

## **106 Mission Ideas**

In fact, these many ideas were born out of meeting the needs of homeless people I was serving for many decades. I used them to urge churches while I was on a speaking tour for 6 years on behalf of the Presbyterian Church (USA) with an initiative for every church to open one or a few rooms to welcome the homeless and do the homeless mission in a small way. I needed to provide them with mission ideas so that they can do something constructive with homeless people whom they invited to come. 106 ideas are easily doable project for the church because it has people, resource and some funds. I present these mission ideas as ingredients to bring the homeless restoration and healing to their broken and lost lives.

### **1. AA or NA Groups (Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous)**

**Need:** Statistics report that 30-40% of homeless people have alcohol or drug problems. Many homeless have difficulty of maintaining sobriety on their own. AA is a well-known support group in most communities. Many homeless with alcohol problems seem to enjoy attending AA meetings ([Alcoholics Anonymous](#)). NA meetings (Narcotics Anonymous) on a regular basis as they feel accepted there and function as a support system. Attending AA/NA will be quite helpful in the long run even though they might keep relapsing while they attend the support group. We experienced those who did not attend AA/NA faced more deterioration than those who attended because the support, challenge and encouragement are very important for those who can't stop substance abuse on their own will power. I have seen many homeless men and women become able to maintain sobriety for years with consistent support from AA and NA. Attending AA and NA also provides homeless people something to do and somewhere to go as well as gaining ongoing support. AA or NA can be a prevention against relapsing.

**Mission:** Many churches are already allowing for the community AA/NA group to use church space without much direct relationship with them. I suggest churches to get involved with the existing one or

create a new one, and build positive relationship with participants. It usually takes a person who had an experience in alcohol or drug abuse and recovery to run the AA/NA support group so that the group members may build trust with an experienced leader/facilitator. If a church doesn't have any experienced persons to facilitate the group, the area AA Association could provide a facilitator. AA group members, even more than some other groups, drink a lot of liquids. A church may prepare coffee or soft drinks or juice. Decaffeinated coffee would be helpful because they often drink too much caffeine. Incentives, such as a bottle of juice to take home for each one who comes to the AA/NA meeting, will reinforce attendance. Churches may begin to embrace AA meeting participants into the church community by inviting them to church services and activities.

## **2. Advocacy Group of the Homeless**

**Need:** As far as public policy issue is concerned, most of us, even service providers not only keep ourselves but also homeless people in the dark. I think homeless people must be included and informed of public policy issues in relation to homelessness, welfare and government benefits such as disabilities, health care, and food stamps, etc. Usually we all including homeless people think that no one can vote without physical residential address. But I hear there is some change in laws. If it is true, it is very significant for the homeless to know. There are times we all including homeless people must sign the petition for better policy. We usually do not include our homeless friends in such campaign. Therefore, as one claims that we cannot end homelessness unless there is significant policy challenge on local, state and federal government level, I would like urge us to help form an Advocacy Group of Homeless people. They have rights to know about laws and change of the laws regarding homeless issues. They also have equal responsibility to speak up for themselves on issues related to their life.

**Mission:** We not only inform them about the change of policies but also include them and work together to develop better policies in order to make this society a livable place and work toward ending homelessness, which is their grave concern more than anyone else's concern. There are eight good models in chapter ten of the Volume 4.

One of them is No. 103; WHEEL. The membership of their group includes currently and formerly homeless women and do advocacy whenever issue comes up. We too can form a committee with the homeless population and assign them to work on a certain issues such as raising minimum wages and work with local city government for erecting new tent city, and encourage all homeless people to vote for leaders who can do advocacy on behalf of the poor/homeless, and help with voter's registration for the homeless, etc.

Social Service agencies that receive government funding cannot be involved with political issues but faith-based charity programs and church groups that do not receive government funding can help form homeless advocacy group and support them constructive way to enhance public policies to make better society for all citizens, the poor and the rich.

### **3. After- Care Service**

**Need:** After care service refers to homeless people who just moved in apartment after long street life and also the homeless who are released from the hospital. Having a place to live simply means ending physical homelessness and the rest of many issues – substance abuse, unemployment, money management, poor social and living skills, and housekeeping, loneliness, etc. remain unresolved. Eviction due to these issues is also frequent even while they live in an apartment. Someone who was just released from the hospital was only released from a particular health problem area and the rest of issues remain unresolved. For some, they are lonelier when they move into an apartment alone. Some end up hearing more voices (auditory hallucinations) and leave apartments to be with people.

Many homeless people have rarely experienced healthy role models in their early lives because many of them were abused, neglected or raised in broken homes. Many have left their families, having been rejected by them, or perhaps the nature of their problems and transient lifestyles prevent them from building long-lasting and stable relationships or support systems.

Therefore, providing after-care services at every low-income housing site will achieve three goals. One, mentoring men and women and children in the areas in which they need help. Two, it is the

prevention of eviction and recurring homelessness. Three, it is helping to sustain their healthy and independent living.

**Mission:** Congregations can function as friends to these new tenants. Offer frequent visit and invite them to church activities. Listen to their stories. Assess their needs and make appropriate referrals to social services. A few church members might form a mentor group with those who are interested in helping these new friends and children, and regularly make themselves available. The church can open one room and make it a meeting place for needy men and women.

They can do things together, playing cards, eating, talking. By taking these new friends shopping, church volunteers teach them how to do economic shopping. Volunteers can also visit them at their residences after they build some trust. Mentors can invite some of the needy friends to their own homes when they are ready and comfortable.

#### **4. After School Program**

**Needs:** Police officers say that the most dangerous time of day for kids is not late at night. It is from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. This time period is called a crime time/ a prime time to get them on the right path. Juvenile crime has been found to peak during the after school hours when many children are unsupervised. This is the case with many millions of children whose mothers are low wage earners who are trying to move from welfare to independent living. Many children of homeless mothers display discipline problem also because they often come from broken homes where no fathers present.

A study of the long-term impact of a good early childhood program for low-income children found that after 27 years, each \$1.00 invested saved over \$7.00 by increasing the likelihood that children would be literate, employed and enrolled in post-secondary education. It makes them less likely to be school dropouts, dependent on welfare, or arrested for criminal activity or delinquency. Therefore, a safe and constructive places for kids to stay until parents pick them up is a crucial issue facing millions of parents today. After-school-care programs will produce healthier and productive future citizens of this nation and also can be a preventive of the future homelessness of our children.

**Mission:** Can churches use one room to care for these children? Many churches have an abundance of talented retired school teachers who could supervise an after-school program with a variety of activities. Even youth group or college group students can be involved in serving in after school programs. They can teach them praise songs and help them experience Christian love.

Tutoring can include disciplining as well as teaching classroom tasks, especially for homeless children who are not enrolled in school. If churches cannot handle it alone, they might collaborate with the school system by utilizing classrooms and providing volunteers. Most school authorities will be more than happy to work with churches for such programs. It will be a prevention from our current behavioral and performance problem to prevention of future homelessness.

### **5. Anger Management Class**

**Need:** Many homeless persons who come from abusive backgrounds learned to handle anger in an explosive and violent way. They use verbal or physical threat to express anger and get what they need. I have heard a story of a woman who was so angry about her past abuse and also at her current boyfriend who abused her children that she killed him. She had to go to prison for that. Another man I served hit someone out of anger and caused him a permanent brain damage. While anger is useful emotion it can also be a detrimental if it gets out of control. Many female spouses are killed by male spouses who have anger management problem. Often the way my clients handle their anger caused them an eviction or a bar from residential environments or group situations, or fired from their job. How long and how hard they worked and longed to get a housing, but uncontrolled anger can instantly blow these long hard worked privileges. Therefore, anger management is very crucial no matter where they sleep – in the house or on the streets.

**Mission:** A church can open one room for an anger management class for homeless men and women and those who got in a low-income apartment. Anger management counselor can offer individual anger management counseling and later put them together as a group. It will take an experienced volunteer to be an individual counselor or group facilitator who also has some knowledge of mental illnesses and substance abuse. If the church cannot find an experienced counselor

in the congregation they might collaborate with local agencies. The church provide a space, snacks and some incentives for coming to the class. When this class is offered other support services may be offered as needs come up.

## **6. Art therapy**

**Need:** Once a severely mentally disabled woman was referred to me while she was hospitalized for the case management service to be offered after her discharge. When I visited her for the first time she wouldn't talk to me at all. She was talking to herself in a child voice, perhaps responding to the voice she was hearing. But a few visits later she gave me a piece of her drawings in which she sits alone in a wide open field aimlessly gazing at remote horizon. She looked very lonely. Yes, she was communicating to me about her emotional state. Her schizophrenic mind prevented her from verbally communicating with me. After this incident I noticed quite a few homeless people have God-given talents in art; painting, drawing, ceramic work, and woodwork etc., that no one could take away. Even when they lose their mind these talents seem to reside in them forever.

Many homeless men and women and children experience frequent frustration, disappointment, hostility and even rage, but there is no way of venting these emotions. They often take it out on their children, themselves or on others in unhealthy ways. Usually homeless people own nothing. Many even lost their minds. But these people have tremendous needs for self-esteem. Usually people gain self-esteem through what they achieve, if they didn't get it from their parents and parental figures in their early life. They can feel good about themselves in producing art products. Through artwork, they also can express their emotions such as sadness, happiness and rage, and it can be very therapeutic and healing.

**Mission:** Churches can designate one room for artwork; Solicit church members who have talents in art such as drawing, painting, ceramic work, woodwork and anything people can make. If there is none in church volunteers can solicit help from area college/university art school. Students will be willing to help the homeless. Churches can provide materials for this project. Church volunteers can utilize homeless people to run this project together. A homeless art gallery

can be developed which could be open to the public, including the congregation where the gallery is located. Art products can be marketable and generate some income for the artists. This project can serve as a job training program also.

#### **7. Assessment and referral service**

**Need:** Quite often we hear that many needy homeless people visit church offices, but churches do not know how to handle homeless people. Volunteers and church staff also experience some sort of fear of not knowing how to assess the needs that are brought to them. It takes some knowledge and understanding about homelessness and some previous experience in dealing with them. Some homeless people might experience mental illnesses or substance abuse. Some of them, out of their desperate needs, visit every church in the area on a regular basis. Churches can't just hand out cash whenever they show up at their doors. Questions arise on how much, how often, who and what kind of help should be offered. The church staff must make instant decisions on these issues and often they are not able to do so. Innocent and inappropriate help can harm more than help someone. Besides, churches cannot meet every need that people bring. Often churches need to refer them to other agencies. With an accurate assessment we can offer the right kind of help and send them to appropriate referral services.

**Mission:** Several area churches on an ecumenical or interfaith level can form a coalition and put their funds together. Place a volunteer (with or without some stipend) who is knowledgeable about the client population and is able to interview them. She/he will be located at one of the churches on behalf of the Coalition. Other members of this church collation will send clients to that one church where a volunteer interviewer is present. If the volunteer can't be there on a daily basis, set a schedule as to how many days, what day (s) of the week the volunteer interview will present. This assessing person keeps intake and assistance records for all recipients and refer to the records whenever they return. The record will include interview date, their presenting problems, the kind of help offered, and to where client was referred to, etc. In order to refer clients to other sources according to their needs this interviewer must be knowledgeable of area resources

and keep the written flyers to pass them out. Many homeless people can neither remember addresses nor find the places. The Coalition might set its own limit of assistance regarding how much, how often depending on their funds; for example, only once, twice or three times a year, etc. and \$25, \$50, \$75 or \$100 each time for gas, utility, rental assistance, etc. I would suggest to keep the funds in bank and write checks instead of handing out cashes because some homeless people or even homed poor who suffer from substance problems more likely misuse the funds. Issue a check payable not to client but to landlord, utility company, drug store, filling station, and grocery store, etc. in order to prevent from the misuse of the funds.

#### **8. Automobile Mission**

**Need:** At our surprise and shock, unbelievable number of people sleep outside. In some areas half of the year is cold with frequent snow or rain. It is awfully difficult to sleep outside. Those who were sick with whatever illness previously will get sicker and those who used to be at least physically healthy will get sick. This is the reason why the homeless die early – their average longevity is known to be 48. But if they sleep in the car, while it is not the inhabitable place for human beings it is better than snowing, raining or windy outdoor. But it is almost impossible for them to get even used automobiles. This automobile mission is to provide temporary sleeping space but not for too much driving long distances because it is costly for gas and frequent repair.

