

ALUMS PLANT NEW CHURCHES

"If we reduce church to being a place, a location, where the word is preached and the sacraments are administered, I don't think we're teaching the whole story of who the church is supposed to be."

Keith Kaufold is a pastor in a tough neighborhood where drug dealers and school dropouts abound. He grew up nearby and can speak firsthand about addiction—and redemption.

In 2007, Keith renovated a former radio station in Homestead, just outside Pittsburgh, into Eighth Avenue Place—a coffee-shop ministry that provides a safe environment to drink a cup of fair-trade coffee, fellowship, and participate in Christian worship services.

By living and ministering together in the name of Jesus Christ, the people who gather at Eighth Avenue Place confront the ignorance that perpetuates racism. Eighth Avenue offers numerous programs to serve the community. The coffee house is brewing with diversity and various resources for those who may be in need of casework services. The Gathering is a weekly Saturday worship service that includes a meal twice each month. Additionally, Eighth Avenue runs an in-house Christian 12-step recovery group in partnership with Christian Counseling Associates, which provides an on-site social worker and counseling services. Local urban youth can participate in Valley Landscaping, which offers summer employment and high quality lawn care and landscape services. And realizing more can be done together than alone, Eighth Avenue has joined with local churches in serving the local elementary school. Volunteers assist with reading and homework.

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