



Korean American Churches as Partners in Community Development: The Untold Story



Prepared by Korean Churches for Community Development

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Introduction

As the demographic landscape of many communities across the United States continues to change¹, the need for engaging new partners and new methods in local community development efforts has become even more essential. In recent years, government agencies and other stakeholders have substantially increased their interests in community development with faith-based partners². Traditionally, African-American congregations, and more recently Latino churches, have been known for their work in this area; hence, research has primarily recognized these communities as potential partners³. However, there are an estimated 1 million Korean Americans⁴. Along with increasing numbers of Korean Americans, there are 4,000 Korean-American churches⁵ in the United States whose work in community development has yet to be highlighted or recognized. In this paper, we present the story of Korean-American churches as unrecognized partners in community development drawing from focus groups, surveys, interviews and secondary research (See Appendix A). Our discussion of community development also includes human and economic development⁶.

Unbeknownst to many policymakers and other key stakeholders, Korean-American churches enjoy a wealth of resources that position them as viable partners in community development. Their assets include a history of generous giving and serving, exceptional resources in land and facilities, numerous construction projects, increasing human and financial capital, and emerging community investments in multi-ethnic neighborhoods⁷. Despite these impressive resources, Korean and other Asian-American congregations have yet to be actively engaged by other stakeholders. In addition, due to language and cultural

barriers and lack of appropriate outreach strategies, most Korean and Asian-American faith communities have yet to fully understand and participate in the expanding government-funded social and community service programs. However, whenever there has been targeted outreach by public or private community agencies, Korean and Asian-American faith communities have come out in strong numbers and demonstrated their willingness and ability to serve the broader community.

In this paper, we share specific examples of the community development work of sixteen Korean-American churches located in the greater Los Angeles metropolitan area. Also documented are the strategic opportunities and work of Korean Churches for Community Development (KCCD), the largest Asian-American, faith-based, national intermediary to support and expand community development initiatives⁸. We also highlight the limitations and barriers encountered while engaging Korean and Asian-American faith-based organizations in local and national faith-based and community initiatives. Lastly, recommendations are provided for 1) ways to engage these untapped and viable partners and 2) types of capacity building investments needed in the Korean-American faith community to fully tap the potential of existing community development efforts.

Unrecognized Partners: A Tradition of Community Service and Development

Largely under the radar screen, Korean-American churches provide a wide range of social and community services. Since the arrival of the first Koreans in the United States in 1903, Korean-American churches have played a central role in the development of local and international communities for Korean and non-Korean communities⁹. On an international level, Korean-American churches have contributed to the economic and community development of many developing countries throughout the world. Many hospitals, health

clinics, schools, wells and orphanages have been supported by the labor and donations of Korean-American churches. One study documented that 149 Korean-American churches supported missions work such as building schools and hospitals in 86 countries¹⁰. One example of significant international relief was the donation of \$160,000 to Food for the Hungry International to help victims in Asia rebuild after the devastating Tsunami in 2005¹¹.

Contrary to the model minority myth, Korean Americans face significant economic and social challenges including high poverty rates¹², low homeownership rates¹³, high domestic violence rates¹⁴, and growing juvenile delinquency rates¹⁵. In fact, Korean Americans are one of four communities along with Latinos, African Americans, and Native Americans whose income is below the national median¹⁶. In addition, Korean Americans have the highest rate among the uninsured¹⁷. Korean Americans are second among linguistically isolated U.S. households¹⁸. Consequently, many Korean Americans cannot access the range of public and private social service agencies available to the greater community. In cities like Los Angeles, many Korean-Americans also live in multi-ethnic communities with rising housing prices and increasing housing vacancies.

As a result, Korean-American churches have had to step up and stand in the gap to meet these needs without government support or external resources. From the newly arrived immigrant with a displaced support system to those who are somewhat established, but still disenfranchised by the greater society, Korean-American churches serve as an anchoring institution providing culturally and linguistically sensitive services. As one of the focus group participants stated, “Korean immigrants who come to the U.S. know that they should seek out a Korean church regardless of whether they are Christian or not, because they know that’s where they will get help.”

Congregations in our study also identified a range of needs for many Korean Americans. The most important needs included:

- translation and education to address the language barriers of immigrant families,
- support and mediation to address intergenerational conflicts among 1st, 1.5, and 2nd generation Korean Americans,¹⁹
- marriage and family strengthening programs, parenting education, and children and youth programs,
- caregiving and activities for the elderly, and
- educational and financial support for students, particularly for college students.

In response to such needs, Korean-American congregations have had to provide a diverse range of services including language schools, leadership training, financial counseling, business support, neighborhood clean-ups, and construction projects to expand their facilities for children and family services. In reference to youth development, Korean-American churches operate over 90 percent of the 1,000 Hangul Schools, which are expanded after-school programs that teach language, culture, art, sports and discipline.

Korean-American churches also have a record of serving the greater community by providing a wide variety of local community services. In our study of 16 Korean-American churches, faith leaders reported a total of over 45 different types of social and community services (Appendix B, Table 1). The extent to which Korean American serve beyond their congregation members was reported as follows:

- 77 percent reported that their services target both congregation and community members
- 14 percent reported that their church primarily provides services for community members
- 9 percent reported that their church only provides services for congregation members.

