



Mecklenburg Ministries
From Common Ground to Higher Ground

2012 Community Leader Award Recipient

Dale Mullennix

Dale Mullennix has served as a moral conscience for our community for two decades as a leader who advocates that every person has a safe, stable place to call home.

Formerly a pastor at Myers Park Baptist Church, Dale discovered a new call to ministry when he befriended a man experiencing homelessness who found shelter on the church grounds in the 1990s. Through that friendship, Dale led an effort to merge ministries to the homeless and create an uptown campus of compassion, now known as the Urban Ministry Center. In large part due to Dale's leadership, Charlotte created a collaborative partnership between the faith community and business to improve the services to people experiencing homelessness. Such leadership is Dale's hallmark. Dale believes that giving people the opportunity to form friendships across differences is a force that can change our community.

It was in this same spirit that only two years after creating the Urban Ministry Center, Dale worked with local faith leaders to create the Room in the Inn ministry as part of the Urban Ministry Center. Today more than 100 communities of faith (and a few schools, YMCAs and retirement homes) provide an average of 130 additional shelter beds every night each winter. Even more remarkable are the relationships that occur when individuals come together and recognize a shared humanity, despite very different material situations in life.

Also, Dale was part of a group of four young pastors who brought Habitat for Humanity to Charlotte in 1981 and chaired the group that created McCreesh Place in 2002.

In 2007, Dale led the Urban Ministry Center to address the chronically homeless. In the midst of the worst recession since the Great Depression, Dale set out to raise \$10 million to create Moore Place, Charlotte's first large-scale housing-first model to end homelessness for 85 chronically homeless individuals. No other city in America had ever attempted such an audacious fundraising goal. Dale's hope is to eventually change how Charlotte thinks about homeless people. In January 2012, the community celebrated the grand opening of Moore Place.

Liz Clasen-Kelly commented, "Through the Urban Ministry Center, Room in the Inn, and the creations of Moore Place, Dale's leadership has clearly impacted our community. Despite his remarkable achievements, however, I believe that Dale will be remembered most not for what he created, but who he is. Dale has a deep belief that all human beings, despite their struggles, are created in the image of God."