**Mission:** Many churches may put out ads for used vehicles for the homeless. Some people will be able to donate used cars. I myself experienced in donating my used car twice. So I know how deeply they appreciate such a contribution. Of course the car must be in decent shape and run. A church that is interested in this project might partner with area social service or church meal programs to get the referrals. The church needs to assign a volunteer who has some knowledge on cars to receive calls for donation of cars, assess if the donated car is running or need some work; he will also interview the possible receiver of a car and see if he/she has a driver license, and driving/ticket/accident history, and if they can afford gas, etc. If all fit together, the church volunteer choose receiver and he/she will have



a temporary home in a car. If possible church gives this person some odd jobs to earn gas money.

#### **9. Auto Repair Mission**

**Need:** Again, at our surprise, numerous number of people including elderly sleep in cars and RVs these days. As I stated above, if we do automobile mission, next issue is repair problem. Although they don't drive long distance, most these autos are old to start with. The homeless who sleep in cars frequently face a minor or large repair issues. Most homeless have little income. Even low income people cannot afford repair. And these days labor cost is so high that it surpasses much the price of auto parts. Therefore, the automobile mission must accompany repair mission.

**Mission:** Sometimes churches have auto mechanics in the congregation. Most car owners who drive cars have connections with auto repair shops. Therefore, they can solicit some angels who can waive labor charge which is a huge part of the total repair cost. Time to time we find such angels. Our Nest Mission receive urgent request for help with disabled cars which function as a home for the homeless. It is urgent situation for the homeless because he constantly has to move car from one place to another. Those of us who have parking space/garage will never understand this crisis. I contacted my auto mechanic who has been fixing my cars for years. I explained the situation the homeless person was in. He was an angle who was willing to wave labor charge. And Nest Mission paid for the parts. I heard there is auto mechanic course at community colleges. Church can partner with them and ask them to repair such cars belong to the homeless free of charge. Even church members who have skills can fix cars. Where there is a will there is way. For the church, it is a doable and almost life-saving mission for the homeless.

#### **10. Auto parking Mission**

**Need:** Often homeless people lost everything, home, jobs, families, except one vehicle. Often that is all left for them. Once a homeless friend parked his car somewhere and it didn't start and he faced crisis because he wasn't allowed to park there. He talked to a pastor of a certain church. They kept it for a week. Since he sleeps in it, the church

couldn't handle it for more than a week or two and then requested him to move the car. So he talked to another church. He was allowed to park there for a few days and was asked to move due to parking space problem of that particular church. My homeless friends who sleep in cars tell me it is nightmare to find a parking space every night to park their cars. It is similar problem to find a bed in shelters every night. There is no bed space in shelters and no space they can park their car and sleep there. For parking at metered place you get ticket if you don't pay or time is out. Finding a parking space and constant moving of cars for the homeless is highly distressing, anxiety provoking, emotionally draining and anger generating crisis. One late night I was driving through shopping and business areas. I noticed half of the lots was occupied by buildings but the other half was parking space. I mean it was a huge, wide open empty space which was wasted during the night. But there is not a single space for my homeless friends to park their cars. No one including police would want them to park on that wide open empty space. I know there is sanitation and safety issues as far as police force is concerned. For most people environment is much more important than caring for human beings who are in dire need for a space to park their cars and rest in them during the night.

Let me introduce an article of 04/08/2014 - Homeless Lose a Longtime Last Resort: Living in a Car:

The article describes how cities across the U.S., like Silicon Valley, are cracking down on vehicle dwellers who were driven out of their apartments. Maria Foscarinis, Executive Director at the National Law Center in Washington DC, says there has been a boost in "laws that criminalize [homelessness]," such as bans on camping in public places and restrictions on sitting and lying on sidewalks. Advocates say cities should do more to aid homeless people, rather than prosecute them.

**Mission:** How wonderful it will be if a church opens a small corner of their huge parking lot designating it as a space for the homeless to park and rest at night. Where I live in Lynnwood/Edmonds/Mt. Lake Terrace/Brier city area there are churches almost on every a few blocks. But there are very few church that allows homeless persons to park overnight. For me and for churches too the major concern will be restroom issue. In our area, 50-100 churches, even 10 churches may

put funds together and place a portable honey pot and hire a homeless person to manage it. It is doable. Tent City handles hundred people with several such pots. If 10 -20 church leaders go to see a certain City Council Members and request to allow one church to do this mission with the support of other 19 churches. Most likely the City officials will create an ordinance to make this possible. Although churches have their property rights and are free to do just about anything on their property but it might be helpful if they could coordinate this effort with city officials who can help the church run this mission more smoothly. After all, they too are human beings with God-given good hearts and compassion. Here are some newspaper articles (Los Angeles Times) on parking mission:

03/08/2014 - In Sonoma County, CA, a Heartwarming Safe-Parking Program for the Homeless: In Sonoma County, a safe parking program was created in late January where homeless people could park and sleep in their cars without being disturbed by law enforcement. The Law National Center's Policy Director, Jeremy Rosen, comments on this program in the LA Times article. The program is an emergency response to freezing weather, making it one of just a handful on the West Coast.

Santa Rosa, Calif. — As a cold rain pelted the parking lot, the gates opened and the cars began to roll through. In an aging Nissan was a 74-year-old longtime farmworker whose landlady had booted him to raise the rent. A 65-year-old disabled woman pulled her Ford Fusion up to the small trailer, where she could at last plug in her sleep apnea machine. Then there was Patsy Perez, 55, who had learned about the fledgling "Safe Parking" program at the county fairgrounds lot after pleading to spend the night in her Volvo outside a downtown shelter. "I think it's heaven-sent," said Perez, who since losing her housing two months ago said she has often been rousted by police or "messed with" while trying to catch some sleep in her car.

The Sonoma County Board of Supervisors created the safe parking program in late January as an emergency response to freezing weather, making it one of just a handful on the West Coast. (Similar programs operate in Santa Barbara County, San Luis Obispo and San Diego County.)

But lawmakers here went one step further. In what Sonoma County advocates for the homeless called a "pinch me" moment and a "watershed," supervisors removed a ban on the "use of vehicles for human habitation" from the county's anti-camping ordinance. "Our mantra is decriminalization," said Supervisor Shirlee Zane. "It was just stupid to say it's illegal to sleep in your car. For some people, all they *own* is their car." "It's definitely cutting against the trend," said Jeremy Rosen, policy and legal director of the National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty, which has tracked ordinances across the country that ban sleeping and camping in public spaces. "They're saying we understand that people in this economy don't have any place to go."

More stories:

Jennielynn Holmes, director of shelter and housing for Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Santa Rosa, which operates the safe parking program under county contract, awoke to a 19-degree December morning and headed to her drop-in center to hand out oatmeal.

"A man walked up to me and his entire face and beard was covered in frost," Holmes said. "I just said, 'That's not OK.' I canceled my meeting and warming stations were open by that night." Holmes had allies at the Board of Supervisors, Zane among them. She was doing her own hand-wringing. In Santa Clara County, four homeless men had frozen to death on the streets. She dialed the county administrator and said, "Nobody is going to freeze here," she recounted. Momentum for solutions had been building since fall, when Georgia Berland, who launched the Sonoma County Task Force for the Homeless three decades ago, teamed up with the nascent Elder Advocates for Community Health and activists from Santa Rosa's Occupy movement. Safe parking for those with vehicles — an estimated 20% of the 3,300 homeless county residents living outside — was on their list, and the board seized the opportunity. By late January, they settled on the fairgrounds lot and unanimously moved to expand motel vouchers and change the law that banned "inhabiting" vehicles.

Housing may be pricier in San Francisco or Santa Clara counties, but Sonoma County has one of the state's highest costs of living when wages are taken into account. Homelessness has been exacerbated by

the recent recession and a 1% apartment vacancy rate. The death of redevelopment agencies has slowed affordable housing construction. Shelter waiting lists are long. As supervisors push for long-term solutions — among them a recently launched veterans housing program — they hope to ensure that short-term needs are met. "This is a Band-Aid but it's an important Band-Aid," Zane said. "There's an opportunity in everything — even in this cold weather."

Frederick Helmke, 55, attended Stanford University and once had a home and business. But it all unraveled. Three abdominal surgeries and other personal issues left him struggling. He bought a decrepit 1971 El Dorado camper from a desperate friend a few years back — for \$38.40 — and that has been home. He's come to the fairgrounds lot since the program began. "It's taken awhile for it to sink in that I don't have to sleep with one eye open, waiting for someone to bang on the door and tell me to move on," Helmke said.

Vehicles must pull in between 8 and 10 p.m.; then it's lights out. No belongings are allowed outside the vehicle footprint, and no on-site drug use or drinking is tolerated. Everyone must be out by 8 a.m. A full third of those who have come through are homeless for the first time, 36% have had no previous contact with county social services and 35% have pets.

Lea Glynn, 24, was an in-home care worker who lost her housing when her grandmother died last summer. She and her boyfriend, 20-year-old Cody Wertz, found a rented room, but it didn't last. A stint with Glynn's ill mother ended because she couldn't handle their dogs.

Shortly before 10 p.m., Tom and Allison Dunn pulled up in their 2002 Mercury Sable. Their two high-school-aged children were with friends in the Marin County town of Novato, where the Duns once owned a 5,200-square-foot home.

Tom, 57, held software industry jobs for years, before recession, unemployment and a 2009 foreclosure turned his world around. He and Allison, 49, both developed health problems. They've now saved cash for housing, but with poor credit, no landlord will have them. The safe parking program, Tom Dunn said as he huddled by a propane heater at dawn, "has been amazing." (Source: [lee.romney@latimes.com](mailto:lee.romney@latimes.com).)

## **11. Bicycle Missio**

**Need:** Homeless people usually have no income. They cannot afford to buy bus tickets. So they walk a lot, amazing distances. Our Nest Mission found that two bus tickets we give out at the value of \$4.00 per person every Friday evening are very costly for us, but not nearly enough for them for the rest of the week. What we give covers only one round trip to and from our dinner program. Then they don't have any more bus tickets and have to walk all through the week. But their doctor's offices and locations for job interviews often are not at walking distance. Not keeping appointments with doctors or social service agencies on time is often the result of a transportation problem. The homeless person has no bus tickets and the appointments are located too far to walk. This is another crisis homeless persons must face on a daily basis. They might easily walk 4-5 miles one way but 10 miles can be too far to walk. A bicycle comes in handy in such a situation. But finding a parking space is another hurdle they need to overcome. One of my homeless friends hid the bike we gave him in a bush. When he returned it was gone.

**Mission:** Unlike automobiles, used bicycles are easier to get and often donated. Churches put ads out and more bikes may be given than wanted. We (Nest Mission) got bikes from church members and we gave them to homeless friends. Homeless people came to our dinner on bikes. I suggest churches develop a relationship with area bike shops. They may not only donate bikes but also offer repair free of charge or just charge for the parts. In my area there is a bike shop. One day I dropped by and explained what we do with the homeless. The shop owner seemed to feel compassion for the homeless. He repaired some of our bikes free of charge. While this world is cold and apathetic there are many warm-hearted angels too.

To address the concern that bikes which are not parked at secure places are often stolen, parking services for bikes need to be provided. Churches or agencies or businesses can install small bike racks or install a secured parking device which protects bikes from rain and snow.

## **12. Bible study Class**

**Need:** As the Bible says, "*Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path (Ps.119:105); one does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes*

*from the mouth of the LORD*” (Deut. 8:3; Mt. 4:4), Bible study should be provided for those who are willing to participate and should not be required of those who do not choose to attend. Homeless people get their value systems mixed up or messed up. Many of them come from disturbed family backgrounds and seldom learned positive and constructive values. Many of them have been surviving through the toughest street life. We should not impose our Christian values on the homeless who don’t agree with us but we can offer an opportunity and choice for them. . While we know there are many ways to bring an impact for changing a destructive lifestyle to a positive one, we also know that religion – Christian faith – can be a particularly powerful tool to influence or guide people to change. I can witness to a powerful story: One homeless woman, who was participating in our prayer and bible study group, happened to be entertained overnight at a man’s residence. While he was in deep sleep, she saw his wallet full of cash. She confessed to me, “I could have run away with it but it was all your fault that I left it alone.” What she was saying was that the Christian conscience she developed through the bible study I was leading, impacted her to make the right decision. Bible study can influence people to think and act right at the time of temptations.

