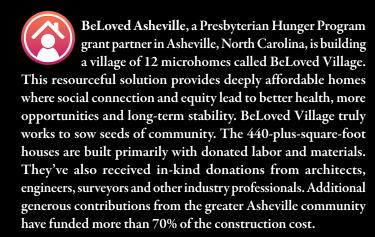
How Congregations Are Increasing Affordable Housing and Addressing Unhoused Populations

In 2008, the 218th General Assembly of the PC(USA) approved recommendations in the report "From Homelessness to Hope: Constructing Just, Sustainable Communities for All God's People," including "Encourage congregations, presbyteries, synods and other church-related entities to pursue comprehensive responses to the crisis of homelessness and affordable housing." The PC(USA)'s Matthew 25 vision also calls us to be actively involved in the world around us in eradicating systemic poverty, dismantling structural racism and building congregational vitality. With diminishing affordable housing options across much of the United States, many congregations are considering ways to affect change by utilizing untapped resources such as land. The following are a few examples of congregations and communities of faith thinking creatively about land use and building a more just community for all.

Westminster Presbyterian Church in Washington, D.C., discovered that the equity of their property had grown due to the location's demand. Westminster decided to build a new building, and later the church found developers to build affordable housing with the additional equity. Westminster is now co-owner of a 123-unit apartment complex and a church building that, once it's constructed, will be 2½ times bigger than its current building.

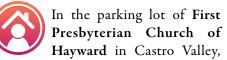
Read more:

https://bit.ly/phpposthousing1



Read more:





California, a village of five tiny homes is the most visible manifestation of the church's effort to address homelessness. "We've come to the theological place, maybe philosophical, that housing is a human right," said the Rev. Jake Medcalf, Hayward's lead pastor. "If we don't provide housing in our neighborhoods, especially in an area like the Bay, we are literally — I don't think it's dramatic, I think it's real — condemning people to die on the streets."

Read more:

https://bit.ly/phpposthousing2

Ideas for congregations:

• Use church buildings to host neighbors

• Provide social services and assistance in finding stable housing for neighbors

• Donate property for affordable housing.

• Partner with qualified organizations to build affordable housing units on church

• Provide church parking lots as "safe lots"

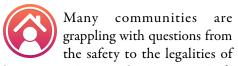
• Find, join or form a Congregation-Based

Community Organizing (CBCO) team to advocate for affordable housing.

for individuals living in vehicles.

experiencing housing insecurity.

experiencing housing insecurity.



living in one's car and are creating "safe fountains for lead, "there's definitely lots" for the vehicular homeless to park in. Some of these safe parking lots are owned by the Department of Transportation or the Department of Public Health. Other lots are owned by faith organizations, such as Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church in Northglenn, Colorado. The Rev. Sheri Fry shared that the process was a months-long effort to convince neighbors that opening the parking lot at night for people to stay safely in their vehicles was a good idea.

Read more:

https://bit.ly/phpposthousing5

Whether advocating on

affordable housing issues or

the need to test school water

influence and power when you have a lot

of organizations working together," said

Pastor Timothy Stern of Ark and Dove

Presbyterian Church in Maryland. He also

noted, "Community organizing is a great

way of organizing a congregation" because

it involves doing "one-on-one meetings

with people so that you can create relational

Read more:

https://bit.ly/phpposthousing3 https://bit.ly/phpposthousing4

Getting Started:

- 1. Find out if there are groups working with unhoused people in your area and support or complement their efforts.
- 2. If there aren't local groups doing this work, begin by listening to and assessing the needs of the community through listening
- 3. Contact local and state agencies to get a clear understanding of assistance options.
- 4. Envision a realistic plan for how church property could be used.
- 5. Assess the skills in the congregation and partner with knowledgeable people - community organizers, lawyers, builders, accountants, financial partners, community leaders and officials, journalists, etc.
- 6. Before developing property, assess the value and buildable square footage.

Affordable Housing:

https://www.enterprisecommunity.org/

property.

https://www.enterprisecommunity.org/sites/default/files/2021-07/Enterprise-Paper-Leveraging Property-Owned-by-FBOs-January2020.pdf

https://nhpfoundation.org/documents/NHPF_FaithBasedAffordableHousing_Articles.pdf

https://naht.org/our-partners/development-partners

https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/compassion-peace-justice/hunger/cbco/ https://www.presbyterianmission.org/wp-content/uploads/homelessness-report2008.pdf

https://www.uua.org/files/documents/aw/cbco_near_you.pdf

Unhoused Services

https://familypromise.org/what-we-do/programs-services/

https://safeparkingla.org/

https://www.thepeaceplan.com/4-steps-to-move-your-church-to-address-homelessness/

https://nationalhomeless.org/