



PRESBYTERIAN
WOMEN

NEIGHBORS **IN NEED**

Christ's Call to Care for All



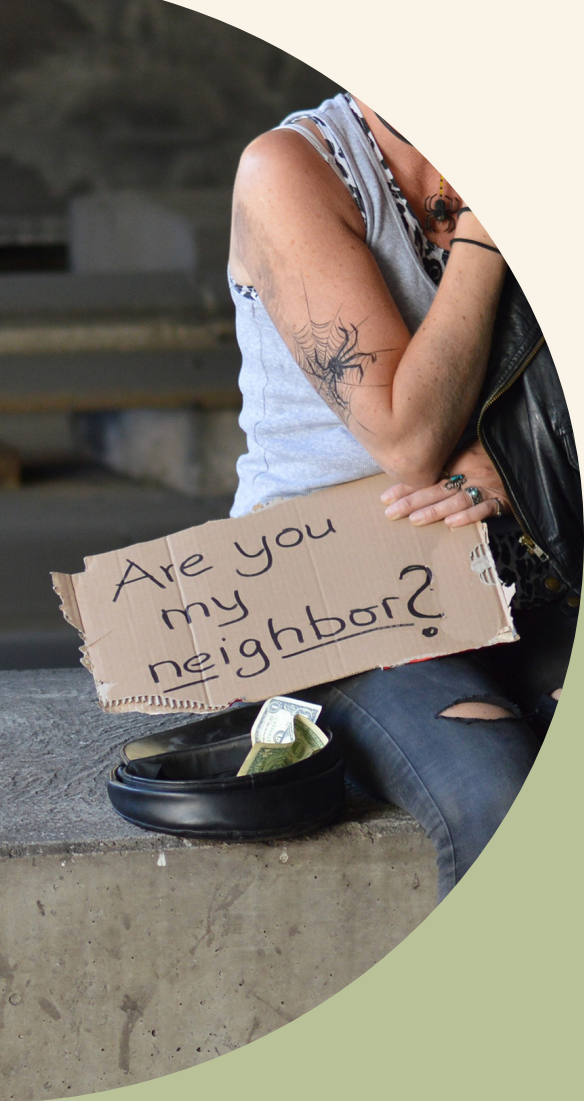


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Throughout scripture, God's followers are given the holy summons to provide hospitality, reach beyond comfort zones and offer care for people in need. Like our earliest ancestors in faith, participants in Presbyterian Women are also called and moved to demonstrate the love of Christ through hands-on action. Working alongside partners in our local communities, PW can support unhoused people and respond to Christ's sacred call to care for all our neighbors.

For many years, *homeless* has been the primary term to describe the experiences of people without a fixed residence. While this term is still in use by many individuals and organizations, *unhoused* reflects more nuances and diversity of experiences; it includes people living in vehicles or who sleep outside (*unsheltered*) or those who rotate their housing arrangements yet feel a sense of home and connection to the broader community. The term unhoused also points to the reality that this issue persists, at least in part, due to a shortage of affordable housing. While this resource incorporates all of this terminology, it is with the recognition that we build relationships with beloved children of God and work together to dismantle systems of injustice and to promote wholeness for all.

Worship

As your group discerns how they can best be agents of God's love with people who are unhoused, consider reading one of these passages or singing one of these hymns together.

Scripture

- Deuteronomy 15:7-11
- Isaiah 58:6-9
- Matthew 25:34-40
- Luke 10:25-37

Hymns

(all found in the Presbyterian Hymnal, *Glory to God*)

- All Are Welcome (301)
- Christ, Be Our Light (314)
- Servant Song (727)
- For Everyone Born (769)

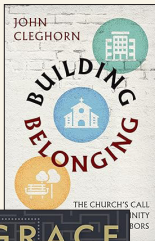


Memorial Drive Ministries, Stone Mountain, Georgia
(2021 Birthday Offering recipient)

Education

Understanding who is unhoused in your community, what local networks are already doing and how church groups can best respond is a vital foundation for a meaningful response.

Books

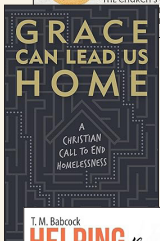


Building Belonging: The Church's Call to Create Community and House Our Neighbors

By John Cleghorn

Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2024

Visit wjkbooks.com/BuildingBelonging to download a free, congregational guide to use in tandem with the book. The 18-page resource provides five steps for faithful, thoughtful, practical responses.