Examples of services included child care, healthcare clinics and fairs, after school programs, tutoring, scholarship programs, job training, crime prevention, domestic violence support and shelters, and programs for the homeless programs. In our study, Korean-American

congregations served diverse communities that included other immigrants, African Americans and Latinos as indicated below:

- 55 percent reported that congregation members primarily use their services
- 45 percent reported that their services are used by community members
- 21 percent reported that the community members served was not Korean Americans. These community members were primarily African American, Chinese, Hmong, Japanese, and Latino.

Korean-American congregations of all membership sizes and budgets demonstrated numerous examples of community development work. For example, All Nations Church, a 3,200 member church founded in 1996 with a 22 acre facility, is another example of a church who is actively addressing many of the community needs by providing funding, volunteer labor and its meeting space. Recognizing a great need among children with disabilities, the church organized and raised funds to start a horseback riding camp program to serve developmentally disabled children. They also began actively working with the Police Department to reduce the local crime rate by opening up its facility for a wide array of programs to bring the church and the community together. These included family music concerts, Korean American B-B-Q night, basketball tournaments, and after school programs for youth. With a vision to do more, this church also purchased another 160 acre facility to house other community outreach programs in the future.

Other mega churches like Young Nak Presbyterian and Wilshire United Methodist Churches have hosted election polling sites showing their interest in the democratic process and opening their churches to groups of people that rarely interact with their community. These churches also provide space for community programs such as homeownership fairs, Alcoholics Anonymous meetings, Boy Scout meetings, and police community forums. Even a 320-member church like Covenant United Methodist Church offers its facility as a polling

site and sponsors several community programs to non-Koreans including a homeless program and soup kitchen in Pomona, CA, serving largely Latino and African-American community members, a ‘Rainbow Ministry’ that assists victims of domestic violence with emergency shelters and job training and relocation programs, and support for parents of children with Down Syndrome. Orange Korean Church, a 600-member church, partnered with the Probation Department to provide mentoring and counseling services to at-risk and adjudicated youth in the community. In partnership with the YMCA, Orange Korean Church also provided free breast cancer screenings. Congregations with modest resources, like the 120-member Good News Chapel, also opened its facility to community organizations for meetings and community programs, such as child care for children with special needs and Boy Scout meetings.

Unleveraged Resources: Human, Financial, Social and Physical Capital

In addition to their demonstration of service, the Korean-American churches, and the Korean-American population in general, have an impressive array of resources that have yet to be fully developed and leveraged for the greater community. The Korean-American population in Los Angeles County, the context for this study, is the largest in the United States and the largest outside of South Korea, estimated at 257,975 people²⁰. Although they represent 2.0 percent of the Los Angeles County population, Korean Americans in Los Angeles and other Southern California Koreatowns own 42 percent of commercial lots, 40 percent of office buildings, and 41 percent of shopping malls, as well as 10 of Korean-American ethnic banks²¹. Korean Americans have the highest rate of self-employment of any group²². In addition, Korean Americans also have the third highest level of education of any group in the U.S.²³

Of all key institutions in the Korean-American community, the Korean-American churches, having 70 to 75 percent of Korean-Americans as members²⁴, enjoy one of the largest pools of volunteers and human capital, significant financial strength, transnational church networks, active small business connections, and increasing physical assets. In 2001, the top 16 Korean mega-churches in Southern California raised \$52 million in annual offerings²⁵. In addition, their congregation size ranged from 1,000 members to 4,000 members totaling 32,000 members. Today, the financial strength of the Korean mega-churches has increased by \$32 million. In December 2007, the top seven Korean mega-churches in Southern California reported \$84 million in their annual offerings plus an additional \$39 million in construction budget resulting in a \$123 million total budget²⁶. Many of the same churches now boast congregation sizes ranging from 5,000 to 8,000 members.

The Korean American churches in our study demonstrated similar patterns of assets and resources (Appendix B, Table 2). Of the 12 Korean churches that reported assets, these churches varied in membership size from 120 members to 8,950 members totaling 20,105 members. Their annual budgets ranged from \$208,000 to \$10 million totaling over \$32.9 million. The level of giving reported by these churches is exceptional in light of the low-income of Korean Americans. Many of the congregations also owned facilities that ranged from one building to 7 buildings with a total value of over \$86 million. In addition, many congregations have invested in spacious gymnasiums and as much as 160 acres of land with the intent to serve youth and share their resources with the greater community. Focus group participants reported that their churches also have track records of raising significant financial capital for social causes and relief efforts.

Untapped Opportunities: Potential Partnerships for Broader Reach & Greater Impact

In recent years, Korean-American churches have increasingly taken greater interest in expanding their local community development efforts and creating partnership opportunities for broader reach and impact²⁷. However, these congregations must often struggle to balance the tension between continuing their current levels of international efforts while expanding their local efforts. Many congregations in this study allocate 10 percent to 55 percent of their annual budget to international community work. Many faith-leaders are reluctant to reallocate their international budget, but seek alternative models for local efforts. Another tension point for congregations is that as their memberships grow and members move away from the church, congregations must decide whether to stay in the neighborhood and respond to local needs or move to a new location where many of their members live. During a focus group, one faith leader commented, “Many Koreans do well with their business ventures and move out of the neighborhood, but the church has a vision now to invest more into the community by staying and serving the community”. Those who desire to move commonly argue that the congregation does not have the budget or capacity to take on such challenges. In the past, congregations faced with such challenges would have given up on their desires to serve the local community.

