

En Christo Handbook

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MISSION STATEMENT

" For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me. . . I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it for me" (Matthew 25:35,40).

En Christo is a student-founded and student-led Christian ministry created in response to Jesus' call to serve our neighbors. Composed of members of the Whitworth community and local churches, En Christo focuses its ministry on four low-income hotels and the surrounding streets of downtown Spokane. The members provide food and friendship for these people, demonstrating the love and grace of Jesus Christ. Our method is both relational and evangelical.

En Christo trusts in the Lordship of Jesus Christ, our Sustainer and Guide. We believe that many people are trapped in personal and structural sin, but that they can be transformed through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. We believe that our friends living in Spokane's inner city are, as all people, created in the image of God: beautiful and valuable.

En Christo operates completely by volunteers from the Whitworth community. These volunteers are responsible for the preparation and delivery of 375 lunches every week. Each year En Christo delivers over 15,000 lunches, and as of 1998, over 120,000 lunches and 500 Bibles have been placed in the hands of our friends downtown. Primarily churches, social service groups, individual sponsors, and Whitworth students fund En Christo. All donations go toward food and ministry purposes.

HOW EN CHRISTO STARTED

Here is an article from Decision magazine detailing the beginnings of En Christo.

More Than a Bag Lunch

By: Christopher Murphy, as told by Mark Cutshall

When I was a freshman at Whitworth College, in Spokane, Washington, my life changed in a way that I hadn't expected. It began one Sunday night when a friend, Chris Koch, came to my room and told me about a chapel speaker whom he had heard earlier that evening.

The speaker had challenged the campus audience with the question: "How can you be more effective ministers of Christ?" One way, he suggested, was to make lunches and then give them to needy people in downtown Spokane.

The idea intrigued Chris and me, and what started as a casual chat turned into a late-night discussion of how we could minister to people downtown. We prayed and asked God to direct us as to how to put our Christianity into practice.

Over the next few weeks the idea of reaching out to the downtown poor didn't go away. In December our ministry began to take shape. Chris and I shared our idea with the manager of the college food service. He agreed to supply lunch meat, bread and paper bags at cost. We told our student friends about the plan, and they responded with small donations, enough to pay for

making 50 lunches. Later that month, while I was on a choir tour, Chris and our friends, Jessica and Aaron, all freshmen, made their first trip together into downtown Spokane. They gave away all their lunches to residents in low-income hotels and to street people.

Eventually we had six people in our group, which we called “En Christo.” In Greek that means “In Christ.” I’ll never forget my first trip downtown. We visited one of the hotels located in a run-down section of the city, across from the bus station and near an adult bookstore. The front of the hotel was no more than 15 feet wide, bordered by neon signs.

We opened the door and walked into the cramped lobby. The odor was bad; the carpet was torn.

Our team split up, and I climbed the stairs to the fourth floor. There I knocked on a door and a man answered. Shirtless, he was thin and smelled of alcohol.

“Hi,” I said. “Would you like a lunch?”

The man said “yes.” I was surprised when he invited me inside and asked me to take a seat. As we talked, I learned that George had been in the Air Force. His life had taken some rough turns. Now he worked as a janitor and lived in a bare hotel room with not much more than a bed and a television set.

I looked for opportunities to tell George how much God loves him, but this didn’t seem to be the time.

However, the next person I met was ready to talk about the Lord. His name was Steve; he was big and muscular. I found him in his room two doors down the hall, grasping the hands of Chris and Jessica. He became teary-eyed as he told his story of how he had been kicked out of his house and had lived on the streets for years. Steve candidly poured out his life story to us. It was a story of fear and of weakening to temptations.

“I know Jesus is out there,” he said. “I know Jesus has brought you here tonight. I know he has forgiven me.” Then he began to cry.

We stayed with him for about an hour. Then we gathered together in a circle, linked arms and prayed, thanking God for Steve and for the opportunity to meet him.

When I left Steve’s room, I sensed that what I was doing that night was more in line with the Gospel and with what Jesus did than anything I had ever experienced. I felt a tremendous sense of peace and love, even though I was stepping out of my comfort zone.

As we drove back to Whitworth, my friends and I realized that we had to keep doing this. We discussed the possibility of taking a group of students downtown every Saturday night. We wanted to get to know the people living in downtown Spokane.

And that’s what happened. Eventually word got around campus about our ministry. Other students wanted to be involved. By spring we were regularly preparing and handing out 200 lunches and giving away Bibles. Our core group remained at six, but at least 15 more students began to spend time with Spokane’s downtown poor through an established city ministry.

