

Members use Thrivent generosity programs to help communities and causes.

BUILDING ON THE APOSTLES

By Kathleen Childers

A community of churches sets out to construct a home but ends up building so much more.

KENNEWICK, WASHINGTON—When Thrivent Financial Representative Michelle Clary and her practice manager Jenny Krueger discussed a Thrivent Builds idea with representatives from Habitat for Humanity earlier this year, they gave themselves a challenge: Get churches in the area to work together to build a home alongside a local family in need of a safe place to live.

Their vision? Twelve churches of various denominations working as a team, inspired by the biblical Twelve Apostles. The project, called Apostles Build, would benefit many: those who work on the home, the businesses that donate construction materials, the family who will purchase the home, the faith community and the wider city.

As it turns out, 13 churches, ranging in size from fewer than 100 members to more than 3,000, officially agreed to volunteer, and many more churches ended up participating.

Because there were so many volunteers, the local Habitat office was able to arrange for two homes to be built in the area.

Construction took place this past summer. After the foundations for the homes were poured, volunteers from all of the churches worked side by side to raise the walls at each site. Then each church took turns providing volunteers for one week at one of the building sites.

“Some churches did their week as a men’s retreat,” says Krueger. “Other churches



Members from a number of churches in Kennewick, Washington, worked together to raise the walls of a new home they were building. This was one of two homes the group built this year for a Thrivent Builds with Habitat for Humanity project.

partnered with each other to build cross-church relationships.”

Volunteers as young as 16 donated their time. Professional contractors from the area volunteered at the building sites on weekends.

Thrivent member Tim Guidotti’s church, Southside, has one of the smaller congregations that participated. Yet so many people from the church volunteered, they were able to work at both of the homes. The experience was very affirming, says Guidotti, a board member of Thrivent’s Northwest Region.

“It gave everyone a sense of ownership and happiness. And working alongside people from other faiths who were coming together for a common good had an impact on me and others.”

Later this year, two families will take possession of their new homes, and a celebration is planned to commemorate the event.

Clary, Krueger and Guidotti also look forward to celebrating what is yet to come—more collaborations between the churches on community projects.

Kathleen Childers is assistant editor of *Thrivent* magazine.



Watch a video of Apostles Build volunteers raising the walls in a single day of one of the homes they built. [Thrivent.com/apostlesbuild](https://www.thrivent.com/apostlesbuild)

Learn more about Thrivent’s partnership with Habitat for Humanity. [Thriventbuilds.com](https://www.thriventbuilds.com)