



Strategic Report

Executive Summary

Loving one's neighbor is an essential part of our faith. "Neighbor" includes those beyond the boundaries of our congregations and parishes. Oftentimes, though, when we want to help others, we don't know who is in need nor do we know who to contact. UShare was created to bring these community connections on behalf of our neighbors in need. It is an innovative web-based tool which can assist faith and community leaders meet their mission objectives. We are inviting all New Hampshire citizens to register. There is no cost. We are also inviting "social workers" (broadly defined) to become a UShare Manager able to post "Requests for Assistance" to help neighbors in their area. Finally, opportunities exist for faith and community organizations to develop their own UShare portal directly from their church website without cost.

Finally, we don't think it is an accident that we're ready to implement UShare as we face the current state budget cuts. "The impersonal hand of government can never replace the caring hand of a neighbor (Hubert Humphrey)."

Background

Loving one's neighbor is an essential part of our faith. When Jesus was asked the question of "who is my neighbor," He answered with the story of the Good Samaritan (Lk 10:30-37). As we look carefully into this parable, and then take an honest look at western Christian Culture, we see the need to expand our understanding of "neighbor." Oftentimes, though, when we want to help others, we don't know who is in need nor do we know whom to contact. UShare was created to bring these community connections on behalf of our neighbors in need. It is an innovative web-based tool designed by two New Hampshire pastors. The internet continues to shape our culture for good and for evil. Zip cars found in urban areas are examples of "Collaborative Consumption"; UShare is an example of "Collaborative Compassion." Pastors, in particular, should consider how UShare could help them meet their mission objectives:

- Become more informed about, and connected to, your community.
- Help members of your community make a difference locally.
- Practically demonstrate being "Salt and Light" in your community.
- Collaborate with state agencies, community organizations and other churches locally.
- Build a good reputation as a problem solver within your community.
- You can also post needs you are trying to meet through your congregation.
- Meet new neighbors who may join your church and its efforts.
- Demonstrate the value of the Faith Community in the eyes of all.
- Increase the joy of your congregation as it is more blessed to give than receive.
- Develop your own UShare portal by linking directly to our web engine from your website.

Click [here](#) for a brief powerpoint explaining how UShare works.

Past Performance

UShare was launched in 2008, and our early days were marked by widespread acceptance on the part of state officials as well as faith-based leaders. With the then recent examples of hurricanes Katrina and Rita fresh on their minds, state officials knew the potential that existed within the faith community but didn't know how to build the necessary bridges for partnership. Health & Human Services Commissioner, Nicolas Toumpas, referred to UShare as "the kind of paradigm shift state government needed to embrace." On the faith side, there was, and continues to be, a growing desire to connect with our communities and help neighbors in need. This question as to who is our neighbor continues to be a pressing issue for many of us in Christian leadership.

UShare continued to grow and develop its network until we ran into a technical problem we could not solve using the platform we had built the website on. What was needed was a complete rewrite. The Day Foundation graciously donated \$10,000 to help with the costs of such an undertaking. A java developer was engaged and rewrote the back end of the website. This was no easy task given the complex operations the site requires to connect those willing to help with neighbors in need in a targeted

way. During their development phase, we also took the opportunity to simplify and automate the UShare process. We also updated the front side for the website making it more informative and interactive. We are happy to report that we have completed this phase. [UShareNH](http://UShareNH.org) is now fully operational, fully tested and have begun rolling it out across the state.



The current UShareNH.org site.

We have begun using [facebook](https://www.facebook.com) and [twitter](https://twitter.com) to begin letting people know about UShare and how they can get involved.

We are partnering with Cornerstone helping them to develop a compassion wing to their ministry to political activities. We've had many discussions in the past years about the authority that comes to speak into the culture when perceived to be an advocate for the poor and needy. We are also partnering with Sullivan County (NH) in a project we are calling SullivanCARES. Although it is in its beginning stages, we are attempting to build a place on the web where residents of Sullivan County can go to learn about available resources and where social service workers can use UShare to help find community connections for their clients.

We have been in touch with Graham Kendrick making an appeal for a new genre in Christian music - songs we can sing as we go to court to be a voice for the children in foster care, or anthems of praise we can raise as we engage with those in our communities who are facing great trials. We met Graham some years back and have been friends ever since. Our letter was met with a very gracious response. As Graham took our words to heart, and spent a season of prayer, he concluded that there is a group of people in Scripture called the "poor and the needy." He saw how God loved the poor and the needy, and once we saw the extent of His love for them, we would be moved to get involved in their lives as Good Samaritans. He wrote three different songs and we hope this will be a theme that goes viral within the Christian Community worldwide. He is coming to New Hampshire this year for a statewide prayer service on September 30th. We hope you'll be able to participate.

Future Plans

We are presently building our member network throughout the state so when requests for assistance are made, they go to real people, neighbors who are willing to reach out; neighbors who want to be Good Samaritans demonstrating the love of God to those desperate for help. There is no cost to join - just a [member profile](#) to fill out which identifies your community and the kinds of needs you want to be informed about when they arise in your community. With UShare you'll never get an ActionAlert about a need outside of your profile parameters. You can click [here](#) to learn more.

What You Can Do

First, please let the members of your congregation, and others in your network, know about UShare and encourage them to register and tell their friends. If you live near one of our borders, please note that UShare is only being activated in New Hampshire to begin with. If it works, we hope you'll see a UShareMA, UShareCT, UShareME , UShareVT, etc. I think you get the picture.

Second, please consider appointing a member of your congregation to be our liaison. We know you are busy and we don't want to add to that. They can also be trained to become a UShare Manager who will be able to post requests for assistance as well. Click [here](#) for more info.

Third, on Tuesday mornings starting on June 7th, we'll be giving 30 minute webinars about UShare. Those who want to become UShare Managers are required to participate but you are welcome to sit in. You'll see more fully what we've built, how it works and maybe you'll see how you can use UShare in your ministry. Click [here](#) to register.

And finally, please consider making UShare your own. We would be happy to assist you. Use our login graphic below and link directly to our web engine. We're partnering now with Cornerstone Action and Sullivan County. Why not consider linking to our UShare engine directly from your website?



Although these are difficult days, there are great opportunities for the church to be the church and make a huge difference. Please let us know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

[Keith Marsh](#) and [Nick Manha](#)