Every week we met hurting people who just wanted someone to trust, someone who would listen to them and not judge them. Each week two or three people would open their doors and invite us in to their hotel rooms. I believe that they confided in us because they knew we would be there every Saturday. In our conversations with the people, they often asked, “Does Jesus really love me? Does God really love me?” We would assure them: “Yes, God loves you.”

Though we would be leaving school in May, we wanted our ministry to continue though out the summer. I met with a pastor of a church near campus and asked him if church members

would want to take part in the ministry. He was supportive and told the congregation of our need. That spring we took a group of six church members downtown so that they could see if they wanted to take part in the ministry. They did.

Vanessa, a student from our original team, planned to stay in Spokane for the summer, so she took responsibility to coordinate church volunteers. By the end of summer 35 to 40 church members had become involved in the ministry.

That summer Vanessa met Bob, a quadriplegic. Bob could “talk” only by punching letters on a typewriter keyboard on his lap, but his needs came through loud and clear.

“I feel empty,” he told Vanessa. “I’m looking for something and I don’t know what it is.”

Vanessa asked, “Bob, do you know that Jesus is the Savior of the world?” Bob said “no.” Then Vanessa read John 3:16 to him:

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

She also read: “If you love me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever.”

The more that she read from the Bible, the more Bob listened. She asked, “Would you like to pray to receive Jesus into your life?”

Bob answered, “I don’t know how.”

Vanessa prayed the words out loud for him, and Bob accepted Jesus Christ as his personal Savior and Lord. Bob was the first person whom Vanessa led to the Lord through this ministry.

Not everyone with whom we share the Gospel becomes a Christian, but often we are able to tell our own stories. When I tried to communicate the Gospel to a woman named Mary, she asked, “How do you know Jesus? Why are you so sure about him?”

I told Mary that, when I was 14 years old, I had had heart surgery to correct a narrowing in my aorta. “When I faced the prospect of not living,” I explained, “I had to trust God. I couldn’t live without trusting him.” And, in fact, I never felt God’s presence more than when I faced this problem that was bigger than I was.

I told Mary about God’s love for her and, though she hasn’t yet accepted Christ, I still pray that she will. I have made friends among these people who live in downtown Spokane. I may have given them lunch, but they have given me much more—the peace of knowing that I am right where Jesus would be: serving the poor and being blessed by them.

HEART OF EN CHRISTO

The name “En Christo” is Greek for “in Christ”. Christ is the center of our ministry. Everything we are and everything we do comes out of our love for and obedience to Jesus Christ. Our focus is not feeding the hungry, though we do that. Our focus is not befriending the friendless, though we do that, too. Our focus is Jesus Christ.

What does this mean? First, it means that we are people who know and love Christ and are seeking to know Him better. This is what God has created us for. Our first duty as a staff is to help and encourage you in your walk with Christ. A person asked Jesus what the greatest commandment was, and Jesus replied “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Matthew 22:36-39).

Notice that Jesus did not say "love your neighbor" first. Service is not our focus, but it is the fruit, the direct by-product, of our relationship with Christ. It is important for us to keep this distinction. It is because of our love for Christ that we are choosing to serve Him through En Christo. We will do this in a variety of tangible ways: giving people food, becoming their friends, and hopefully verbally telling them about God. We do this all out of love, both love for God and love for His creation, the people of downtown.

So in all we do, we need to be asking ourselves, "Is Christ my focus" and "Am I doing this out of love?"

THE FIVE MINISTRY BRANCHES

Outreach - This is our main evangelical branch. Every Saturday night, people take lunches to the residents of the four target hotels (Otis, New Madison, Jefferson, and Norman) and to those living on the streets of downtown. Their main goal is to initiate friendships and to look for opportunities to share the Gospel message. Each team within Outreach visits the same people every week to build consistency in relationships. Bibles are provided to those who are interested & requests for specific needs are taken and handed over to the Discipleship team.

Discipleship - Teams go downtown on weeknights to visit people who have expressed special requests or who are recommended by Outreach. Discipleship is responsible for distributing groceries and clothes, leading bible studies, and fulfilling other specific needs, always seeking to strengthen the friendships Outreach has initiated. The goal is to deepen relationships and help develop the faith of the Christians living downtown.

Lunch Making - The lunch making crew meets every Saturday, making 375 lunches for Outreach to distribute. Every sack lunch includes a meat and cheese sandwich, fruit, dessert, and a Bible verse. This group is crucial not only for meeting the physical needs of the people downtown, but also for creating opportunities to share the Gospel message with people who otherwise would not listen to us.