**Mission:** Churches can open one room, and invite the homeless to a Bible class. I will repeatedly say it is important not to impose attendance on anyone but just to give the invitation. Each person must make the decision to accept it or not, and leaders must respect that. I will also encourage the Bible teachers to focus on positive and encouraging messages that will influence the participants to change their thinking and behaviors. I encourage teachers to utilize the Bible class to be spiritual as well as therapeutic by facilitating and guiding them to use the Word of God as the light for their feet as the Psalmist confessed in Ps. 119:105. In other words, leaders should help them to apply the biblical messages to their present life circumstances. Encourage homeless students to make decisions about which path they will choose to walk. Personally I take teaching a bible class very seriously. To reward those who come to Bible class, which is not always easy for homeless persons to do, I used to offer a nice meal and a small pocket size bible that they can carry in their backpack. They can trust that those words they carry on their back will be their friends.

The words will give guidance and help them experience the Spirit of God that they may not feel alone any more in their cruel homeless life.

While I was serving them through Nest Mission we didn't have space to meet and therefore we met in parks in summer, and in a library room or sandwich shops in winter. We always had something to eat because they are always hungry. Spiritual food and physical food are prepared together. They enjoyed it very much. It was very therapeutic as well as spiritual.

### **13. Career counseling**

**Need:** While many homeless men have no career per se, many women who are on welfare (with children) live under the WorkFirst demand of the government's Welfare Reform. Homeless persons who receive Security Supplemental Income (SSI) suffer from some form of physical or emotional disability, usually perpetuated over time. Homeless women and also men who receive General Assistance Unemployable (GAU) suffer from some form of physical or emotional disability, usually short-term or temporary in nature. This assistance was terminated in many states including Washington state last year (2013).

Most of the above groups of people might not know what kind of career potential they have or even what they want to do, but they can develop a career at some level. These people have lots of potential. Their life can be more meaningful if they do something with their time and potential. In the long run, this will be a great help in increasing their self-confidence, and will prevent the revolving door syndrome of homelessness. It can become a way of ending their homelessness.

**Mission:** A church can open one room for career development. Counselors can talk with homeless clients, interview them and observe them. Church counselors can collaborate with local agencies and conduct assessment tests to help homeless people find their potential. Volunteers with some experience can assess their potential, talents, skills, interests, personality, and problems; and guide them to develop an interest in some work or task. A church might sponsor some of them to take classes or attend school and enable homeless persons to achieve a self-sufficient life after all their troubles of homelessness. Career counseling can include the following: exploring careers in occupational fields participants enjoy; understanding how employers think; identifying solutions to employment barriers; developing good



answers to tough interviewing questions; planning an effective job search; writing a resume that results in an interview. When a homeless person finds a job, it is important to provide the person with necessary and appropriate tools, materials and clothes to fit the job.

#### **14. Case management Service**

**Need:** Many homeless people did not grow up with appropriate care from healthy parents or parental figures. Many of their parents had their own problems and disabilities, and couldn't provide a healthy environment in which their children could grow up. Many of the homeless were abandoned at an early age. Many were raised in foster care homes or by relatives. They grew up hungering for love. They didn't learn to discipline themselves. They usually have difficulty delaying gratification. They have a hard time to control their negative emotions. Their judgment or insight is usually poor. Their daily life, their thoughts and their tasks are usually disorganized. They do not handle stresses and crises appropriately. They are so disorganized that they are forgetful and can't keep appointments and take care of important tasks. Often they fail to complete given tasks. On top of all these problems, homeless life make them feel depressed, hopeless and careless about everything. Thus, although their body looks healthy, strong and fine, many are very dysfunctional even though they are not developmentally disabled. But they are emotionally disabled at various degrees. Many are capable of doing things but had never learned to accomplish tasks. Many realize the complications of their behaviors and life style and many don't. They are not children but grownups but at times their behaviors are worse than children's. Once I asked some homeless persons why they are so clumsy and their answer was, "you get that way once you become homeless." They need help, case management service.

**Mission:** Church volunteers, who are task-oriented, who have some experience in handling people who have the challenges described, who know how to teach in healthy way, who know how to apply limit setting and disciplining in a loving way, and who are also warmly caring, can work with them. Case management is not doing everything for homeless persons but rather helping them to learn to take care of their own business. For example, instead of reminding them of their

appointment time, let them tell you their appointment time; instead of leading them to a certain appointment site, you make it possible for them to lead you there. In other words you are with them but teach them to take care of things that are important to them. It is important to teach them how to handle different tasks appropriately. Encourage them to make a list of their daily chores and appointments. Give them lots of positive strokes when they succeed and encourage them when they fail. It is easier said than done. But volunteers can guide them to accomplish all of the above that they couldn't do without help

When I did case management for mentally disabled patients of Harborview Community Mental Health Center, I helped a homeless woman to get a low income apartment. She had Ph. D in math and was brilliant. But in her mental state, she was extremely disorganized in housekeeping and her apartment became a fire hazard. The apartment management didn't evict her but turned her stove off. She could not cook in her apartment. She had to prepare her meals through other methods. I used to go to the grocery store with her and let her choose what she could eat without cooking. I let her do the math on how much she could buy with money she had. I also showed her how to clean the room, and put the broom in her hand so she could do it herself.

I had another woman who didn't want to take psychotropic medication for her mental illness. I kept her medication, visited her on daily basis and brought her pills, put them in her hands, let her take it and checked her mouth to make sure that she swallowed them.

I had another woman who was hearing a voice all the time, usually the bad voice of her father who was a medical doctor. She felt her father was always criticizing and condemning her. On the streets she responded to these voices by assaulting a passerby. She used to hate her father, the doctor. So she hated our psychiatrist who was treating all of our patients. She had to come to see her psychiatrist once a month to have a consultation with him and have her medication adjusted. We –case-managers –encourage and do everything we can with these most non-compliant severely mentally disabled people to help them keep appointment with us and also with the psychiatrist. She hated him but came only because her voice told her, “Go to see Jean Kim.” Case-managers accompany patients when they see the doctor.

Because of her voice encouraged her to see me, she would go into the doctor's office with me.

One day, I ran into her on the streets. She was in a heavy winter clothes on a hot summer day and was smothering in them. I took her to Woodworth Store and helped her change into summer clothes.

We had 24 hour coverage. Twelve case-managers formed six teams. Each team consisted of a social worker and a nurse. We took turns to have on-call duty. At 1:00 p.m. a male patient called me in desperation to report that his voice was telling him to jump off a window. I talked to him on the phone first and helped him calm down somewhat. I asked him if he could hold everything for fifteen minutes until I could come and be with him. He said he would do that. Then I drove down to the city and visited him. I let him talk to me about what went on in his life that day, about what was the most stressful to him and about how he was feeling. As we talked and had a cup of tea, he began feeling better; his voice calmed down and finally he told me that "I am ok now, you can go home." If I had found him still hearing a voice ordering him to kill himself or if I had observed active suicide ideation, I would have taken him to the emergency room. To judge what action is needed, you need to know your client, your relationship with him and his past history. These factors make a difference in dealing with difficult clients.

I am not recommending that church volunteers work for 24 hours. I am sharing my experience to illustrate that case management is not that hard but that counselors need to learn what to do and what not to do. Church volunteers would not be involved in treatment as we were involved but can help homeless persons carry out simple tasks. And more likely church volunteers wouldn't deal with severely mentally disabled people as we did. These people must be referred to local community mental health centers. It is always helpful to arrange a team case management. In other words, have two people work together as a team to consult with each other for better judgment and better disposition. Finally, case management requires active outreach. Church volunteers can meet homeless persons at the church but they also need to meet them where they are, somewhere in the community. Building a trusting relationship is very important. A client and case manager (volunteer) must know each other very well and become able to trust.

## **15. Christmas Gift of Rooms**

**Need:** In our time, Christmas has become commercialized as a season for people to sell, buy and give gifts, not for poor people but for themselves, their families and close friends. It is hard to find the original Christmas spirit anymore; Jesus came into this world to build a better, just, peaceful and livable society for everyone especially for the poor and oppressed. However, it is the loneliest time for homeless people. At Christmas, few of them have a family to go to and few are invited by anyone. People who have a heart of charity give token gifts – hats, scarves, gloves, socks and some winter clothes, shoes and some meals for the homeless. It is good that there are some people who think of the homeless at this particular season and give them some gifts. But when we remember the baby Jesus who was born homeless in a manger and who lived, worked and died homeless (voluntarily choosing to be poor for others), we need to give more serious consideration to our response at Christmas time. If we feel heartache for the infant Jesus' homelessness and for the cold-heartedness of people who allowed Mary to deliver her baby in an animal barn and lay the baby in a manger, we need to feel the same heartache for homeless people in our day especially at the Christmas season. We must think what it means to welcome this homeless Jesus in our life and what can be the best way to remember the infant Jesus' plight and respond appropriately in our day. Had we been in Jesus' days wouldn't we have we offered him a warm bed to be born in? Can we do something for Jesus on his birthday? Can we see him in the face of our homeless today and give them some substantial gifts instead of giving gifts to our own closest family members? What can that gift be?

**Need:** Our Nest Mission also thought about this question very seriously and decided to offer a Christmas gift of rooms for a few nights beginning Christmas eve and lasting a couple more nights – usually 3 nights with gift packages that included hats, scarves, gloves, brand new underwear and snacks, and 3 full meals per day for the entire time while they stayed at motel rooms. We wish we could give them more nights but that was all we could afford. I heard one homeless man took showers ten times during that short period. We can imagine how much he missed a shower and how nice he felt to clean up and feel like a human being. One year King 5 TV reporters

came and they put us on the Christmas evening prime time news with the announcement, "There will be a room in the inn tonight." For the last three Christmases, the Korean Community Church partnered with us and made the gift of three nights of motel rooms easily possible. Homeless men and women exclaimed in tears, "This is the best Christmas gift we have ever had. Our own families do not invite us in to warm beds for Christmas but you, aliens, do this for us. May God bless you." When I heard that I wanted to cry with them.

Starting in October each year, we begin to make up a list of those who can stay at motel rooms. Then we begin to reserve rooms at several motels. Usually we put two people in one room. They willingly accept that arrangement. Board members maintain close contact with motel staff during that time to monitor behaviors.

Area Korean churches bring hot meal for three days. So the program is a partnership with several churches. It is easily doable for a large church alone or several smaller churches together. Churches just don't seem to think such Christmas gifts are possible for the homeless. I can personally witness that it is possible and doable if any church wants to do it. And we can afford it too.

#### **16. Clothing Bank:**

**Needs:** All homeless men and women and even poorly housed women cannot afford the cost of clothes. For homeless persons to go to a job interview, go to work, go to a doctor's office, or even go to a bank, they need to wear appropriate clothes. Homeless people want to look decent, not to look like homeless so that they may protect themselves from abuse in street life. They do not have the right kind of clothes for the right season at the time they need them, although there are shelters that do pass out some clothing. For example, in a city like Seattle where we have rain for more than 6 months a year, homeless people need rain coats with hoods and good water-proof shoes because they walk on the streets a lot. Or in cities where there is lots of snow in winter, they need winter coats with hoods and snow boots.

**Mission:** A church can operate a clothing bank. This clothing bank must be open for emergency needs and on an ongoing basis also. It won't be hard at all to collect clothes because people usually have too many clothes anyway and find it easy to give them away. Those who

want to donate clothes must clean them before giving them away. Church volunteers may sort them out by sizes and organize them so that distribution can be easy and effective. You need to set certain rules, such as how many pieces of clothing each person can get and how often, and what special provision there can be for emergency cases such as a sudden job interview. If there are no enforced rules, then one person can take an unfair number of items leaving others with little choice. But it is another doable mission for a church if volunteers organize well.