However, with the outreach efforts of Korean Churches for Community Development in educating the community on the Federal Faith-Based and Community Initiative, congregations are coming to understand that they can partner with others in such efforts. Whereas in the past, the congregations would have attempted to take on such challenges solely by funding and supporting all such efforts internally, the congregations are starting to be aware of more strategic and effective ways to respond to community needs. In particular, 73 percent of the congregations recognized the potential for Korean-American churches to

expand their community development work to include community-based employment, housing, business development, and other asset building projects. Several churches expressed interest in developing a long-term plan to organize these interests into a comprehensive, multi-ethnic community development initiative similar to community development models of African-American churches²⁸.

In contrast to the past, congregations in our study demonstrated their willingness and interest in addressing challenges such as:

- Reducing crime, particularly vandalism and gang activity,
- Improving public education by providing tutoring,
- Increasing access to affordable housing, as well as serving the homeless,
- Increasing access to affordable health care,
- Strengthening families by offering child care, youth programs, and other support for working parents,
- Addressing the isolation of older adults and the need for more programs for older adults, and
- Addressing environmental justice issues.

As more Korean-American congregations actively engage in responding to more local community needs, they are also applying the lessons learned from the 1992 Los Angeles riots when Korean Americans were criticized and ostracized despite their impressive array of services and community contributions²⁹. Without proper connections and partnerships, the community's work and contributions can be misrepresented or overlooked. Consequently, according to 70 percent of the Korean-American faith leaders from our study, they have come to learn that building a relationship with the broader community is an important part of being a local church.

Recently, Korean-American congregations have attempted to increase their collaboration with public and private agencies, as well as with other ethnic communities with

some success. For example, Wilshire United Methodist Church hosted a 5-K race to raise funds and awareness for foster children that attracted over 1,000 runners, six other congregations and a State Assembly member to participate in this worthy cause.

Collaboration with the LA Police Department, Probation Department, city officials, the business community, other congregations, and the media were key to Wilshire's success in sponsoring an event that crossed racial and ethnic lines. According to one of Wilshire's leaders, "we came to realize, that when we have a great cause, that others, including churches, are willing to support....and also, we were able to lift up an important cause."

La Hanmi Church, a 400-member church located in a predominately Latino community, has begun partnering with its Latino neighbors to provide local services. This church also partners with city officials, and the LA Police Department to offer community programs for youth and their families. Covenant Church in Pomona works with the Police Department and city council members to decrease crime rates in their neighborhood by offering youth services. Another example includes Young Nak and its collaboration with Union Rescue Mission and other churches to support a homeless program that provides meals and a support community to 1,200 homeless people from diverse ethnic groups. Through a strategic partnership, this program expanded from one location on Skid Row to include 10 different sites. Living Hope Church which also currently rents space from a local elementary school for its worship services, sponsors an after school tutoring program and summer school program for low-income, at-risk youth. Seeking to be a good neighbor, Living Hope has also donated and installed sound systems for the local school and provides scholarships to students.

While many Korean-American churches generously serve and give, making their work visible to the greater community has not been a great priority. Consequently, they missed out on potential partnership opportunities. Taking a cue from KCCD, many Korean-American churches are starting to restructure and repackage their services in ways that can be recognized by the greater community. One successful example is Young Nak Presbyterian Church, an 8,950 member mega-church that generates an extraordinary offering level of \$10 million annually, allocates 20 percent of its budget to international missions, and owns property worth \$30 million. Young Nak restructured its giving program to address local community needs by providing sub-grants to local community agencies. Over the past three years, Young Nak's innovative grants program has awarded sub-grants totaling \$600,000 to over 112 grassroots organizations that serve the most vulnerable populations, including the homeless, low-income senior citizens, at-risk youth, victims of domestic violence, and people with disabilities from various ethnic communities. As a result of Young Nak's restructured giving to the community, Young Nak's contributions are being recognized by many local community stakeholders, including government officials and community members. Young Nak has also established a \$2 million scholarship fund and awards up to \$150,000 of the fund annually to Latino students, as well as its own members. Addressing local community needs in this way has raised their visibility as community agents, increased the church's community partners and credibility, and maximized the potential for even greater reach and impact.

Despite these illustrative examples, Korean American congregations still have many capacity building needs to respond to if they are to maximize their full potential (Appendix B, Table 2). For example, among the 12 congregations, only three possessed a separate 501 c3 designation for their community development efforts. In addition, 77 percent

of the Korean-American faith leaders expressed a need for more information and skills on grant writing and program development. In addition, they expressed a need for paid staff with experience navigating the government and private sector grant application and contracting process. These leaders welcomed the assistance of KCCD to help advance plans for community development that crosses racial and ethnic boundaries. In addition, there were hopeful signs: a desire for more collaborative efforts among the congregations in our study and movement toward more trusting relationships during the short time of our focus group. One faith leader expressed interest in joining forces stating, “Almost every Korean Church is doing mission work with the homeless or sending missionaries to China. If the churches can do this together, they can provide more services in an effective manner. I think it is a great idea to plan our work collaboratively.”