Prayer/Encouragement - Prayer is the foundation of En Christo. The prayer team lifts to God the praises and concerns of our friends downtown and needs of the En Christo ministry as a whole. They meet every Saturday to pray with the Outreach group and continue to pray and worship while Outreach is ministering downtown. They also lift up En Christo members with encouragement, and they publish weekly prayer lists so everyone in En Christo can be praying for the specific needs of our friends downtown. Prayer is essential, and as an entire organization we want to continue to come before God in prayer and keep Him as the center of En Christo, with all glory going to Him.

Community Relations - this team keeps works to keep the Spokane community informed and involved with En Christo. They provide communication between Whitworth students and community members, sending letters, making phone calls, and presenting at churches. The team also develops and maintains relationships with local churches that support En Christo with people and/or finances. Their goal is develop strong partnerships with the people of Spokane.

REQUIREMENTS/GUIDELINES

We want everyone to be safe and know how to handle situations that may arise. No one can prepare you for every possible situation, but we want to give you guidelines that will help. We are not trying to ruin your fun or make you uncomfortable. There are not a lot of guidelines, but the few we have need to be followed. We want to make sure our conduct is glorifying to God, not causing people to turn away from God or stumble, but instead to love and know Him.

I. **PERSONAL FAITH:** Members need to have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and believe He is the only way to salvation. They also need to pray and read their Bible consistently and attend church regularly.

II. **COMMITMENT:** Members must serve in the ministry for at least one semester

- A. Each member receives a two-week trial period before making a semester commitment.
- B. If you are going to miss a week the coordinators need to know 3 days in advance
- C. If you wish to bring a friend/visitor downtown, the coordinators need to know and approve it several days in advance

III. **COORDINATORS:** Respect the authority of the coordinators. These people are responsible for your safety and for providing you with any information requested. They want you to have good experiences and clear lines of communication with all En Christo members. So please get to know them, ask them questions, and always get their approval.

IV. **DRESS CODE:** We need to be sensitive to the people downtown and not cause them to stumble. Please dress appropriately. Long pants only, no shorts, skirts or dresses. Also no jewelry or anything else you do not wish to part with.

V. **MONEY:** Do not bring any money with you, that way if someone asks you for money you can honestly reply that you do not have any with you.

VI. **MINISTRY TEAMS:** Groups are designed for the safety and comfort of all. There will always be a male in each group. Safety is everyone's responsibility, so take care of each other and never leave your group. And remember, we are an example of Christian community and an example of God's love, so please be polite to your partners, modeling how men and women should be treated.

VII. **TEAM COMMUNICATION:** When downtown, it is very important to work on your team communication and signals to let each other know that you are uncomfortable and you would like to change the discussion subject or leave. Please be aware and sensitive to everyone's feelings and needs.

VIII. **PHYSICAL CONTACT:** Many people struggle with physical attraction, therefore it is best to initially avoid physical contact with the opposite sex. Handshakes are fine, but hugs and

pats on the back should be saved until you know the person well enough to make sure they won't take your gesture of friendship the wrong way.

IX. PHONE NUMBERS: Some people have received unwanted phone calls at all hours of the day and night. To address this, never give your phone number to the people downtown. If someone asks for your numbers, just say, "I'm sorry, but En Christo policy does not allow me give out my phone number." If you feel there may be a crisis and they might need some help soon or immediately, refer them to one of the hotline numbers provided in the prayer notebook (ask your coordinator if you don't have one). Also, letters addressed to you at Whitworth are an acceptable means of outside communication.

X. EXTRA VISITS: If you decide it would be beneficial to visit a downtown friend outside of En Christo time you must be accompanied by your partner and talk to your coordinator before and after your visit. You can meet with your friend anywhere in Spokane except Whitworth and Whitworth Presbyterian, because in the past some people have received unwanted visitors.

XI. EQUAL GROUND: Always remember that we are just as much sinners as the people downtown, and that the only difference between us is whether we know Jesus. "There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus" (Romans 3:23-24). So anytime you are tempted to judge people downtown, examine yourself to see what sin is standing out in your life (Matthew 7:1-5). Please view all people as your equal.

Leadership is here to serve you and Christ. We want to be there and seek out the best possible solutions in a conflict. If one of these guidelines is infringed upon, a coordinator will speak to you and seek explanation. If further problems occur, you may be asked to leave En Christo for the semester. Let's have a great year without any problems. We desire to see a real movement for God's kingdom in the hearts downtown. We welcome you to En Christo and look forward to serving Christ alongside you this year.

