

Rocky Mountain Presbyterian Church

Philosophy of Mercy Ministry¹

Mission Statement

Our mission is to love our neighbors in need by walking with them as they journey from material poverty to human flourishing.

Definition of Terms

1. Poverty: Experiencing brokenness in our four foundational relationships with God, self, others, and the rest of creation. This brokenness can be the result of individual behaviors, abusive or exploitative people, oppressive systems, and/or demonic forces.
 - Material Poverty: Our neighbors' lack of sufficient financial resources to provide for the basic physical needs of themselves and their families. This lack of resources is the result of brokenness in the four foundational relationships.
2. Human Flourishing: Experiencing restored relationships with God, self, others, and the rest of creation.

Vision Statement

- We believe the deepest restoration a person can experience comes through a relationship with Jesus Christ in the context of a church family. Therefore, we will show our neighbors in need the love of Jesus, we will invite them to church, and we will share the gospel with them as God opens doors.
- We believe our neighbors in need are created in the image of God and are called to be stewards of God's good creation. Therefore, we will employ methods of poverty alleviation that empower them to fulfill this calling by working and supporting their families with the fruit of that work. These methods include:
 - Development: Walking with people in need as they learn the skills necessary to live as good stewards of God's creation.
 - Relief: Providing urgent and temporary provision of emergency aid to reduce immediate suffering from a natural or man-made crisis.
 - Rehabilitation: Working with people to restore them to their pre-crisis condition.
- We believe all image-bearers possess gifts, resources and abilities that God calls them to steward. Therefore, we will work to identify, celebrate and mobilize these assets in our neighbors in need.
- We believe that God uses Christ-centered relationships to bring restoration. Therefore, our ministry will be relational rather than transactional. We will enter the world of our neighbors in need, and walk beside them on their journey of restoration.
- We believe that we, like all human beings, suffer the poverty of broken relationships with God, ourselves, others, and the rest of creation. Therefore, our relationships with the materially poor will be characterized by humility and mutuality rather than paternalism. We will treat our neighbors as fellow image-bearers who possess dignity and agency. As we walk beside them, we expect God to not only work *through* us, but to also work *in* us to restore our brokenness.

¹ This document is based on two books by Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert: 1) *When Helping Hurts* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2012). 2) *Helping Without Hurting in Church Benevolence* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2015).