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FROM THE SANCTUARY TO THE STREETS

HOW THE DREAMS OF ONE CITY'S HOMELESS
SPARKED A FAITH REVOLUTION THAT TRANSFORMED A COMMUNITY

WENDY McCAIG

What does it mean to be church? Is it spending an hour on Sunday with people who look, think, and act much as we do? Or is it something more incarnational that seeks out those who are different, the ones living on the margins? For centuries Christians have presumed that we are to take the gospel to the poor. Instead, Wendy McCaig invites us to receive the gospel from the poor. Through a series of encounters with incarcerated, homeless, and impoverished individuals, Wendy McCaig experienced the mysterious power of Christian hospitality that turns strangers into family. Her gift for storytelling brings this mysterious transformation to life.

Inspired by the dreams of a homeless mother who wanted to help her neighbors, McCaig started a ministry that empowers formerly homeless individuals to live out their dreams. Together these dreamers are transforming their city one person, one community, and one church at a time. Her true stories of the least, the lost, and the forgotten in her community will show you the Good News becoming reality in the midst of injustice in ways that will inspire you and deepen your faith.

These twenty stories-within-a-story about what ordinary people can do when they come together across racial, economic, and geographic divides to fight poverty will expand your vision of what it means to be the church. With your eyes opened to the needs and gifts of your neighbors, you too can begin to dream God-sized dreams for a hurting world. And as you pray “Thy kingdom come on earth,” you will be inspired to live in such a way as to make it happen in your own community.

“*From the Sanctuary to the Streets* is the story of how one person began to help others—the broken of our world—dream and realize those dreams. She invites us into her world and introduces us to her friends. It is through this eye-opening account of Wendy’s story and the individual stories of her friends that we get a glimpse of God’s power to heal and mend the broken and transform them into a community of dreamers.”

—Eric Swanson, co-author of *The Externally Focused Church*

“McCaig’s vision of Christian hospitality involves opening ourselves to the most vulnerabl—the abused wife, the drug addict, the ex-felon, the abandoned elderly—and discovering there the presence of God. Friendships with those close at home—family and neighbors—as well as with those across racial and class lines illustrate how ‘God never works alone.’ This beautifully written book is a call to all of us to embrace our dreams, whether large and small, and in so doing respond to God’s call to be Christ’s body for the world.”

—Elizabeth Newman, author of *Untamed Hospitality: Welcoming God and Other Strangers*

“This is one of the best, most challenging, and hope-filled books I’ve read in a long time. What makes *From the Sanctuary to the Streets* so different from other books on the subject is its narrative quality—it reads like a novel, chock-full of personal stories and wisdom born of experience. McCaig has captured qualities of holiness and hope that blossom in some of the most desolate corners of the inner city.”

—Stephen Brachlow, author of *The Communion of Saints: Radical Puritan and Separatist Ecclesiology 1570–1625*

“Years ago, God gave Joseph an unpopular but ultimately redemptive dream that altered the course of his nation. Today, God has spoken a dream of the same fabric to my friend and courageous leader Wendy McCaig. Those who are wise enough to listen to this dreamer will become a part of a movement of the Church Distributed and will touch their communities with grace and hope.”

—John P. Chandler, author of *Courageous Church Leadership: Conversations with Effective Practitioners*

Wendy McCaig is the founder and Executive Director of Embrace Richmond, an urban ministry in inner-city Richmond, Virginia. She holds a MDiv and has worked for more than ten years as a leader in the local church, and for another six years serving the homeless. However, her greatest honor is being the mother of three amazing daughters and wife to the most supportive husband ever.