### **17. Community Service for Court-Orders Offenders**

**Need:** Often persons are required by a court order to perform a certain number of hours of community service as a punishment for breaking a law. In most cases the offender must perform this community service for a certain period of court-ordered time in a certain city or county. Usually they are not allowed to go into a different county to give this service. We noticed it is not so easy to meet such guidelines and requirements. Often times services for the church is not counted as a community service. The Court wants them to do community service for others who are needy through social service agencies.

**Mission:** In these cases, churches cannot invite offenders to do service for the church but a church can be a supporter and walk along with them while they do service. It will be wise for the church to know some community social service programs. Usually churches have group of members who support community agencies as their mission. Such groups need to develop a working relationship with social service programs they support financially or with volunteers. Churches can let them know they can offer different kinds of support for those who do community service. Church volunteers can help the offenders have a positive experience while they are doing community service, not just spend a number of hours doing a chore. The goal is to guide offenders to make better decisions so that the same violation or crime will never occur again. Volunteers can be their extra support and friends who walk along with them while they do the obligated service. I don't mean the church should proselyte them for a certain religion but by sharing God's love, offenders may experience positive relationships that may help them to develop a different positive value system and they will

not choose to not repeat the same crime again. Churches can also learn about the future needs of persons doing court ordered community service and continue to work with them to nurture them to become responsible and reliable citizens.

#### **18. Counseling (individual/group)**

**Need:** Most homeless persons have long-lasting stress, anger and resentment toward their parental figures, spouses, lovers, themselves and society at large due to their past physical, emotional and/or sexual abuse. They also carry resentment about the unfairness of their life of poverty. They also experience current stress in their life of homelessness. Many homeless persons also share a common experience of poverty, abuse, illness (physical, social or emotional), eviction, a wrong marriage, anger management problems, arrest, incarceration, prostitution, alcohol and drug abuse, unemployment, loss of family/children and even rape.

As one of my homeless friends told me, when they live a homeless life for a while they become clumsy and irresponsible. However, they often are not motivated to talk to another person and few people are available to listen to their problems. Staff at residential settings, shelters or anyone on the street seldom have enough time to listen or to work with each of them.

While some of them might prefer to talk to someone on a one to one basis, others might feel supported to sit down together so that they can share their common experiences with each other. Definitely, there are some who don't want to share their private experiences in a group setting. However, there are many who are willing to talk and often they can listen to each other's advice as well.

**Mission:** A church can open one room for homeless persons to come, talk and cry on the shoulders of church volunteers. All the volunteers have to bring is good listening ears, empathetic and non-judgmental attitudes and some understanding of homelessness. This is a good place for volunteers to offer homeless persons an option to cry out to God in prayer.

Church volunteers can see clients individually if that is preferred by them. But they may also offer group settings for those who are willing to sit with others and share their common experiences and help each other in a group setting. At this time, more than one group facilitator will be helpful. Two facilitators can complement each other.

At an appropriate time, offer an opportunity to the ones seen individually to join the group.

A church can set a certain hour of a particular day of the week for this service. Put publicity out through the nearby shelters. The group counseling session can be set up with common themes, such as one with substance issues and another with the prostitution issue, etc. But when the group meets for the first time, let the group decide if they want to divide up according to common issues or stay together as they are. Listen to the group wish and move along with them. Group facilitators must have some knowledge or experience on how to deal with disruptive behaviors. Church volunteers might invite professional counselors and can learn from them or take a course at a local community college or workshops to prepare herself or himself better for this service. There might be some people within the church community who have group facilitating skills. They might be willing to help. You could also contact social service agencies, such as a women's shelter and get their help in obtaining a group facilitator or help to run the mission together if church volunteers find it hard to manage the group by themselves.

Food is always important, not only to meet the physical need of hunger, but also it motivates people to come together and helps overcome barriers between people and it helps to build community. Again, an advantage every church has is having many human and material resources within the congregation. So use the multiple talents and resources that the church owns.

### **19. Dancing, Exercise and/or Sports**

**Need:** Most homeless people seldom have an opportunity to enjoy themselves. Many homeless persons suffer from health problems. Emotionally they don't feel good and are even angry and hostile, but there is no outlet to express these emotions. Often their bodies ache. Although they seem to walk a lot on the streets, it is not a regular, energetic and joyful exercise. It is a rather painful and tiresome walk. Some suffer from obesity because they sit for long periods at a day center for they have no place to go and not much to do. Or they have to stuff themselves with whatever food is given because they do not know when the next meal will be. Often their weight problems can produce cardiovascular problems.



Some homeless men and women enjoy dancing. Exercise or dance can be very therapeutic and healing, emotionally as well as physically. Exercise can be a good way of stress management for homeless people who experience the constant daily stress and frustration of being homeless. They appear to do better with structured planned dance or exercise as they rarely motivate themselves.

**Mission:** Most churches have a family center or gym. It won't cost any extra to open up the large space which is already there. A church might open a large or small room, depending on the size of the group, for them to come in to do planned exercise under a leader. They might not take a bus to come to do exercises. Therefore, the exercise program must be coordinated with other programs, such as skill training or a meal program. While they are there for something else they are interested in, they can be invited into the exercise class. With an energetic leader and lively music, exercise and dancing will be enjoyed by many homeless persons.

Most churches have someone or a group of people who are interested in exercise, sports or dance. Get volunteers to carry out this program. Find someone in the homeless population also. Let the existing shelters and day centers know what you plan to do and get their help to get clients. Your church volunteers may transport them to your church if you are not within walking distance from where homeless people hang out. It is important to have food ready after dancing or exercise. But they may eat meals after the exercise. It would be ideal to have a shower available after the exercise or dancing if possible at all. This will hit three birds with one stone; exercise, shower and meal. How much they miss their showers!

## **20. Day Care Center for Homeless Children**

**Need:** Each day, an estimated 13 million children younger than six, including six million toddlers, spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents. There is a serious shortage of care for infants and toddlers. Often the care provided is of such poor quality that the child's health, safety, and development is jeopardized.

According to Dr. Bruce D. Perry, MD., Ph.D. of the CIVITAS Initiative, "The experiences of childhood act as primary architects of

the brain's capabilities throughout the rest of life. These organizing childhood experiences can be consistent, nurturing, structured and enriched - resulting in flexible, responsible, empathic, and intelligent contributors to society. Or, all too often, childhood experiences can be neglectful, chaotic, violent and abusive - resulting in impulsive, aggressive, remorseless, and intellectually-impoverished members of society. One set of experiences will produce tax-payers and one set of experiences will produce tax-consumers."

Current welfare reform is expected to put many more children than before in full-time care outside their homes. Millions of school-age children whose parents work also need care before and/or after school.

Many women have their children with them when they become homeless, when they run from abusive situations, when they are evicted, or when they are deserted by their spouses or lovers. Women alone end up taking their children with them. Many welfare mothers are pushed to go to work by welfare reform. Mothers need to look for jobs, attend job training classes, go to school, or go to work, but they cannot do these things with children. They cannot afford regular child care services. They are often offered week-end or evening jobs. Very few child care services are available on week-ends or evenings.

Many mothers choose their children over their jobs. When they do, the welfare office drops these mothers from the welfare roll because it is interpreted that they have failed to comply with the new WorkFirst welfare law. The child care service that the state subsidizes never has enough space to accommodate all the homeless children. Lack of affordable child care services becomes a nightmare for many mothers with young children who are threatened to be dropped from the welfare roll if they don't go to work. Welfare, which is their only income, is below the poverty level. Child care is a desperately needed service for these women.

**Mission:** One room in a church could provide a life-saving-service to these homeless or welfare mothers and children by having free or sliding scale child care until mothers earn enough to afford child care or find space in state-subsidized child care services.

Under the supervision of church volunteers, homeless women themselves can take turns doing child care for each other. This can be a chance to teach parenting skills to homeless women. In this case, there should be a qualified church volunteer with them because child care by homeless mothers sometimes can turn into abusive situations. Churches can apply some of the 100 programs ideas for children and mothers. Child care shouldn't be simply baby-sitting. These children who had no parental role models with appropriate discipline can experience role models from church volunteers. They can also gain a taste of the love of God which they may never have experienced before. I always suggest volunteers give them many positive strokes and hugs with a verbal and nonverbal message "we love you, God loves you," while they are at church day care so that they may grow up in that positive experience as good productive citizens, which will prevent their future homelessness.

## **21. Day center for Homeless Women or Men**

**Need:** When a man or woman becomes homeless, she finds no place to sit down. I mentioned in volume one about criminalization for the homeless to sit on sidewalks or lie down in city parks. So they walk around or ride a bus most of the day, if they have bus fare. How can a human being walk all day? They use the restrooms at department stores. This, however, is not allowed in some cities. In many cities there are day centers and/or drop-in-centers, but there are not nearly enough for the number of homeless men and women. A crowded day center is not healthy. Many, particularly women become stressed out.

While waiting to get into evening shelters, having a place to sit is very crucial. A day center serves not only as a physical drop-in, but also provides emotional comfort and rest. Those who are sick can find a space on a couch and lie there. However, exposing their sicknesses to many others is not healthy either. Some shelters have a dark room in which a small number of the homeless can take a nap.

Men and women living alone in low-income housing often experience loneliness. Mingling with the wrong crowd for friendship can happen easily. An evening drop-in-center for these folks under friendly supportive supervision with healthy activities is urgently needed. How can I say this when there is not nearly enough day centers

for homeless men and women during the day? But the need is unavoidable reality. A separate Day Center for men and women might be needed which is also depending on how these two populations handle and treat each other.

**Mission:** A church can open a room for homeless men or women to drop in during the day or in the evening to sit and rest with a cup of coffee. Churches can offer a simple snack, lunch, or even a hot supper. I would suggest to do women's drop in center apart from men's because women need their own private space without males since they have been so abused by men in their life.

Churches can solicit volunteers within their own congregations or through other churches. Gradually the church can add a variety of healthy activities described in the 100 ideas in this volume. Churches can coordinate this project with local social service agencies.

I used to be a mental health practitioner assigned to Angeline's Day Center in Seattle. In between counseling and therapy sessions, I used to cook a simple hot dish for the women who came to the Center. A Day Center is a place that has great potential for creating a variety of programs for the homeless, men or women.

## **22. Dental Care Service**

**Need:** Numerous homeless men and women also have dental problems, perhaps because they cannot brush their teeth when needed or not getting ongoing care and cleaning in their homeless life. They might not have a toothbrush, toothpaste and water when they need them. On top of low motivation to care for themselves, often dental care, including dentures, are not covered by most health insurances although new law might be different. Many homeless people are younger – 20s-50s who already need dentures but don't have them. Of course, the condition of the older homeless population is worse. This causes them health problems because they cannot chew well or cannot eat solid food at all. Once a Korean-American supporter of our Nest Mission brought whole lot of beef steaks. We invited so many homeless men, women and children to the park, barbecued them and had a picnic with them. I thought I was offering them the best food – beef steak – that they seldom, maybe never can have. But I was

shocked to discover how many homeless friends couldn't enjoy the beef steak that they longed to eat due to their teeth condition.

**Mission:** Many churches might have dentist in their congregations or in their neighborhoods or local dental schools, who want to volunteer for homeless men, women and children. A church may open a room and set up a very simple dental clinic even for examination. These dentist can invite them to their clinics for dental work that might require equipment. Several dentist can work together to offer this service. If one dentist assumes all it might be too expensive but if several dentists share it won't be that hard. I hear many dentist go to mission trip to overseas carrying their equipment and supplies to treat people in poor countries. I think many dentist forgets we have third world in our midst and they too need dental care. While the poor countries need help from our dentists but crossing over their own neighbors who are in desperate need to go to overseas makes us think twice as to how we treat our own poor and needy in the third world that we created in our midst. While I heard some dentist stopped volunteering for dental care at the local volunteer dental service I also heard a dentist in Los Angeles give one tenth of his dental skill, time and money for the poor and homeless. I heard people give monetary tithes but never heard tithing of talent and professional skills. Good for him. We need to learn from people like him.

