experience church-wide revitalization.
- Volunteers can meet and develop friendships with people from their own church and churches across town.
- Churches that have never worked together have the potential to build communities. In fact, they may decide to worship or work together and may learn from one another how to advance their church missions.

## Make the right connections

Be sure to find the right people to talk to at each church. It takes persistence and personal visits to authentically connect with leaders who have a heart for Habitat and interest in the Faith Build. Start by connecting with church leaders, members of the stewardship committee and communications people.

## The presentation

Invite church members to make an amazing difference in their community. Asking for funding can be uncomfortable for many people. Never enter a conversation by begging a church for help. Focus instead on inviting churches to prayerfully and generously join you in the journey of the Faith Builds.

Discuss ways to raise awareness about the project within each church. Churches that introduce their members to Habitat for Humanity and build excitement for the project have the best engagement. The more you touch the hearts of church members and help them understand how home ownership can change lives, the more likely they are to be generous.

This is an opportunity for churches to live their mission by engaging members, building fellowship and witnessing the wonder and power of homeownership.



### TIP:

*Share how the Faith Builds align with church missions and engage the community.*

*Explain the family selection process, and the concepts of affordable mortgages and sweat equity to each church.*

# ENGAGEMENT AND VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

## Church Members

Faith Builds should focus on making volunteer days available to church members who will be doing the greatest amount of the construction activity. And although construction is a big part of a Faith Build, be sure to let church and Thrivent members know there are many ways to make a difference, on and off the build site.

Be creative in how you engage volunteers. In most cases, experience is not required for construction activities. There are many ways for people of different skill sets and physical abilities to get involved.

### Construction Activities:

- Wall building
- Siding
- Hanging dry wall
- Roofing
- Painting
- Laying flooring
- Site prep and cleanup

### Other Activities:

- Prayer circles or networks
- Fundraising
- Awareness building
- Volunteer recruitment
- On-site worship service
- Ground breaking, wall raising and home dedication celebrations
- Providing lunch and snacks

# ENGAGEMENT AND VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

## Thrivent Members

The local Thrivent Member Network is encouraged to engage Thrivent members through events that support Faith Builds. After all, swinging a hammer isn't the only way to engage members! Here are a few other ideas:

- 1. Work with the Thrivent Member Network to promote the event.** Send postcards to local members and the churches involved to let them know there is a Faith Build in their community. (See *Promotion and Recruitment Resources*.)
- 2. Notify Thrivent members of specific Faith Builds events in their community.** (See *Promotion and Recruitment Resources*.)
  - Thrivent members who belong to a participating church will have a unique opportunity to participate in the build and share their story.
- 3. Engage Thrivent members through community events.**
  - **Invite** them to a ReStore volunteer day, donation drive or to activities and events supporting the Faith Build.
  - **Encourage** them to use Thrivent Action Teams to support the build by:
    - Providing lunch for on-site volunteers.
    - Fundraising for the affiliate and the families it serves.
    - See more ideas at [Thrivent.com/ActionTeams](https://www.thrivent.com/ActionTeams).

### Thrivent Action Teams:

Thrivent Action Teams may be used to support Faith Builds and raise funds to support the cost of the home. (Donations should be made payable to the local Habitat office.) Members cannot use Thrivent Action Team proceeds to buy materials for the Faith Builds home.

# ENGAGEMENT AND VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

## Thrivent Community Engagement Team

There will be many opportunities for the local Thrivent team to engage in and financially support Faith Builds activities.

These might include:

- Faith Builds kick-off pastor breakfast.
- Ground-breaking event.
- Wall-raising event.
- Home dedication event.
- Volunteer appreciation event.
- Other events.

The community engagement team can also help forge connections between the church and the local Thrivent teams.



# PROMOTION AND RECRUITMENT RESOURCES

**Resources added and updated regularly.**

See available resources at [Thrivent.com/HabitatResources](https://www.thrivent.com/HabitatResources) on the Faith Builds tab.