

Community Focus Statement E: Create opportunities for community connectedness where residents of Muscoy know their neighbors, are connected to their community, and have diverse opportunities for social interaction.

Action Statement E.1: Engage local churches and faith-based institutions in Muscoy to sponsor local events, activities, and community cleanups.

E

Benchmark: Formation of a leadership committee with representatives from each church or institution. Hold one large community-wide event on an annual basis, with smaller monthly/biweekly events held for specific groups of Muscoy residents.

Champion: Volunteer group or person or can be identified by the community

Estimated Cost: variable dependent upon the program established.



Volunteers from a church group help clear sand bags in Minneapolis MN. Photo source: FEMA

Muscoy is home to many local churches and other faith-based communities that can actively engage in community connectedness and offer opportunities for social interaction. Neighborhood religious institutions have resources that can contribute directly to social capital—the network of relationships among people who live and work in the community, enabling Muscoy to function efficiently. As most religious institutions have staff, space and facilities, materials and equipment, and relevant understanding of community needs, they are uniquely positioned to become centers of community interaction.

Several churches and religious communities in Muscoy are centers for interaction between local individuals, groups, associations, and institutions. For example, many hold weekly bible studies, classes, support groups, and other charity outreaches related to their faith. Additionally, some host ministries that focus on after-school care, tutoring, and literacy. Joint-use agreements (as described in Action

Statement A.3) could create sustained partnerships between religious institutions and the community for the use of buildings and open space owned by churches.

Local churches and faith-based communities can be further engaged to sponsor community-wide events and activities, such as community fairs, potlucks, talent shows, or holiday parties. Church meeting spaces, classrooms, or other multipurpose rooms could be used as gathering space for other community-based organizations. Religious institutions could also form coalitions to coordinate on community activities or ministries in order to make the most efficient use of their combined resources.

Action	Action Leader	Timeline	Resources
1. Create a committee of representatives from faith-based institutions in Muscoy.	Champion	Years 1 – 3	Building Communities from the Inside Out, <i>Kretzman and McKnight</i> Faith-Based Organizing http://www.nhi.org/online/issues/115/Warren.html
2. Develop a leadership committee and complete an asset inventory of what each church or institution can offer to better the community.	Committee	Years 1 – 3	PICO Network http://www.piconetwork.org/about
3. Sponsor one large annual event through combined volunteers.	Committee with Local churches and faith-based institutions	Years 1 – 3	
4. Create smaller monthly programs geared to specific residents with common interests.	Committee with Local churches and faith-based institutions	Years 1 – 3	
5. Connect with other groups in Muscoy to build on events and activities.	Committee	Years 1 – 3	