Bringing Korean-American Church Community Development Work to Scale

As the Federal Faith-Based and Community Initiative expands and Korean-American churches engage more in community development efforts, the guidance and support of an intermediary adds great value for increasing the capacity, networks and funding, as well as visibility, credibility, and effectiveness to their work. Korean Churches for Community Development (KCCD) has already advanced these goals with their faith-based constituencies on multiple fronts. In 2001, KCCD’s Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Hyepin Im, began working to develop partnerships with two diverse constituencies – faith-based organizations and public and private sector stakeholders. Ultimately, KCCD now acts as a broker between the Korean and Asian-American faith community and public and private community stakeholders. Seven years later, KCCD can point to many successful examples of faith-based organizations and public and private sector partnerships (See Appendix C). For

example, through its advocacy and training efforts, KCCD has a proven model for successfully capturing the interest and partnerships with over 100 public and private entities including major corporations such as CVS Pharmacy, State Farm Insurance, Countrywide, United Way, Freddie Mac, and Fannie Mae, as well as the U.S. Department of Labor, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and Corporation for National and Community Services. Through KCCD's leadership, major community development initiatives have been introduced to the Korean and Asian-American community including the Youth Workforce Program, the Homebuyer Center, the Foreclosure Prevention Program, VITA/EITC, Financial Literacy/Individual Development Account Program, Path Builders Technical Assistance Program, the Asian American Healthy Marriage and Family and Small Business Assistance.

As Korean-American churches express great enthusiasm for bringing community development work to a scale similar to their African-American mega church counterparts, KCCD is strategically positioned to provide technical assistance and capacity building resources and training to lead the way for Korean-American and other Asian-American churches like those described here. Most notably, KCCD has demonstrated a track record of implementing local, regional, and national programs and projects that engage local congregations. In each of its initiatives, KCCD has taken the long path by first educating stakeholders about the Korean and Asian community, inviting them to take part in events in Korean-American churches, and thereby elevating the needs and contribution of Korean and Asian-American churches and communities. Over time, KCCD has helped to create a more receptive and positive environment for the Korean and Asian-American community's capacity to fully develop as community development partners. Ultimately, KCCD's work

with churches like Young Nak and Wilshire United Methodist Church has helped to increase their churches visibility, credibility, partnerships, political clout and impact in the greater community.

Conclusions

While this study is limited to 16 Korean-American Churches, in one county, we capture the following credible insights. Korean-American churches are responding to community needs in unprecedented ways with their own resources. Much like the 1992 LA riot, the Faith-Based and Community Initiative has served as a catalyst for Korean community leaders to re-examine their interactions with the broader community and to explore new models for community service and partnership. As the Faith-Based and Community Initiative empowers faith- and community-based organizations to do more, these churches can capitalize on their potential and advantage by working with an intermediary like KCCD to help Korean and Asian-American churches better navigate their way in seeking outside partnerships. This research suggests that the Korean-American faith community can further benefit from external partners and funding to help coordinate their expertise and resources. One recommendation for engaging new partners includes collaborating with denominations³⁰, church networks, and ministerial alliances as well as KCCD and their affiliates to increase and leverage financial resources and identify other professional expertise. In addition, Korean and Asian-American churches would benefit from the development of more culturally and linguistically specific technical assistance and capacity building training and other tools. Korean-American churches would benefit from increased access to monetary incentives such as start-up funds to assist faith leaders to re-prioritize their local community development and establish new strategic and programmatic

plans. Providing monetary and other incentives would support faith leaders to re-examine existing programs and coordinate or collaborate with local, regional or national programs in ways that respect the values of both partners.

As the role of Korean and Asian-American churches remains among the least researched areas³¹, this study sheds light on the existing role and potential of Korean-American churches in community development in multi-ethnic environments like the Southern California area. A more comprehensive study that includes more churches and more cities would further distinguish the comparative advantage of Korean and Asian American churches, as well as explore additional investments and outcomes needed for sustainability. Other studies that address ways that Korean-American churches can collaborate with faith, community, and public leaders from other racial and ethnic groups can also refine models for successful community development partnerships. With the current state of knowledge on Korean-American churches, we can confidently recommend that Korean-American churches should be actively pursued and engaged as viable partners - partners who have the vision, commitment, and resources for community development and possibly much more.

Endnotes

¹ As cited by Pak and colleagues, the change in the Korean population has been quite rapid over the last 30 years. According to the U.S. Census, the population of Koreans in America was 70,598 in 1970, by 1980, it was 357,393, by 1990 it was 798,849, and by 2000 it was 1,076,872. The rates of growth between these periods measuring at 406% from 1970 to 1980, and 124% from 1980 to 1990, and 348% from 1990 to 2000. See Su Yon Pak, Unzu Lee, Jung Ha Kim, and Myung Ji Cho, *Singing the Lord's Song in a New Land: Korean American Practices of Faith*. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005; Eui-Young Yu and Peter Choe, *100 Years of American History: The Korean American Population*. The Korean American population, First National Convention, Waikiki, Hawaii, September 10-13, 2003.