Grace Can Lead Us Home: A Christian Call to End Homelessness

By Kevin Nye

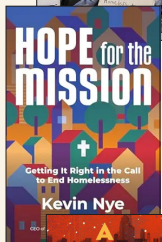
Harrisonburg, VA: Herald, 2022



Helping the Homeless: A Service Guide

By T. M. Babcock

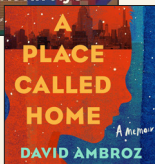
Indianapolis, IN: WP Lighthouse, 2024



Hope for the Mission: Getting It Right in the Call to End Homelessness

By Kevin Nye

Harrisonburg, VA: Herald, 2026



A Place Called Home: A Memoir

By David Ambroz

New York: Hachette, 2022

Film



Evicting the American Dream

Produced by Presbyterian Disaster Assistance/Counter Stories

Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2024

Available to stream on Amazon Prime

Visit pcusa.org/evicting-american-dream for the related resource guide.

Community Resources

Ask local or regional organizations to speak to your group about the needs in your community, perhaps focusing on

- affordable housing
- supportive housing or shelters with wraparound services
- city laws/ordinances pertaining to unhoused persons
- legal aid
- substance use disorders and/or mental health issues and housing stability
- stable housing and the role of race, gender or sexual identity
- trauma-informed practices for services your church may offer

National Organizations and Networks



National Alliance to End Homelessness

endhomelessness.org

Conducts research and analysis on trends; offers education and advocacy opportunities; promotes systemic change to eliminate homelessness



National Coalition for the Homelessness

nationalhomeless.org

Raises awareness around issues impacting people who are unhoused; maintains speaker's bureau for online and in-person speakers with lived experience of homelessness



National Low Income Housing Coalition

nlihc.org

Outlines housing programs and supports; offers education and action around housing priorities, such as rural housing or shelter following disasters; maintains a state-by-state overview of housing issues and state agencies



Direct Action & Research Training Center (DART)

thedartcenter.org

A network of 28 grassroots organizations, working largely in the Midwest and Southeast, promoting systems that meet people's basic needs, including housing



Family Promise

familypromise.org

A network of volunteers (in almost every state) that provides housing, food, mentorship and more to unhoused families with children; database of ways to be involved by zip code

Partnerships

Seek out organizations and networks in your community that already serve people who are unhoused. The following may need volunteers, building space for programs, a committee willing to take on a new initiative or material supports.

- schools
- churches or other houses of worship
(seek out interfaith or ecumenical groups)
- libraries
- hospitals
- food banks or soup kitchens
- women's shelters
- programs with wraparound services
- city council
- job training programs

Action

Whether your church or PW group feels called to answer immediate needs or advocate for systemic change, you can support people who are unhoused.

Advocacy

- Build relationships, treating all people as equals
 - o Invite people who are unsheltered or unhoused into your congregation for worship or to church events
 - o Hold or attend listening sessions to learn what the most pressing housing needs are in your community
- Provide interpretation and/or translation of resources
- Contact lawmakers at local, state and national levels, following through on advocacy suggestions from national and/or community organizations and networks



Holy Discontentment

bit.ly/3MtdQM_u

This PC(USA) guide is a free download that emphasizes the spiritual foundations of advocacy, and outlines best practices for organizing events, from prayer vigils to town halls, and ways to form advocacy teams.

Hands-on Mission

Projects for your group to do together

- Assemble hygiene kits or other supplies needed by partners
- Assemble blessing boxes—water, snacks, socks and other items—that church members can keep in cars to give to people in need
- Collect and donate clothing, especially for extreme weather conditions

Consider the financial and volunteer resources that your group could commit.

Your church building and grounds may offer unhoused people services such as

- a place to charge a phone
- laundry and/or shower facilities
- storage lockers or secured areas to keep documents and other possessions
- safe, well-lit parking spaces where people living in a vehicle could park overnight
- warming and/or cooling stations available when shelters are closed

Presbyterian Women's Thank and Birthday Offering grants have established, expanded or strengthened numerous programs that support unhoused people— from purchasing generators to ensuring food safety to renovating kitchens.

Learn more at presbyterianwomen.org/offerings.



First Presbyterian Church of Hammond, Louisiana, Shower Ministry (2025 Thank Offering recipient)



GAP Ministries of Augusta, Georgia (2020 Birthday Offering recipient)



**Presbyterian Women
in the PC(U.S.A.), Inc.**

100 Witherspoon Street
Louisville, Kentucky 40202-1396
844/PW-PCUSA (844/797-2872)
presbyterianwomen.org