WHAT TO DO IF . . .

Something awkward happens downtown: Please inform your coordinator immediately. We need to know what is happening to make En Christo the most effective. Please tell your coordinator if:

- 1) People downtown are acting strange
- 2) People in your group or in En Christo are acting strange
- 3) You feel awkward or strange about downtown and/or En Christo

You get done with your floor early: please stay on them and talk about your week, read the Bible and talk about it, and pray. We want to model Christian Community.

Someone is fighting: Pray and don't get involved, back away.

Someone asks you to go into their room: Take your whole group with you.

Someone asks for more than two lunches: Tell them that we need enough for everyone, so two will have to be enough.

You run out of lunches: Your whole group finds another group with extra lunches. If there are no lunches left, continue going door-to-door and visit, apologizing that you ran out.

Someone downtown makes an advance toward someone in your group. The Group member who is the same gender as the advancer should stand between the two and divert conversation. Make sure to show women and men respect.

Police are running an investigation: Gather your group, move out of the way, pray, and don't volunteer information unless asked.

STRONG SUGGESTIONS:

A. Meet for En Christo prayer every Saturday at 4 p.m. in the chapel.

B. Come to the En Christo activities (sleepovers, basketball, soccer, etc)

C. Eat a meal with some people from your group during the week so you can get to know them better. Team ministry is best done when you know your teammates. We suggest that you get together with another outside of En Christo time and pray for one another. Classes, jobs, schedules, families, and En Christo can become taxing, so let your partners know. People downtown can see what kind of feeling you have for each other. This is a great way to be an unspoken example of God's love for us and how that love gushes out of us onto other people

D. Debrief weekly: talk with other E.C. people about what you are experiencing, both joys and sorrows, and what God is putting on your heart

E. Be aware of what are hot/personal topics with individuals downtown, and address these areas carefully or not at all.

F. When downtown, be aware of the surrounding area. It is okay to glance around to see who is coming down the hall. We want to avoid dangerous situations as much as possible, and being aware is the best prevention.

G. Use common sense and be cautious

H. Please be aware of time. We need to be done each night at the assigned meeting time. Trust that God can accomplish his plan for the evening in the allotted time.

I. If you have any problems at all, please let your coordinators know. They can also answer or find answers to any questions you might have

J. Pray for En Christo, both its members and the people downtown

K. BE BOLD, for God is with you!!!

BE ENCOURAGED: Why You can Smile Each Night.

Some people in this ministry walk away feeling sort of guilty about how little they feel they have accomplished downtown. The feeling that you have not done enough is a very normal response, even among those who are experienced. It always looks and feels like we can do more . . . when in fact we have done everything possible and we have done the best job we could. Chuck Lewis, a San Francisco night minister, described what he does after a night of ministering. He said, "I come home, I cry or sometimes I laugh, and then I pray, but I always sleep well. Jesus asks me to do the best that I can and if I do, there is no guilt." When we are obedient to do what God calls us to do, He will enable us with His grace. When we are ministering in His power and strength, there need not be any guilt. God is big enough to accomplish His will, so do your best, and trust that He will get things done!

EVANGELISM TRAINING

Why Evangelize?

- Because God tells us to (Great Commission Matthew 28:18-20)
- Because people are going to hell without Jesus (Rev 20:15)
- Because God loves people enough to come to earth in human form (John 3:16, Hebrews)
- * Are we there to sell a product or bring the hope of true love and Jesus

Essentials to Evangelism:

- Be a Christian
- Know God = spend time with God in prayer and in His word. Because we can't preach what we don't know. Because we will recognize our sinfulness, which greatly augments our ability to love
- Fellowship with other Christians - we need that building up and accountability
- Pray for a compassionate heart - that we will truly love the people we are witnessing to
- Pray that God will change people's hearts. Only God can do this.
- Listen - to them and to God
- Be honest/real
- Preach the Gospel
- Trust God - evangelism is doing what God tells us and trusting the results to Him. And remember, salvation belongs to God (Rev 7:10).

- Expect attack from the enemy - the devil won't like what you are doing
- Remember that God is bigger than the devil. God will get the job done

But what do we say?