² Avis Vidal. *Faith-based organizations in community development*. U.S. Department of Housing and Community Development: Office of Policy Development and Research, 2001.

³While many accounts of faith-based efforts come from the media, a significant body of work documents African-American congregations as providers of faith-based community work. An emerging body of work also exists for Latino churches. See Andrew Billingsley. *Mighty Like a River: The Black Church and Social Reform*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999; Ram A. Cnaan, Stephanie C. Boddie, Charlene McGrew, and Jennifer Kang. *The Other Philadelphia Story: How Local Congregations Support Quality of Life in Urban America*. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006; C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence Mamiya. *The Black Church in the African American Experience*, Durham: Duke University; Laura A. Reese and Gary Shields, Faith-based economic development. *Policy Studies Review*, Summer/ Autumn 2000. 17 (2/3), 85-102; Edwin Hernandez, Rebecca Burwell, and Marciana Popescu, *Leadership Matters: The Role of Latino/a Leadership in Social Ministry, Baltimore, Maryland: The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2006; Helene Slesserev-Jamir, Sustaining Hope, Creating Opportunities: The Challenge of Ministry Among Hispanic Immigrants, Baltimore, Maryland: The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2003; Catherine Wilson, The Politics of Latino Faith: Religion, Identity and Urban Community*. New York, New York: New York University Press.

⁴ All demographic statistics are from the 2000 U.S. Census Bureau. The enactment of the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act facilitated the increase in Korean immigration that had not existed before 1960. The 1980 represented the height of Korean migration to the United States. See Angie Y. Chung, *Legacies of struggle: Conflict and cooperation in Korean American politics*. Palo, Alto, California: Stanford University Press, 2007.

⁵ Korean churches are experiencing exceptional growth. For more details See Sang Hyun Lee, *Korean American Presbyterians: A Need for Ethnic Particularity and the Challenge of Christian Pilgrimage*, Milton J. Coalter, Mohn M. Muler, and Louis B. Weeks. *The Diversity of Discipleship: The Presbyterians and Twentieth-century Christian Witness*. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox. 1991, 312-30, 400-402; Ivan Light and Edna Bonacich, *Immigrant Entrepreneurs: Koreans in Los Angeles, 1965-1982*. Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1998, and Ho-Youn Kwon, Kwang Chung Kim, and R. Stephen Warner. *Korean Americans and their Religions: Pilgrims and Missionaries from a Different Shore*. University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University, 2001.

⁶ We draw from Avis Vidal's definition community development as asset building that centers around housing and economic development initiatives as well as human development efforts such as job training and other activities to prepare residents for more productive lives. We also reference the holistic faith-based development concept put forth by John Wallace, Valerie L. Myers and Jim Holley in *Holistic Faith-based Development: Toward a Conceptual Framework*. Albany, New York: The Roundtable and Religion and Social Welfare Supported by the Pew Charitable Trusts, 2004. Their development typology begins with human development and also includes economic and community development. In many cases, faith-based community development primarily develops people and as more significant financial resources are available this work focuses on "brick and mortar" community development activities.

⁷ Stephanie C. Boddie and Hwo Bae. *Understanding the perceptions and actions of Blacks and Koreans toward social problems: A view through congregation-based social services*. Presented at the Sixth Annual Conference of the Society for Social Work Research, San Diego, CA, January 17-20, 2002; Hyunsun Choi, *Social capital and community economic development in Los Angeles Koreatown: Faith-based organizations in transitional ethnic community*, Graduate School of University of Southern California Dissertation, 2004; Elaine Howard Euckland. *Korean American evangelicals: New models for civic life*. Oxford University Press, 2006; Helene Slesserev-Jamir, *A place of refuge and sustenance: How faith institutions strengthen the families of poor Asian immigrants*, Baltimore, Maryland: The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2003.

⁸ For more information on Korean Churches for Community Development see www.kccd3300.org.

⁹ Ronald Takaki. *Strangers from a Distant Shore: A History of Asian Americans*. Revised edition. Boston, Massachusetts: Little Brown; Pyong Gap Min. The structure and social functions of Korean immigrant churches in the United States. *International Migration Review*, 1992. 26 (4), 1370-1394.

¹⁰ Dr. Eui Young Yu's research showed that of 149 Korean-American churches surveyed, these churches supported mission efforts in 86 countries. See research on the Korean for Community Development site www.kccd3300.org.

¹¹ See [http://www.fh.org/newsfeed/03/10/2005---Korean-Churches-in-America-band-together-to-help-tsunami-victims-korean-american-group-donates-\\$160000-to-Food-for-the-Hungry-International](http://www.fh.org/newsfeed/03/10/2005---Korean-Churches-in-America-band-together-to-help-tsunami-victims-korean-american-group-donates-$160000-to-Food-for-the-Hungry-International).