### **23. Detoxification service**

**Need:** Many homeless men and women have alcohol and drug abuse problems.

Usually the drunk or stoned homeless are not accepted into shelters. Then, they have no place to go for detoxification although there are some detox centers in

cities. But they can't get there easily. Many of them end up sleeping on the street where they are often robbed or raped. For an intoxicated person to sleep outside is very dangerous. I have seen many men and women sleep outside because of alcohol problem because they are not allowed by any shelters as shelters are not equipped to deal with this issue. Drunk or drug persons can easily become disturbance to others in a shelter environment. Therefore, they need a place to sleep and sober up. In case of severe intoxication, a detox van usually picks them up in big cities. But there is nothing like that available in many cities such as ours. Even the temperature is not a freezing level, still a drunk person can die. That is what happened to two men in our area. I wish we had detox center in our area so that these people can be taken, detoxed and saved their life. Substance abuse can cause other complications. That is whole another medical problem.

**Mission:** A church can open a space as a sobering-up-room for men and women who were denied for bed by shelters for substance issues. Churches can work with local alcohol and drug treatment agencies or local hospital emergency room staff and learn how to deal with them or when to refer them. They can utilize a church as their treatment extension so that church members don't have to experience anxiety for not knowing what to do. A church does not need to have medical doctors for this. I have seen a residential program that is offering detox service without using medication although there are some that uses medication to prevent a shock from withdrawals.

The church just needs to have a few volunteers to be with them during the night. The following morning, the church may prepare soup for them as these people experience hang-overs or discomfort in their stomachs. The church might build a relationship with them and guide them to treatment. While awaiting a bed for treatment, the church can continues to be a support. The church can also guides these individuals to job training and educational opportunities. Finding a hope might help them to wean themselves from substance abuse.

#### **24. Education: College**

**Need:** I have been saying all along that to survive in this country and culture in this day and age one should have 1) healthy physical/emotional health (body and mind), 2) capital (money), or 3)

high level education. Without one of these you can easily become poor. Unfortunately there are many citizens who don't have one of these three conditions. They easily fall in poverty or homelessness.

There are many bright people among homeless population. They just didn't have right chance, or financial resource to obtain education. We see lots of potential in these people. If only we support them in many ways including finance, many of them will succeed with their education. Feeding and clothing are necessary and important but teaching them how to fish instead of handing out fishes is equally important, perhaps most crucial in the long run to prepare them to care for themselves.

**Mission:** Churches can set up funds for the education of the homeless. While churches offer some of the 100 mission ideas you can assess their potentials and guide them to start at community college level if one finished high school. We the Nest Mission formed a group called "CSW Group" which stand for College, Sobriety and Work. We walk with those who want to enroll to community college. We support with books, tools and supplies if they are not included in the stipend they receive. We had a man who was attending mechanic course at community college level. We supplied tools for his training for auto mechanic field. He got a job at an auto repair shop.

I personally went to 6 colleges including seminaries. I managed somehow my difficult financial circumstances and got 4 degrees (2 Bachelors, 1 Master, 1 Doctoral degree). I am wholeheartedly supporting education for anyone but especially for the homeless. I am writing 6 books putting many decades of work in writing. I am designating the entire proceeds from these books for the education and related expense for the homeless men, women and children. I am strongly convinced that education can get some of the homeless off of the street life and turned them around 180 degree to be productive self-sufficient citizen of this society. I hope many of readers of this material join me in this endeavor for the homeless around you wherever you are.

## **25. Education: English Class**

**Need:** People usually think only foreigners need to learn English. Some people might laugh when I say English class for Americans. I

have seen many native born Whites, Blacks and Native Americans can't read or write. I have also seen people from Hispanic or Asian or other ethnic backgrounds in the homeless population who were experiencing language barrier. They experience double or triple hurdles in homeless life than those who speak their native tongues. I have also seen some of the American born homeless couldn't fill out job or apartment applications. Without language skill they couldn't get into job market except physical labor. They could seldom improve themselves toward better paying jobs or higher position. They have to be remain where they are – either in homeless situation or labor work which is not easy to get into and not pay enough to afford living. Some might argue with me by pointing out the fact that there are many who have low level education and difficulty in writing and reading got a good paying construction or labor work and do well. I wouldn't argue with that because that is true. But we seldom find that in our homeless population who have different kinds of issues that prevent them from getting there. Community colleges offer ESL – English as a second language – but American born whose English command is poor don't belong to ESL class because they have no problem in speaking the language. Even their poor reading and writing skill might be whole lot better than foreign born ESL students. Therefore, they need a chance to improve their reading and writing at different level than ESL level.

**Mission:** As a mission, a church can develop an English class for them. Since entire congregation speaks English, there will be no trouble in finding teachers. But it would be beneficial if church can find English teachers who have teaching experience. I have noticed that it is not hard to find retired school teachers, or someone able to teach writing and speaking in English. As a way of practicing the language, English learners can be invited to church services and activities. Teachers and students can do things together as a way of learning the language and culture. They can practice writing about their own personal stories, prepare resumes, and filling out job applications. Church volunteers may add something else too from 100 mission ideas.

## **26. Education: (G.E.D.- General Education Diploma)**



**Need:** Of the parents receiving TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families which is called “welfare”) 40% are without a high school diploma or a GED (General Education Diploma); only 9% have post-secondary education.

There are quite a few homeless who did not finish high school. When they want to work, at least a high school education is required. Many of them want to finish high school by obtaining a GED. Many community colleges offer the GED program, but the homeless finds it hard to get there. Major problem can be transportation and motivation issues. Or some do labor work and can't be at the evening class on time. When formally homeless women who live in low income housing and have children they can neither afford to hire baby sitters at night time nor can they take their children to class.

Some after obtaining GED, can even move onto the community college. But without high school diploma they can't enhance themselves. While they are homeless and have more time on hand, getting GED will be a wonderful thing to achieve.

**Mission:** A church can open one room for GED class. The religious communities have many retired teachers. It can be a wonderful opportunity for them to be useful with their teaching skills or to teach others to teach. A church may also coordinate with community colleges for instructors, materials or guidance to operate GED classes. I heard there is good software designed to teach GED.

Offering the class during the day might be better because many homeless are roaming around aimlessly anyway. Some might need to get into shelters by a certain time in the evening and therefore, night class might not be practical. For the formerly homeless who have children church can offer children's class while mothers are in GED class. A tutoring program or child care can go on simultaneously with GED classes. This will create an opportunity for the church to engage with the poor, homeless and/or welfare mothers. It is also an excellent opportunity to invite them to church.

To boost their motivation to come to GED class rewards will be necessary. One of the rewards can be meal after the class. A meal prior to class will make them feel tired and sleepy and won't be effective for learning. There can be more rewards such as bus tickets or other daily

necessities. Or depending on the location of the church and place homeless hang out a church can provide transportation and pick them up at a central location where they mostly hang out and drop them off there after the class. Church volunteers can't be a taxi driver to pick them up at too many different locations. But it might be possible to make a couple of stops not too far apart from each location. As volunteers proceed with class gradually more mission needs and ideas will come up. They may choose from 100 mission ideas whatever they are able to do.

## **27. Education: Literacy program**

**Need:** **The Statistics:** According to Literacy Project Foundation, Illiteracy has become such a serious problem in our country that 44 million adults are now unable to read a simple story to their children: 50% of adults cannot read a book written at an eighth grade level. 45 million are functionally illiterate and read below a 5th grade level. 44% of the American adults do not read a book in a year.

6 out of 10 households do not buy a single book in a year.

**The Economy:** 3 out of 4 people on welfare can't read. 20% of Americans read below the level needed to earn a living wage. 50% of the unemployed between the ages of 16 and 21 cannot read well enough to be considered functionally literate. Between 46 and 51% of American adults have an income well below the poverty level because of their inability to read. Illiteracy costs American taxpayers an estimated \$20 billion each year. School dropouts cost our nation \$240 billion in social service expenditures and lost tax revenues

**Impact on Society:** 3 out of 5 people in American prisons can't read. To determine how many prison beds will be needed in future years, some states actually base part of their projection on how well current elementary students are performing on reading tests. 85% of juvenile offenders have problems reading. Approximately 50% of Americans read so poorly that they are unable to perform simple tasks such as reading prescription drug labels. <sup>1</sup> According to the Department of Justice, "The link between academic failure and delinquency, violence, and crime is welded to reading failure." The stats back up this claim: 85 percent of all juveniles who interface with the

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Institute for Literacy, National Center for Adult Literacy, the Literacy Company, U.S. Census Bureau.

juvenile court system are functionally illiterate, and over 70 percent of inmates in America's prisons cannot read above a fourth grade level.<sup>2</sup>

Penal institution records show that inmates have a 16% chance of returning to prison if they receive literacy help, as opposed to 70% who receive no help. This equates to taxpayer costs of \$25,000 per year per inmate and nearly double that amount for juvenile offenders. Illiteracy and crime are closely related. The Department of Justice states, "The link between academic failure and delinquency, violence, and crime is *welded to reading failure.*"

Many of the USA ills are directly related to illiteracy. Just a few statistics: Literacy is learned. Illiteracy is passed along by parents who cannot read or write. One child in four grows up not knowing how to read. 43% of adults at *Level 1* literacy skills live in poverty compared to only 4% of those at *Level 5*. 3 out of 4 food stamp recipients perform in the lowest 2 literacy levels. 90% of welfare recipients are high school dropouts. 16 to 19 year old girls at the poverty level and below, with below average skills, are 6 times more likely to have out-of-wedlock children than their reading counterparts. Low literary costs \$73 million per year in terms of direct health care costs. A recent study by Pfizer put the cost much higher.<sup>3</sup>

**Homelessness and illiteracy:** The Literacy Gap make a link between homelessness & children's literacy: In America there are over 550,000 families with young children that are homeless. These homeless children are put at a higher risk for not becoming literate, simply because of their living conditions. Because of how homeless resources are acquired, many children are moved around frequently. The lack of a consistent home environment and the placement in a homeless shelter or foster home can restrict early literacy development. To compound matters, moving around frequently can also make it hard for homeless children to attend school regularly, make ties with teachers and acquire basic reading skills at a young age. Becoming a literate adult is a huge leg up in escaping poverty and homelessness. Sadly, being a homeless child makes the odds of becoming a literate adult that much slimmer.<sup>4</sup> This means that they are at great risk of

---

<sup>2</sup> [BeginToRead.com](http://www.BeginToRead.com).

<sup>3</sup> [BeginToRead.com http://www.begin Toread.com/orderform.html](http://www.begin Toread.com/orderform.html)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.charitysub.org/the-literacy-gap>

future homelessness as well as delinquent for all the reason stated above.

As I mentioned somewhere else, a large portion of the homeless population are illiterate. They cannot fill out housing applications. They cannot read letters from housing authorities and fail to respond. Of the parents receiving welfare, 40% are without a high school diploma or a GED. Illiteracy can become one of the root causes that keeps them in poverty and homelessness.

**Mission:** Knowing above facts if we are not motivated to help illiterate to read and write our conscience is impotent and our compassion is out to lunch.

According to BeginToRead.com, "Teaching reading skills is one of the best ways to save an aging brain," Carlson is running a study called the Experience Corps Trial, in which older men and women volunteer to teach reading skills to kindergarten through third graders in Baltimore city schools. Using brain-imaging studies, Carlson and her colleagues have shown that after just a few months, people who volunteer show beneficial changes in their brains similar to those that other research teams have seen with exercise."<sup>5</sup> Churches can open one room and develop it as a literacy room for homeless children and adult. The religious communities have many retired teachers. It can be a wonderful opportunity for them to be useful with their teaching skills and experience. The church may also collaborate with existing literacy programs in every city. They will be glad for the opportunity to help set up a program or to work with churches. This project will become a crucial mission for homeless or delinquent people to improve themselves, stop committing crime, become gainful employees and end their homelessness.