- The Holy Spirit will speak through you (Luke 21:14-15, Acts 6:10)
- God also tells us to be prepared to preach (II Timothy 4:2,5; I Peter 3:15)
- Use words that can be understood. Don't say things like "grace", "sin", "salvation", etc., unless you take time to explain what they mean.
- Do not argue!!! "My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power" (I Cor. 2:4).
 - Be attentive to the Holy Spirit - which will tell you when to speak
 - Test the spirits - you can usually tell if a person wants to discuss or argue.
 - If all the person wants to do is argue, switch the conversation to something else. Talk to them for a few minutes about their life, and then leave. We don't want to reject them because they won't hear our words, we just don't want to cast our pearls before swine (Matthew 7:6).
 - Alternatives to arguing
 - 1 - pray against the demonic spirits hindering them
 - 2 - ask them why they think what they think; people want to be heard
 - 3 - ask them if you can share your perspective
 - Love them, remember, they are prisoners, not enemies (II Tim 2:26)
 - Redefines our definition of "Evangelism" - it is no longer simply words, but a whole way of life, truly caring for the person. If we believe they are creations of God we can do nothing less than care about every facet of their life
 - Remember that Salvation belongs to God. They aren't rejecting us, but rejecting Him.
 - All this doesn't mean to give a watered down version of the gospel. Jesus and the apostles never watered it down, but they were sensitive to the people they were talking with.

What is the "gospel"? What must a person know to be saved?

"If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus Christ and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved" (Romans 10:9).

Unique Truth Claims of Christianity: The Good News

- God made us and loves us incredibly (Gen. 1:1,27,31; John 3:16)
- God loved us enough to give up His rights and power, choosing to come down and be a human! He did this to show us that He knows what we go through, because He went through it Himself! (Hebrews 2:10-18)
- Not only did Christ come, but He also died on the cross for us, so that our sins would be paid for so that we can be with God. (John 3:16) Without this sacrifice we would all go to hell. We are sinners worthy of judgment (Romans 6:23)
- If this wasn't enough, Jesus rose from the dead just as He said. No one has ever risen from the dead and not died again.

● In order to be saved we must repent of our sins and accept Christ as our Lord and Savior (Christ's message to the world is "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" Matthew 4:17, I John 1:9, Romans 10:9). *) In a nutshell:

- 1) God loves us
- 2) We are sinners in need of salvation
- 3) We need Jesus

LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

Director:

The director is responsible for planning the agenda at leadership meetings and is a liaison between En Christo and ASWC. The director should be able to keep the overall picture of the ministry in mind, encouraging and supporting the rest of the leadership staff. Above all, the director is responsible for keeping the ministry Christ-centered, seeking to obey and follow the direction of the ultimate head of En Christo – Jesus Christ.

Outreach Coordinator:

Lunch making Coordinator:

The lunch making coordinator is responsible to see that the appropriate number of lunches are made and ready for the outreach team each week. This involves: maintaining communication with Marriott, printing of weekly verses, picking up of lunch materials from Union Gospel Mission and having everything ready to begin lunch making each Saturday. The Coordinator oversees the lunch making process, helping things to flow smoothly and making sure we aren't inconsiderate of Marriott.

Prayer Coordinator:

Research & Development:

Public Relations & Media

Community Liaison:

The community liaison's job is to coordinate for church involvement during school breaks. He/she provides sufficient information for the church groups to carry on the ministry while the students are away; for example, where lunch materials are found, safety issues downtown, hotel and resident information, where to get keys, etc. He/she provides calendars/ scheduling for churches involved so that they have a clear understanding of what and when things need to be done. The community liaison also tries to make the community more aware of the presence of En Christo and solicit the support of area churches and individuals.

Some Bible verses regarding evangelism/salvation:

Esther 4:13-14
Isaiah 43:10-11
Isaiah 52:7
Isaiah 55:10-11
Ezekiel 3:17-21
Matthew 4:17
Matthew 5:14-16
Matthew 9:9-13
Matthew 10:5-15
Matthew 10:33
Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23
Matthew 25:31-46
Matthew 28:18-20
Mark 1:1-8
Mark 16:14-20
Luke 10:1-12
Luke 12:8-9
Luke 21:14-15
Luke 22:35-36
John 3:16
John 6:41-51
Acts 1:8
Acts 2:42-47
Acts 5:42
Acts 8:25-40
Acts 10:35
Acts 17:22-31

Romans 3:23-24
Romans 6:23
Romans 10:9-13
1 Corinthians 3:5-9
1 Corinthians 13
2 Corinthians 5:17-21
Ephesians 2:8-10
Philippians 2:1-8
Philippians 4:6-7
Colossians 3:17
2 Timothy 2:24-26
2 Timothy 4:2-5
Hebrews 2:10-18
James 2:14-19
1 Peter 3:13-16
1 John 1:9
1 John 3:16-23
1 John 4:7-11
Revelation 7:10