¹² It is also important to note that nearly half (43.5 percent) of Korean households in L.A. County has an income of less than \$25,000. See Angie Y. Chung, *Legacies of struggle: Conflict and cooperation in Korean American politics*. Palo Alto, California: Stanford University Press, 2007.

¹³ According to the 2000 U.S. Census Bureau statistics, homeownership rates for Korean Americans is 40.1 percent as compared to 46.3 percent for African-Americans, and 45.7 percent for Latinos with the national average at 66.2 percent.

¹⁴ According to the Los Angeles County Commission on the Status of Women, Korean-American women constituted the highest number of domestic violence cases of all Asian/Pacific Islanders in the Los Angeles County. See Yoshioka MR and Dang Q, *Asian Family Violence Report: A Study of the Cambodian, Chinese, Korean, South Asian, and Vietnamese Communities in Massachusetts* (Boston, MA: Asian Task Force Against Domestic Violence, Inc., 2000; available from www.atask.org; Korean American Family Service Center, *The Advanced Community Empowerment Project Proposal*, Los Angeles, California: 2000.

¹⁵ According to Uniform Crime Reports, national trends show that juvenile arrests have decreased in the last 20 years. However, when examined by ethnicity, Asian youth are the only group to show an increase in arrests (11.4%).

¹⁶ According to the 2000 Census Bureau statistics, Korean Americans are one of the four poorest ethnic groups in the U.S. The Korean poverty rate (20.9 percent) is just a little lower than the poverty rate for African-Americans (24.4 percent) and Latinos (24.2 percent).

¹⁷ AsianWeek Staff Report. *Disparities in APA Health Coverage: Uninsured rates for some subgroups among highest in U.S.*, April 29, 2008. available at <http://www.asianweek.com/2008/04/29/disparities-in-apa-health-coverage-uninsured-rates-for-some-subgroups-among-highest-in-us/>

¹⁸ According to the 2000 U.S. Census Bureau statistics, 41.0 percent of Korean families and 46.1 percent of Vietnamese families are linguistically isolated and only 26.4 percent of Latino families with the national average at 4.1 percent.

¹⁹ First generation Korean American clergy are those that were born in Korea, grew up in Korea, and likely trained at Korean seminaries. Since 1965 there has been a continuous flow of Korean immigrants. This group is credited for much of the growth of Korean American churches. The 1.5 generation Korean Americans immigrated to the US as children or teenagers and if trained, most likely attended US seminaries or divinity school. These second generation Korean American clergy are American born and raised and most likely trained in US seminaries or divinity schools.

²⁰ All demographic statistics are from the 2000 U.S. Census Bureau. To understand the trends overtime, 1980 Census data have also been used for maps. Korean Americans represent .4 percent of the total U.S. population. The racial composition in Los Angeles county: White, 31.1 percent; Black, 9.5 percent; Latino, 44.6 percent; Asian; 11.8 percent ;other race/races, 3.0 percent. Data for the maps were derived from 1980 and 2000 census tract files for Los Angeles and Orange County.

²¹ Hyunsun Choi. *Social capital and community economic development in Los Angeles Koreatown: Faith-based organizations in transitional ethnic community*, Graduate School of University of Southern California Dissertation, 2004. Data drawn from 2000 Los Angeles Korea Times Business Directory.

²² According to the 2000 U. S. Census Bureau, the Korean American rate of self-employment in Los Angeles County is 24.7 percent as compared to the national rate, 9.4 percent.

²³ According to the 2000 U.S. Census Bureau, the rate of educational attainment for at least bachelor's degree are 43.8 percent for Korean Americans, 14.3 percent for African American, and 10.4 percent for Latinos with the national average at 24.4 percent. Given the rates of self-employment and the stock of local commercial property, there are opportunities for Korean Americans to take leadership in community development in areas related to small business development training and incubation.

²⁴ Last documented in 1990 by Woo Moo Hurh and Kwang Chung Kim in Religious participation of Korean immigrants in the United States. *Journal for Scientific Study of Religion* 29, (March): 19-34.

²⁵ The Los Angeles Korean Times regularly reports on the life of Korean churches.

²⁶ This update of the asset of Korean-American churches also appeared in the Los Angeles Korean Times.

²⁷ According to our focus group participants, Korean-American faith leaders desire their local community development efforts to equal those of their international work.

²⁸ KCCD has introduced several Korean- American faith leaders to models developed by First African Methodist Episcopal. See <http://www.famechurch.org/>; Stephanie C. Boddie. *Way to give: Tithing practices*

that benefit families, congregations, and communities. St. Louis: Washington University, Center for Social Development, 2005.

²⁹ It should be noted that after the LA Riots many Koreans fled the area. However, most Korean-American churches remained in the cities and increased their outreach to the community. With 2000 revitalization many Koreans are returning to Koreatown/ Wilshire Center. See U. S. Census 1980 and 2000; Dowell Myers. Demographic dynamism and metropolitan change: Comparing Los Angeles, New York, Chicago, and Washington, D.C. *Housing Policy Debate*, 1999. 10 (4), 919-948.

³⁰ Presbyterian and the United Methodist denominational offices would be excellent partners given the large number of Korean congregations affiliated with these denominations as well as organization like the Council of Korean Churches.