## **28. Education: Values & Ethics Class**

**Need:** As I mentioned earlier, a homeless friend told me that the homeless can become very clumsy once they fall into homelessness. I love, respect and serve my homeless friends for many decades. I try to understand them very hard but at times I can't avoid creeping up disappointments and frustrations. While there are a few who are ethical, moral, honest and conscientious many of my homeless friends

---

<sup>5</sup> BeginToRead.com <http://www.begintoread.com/orderform.html>

are not; they don't keep time or show up on time when I have lunch engagement with them; I always treat them. They easily tell me lies when I know the truth; when we put them in motel rooms for Christmas with lots of prior warnings and even sign the contract not to have drink/drug party, smoke outside instead of in non-smoking rooms, which will all cause eviction, and we as an agency will be deprived of the second chance for rooms again next year, many do have party, smoke in the room with no-smoking sign on the door. But many did what exactly they were told not to and brought the result that we have warned against. Many if not some, steal when there is a chance. Too often they don't keep up with assignment that they are supposed to carry out to improve their life, to get a job or get housing. They lose things; for example, I helped 40 people with free cell phones. A year later very few kept them; many told me they lost them or stolen or broken. One winter we gave winter rain boots for Christmas. I saw very few were wearing them. They easily fall into crime and get in and out of jail and prison as if they are norms. When I asked them how come they are so irresponsible and clumsy they blame homelessness. It might be true because homelessness causes depression, illness, emotional turmoil, abuse, hopelessness, helplessness, don't care mentality with profound discouragement and anger, and their motivation to do anything being killed. It might be true that once they are thrown into deep ditch called "homelessness" they can't get out on their own and have to do anything in there for survival. They might not care about right or wrong except survival instinct that might be all that is left with them.

What is values and ethics anyway? According to Navran Associates, individually or organizationally, **values** determine what is right and what is wrong, and doing what is right or wrong is what we mean by **ethics**. To behave ethically is to behave in a manner consistent with what is right or moral.<sup>6</sup> [Oxford Dictionary](#) defines value as "The regard that something is held to deserve; the importance, worth, or usefulness of something." A person's principles or standards of behavior; one's judgment of what is important in life."<sup>7</sup> [Dictionary.com](#) defines: Values are the rules by which we make decisions about right and wrong, should and shouldn't, good and bad.

---

<sup>6</sup> Values & Ethics by Navran Associaes: [www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/ndu/.../pt4ch15.html](http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/ndu/.../pt4ch15.html)

<sup>7</sup> Oxford Dictionary

They also tell us which are more or less important, which is useful when we have to trade off meeting one value over another.<sup>8</sup>

My homeless friends might have their own rights to have whatever value system they want to have and keep. But problem is their value, if they have any, clashes with the societal values and general public values. This clash not only damages their own reputation and life but also kill motivation of the public to help or work with or offer them jobs or keep them at work. That clash damages their marital life as well as social life and they end up on the streets and live alone or only with same destructive party bodies. Are we going to leave them there as if they are destined to that kind of life style?

**Mission:** No. We cannot leave them there because they are the same human beings as everyone else. They are too Children of God, who created them in God's own image, and God loves them dearly. They must restore their ability to live together with other human beings in our society by developing values and ethics.

We, the church, or any and every faith-based community is responsible to bring them out of the deep ditch they have been thrown into by many different life circumstances. Churches can open one room to offer classes on value and ethics. They might have never learned from anyone and might benefit from such a class. Of course, without a change in life style only theoretical lesson might not help at all if they must continue living in the ditch. Therefore, some other mission programs as described in 100 mission ideas must accompany toward ending their homelessness – getting out of the ditch. Churches have human resources on this subject and some might be willing to volunteer to lead values & ethics class. As I mentioned earlier, the class must offer some incentives for their participation and effort to change. The incentives can be in many different forms; good meals after the class; other fun programs; material things such as daily necessities.

## **29. Field trips and picnics**

**Need:** Most homeless men and women have no support systems. Many are single, have either never been married or are divorced. Many left their families or are abandoned by them. Many do not maintain contact with their families. They are very lonely people. Once Mother

---

<sup>8</sup> [Dictionary.com](http://Dictionary.com)

Teresa said that, "The worst poverty is loneliness." Many homeless persons are unwanted by families, friends and even by society. Very few people ever invite them. There aren't many places they can go because of the costs. Even to go to a coffee shop, restaurant, or movie theatre, they need to pay. Many are excluded and alienated by our existing social system.

In the beginning of the Church of Mary Magdalene, our congregation was invited to a picnic by Rolling Bay Presbyterian Church, which is located on Bainbridge Island, Washington. The picnic day fell on one of the Saturdays in June. Rain was pouring and it was extremely cold. But we did not cancel the picnic because we were so happy to go somewhere. I got 34 homeless women on a ferry and got to the picnic site. We had the picnic under the pavilion in a park. The BBQ lunch tasted so good; the music was so good; and the women were so happy to be out as guests of the church that no one saw the rain or felt cold on that day! I will never forget the happy faces of these women on a rainy cold day.

**Mission:** Churches can invite a group of homeless men and women and their children to a picnic in the summer. Churches can coordinate with shelters in your area for publicity. Prepare flyers indicating the month, date, time and the place of the picnic and also a gathering place for a ride. Indicate how long it will take and what are the programs involved in the outing. Rules must be specified, such as no violence, no substance use, no straying from the group, etc. Any kind of field trip can be arranged. Rides must be provided from where they are and to bring them back. Several volunteers must accompany the group. Invite the staff from social service agencies to join you if possible at all. I had planned 4 picnics on four different islands every summer under the sponsorship of four island churches. Nothing, including rain and cold, stopped us from going. We never canceled these outings because homeless women have few places to go and they enjoy ferry rides so much. Rain didn't matter. We all wanted to go. How grateful I and my women were to the churches that invited us.

### **30. Food pantry**

**Need:** 2013 U.S. Mayor's Conference surveyed on 25 U.S. cities. 83 percent of cities surveyed reported that requests for emergency food assistance increased over the past year. In all of the responding cities, emergency kitchens and food pantries had to reduce the quantity of food persons could receive at each food pantry visit or the amount of food offered per-meal at emergency kitchens. In 78 percent of these cities, they had to reduce the number of times a person or family could visit a food pantry each month. In two-thirds of the cities, facilities had to turn away people because of lack of resources.

Homeless people usually have no money. Their SSI checks or welfare checks will only last a week or two if they stay in a motel room to rest, clean up and buy food. Many homeless men and women neither receive SSI nor public assistance. For welfare families as well, funds are scarce since the cash assistance is far below poverty level. After they pay rent, not much money is left. Often times it is short for a month rent. Therefore, hungry people turn to the food pantry. Food pantries are helpful not only for homeless people, but also for the low-income families and the elderly population who live on SSI or fixed low income. They are on the verge of being homeless.

**Mission:** One room in the church can be used as a food pantry. I have seen this throughout the nation but not enough. This emergency food pantry must open for every emergency, not twice a week when volunteers want to help. Someone is starving and it is an emergency. Food must be given. There must be a food-hot-line phone system set up and a volunteer can answer the calls on a rotating basis. The church can ask the congregation to bring food items on a regular basis, which is happening at many churches already. Usually the congregation finds it satisfying to bring food items for the hungry. They might also prepare bags of specific kind of groceries for those with special health problems. The church may hire homeless men or women to help at the food pantry. Some expanded ecumenical food pantries even receive and distribute USDA commodities. They function as an umbrella food bank for many small food pantries. I



would also suggest food pantries to keep supplies of plastic silverwares, plates, and can openers.

### **31. Housing for AIDS Patients**

**Need:** According to CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) report, More than 1.1 million people in the United States are living with HIV infection, and almost 1 in 6 (15.8%) are unaware of their infection. Gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men (MSM), particularly young black/African American MSM, are most seriously affected by HIV. By race, blacks/African Americans face the most severe burden of HIV. CDC estimates that 1,144,500 persons aged 13 years and older are living with HIV infection, including 180,900 (15.8%) who are unaware of their infection. Over the past decade, the number of people living with HIV has increased, while the annual number of new HIV infections has remained relatively stable. Still, the pace of new infections continues at far too high a level— particularly among certain groups. AIDS continues to be a problem for illegal sex workers and drug users. Today, women with HIV are most likely to get it through heterosexual sex. Both men and women are at greater risk when not using protection, such as condoms, during sex. Experts worry that young people don't use protection. Those who were not around or sexually active in the 1980s during the AIDS epidemic are less scared of the disease. For this reason, some are less likely to use protection and more likely to practice high-risk sexual behaviors. This trend, known as "AIDS fatigue," is a major source of worry to public health workers. Another source concurs:

African Americans are disproportionately affected by AIDS. In the US, AIDS is one of the top three causes of death for African American men aged 25-54 and for African American women aged 35-44 years. Today, African Americans account for 47 percent of the HIV-positive population. African Americans make up only 12% of the entire United States population, and yet they make up over half of all new cases of HIV infection. Additionally, African American women's chance to contract HIV is 19 times more than that of white women, Sexual orientation affects risk of HIV transmission. In a study in 2008 on gay and bisexual men, the CDC discovered that almost 1 in 5 were HIV positive. 44% of these men didn't know they

had the virus. The CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) study went on to track the demographics of those most affected. White gay and bisexual men showed the greatest number of cases of new HIV infections. Within this group, the majority of new infections occurred in men age 30-39. After white gay and bisexual men, the greatest number of new infections are seen in African American gay and bisexual men. In this group, plurality of new infections occurred in black men from 13 to 29 years old.<sup>9</sup>

### **11 facts about HIV/AIDS in the U.S:**

1) The first case of AIDS (unidentified at the time) was reported in the U.S. in June, 1981. 2) HIV infects 1.1 million Americans and more than 18 percent are unaware of their infection. 3) Every 9.5 minutes, someone becomes infected with HIV in the U.S. 4) Blacks represent approximately 14 percent of the U.S. population, but accounted for 46 percent of current HIV cases in 2008, and an additional 44 percent of new cases in 2009. 5) HIV/AIDS cases have been diagnosed in every state across America. 6) Since 1981, close to 620,000 people have died from AIDS in the U.S. More than 17,000 people died in 2009 alone. 7) The number of new HIV cases in the U.S. remains stable (not spiking or dropping) with approximately 50,000 Americans diagnosed each year. 8) Women made up 23 percent of new HIV infections in 2009, rounding the number of American females that are HIV-positive to 280,000. 9) Gay and bisexual men are the groups most severely affected by HIV in the U.S. They accounted for more than 60 percent of all new HIV infections in the U.S. in 2009. 10) Programs that provide health insurance, care, and support to HIV patients in the U.S. include Medicaid, Medicare, the Ryan White Program, and HOPWA (Housing Opportunities for Persons with HIV/AIDS Program). 11) Advances in treatment have substantially reduced AIDS-related deaths and extended the lives of Americans with HIV/AIDS.<sup>10</sup>

### **Doctors through 2014 Health Media Ventures, Inc. identified 17 Signs/symptoms of HIV: We can see how people with**

---

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.medwiser.org/hiv-aids/around-the-world/aids-in-the-usa/>

<sup>10</sup> Start the conversation with friends about sex-related risks. **GO** Sources: AIDS, KFF, CDC

**HIV/AIDS suffer:** Within a month or two of HIV entering the body, 40% to 90% of people, 1) experience flulike symptoms known as acute retroviral syndrome (ARS). But sometimes HIV symptoms don't appear for years—sometimes even a decade—after infection. 2) One of the first signs of ARS can be a mild fever, up to about 102 degrees F. The fever, if it occurs at all, is often accompanied by other usually mild symptoms, such as fatigue, swollen lymph glands, and a sore throat. 3) The inflammatory response generated by your besieged immune system also can cause you to feel tired and lethargic. 4) Achy muscles, joint pain, swollen lymph nodes. Lymph nodes are part of your body's immune system and tend to get inflamed when there's an infection. Many of them are located in your armpit, groin, and neck. 5) Sore throat and headache. 6) Skin rashes. 7) Anywhere from 30% to 60% of people have short-term nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea in the early stages of HIV. 8) Once called "AIDS wasting," weight loss is a sign of more advanced illness. 9) Dry cough. 10) Pneumonia: Other opportunistic infections include toxoplasmosis, a parasitic infection that affects the brain; a type of herpes virus called cytomegalovirus; and yeast infections such as thrush. 11) About half of people get night sweats during the early stages of HIV infection. 12) Another sign of late HIV infection are nail changes, such as clubbing (thickening and curving of the nails), splitting of the nails, or discoloration (black or brown lines going either vertically or horizontally). Often this is due to a fungal infection. 13) Another fungal infection that's common in later stages is thrush, a mouth infection caused by Candida, a type of yeast. They tend to appear in the mouth or esophagus, making it difficult to swallow. 14) Cognitive problems could be a sign of HIV-related dementia, which usually occurs late in the course of the disease. AIDS-related dementia might also involve memory problems and behavioral issues such as anger or irritability. It may even include motor changes: becoming clumsy, lack of coordination, and problems with tasks requiring fine motor skills such as writing by hand. 15) Cold sores (oral herpes) and genital herpes can be a sign of late-stage HIV infection. 16) Late HIV can also cause numbness and tingling in the hands and feet. This is when the nerves are actually damaged. 17) Advanced HIV disease appears to increase the risk of having menstrual irregularities.

