

***Urban Reality Meets Compelling Christian Community  
Oakland, California***

“How do we reach the people in a city that ranks near the top in the state’s most violent list, with a school system in meltdown, and where people regard Christianity as irrelevant at best and oppressive at worst?”

That’s the question that Lead Pastor Paul Wilson and the staff at First Covenant Church in Oakland, California have been asking.

One of the strategies is to “get out of the church building and into the community.” So that’s what they are doing. On Labor Day, they threw a party for the community that included music, booths, food, and fun for the whole family...over 500 neighbors were blessed by this event. In partnership with Faith Network, led by their former pastor Randy Roth, they adopted a nearby elementary school with a goal “to be the best friend the school has ever had.” They serve as tutors, organized a library, and held a Teacher Appreciation Day, the first in recent memory. In addition, the worship team participated in a concert to raise money for under-performing schools. Through the connections of a church member, volunteers are now helping at a new community center with an after-school program, all developed by the police department in a park that was once known for its drug sales.