

ARM Vision Narrative:

Transformed rural communities with sustainable homes, strong families, and strategic community partnerships for God's glory.

Transformation is a community that thrives, especially a community that is small, rural, and may feel invisible. Typically, these communities are also close and resilient. Our vision is to build upon those existing neighborly qualities and live out Jesus' mandate to love our neighbor as ourselves and to show mercy to our neighbors as captured in the story of the Samaritan and the fallen Jewish man. For ARM, a community that thrives has homes that are sustainable, families that are strong and show love, and have a community network of support and care. People in these communities know they have other neighbors inside and outside their community that love them. We also believe local churches, as stewards of God's grace, mercy, and compassion, are the main vehicles by which this vision is realized. Additionally, it takes many organizations and partnerships to form strong and thriving communities and to experience transformation.

Sustainable homes: Imagine if not only was there a system by which struggling families could repair their homes but also have a system that prevented catastrophic damage before it happened. Sustainable homes mean a home is warm, safe, dry and beautiful. It is a place where a family feels comfortable to invite friends and family over to visit. It is a place they are proud to call home. Through mission hearted volunteers, we can help families make these repairs and keep money dedicated to other needs. Sustainability means homeowners know how to identify future issues that arise and address before they become unsafe and costly. For example, noticing a leak in the plumbing and being able to have a way to repair before it runs up a water bill or causes damage on floors or cabinets. Through mission hearted volunteers who love their neighbors, we can make repairs and help families identify potential issues before they become costly. Finally, homeowners can learn how to identify a qualified repair person that will do a great job and not take advantage of them.

Strong families:

Imagine families that were close, tight knit and showed love to one another! Imagine families that were able to invest in their children in a way that is encouraging and empowering. Imagine families feeling dignified as we repaired their homes and that the definition of neighbor is not so much distance as an attitude. Homeowners in the ARM process learn skills on how to budget on a shoestring, how to avoid scammers, and know how to find resources available to them for future repairs and how to access those resources. Also imagine children having a safe place to learn and grow, a place where they feel loved, secure, and empowered. Envision a place where their imagination is cultivated and they learn how to be disciples and servant leaders. This is how we develop strong families. We invest in the family living in their home and we invest in the children in the communities of which we serve.

Strategic Community partnerships: Isolation and disconnection are seemingly common themes. Even with social media and all the interfaces, loneliness and feelings of disconnection are

rampant. It is also easy to buy into the lie we can accomplish big goals on our own. Maybe in the short term, but in the long term it takes partnerships and networks of support to bind communities together. Imagine several and diverse organizations working together. Churches are the core of strategic partners as agents of mercy, grace, and accountability. Additionally, it is the community's local government agencies like economic development and the city planner. ARM's partnerships coordinate with other non-profit groups like the United Way and Area of Aging. Finally, businesses serve with us providing their unique business expertise and getting to share their commitment to the success and empowerment of the overall community. Imagine, all these groups working in tandem and forming partnerships to improve the lives of all people!

Developing servant leaders

How can we create sustainable homes, strengthen families, and build community partnerships? It is by investing in people to help them become servant leaders and engage the community through serving and learning. Everyone can be a servant leader and when we are all learning and serving together, it intentionally blurs the lines between giver and receiver. Therefore, ARM invests in all people and helps create equity within our relationships. Rather than hiring contractors, ARM cultivates volunteers, both individuals and groups. They learn basic construction, how to share their faith and how to actively engage with someone mostly likely different than themselves. We also see one year, six month and semester long internships, in addition to the summer ministry, with college students helping them discern their vocation and cultivate a heart for serving. They also learn about the root causes of poverty and how racism is connected to the struggles. Courses are servant leader retreats continue the process of developing servant leaders beyond the mission experience.

Service learning: We must respond to the results of poverty around us and stop it from destroying homes and families. We must also go upriver and find out the root causes of poverty and what prevents people from thriving. Those who serve must embrace a Christlike servant hearted humility and become a learner. Missioners must understand and seek to solve the complex areas of poverty beyond the individual. This means learning ways to build social capital, understanding how exploitive practices such as lack of living wages, access to finance, and racism contribute to poverty. Finally, it is to understand how laws and policies perpetuate the structures that prevent people from moving from poverty to sustainability.

God's glory: At the heart of the vision is glorifying God through our good works. Our main purpose is teaching and making disciples. ARM is a ministry seeing brokenness and acting as Jesus' agent of healing. In the same way that Jesus healed and taught, ARM will heal and teach. We will heal the brokenness we see with homes needing repairs, families needing strength and communities needing vital connections so that we all thrive. When it is done, we point to our Father and give him the glory.

Vision 2030:

ARM is present in all 67 counties of Alabama providing a local model of home repair and children's ministry through mission volunteers.

ARM has trained 4000 students in Christian servant leadership through mission camps, internships and retreats.

ARM has college student organizations in 5 main universities in Alabama.

ARM has repaired homes and graduated 1000 families from our ministry model and in each community it is serving.

ARM has equipped and ministered with 1000 children through its day camps in each location of which it serves.

ARM has published a student leadership guide.

ARM hosts 2 mission leadership retreats per year.

ARM is the expert leader in housing in the rural areas of Alabama.

ARM is a household name in Alabama.