On top of above mentioned 17 symptoms due to metabolic abnormalities patients with HIV/AIDS also experience impact and

side effects of medications, and also face all forms of discriminations, stigma, ridiculing, avoidance, and alienation. With all these unbearable pain and ill treatment living on the streets and shelters is impossible.

Homeless life is too tough for the healthy person to handle. It is unimaginable how patients with AIDS can survive in streets life. It will be extremely difficult and painful and will only shorten their life. Even when they are sick with AIDS they are equally precious human beings in the eyes of God because God created all of us and we are all children of God who loves us all dearly. Therefore, they must be precious people in the eyes of all the churches too. They need a special kinds of treatment and shelters/housing to deal with such multiple symptoms.

**Mission:** There is no question about what we must do something about this situation. We cannot leave sick persons on the streets. A church may open one room as an emergency shelter or a long term shelter for persons with AIDS until permanent housing become available. This special housing may need volunteers who have some medical knowledge of AIDS and medications so that they can assist the AIDS patients appropriately and with the special care they need. AIDS patients can also be guided to find permanent housing that has a program to help them.

A female clergy friend of mine told me how difficult the process was to get a license for home for the AIDS patients. I suggested that people with AIDS are dying on the streets. She knew it too. There is no more emergency than that. Emergency room wouldn't take walking-AIDS patients. For city government officials ordinances and regulations are more important than the deadly safety of AIDS patients. She knew all of that. I finally suggested her to purchase a house and begin to house AIDS patients and begin to save their lives first and then worry about license because for her and for me saving human lives come first and then license and building codes. If she violated city regulations she may pay price for that later. Jesus paid the price to save our lives. Since her husband was financially capable she purchased a couple of homes and began to care for the AIDS patients. Likewise, several churches can put funds together to purchase a home to be a permanent housing for AIDS patients. It is doable but it takes your willingness. As you move along certain needs come up and then you may add some from the 100 mission ideas to the housing program. Church may develop a partnership with local hospital and/or local

social service agencies and in a collaborative effort better service can be offered.

### **32. Housing: Eviction Prevention**

**Need:** Most of the women who live on welfare, or men on Security Supplemental Income (SSI), or any other assistance experience a severe shortage of funds. A regular apartment costs more than their checks total, and there is also a severe shortage of subsidized low-income housing. Some homeless people out of desperation from being homeless for so long, they often rent an apartment which will take all of their money. Quite often in the second month they cannot afford the high rent. Also, men and women are suddenly laid off from work, as most of their jobs are temporary, and then they cannot pay the rent. Sometimes they are injured on the job, and there are no extra savings that they can fall back on. The result is eviction. In the second month of rent delinquency, the poor tenants are usually evicted unless they are represented by legal services. Sometimes an eviction is caused by behavioral problems associated with substance abuse or anger management problems. Once they are evicted it is very difficult to find another apartment due to their past history of eviction. Eviction prevention is the prevention of recurring homelessness.

**Mission:** One church or several churches can pool funds and help out men or women who cannot pay rent. The church should request the men or women to bring the eviction notices and call the apartment manager to confirm it. Such a situation as the shortage of funds can be temporarily fixed with financial assistance for rent, thereby preventing eviction and recurring homelessness. For other behavioral problems or drug problems, tenants need ongoing support and counseling. Some low-income housing has social service staff who try to deal with such issues. Otherwise they need to be referred to professional services.

To carry out this task, the church needs a volunteer or paid staff. She or he is stationed at one of the churches, answering the phone and interviewing people requesting help on the telephone first and then making an appointed time to see them to offer help. Otherwise people visit every church in the area to get help. Working together will facilitate coordination. The volunteer should be someone who is

experienced with those who need help, and should be able to assess the situation.

Some groups give one time help per year per person/family. Consequently, the tenants must calculate well when to get the help from the church or church groups. Church volunteers may interview men or women who request financial help not only to assess their situations, but to get to know them better. Sometimes they have no money for food and utilities left after paying rent. A church may buy food for them or mail a check directly to the utility company. Each case should be documented, including their situation and the frequency of requests for help and the kind of help offered. Church always must mail a check directly to the apartment or utility company.

### **33. Housing: home sharing**

**Need:** While I was working with homeless men and women, the most frustrating experience was and still is the lack of emergency shelters for immediate needs as well as permanent housing. Whenever I called shelters, especially for women with children, they were always full. Being homeless with children on rainy or freezing cold winter days is an emergency, and I ended up placing them in motel rooms. I wished I had known some people who could share rooms with these women even for few days while they were looking for shelters. Shelters for women with children are usually full even there is one.

Study on San Diego Homelessness reported that solution to chronic homelessness is one simple notion - housing first. It states, "If we start by giving the chronically homeless people a place to call home, then we can create structure to offer support, services, mental healthcare and job readiness assistance in a smarter, more successful way. This is saving San Diego County a significant amount of money and, more importantly, helping to keep homeless individuals off the streets and living a better, fuller life." A study conducted in San Diego showed that continuing on our current path is much more expensive than moving homeless off the street into permanent supportive housing.

**Mission:** If for any reason a church cannot open one room for homeless people, here is another way to help. I have heard that a member of a Presbyterian Church in Seattle was keeping homeless women, with or without children, at her house for a while until she

finds some other resources for them. There is another family I met in Fresno, CA, who shares a room with homeless individuals until they find a room. Churches can make an announcement to the congregation for room sharing. Churches should keep lists of those members who are able and willing to share rooms. When a request comes, then the church can intervene. Churches with this resource must let the existing shelters know the availability of rooms.

Another room-sharing program could involve homeless women with children exchanging their labors for a room. Women who need a room can help the elderly with cooking or household chores in order to receive free room and board. For this program, references of the helper must be good, especially in dealing with the elderly. Many homeless women, who move around so much, might not have good stable references or have some emotional problems. But some are capable of doing this job.

### **34. Housing First Supportive Housing**

**Need:** According to the National Coalition for the Homeless two trends are largely responsible for the rise in homelessness over the past 20-25 years: a growing shortage of affordable rental housing and a simultaneous increase in poverty. Persons living in poverty are most at risk of becoming homeless.<sup>11</sup> Of homeless population in 2004 one night count, approximately 23 percent are considered chronically homeless with families making up 41 percent of the overall homeless population. “About 150,000 to 250,000 people and 30,000 families are considered chronically homeless.”<sup>12</sup>

Waiting list for low income housing takes five years or longer. And many homeless people are screened out for housing due to their substance addiction, mental problems and incarceration history. Housing First model is known to be an answer to end homelessness. Without having housing, many chronically homeless people repeatedly move from streets to shelters, emergency rooms, prisons or mental hospitals – and right back to the streets. They suffer from revolving door syndrome. These are chronically homeless who usually suffer from mental health and substance problems.

---

<sup>11</sup> National Coalition for the Homeless

<sup>12</sup> Nan Roman, chief executive of the National Alliance to End Homelessness.

### What is Housing First model?

According to the Corporation for Supportive Housing, at its foundation, the “housing first” strategy operates under the philosophy that safe, affordable housing is a basic human right and a prerequisite for effective psychiatric and substance abuse treatment. Key components of the housing first model include (1) a simple application process that does not require numerous site visits and excessive documentation; (2) a harm reduction approach in which tenants are not required to be clean and sober in order to obtain or keep their housing; and (3) no conditions of tenancy that exceed the normal conditions under which any tenant would be subject, including participation in treatment or other services.<sup>13</sup>

Rather than moving homeless individuals through different "levels" of housing, known as the Continuum of Care, whereby each level moves them closer to "independent housing" (for example: from the streets to a public shelter, and from a public shelter to a transitional housing program, and from there to their own apartment in the community) Housing First moves the homeless individual or household immediately from the streets or homeless shelters into their own apartments. Housing First approaches are based on the concept that a homeless individual or household's first and primary need is to obtain stable housing, and that other issues that may affect the household can and should be addressed once housing is obtained. In contrast, many other programs operate from a model of "housing readiness"- that is, that an individual or household must address other issues that may have led to homelessness prior to entering housing.<sup>14</sup> Often this process takes forever. Some never can get a permanent housing because they are not qualified although every human being is qualified for housing as a right.

### What is the outcome of Housing First Model?

Supportive housing has proven more successful and cost-effective; for example, in Seattle, one of the 9 cities surveyed, the cost of supportive housing was estimated at \$26 per person per day, in

---

<sup>13</sup> Corporation for Supportive Housing: Are Housing First Models Effective? August 2006 : Online - Housing First Model.

<sup>14</sup> Resource: **Housing First** from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia



contrast with \$87.67 for a day in jail, \$555 for mental hospitals and \$2,184 for hospitals. Combining housing with services and supports for the chronically homeless is not only more humane, but also costs less.<sup>15</sup>

Housing First projects in New York City and the San Francisco Bay Area – achieved high levels of housing stability: Eighty-three percent of formerly chronically homeless tenants remained housed one year later and 77% were still housed after two years. Even among those with the most severe psychiatric disorders, 79% remained housed a year later.<sup>16</sup>

Studies in various communities have shown that supportive housing can reduce ER visits by 58%; reduce emergency detox services by 85%; decrease incarceration rates by 50%; increase earned income by 50%; increase the rate of employment by 40% (when employment services are provided); help more than 80% of at-risk people stay in household for at least one year.<sup>17</sup>

Carla Javits, chief executive of the Corporation for Supportive Housing, said "A lot of groups have been doing this [supportive housing first], but there is not enough," she said. "Most shelters can't help them." It costs about \$13,000 a year to provide services to a resident of supportive housing, Javits said. But studies have shown that hospital visits, jail time and detox time fall dramatically for such residents.<sup>18</sup> "It's very clear that with supportive housing, people are able to live healthy lives and use fewer resources."<sup>19</sup> Placing homeless people in supportive housing substantially decreases those individuals' need for temporary shelter, number of and length of hospitalizations, number of and time incarcerated, and other temporary psychiatric and medical services. 2) Retention rates are about 70% for the first year. 3)

---

<sup>15</sup> Seattle Post-Intelligencer of November 30, 2004 (B1, B4). According to Seattle Post-Intelligencer of November 30, 2004 (B1, B4), in Seattle and eight other cities (Seattle, San Francisco, Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, New York, Phoenix and Columbus, OH), supportive housing has proven more successful and cost-effective in dealing with the chronically homeless than relying on jails, prisons, treatment centers, emergency shelters and emergency rooms, mental hospitals, and hospital – as the chart below shows. Combining housing with services and supports for the chronically homeless is not only more humane, but also costs less.

<sup>16</sup> Corporation for Supportive Housing: Are Housing First Models Effective? August 2006 2 : On line - Housing First (S Barrow, G Soto, P Cordova, *Final Report on the Evaluation of the Closer to Home Initiative*, (Corporation for Supportive Housing, 2004).

<sup>17</sup> Seattle Post-Intelligencer of November 30, 2004 (B1, B4)

<sup>18</sup> Carla Javits, chief executive of the Corporation for Supportive Housing.

<sup>19</sup> Risa Lavizzo-Mourey, chief executive of the Robert Wood Foundation.