³¹ These are among the few studies on this topic: Stephanie C. Boddie and Hwo Bae. Understanding the perceptions and actions of Blacks and Koreans toward social problems: A view through congregation-based social services. Presented at the Sixth Annual Conference of the Society for Social Work Research, San Diego, CA, January 17-20, 2002; Hyunsun Choi, Social capital and community economic development in Los Angeles Koreatown: Faith-based organizations in transitional ethnic community, Graduate School of University of Southern California Dissertation, 2004; Elaine Howard Euckland. Korean American evangelicals: New models for civic life. Oxford University Press, 2006; Helene Slesserev-Jamir, A place of refuge and sustenance: How faith institutions strengthen the families of poor Asian immigrants, Baltimore, Maryland: The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2003. For general discussions on faith-based initiatives and congregation-based services also see Mark Chaves. *Congregations in America*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004; Ram A. Cnaan, Stephanie C. Boddie, Charlene McGrew, and Jennifer Kang. The Other Philadelphia Story: How Local Congregations Support Quality of Life in Urban America. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006; Robert Wuthnow. *Saving America? Faith-based services and the future of civil society*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004.

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Appendix A

Methods

Korean Churches for Community Development (KCCD) in collaboration with selected faculty and students from Washington University's George Warren Brown School of Social Work designed this research project. The primary research methods used for the first phase of the study included interviews, focus groups, and survey questions. Focus groups were used to capture the depth of the topics of interests and the survey to provide complementary information that covered a broader range of questions. These topics included leadership characteristics, membership profiles, a service mission, perception of community needs, targeted populations, congregational capacity for service, capacity needs, interest and barriers in developing future programs, community relationships, and collaborations.

Sixteen congregations and thirty-two faith leaders participated in this study. From the directory of 1,000 local Korean American churches, KCCD staff recruited a select group of churches and considered recommendations from KCCD board members. Of the 50 churches that agreed to participate in this study, 16 churches sent faith leaders to attend one of three focus groups. The participating Korean American congregations varied in membership size (120 to 8,950), annual budgets (\$208,000 - \$10 million), allocation to international mission outreach (10-55 percent), facility size (from one building to 7 buildings and 18 acres valued at \$39 million) and location (e.g. central city downtown district, ethnic downtown district, and unincorporated communities). To capture the unique perspectives of the Korean faith leaders within the Korean American church community, participants represented the following groups: Korean American 1st generation senior ministry clergy (12; 8 males and 4 females); English-speaking 2nd

generation ministry clergy (8; 6 males and 2 females) and lay leaders (12; 9 males and 3 females).

The three focus groups and surveys were administered on October 13, 2006, at KCCD's national office. KCCD's Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operating Officer and a trained social work graduate student facilitated tape recorded focus groups in Korean. Twenty-two of the focus group participants remained after the 1.5 hour focus group meeting and completed a 23-item follow-up survey. The survey was only prepared in English. The focus group sessions were transcribed from Korean and translated into English. We analyzed the participants' focus group transcripts and notes from each group to identify themes and patterns in responses. We analyzed the survey responses and generated descriptive statistics. We also reviewed KCCD documents and interviewed KCCD staff to gain a better understanding of the ways Korean American churches access support and expand their services. We also interviewed KCCD staff and reviewed KCCD documents and gathered data from other studies, as well as from newspapers.

This report documents findings from phase one of this project. The action research project proposed to move this work from documenting research findings to community action.

The full plan includes:

- Phase 1: a research phase to establish the baseline of existing and potential community development initiatives, including business development
- Phase 2: a capacity building phase to support the expansion of the community development initiatives
- Phase 3: an outreach phase to strengthen and cultivate cross-cultural, public-private collaborations
- Phase 4: an action phase to launch new cross-cultural, public-private community development initiatives in multi-ethnic environments.

Appendix B

Table 1: Services Provided by 16 Korean American Churches

Domains	Human Development	Economic Development	Community Development
Neighborhood	Summer School Saturday School Collaboration with schools Korean language school Summer youth programs Angel Tree participating churches/ other prison ministry outreach Health clinics Acupuncture services Health Insurance programs Health education Free Breast Cancer Screening Programs for homeless Domestic violence support and shelter Horse back riding camp Soup Kitchen Cultural programs Music lessons Translation services	Thrift shop Food co-op Scholarships for high school students Sub-grants to local nonprofits	Community Center Election poll site Community crime collaborations with Police Department\ Community festivals, concerts, bazaars, Halloween alternative celebration, and other events Neighborhood cleanups
Faith-based Organization	20,105 members Worship services Small group ministries Life-stage ministries Retreat Center	\$32.9 million in tithes, offerings, & missions gifts Endowment Program	\$\$86 million in real estate, 3,518,247 sq. ft. Building construction projects Partnerships with Latino residents and churches to send doctors and teachers to support missions work in Latin American countries
Individual & Families	Senior visitation/care Support for persons with disabilities Substance Abuse Recovery Programs Parent-child support /caregiver education Child care Marriage counseling Nutrition programs Tae Kwon Do classes	Assistance to apply for government programs Financial planning Financial education Tax preparation Career counseling Job training Computer training Job placement	Volunteer opportunities

