

Homeless Service Opportunities for Faith Communities

Hello! There is so much going on right now regarding homelessness in our community! Many different interested parties are asking faith communities what they can do to be a part of the efforts and it has been made clear to us that faith communities are not being regularly included in the conversation. We wanted to try to start brainstorming a “menu” of ways for faith communities to start conversations about how and where to plug in. This list is no exhaustive, but is meant to give you and your community a jumping off point to discuss what could work best for you. We would also love to hear from you if none of these menu items would work or if you have other thoughts about how your community can continue to be involved in a meaningful way.

IW Shelter/Community Care Center Volunteer Opportunities

Meals at the Shelter Provide a monthly or weekly meal at the shelter. Generally we need enough food to serve our average number of guests which is around 40-45. Drop it off or stay and serve!

Meals at the CCC Provide a monthly or weekly meal at the CCC. Generally we need enough food to serve our daily average number of guests which is around 125-150. Drop it off or stay and serve!

Volunteer Support one day a week or month at the shelter or CCC and fill all open volunteer spots for that day/evening.

Laundry Assistance Become an ongoing “laundry fairy” and help shelter guests with mobility challenges who can’t get their laundry to the CCC with their personal laundry.

Donation Drives Organize a donation drive using our wish lists as a guide for needed materials. You can find our year round and Amazon wish lists on our website (iwshelter.org) under the Get involved, Donate tab.

Volunteer Team – Days of Service Organize a team of people from your community for a one-off service day to help with a special project at either one of the IW Homeless Services locations.

Funding – Services Donate money to support our work.

Funding – Facilities Donate money to First Christian Church to support the wear and tear on their building.

Annual PIT Homeless Census Commit to volunteering with the City of Olympia and the social service provider partners for this years Annual Point In Time homeless connect and census event.

Hazardous Weather Response Volunteer Opportunities

Hosting a Hazard Weather Shelter Consider opening your building in the event that a Hazardous Weather (Code Blue [extreme cold], Code Red [extreme heat], High winds, etc.) event is called and extra shelter needs to be made available.

Hazard Weather Shifts Sign up for an “on-call” shift (what seems reasonable for on-call--Two weeks? One month?) between November and April signifying that you will bottom line volunteer support d in the event that a “Code Blue” is called during that time. Note: Typically “Code Blue” is only called for 1-8 days consecutively. “Code Blue” is designated for extreme weather that is outside typically temperatures and weather patterns. In the near future there will be a

community calendar to organize for Hazardous Weather Response that will live on the Thurston Thrives website.

Shifts are broken into roughly 6 (evening/morning)-8 (overnight) hour blocks and ideally there are 3-4 volunteers per shift.

- Shift 1: 5pm-11pm
- Shift 2: 10:30pm-6:30am
- Shift 3: 6am-12pm
- Shift 4: 11:30pm-5:30pm

Donation Drive – Hazardous Weather Organize a donation drive for Hazardous Weather goods such as:

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| → Tarps | → Coffee |
| → Cup-o-soups | → Creamer |
| → Granola bars | → Toilet paper |
| → Oatmeal packets | → Paper towels |
| → Blankets | → Socks |
| → Hand warmers | → Hats |
| | → Gloves, etc. |

Meals - Hazardous Weather Provide meals to the Shelter or CCC during your on-call timeframe if Code Blue is not called.

Donations – Services - Hazardous Weather Donate money to support IW Homeless Services work as it relates to Hazardous Weather response.

Donations – Facilities - Hazardous Weather Donate money to First Christian Church to support the wear and tear on their building.

Broaden Our Regional Homeless Response Partnership

→ **Expand Needed Partnership Networks** People experiencing homelessness come from all parts of our County. Consider working with the leadership in your community – Bucoda, Lacey, Tenino, Rainier, Tumwater or Yelm – to expand the partnerships needed for an effective homeless response:

- ◆ Attend **Council and Commissioner** meetings to stay up to date with what's happening in your community.
- ◆ Contact **Businesses** who may be impacted by homelessness and interested in getting involved in solutions.
- ◆ Contact **Community Service Organizations** such as the Elks, Lions, Rotary Clubs and others to have them talk with you and your community about how to get involved in solutions.
- ◆ Ask IW Homeless Services or other local organizations to come speak to your congregations and the communities you are a part of, about this vital topic that affects us all.

Encampment Support Volunteer Opportunities

Work with Just Housing Connect with Just Housing to provide outreach, garbage removal, and supply gathering support to encampments in wooded areas and downtown.

This can look like going out to camps and getting to know people to learn what it is that they are needing; volunteering to help bag and take garbage to the dump (pickup trucks and donations to buy bags and pay dump fees are needed), paying for a dumpster, and gathering survival supplies like tarps, pallets, tents, camping stoves, MRE's and food that can be easily cooked on a camp stove, etc.

Reach out to TUCO to find out how this has looked for their congregation at the Nickerson encampment.

Hosting a Tiny House/Camp Village Consider hosting a tiny home or tent encampment on your faith community property, or sponsoring a family or individual who could live in your building/on your property ongoing.

What would you need in order to make this idea a reality? What concerns do you have? What excites you about an idea like this?

Reach out to First Christian Church to talk with them about how this has looked for their congregation.

Consider attending an upcoming Tiny Home Workshop hosted by The United Churches of Olympia and Evergreen Christian Community are organizing and promoting a Community Workshop on Tiny Houses and Faith Communities in Olympia: When: Saturday October 27, 2018-10-3 pm, Where: Evergreen Christian Community, 1000 Black Lake Blvd. SW, Olympia WA, Topic: What are Tiny Houses and How can these work for Faith Communities? Purpose: To describe the experience of faith communities with tiny houses in Washington and Eugene, Oregon, explore the City Council's plans for tiny houses in Olympia and to identify viable options for Faith Communities to support tiny houses individually or in small villages in Olympia.

Donate/Lease Property Consider purchasing or donating property that could be used for housing/safe encampments.

Encampment Day of Service Organize a team of people from your community for a one-off service day to help with a special project at a local encampment.

Donate to Just Housing Donate money or survival supplies to Just Housing, At Home, IW Homeless Services, EGYHOP or TUCO to support Encampment outreach work as it currently is happening.

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