

1. Discover — Naming the Injustice & Listening Deeply

Guiding Question: *What is the real injustice beneath the surface, and how is my community experiencing it?*

My early work centered on identifying the realities of environmental injustice and its connection to economic marginalization. Through my Environmental Leadership Ministry certification with Dr. Anna Case-Winters and Dr. Ted Hiebert, I learned how environmental harm disproportionately impacts Black and Brown neighborhoods. This grounding shaped my earliest attempts to articulate the injustice at the heart of *Reclaiming Creation Victory*.

In my VoiceThread reflections (VT3, VT4), I described the initial vision: a project built on three pillars—Theological Teaching, Environmental Awareness, and Economic Development. These pillars reflected my desire to integrate my corporate background, theological training, and call to community transformation.

However, the Discover phase—particularly the Build Political Awareness and Partnership stage of the Justice Design Thinking diagram—taught me something deeper: the importance of listening. During our first artifact exercise, *Make Something of It*, my individual design (Artifact 1, Stage 1) was meaningful, but the collaborative version (Stage 2) showed how design becomes richer and more faithful when co-created with others.

2. Interpret — Reframing Through Community Insight

Guiding Question: *How does community wisdom reshape my assumptions and reframe the real challenge?*

The Interpret phase became a major turning point. As shared in my VT8 updates (Nov. 1 and 8), feedback from peers and classmates revealed that my three-pillar model was still shaped primarily by my vision. It had not yet been co-defined by my stakeholders.

Revisiting the design-thinking diagram and reflecting on Lorenzo Lebrija's *How to Try*, I realized I had been moving too quickly toward solutions without communal discernment.

Lebrija's framework emphasizes that faithful experimentation requires listening, failing fast, and allowing direction to emerge from the people impacted. Patrick Reyes's *The Purpose Gap* deepened this insight by reminding me that purpose is cultivated with community, not imposed upon it. This shift moved the project from something *I* was designing to something *we* were discerning and shaping together.

3. Ideate — Co-Creating Possibilities With Stakeholders

Guiding Question: *What new possibilities emerge when I design with my community instead of for them?*

With a renewed posture of collaboration, I began ideating alongside real stakeholders. As reflected in my VT8 update (Nov. 8):

- Reshaped my model as a **phased approach**, directed by community momentum and not merely community introduction or assumed buy-in..
- Insights from our Day 3 Residence session on Disability Worship reminded me to expand beyond my original focus on Black men and embrace a more accessible, inclusive design for co-creators of all abilities.

- Re-engaging Faith in Place provided a practical model for environmental ministry through their “Green Team” approach to community-led sustainability.

During this phase, I also reflected on Audre Lorde’s *The Master’s Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master’s House*. Using her framework, I created Artifact 2, depicting young Black men in a deteriorated neighborhood surrounded by “floating” solutions—cleaner air, green energy, and economic opportunity—just out of reach. The image illustrated how the needed tools often exist but are inaccessible due to structural inequities.

In our class deconstruction, we agreed that nothing needed to be discarded—only redistributed and reimagined so the community could reclaim what was already theirs.

4. Prototype — Testing New Understandings Through Design

Guiding Question: *What does justice look like when it takes shape? How can we test hope visually?*

Insights from the Ideate stage led to Artifact 4: Reclaiming Creation Victory, a visual representation of what community transformation could look like when justice-oriented design meets spiritual imagination. The prototype depicts:

- Clean, renewable energy (solar + wind) & accessible technological resources
- Restored buildings and infrastructure w/ green space and sustainable land use
- Community members visible, engaged, and empowered

The movement from Artifact 2 (Injustice Identified) to Artifact 4 (Hope Imagined) represents a shift from despair to possibility—grounded not in my personal design, but in the wisdom and imagination of the community itself.