Table 2: The Resources and Needs of Korean-American Churches

Resources Used by Korean- American Churches	What Korean-American Churches Need to Expand Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial resources/ track record for giving within the faith community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External funding for large scale community development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant number of professionals including health care professionals, computer experts, teachers, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People with specialized skills in community development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant international missions that include community development activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased collaboration with other community organizations, churches, faith-based organizations and government agencies, particular for referrals and program development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Church members with a desire to serve others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional paid staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational resources, including language schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity building: management, leadership training, grant assistance, language assistance, marketing and strategic planning tools, additional community development models, etc.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stability / desire to build long-terms roots in the neighborhood 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant number of members with small businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services for business training and expansion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ample facilities for expanding programs and sharing space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial support for regular repairs related to increased community use

More information about the Korean Churches for Community Development, such as services provided and a list of affiliate members, is available upon request.

Appendix C: KCCD's Capacity Building Efforts

- KCCD hosted six National "Lighting the Community" Conferences attended by over 600 pastors and leaders representing 13 states. Speakers at these conferences include, government officials (Elaine L. Chao, Secretary of U.S. Department of Labor, Jay F. Hein, Deputy Assistant to the President and Director of the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives; Henry C. Lozano, Deputy Assistant to the President and Director of USA Freedom Corps), Corporate Funders, Foundation Officers, and Business Executives
- Through conferences and other local and regional meetings, KCCD has trained over 3,000 faith-based organizations and nonprofits to develop their own programs and to increase their networks and funding.
- KCCD has developed the following programs: Youth Workforce Program, Homebuyer Center, Foreclosure Prevention Program, VITA/EITC, Financial Literacy/Individual Development Account program, Path Builders Technical Assistance Program, Asian American Healthy Marriage and Family Initiative, and Small Business Assistance.
- From 2003-2007, KCCD was awarded 21 AmeriCorps volunteers.
- KCCD hosted seven annual Homeownership Fairs.
- KCCD has trained over 4,000 homebuyers and connected them with down payment assistance, through the Housing Counseling Agency, Homeownership Fairs, and Homebuyer Education Classes.
- In 2007, KCCD helped 15 families purchase their first homes, providing over \$1.43 million in government down payment assistance and over \$2.7 million in first mortgage supports.
- KCCD has trained numerous organizations in homeownership program implementation.
- KCCD staff has also been invited to speak and provide trainings by various governmental and national agencies including the White House Office of Faith-based and Community Initiatives, U.S. Small Business Administration, the U.S. Department of Labor, the North Carolina State Office of Refugees, New Jersey Office of Faith Based of Community Initiatives, Federal Home Loan Bank of San Francisco, Korean American Coalition, and L2 Foundation Asian American Leadership Conference.
- KCCD has worked to influence policy and funding decisions by partnering with key stakeholders such as LA County Sheriff Leroy Baca, White House Commissioner on the President's Advisory Commission on Drug-Communities Henry Lozano, LAPD First Assistant Chief Jim McDonnell, LA Alcohol and Drug Program Administration Chief Deputy Director Wayne Sugita, and many others.
- KCCD has also advocated for resources like FDIC's Money Smart and Freddie Mac's Credit Smart to be translated into Korean.
- Since 2004, KCCD has advocated for an Asian Pacific American Healthy Marriage Initiative. As one of co-founding coalition members of the California Healthy Marriages Coalition, KCCD has secured a portion of the \$10.5 million awarded to the coalition to make marriage education available to the Asian community. KCCD has trained over 300 faith leaders to provide marriage education, as well as assisted its Healthy Marriage Network Members including Family Savers, His University, and Claremont to receive their first Federal Government grants. In sum, KCCD and its constituents have received \$450,000 in Federal dollars to support the Healthy Marriage Initiative.

- In 2005, KCCD was awarded a \$5 million grant from the Department of Labor to disperse sub-grants and instruct community agencies on training for work readiness and employment for at-risk and adjudicated youth. With this award, KCCD has trained and subgranted over \$350,000 to multiple organizations to strengthen their programs that serve at-risk and adjudicated Asian youth.
- In 2005, KCCD was honored as Faith Partner of the Year at the 12th Annual Minority Enterprise Development Awards Dinner and Celebration, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Small Business Administration, and the Los Angeles Minority Business Opportunity Center.
- In 2006, KCCD expanded its training program called Communities Empowering Youth (CEY) Program, through a \$700,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Communities Empowering Youth Grant.
- KCCD is now one of five national Asian organizations that deliver foreclosure programs through Neighborworks. The \$160,000 award from Freddie Mac, California Reinvestment Coalition and other national organizations have allowed KCCD to provide foreclosure services to the Korean and Asian American community. KCCD has assisted over 150 homeowners with their foreclosure crisis.
- After the Virginia Tech tragedy in 2007, KCCD contacted SAMHSA requesting support to reach out to the faith-community to address mental illness in the Asian community. As a result, SAMHSA has provided a \$25,000 grant that KCCD will use to host a national conference to educate Korean and Asian American faith leaders.
- As an intermediary organization, KCCD successfully sub-granted over \$500,000 to over 15 Korean community based organizations.