On average, the cost of providing temporary services to a homeless person is \$40,500 per year (unadjusted 1999 dollars). 4) Supportive housing greatly reduces the costs of providing these services to homeless individuals. The NY/NY program accounted for a \$16,282 reduction in costs of services per housing unit per year. 5) It costs about the same amount of money to leave the homeless on the street as it does to provide them with supportive housing and comprehensive care. The cost of placing homeless individuals in supportive housing is estimated at \$17,277 per person per year. 6) 95% of the costs of supportive housing are compensated for by the reduction of the costs of other services, such as hospitalizations and incarcerations.<sup>20</sup>

Major Findings by research done by Hart-Shegos, Ellen. (2000): The family's stay in supportive housing reduces costs to the public sector by an average of 51% per year, from \$77,200 to \$37,500 per year. While supportive housing involves increased costs for housing, chemical dependency treatment, and employment-related services, these costs are offset by the reductions in costs to the medical care and foster care systems.<sup>21</sup>

**Mission:** Since giving them housing first, the chronically homeless people need many different kind of services. Experts would say, "Supportive housing" is housing in which an array of services – such as mental health and employment counseling, and drug and alcohol treatment – is provided to help end the persistent [chronic] homelessness seen in about 20 percent of the overall homeless population locally and nationally. For University of South Carolina School of Medicine, the Housing First model works this way: They use a team provider approach for services to persons who are homeless; in the City of Columbia and Richland County. Their team consists of a case manager, a lead case manager, a licensed therapist and a medical adherence assistant. Medical care is provided by a departmental clinic which addresses primary care issues. By using these skills of each team member and our partnering clinic, we provide a comprehensive and

---

<sup>20</sup> Culhane, D.P., Metraux, S., Hadley, T. (2001). *The Impact of Supportive Housing for Homeless People with Severe Mental Illness on the Utilization of the Public Health, Corrections and Emergency Shelter Systems: The New York-New York Initiative*. Fannie Mae Foundation.

<sup>21</sup> Hart-Shegos, Ellen. (2000). *Financial Implications of Public Interventions on Behalf of a Chronically Homeless Family*. Family Housing Fund.

cost effective approach. Emergency services are provided 24/7 to residents of our units.

Several communities across the nation have begun to establish programs that consider alternative methods to ameliorating the homeless problem. Rather than focusing solely on temporary solutions, such as shelters and emergency care facilities, communities are increasingly looking toward more permanent solutions. Supportive housing has proven to be both an affordable and effective solution.<sup>22</sup>

In the Closer to Home Initiative, supportive housing tenants were engaged in a wide variety of services. The vast majority of participants received health care services (81%) and mental health treatment (80%) through these programs. Tenants participated in other services including substance abuse treatment (56%), money management (65%), assistance in applying for benefits (51%), and employment services (41%). The AB2034 data analysis shows that being housed is strongly correlated with retention in a mental health program, providing evidence that housing is a key component – and a necessary foundation – to start addressing serious mental health issues.<sup>23</sup>

It is very clear that churches can be partners with housing first or supportive housing in your community. They will need most anything and everything. Churches may not be able to provide professional services but can provide a variety of support services such as outreach, linkage, meals, moving, furnishing decorating rooms in the housing, life skills, transportation and many others listed in 88 mission ideas depending on what kind skills and talents you have in your congregation.

Churches can offer parsonage, rent, lease or purchase apartment building (s); let the social service agency use them by being a partner with the church. They can offer case management and counseling, mental health and substance treatment.

Churches can make connection with other churches in the community and invite them in this partnership.

---

<sup>22</sup> Leslie Silletti. Center for Urban Initiatives and Research. 2033 E. Hartford Ave. Engelmann Hall, Room B50. Milwaukee, WI 53211 (414) 229-5928. June 2005.

<sup>23</sup> Corporation for Supportive Housing: Are Housing First Models Effective? August 2006 2 : On line - Housing First:

Last but not the least church can do is urging our policy makers to allocate funds for HUD Homeless Programs so that we can have more housing first with supportive services in the nation which will be the most cost-effective way of ending homelessness in our country.

### **35. Housing for mentally disabled – cluster/group home model**

**Need:** I have seen many men and women with mental disabilities among homeless population who are especially vulnerable in the homeless lifestyle. First, they are not able to care for themselves. They can easily be abused and victimized, even among homeless people. They are not able to look for another shelter and move around. They have difficulty adjusting to environments. I have seen quite a few women who could not handle sleeping situations with 40 other women in a crowded shelter. They often wander the streets. I heard frequently that they were beaten or raped. They could not cope with strict rules and regulations either. They could neither survive in the shelter system nor independent living.

There should be some permanent solution for this vulnerable population. Since we do not have a law that no one should be homeless nor one that everyone has the right to have a home, it is almost impossible to keep mentally disabled people somewhere safe. With no law or policy, there is no adequate funding for programs. But one thing very clear is that there should be specialized shelters in every town to provide special care for the mentally disabled. They need to be in a safe environment with less stimuli, less stress and less threat, under some supervision of Mental Health professionals.

**Mission:** There are a few facilities in many cities: For severely mentally disturbed people 1) there state-run inpatient programs. It is locked ward. 2) In individual hospitals also have psychic ward; 3) Private mental health care inpatient facilities.

But here I am not talking about severe cases but those who are released from inpatient mental hospitals to the community without appropriate housing and therefore joined homeless population. They are supposed to care for themselves but not able to do. There are those who are non-compliant leave these facilities and wander on the streets. These people need intensive case management service. Here I am talking about many who are not sick enough to be institutionalized but not well enough to maintain independent living in the community but

with some supervision they can make it without being too burden to the state.

For this level of patients I am presenting clustered-living model in which they are able to maintain some autonomy but under supervision. 4-5 residents share a house. When I worked for Harborview mental hospital we did case management for these people by frequent house calls, monitor their medications and check on their overall life condition and their relationship with others in the house. Under such close monitoring and support they were able to maintain their semi-independent life.

As a mission, churches can do is cluster living model. It is semi-independent living for those who experience chronic mental disability with some function, but who could not maintain themselves alone. Churches can rent or purchase a house or open a parsonage and develop a cluster model of housing for the mentally disabled, where 4 or 5 people can live in a communal house setting sharing the communal kitchen, bath and living room area but have their bedroom. In some homes they have their own toilet. The best way of developing this model is working with the existing local Mental Health programs. They can provide services, such as screening clients who can handle cluster living, offer ongoing case management services and the supervision of clients with frequent contact. Local mental health services always need housing assistance from the community and this will be an excellent way of working together.

Another living would be group home model which churches can also develop jointly with local community mental health programs. Churches can rent or purchase a large mansion house or several houses or even an apartment building. The local community agencies can provide mental health treatment and the churches can provide rooms and support services.

A church will need some volunteers who understand mental illnesses, the symptoms and medications. I have noticed that these people cannot deal with too many and too strict rules. I would suggest a few things for this group home model; 1) less restricted rules so that they can feel comfortable although disruptive behaviors must be monitored. Many of these people had never been disciplined to keep house rules and regulations. Many of them have been living in a wide open homeless life style. They feel boxed in and controlled. With

support by staff and volunteers whom they get to know and trust, they can maintain their baseline.

Churches can also work with policy-makers on the city, state and federal level in order that the mentally disabled population pays only half of their check not the whole check for their room and board. The half of their monthly check is given to them for their clothes, other necessities and for an allowance. Then perhaps more women or men might live in group homes. For those who are not aware of how these group homes are funded, I would add that they are supported by public money plus patient's support from government. If a resident pays half their check, the balance must be paid by the public money.

One thing I have learned from those who don't want to live there is that they have to give up their monthly SSI or public assistance check and are left with some spending money, \$35-50 a month. These are people who have lost everything - family, jobs, homes and themselves. The only thing they have is their small monthly check that they can control and freely use. In order to maintain this freedom and control, they don't want to go into a group home lifestyle.

In this group home model, some of the 106 mission ideas can be offered. Some of these people enjoy music and dancing. Some can make things with their hands. Some have skills in arts and crafts.

### **36. Housing: permanent low income housing**

**Need:** Women and men in shelters and transitional housing still need permanent housing. Since their small income is a check from government assistance, they need low-income subsidized housing for which they pay one third of their check. They then subsist with the remainder of the check. However, the National Coalition for the Homeless reported that the new low wage economy has partnered with housing demolition – gentrification - associated with urban renewal. This has resulted in a sharp increase in the demand for affordable housing, while concurrently reducing its supply.

**Mission:** In order to meet the demands of low-income housing, many churches have already started to rent or purchase homes and develop them into low-income housing. Those who live in such housing pay one third of their SSI or public assistance check and the rest is subsidized by the State. All one needs to do is to report to the City or County Housing Authority to register your unit as subsidized housing.

Of course, the condition of the house must meet the requirements of the city and county ordinances.

I have seen church groups start in a small way and grow into an independent housing program, which keeps purchasing old buildings, renovating them, and turning them into subsidized low-income housing. But then, at the same time, we must work with public policy makers to allocate more funds for low-income housing, instead of benefitting the rich with the tax cuts.

**37. Housing: rent assistance service**

**Needs:** In this day and age who isn't short of money for rent? Except high income people too many people have a trouble in paying rent.

Poverty is cited as one of the three most common causes of homelessness. [2008 and also 2013 U.S. Conference of Mayors reported that](#) lack of affordable housing, poverty, and unemployment as root causes of homelessness. Moreover, extreme poverty is growing more common for children, especially those in female-headed and working families. This increase can be traced directly to the declining number of children lifted above one-half of the poverty line by government cash assistance for the poor.<sup>24</sup> Often these families are unable to pay for housing, food, childcare, health care, and education. Two factors help account for increasing poverty: eroding employment opportunities for large segments of the workforce and the declining value and availability of public assistance. Declining wages, in turn, have put housing out of reach for many workers: in every state, more than the minimum wage is required to afford a one- or two-bedroom apartment at Fair Market Rent. As a result, many families suffering in poverty cannot afford rent. Any extra incidents such as car broken down, someone is sick and needed treatment and expensive meds and anything else make them unable to pay rent.

When the homeless finds housing, especially when women with children leave the emergency shelter into newly found housing they usually don't have deposit and/or first and last month rent. Agencies don't have funds to cover such expense for each client. They end up losing the apartment and are pressured to move on because their time for shelter stay is up. I imagine some of these people knock on church

---

<sup>24</sup> Children's Defense Fund and the National Coalition for the Homeless, 1998.

doors for help. An individual church might be hard to afford it because usually it is \$500 - \$1,000 each case.

**Mission:** A church might take an initiative and invite several other churches into partnership. They may put funds in one pocket and one church may take charge in dispensing funds by interviewing each case. Other churches may send client to the church in charge. The church in charge may assign volunteers to do assess each case, keep the record and refer them to other sources if necessary. To refer the church in charge need to keep referral sources. They may as well set up an assessment and referral service which is No. 6 of my 88 mission ideas.

Before issuing a check the volunteer must check with apartment about the client's circumstances and issue a check payable to the apartment and mail it directly to apartment. It might also helpful if the church develop an interview form so that they will have right question on hand and gather the right information of the client. The churches that are involved need to have a rule as to how often, what is the maximum they can help. I would suggest not give the full amount. They might visit other resource and gather up funds more than needed. In this case, it takes away the portion that could be helpful for other similar cases.

One of the Nest Mission's program is helping with rental assistance. We focus on homeless people who move into housing, not the residents already in housing because there are too many of those that we cannot afford. We have our limit. We have the following rules:

- 1) Persons or families that are in need of rental assistance must be homeless in the state of Washington.
- 2) We will request the shelter counselors to apply for assistance on behalf of their client(s).
- 3) We will rely on the client's case workers to assess the needs and follow up on the client afterwards because we don't have human power to do interview or to do outreach.
- 4) A client must have found an apartment and ready to move in but needs assistance with first month rent and/or deposit.
- 5) A client must expect some income to afford the rent after moving in. We won't be able to offer rental assistance more than once. The amount of rental assistance will vary depending on each situation.
- 6) A client must receive an ongoing support service from an agency.
- 7) We will not discriminate clients on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, nationality, religion and legal status.
- 7) In order to expedite



the process, we want to receive the application electronically. We will respond or issue a check within a week on first come first served basis.  
8) No phone requests. No direct phone calls from clients. We only work with social service agencies or homeless shelters.

Since we don't get to meet our clients, once a year at our annual fund-raising event some of them come and share their testimonies. Our supporters are very much appreciate that and moved to help more.

### **38. Housing Search Service**

**Need:** As soon as women become homeless, single or with children, their housing search begins immediately. They need to find a place to sleep on the first night. After getting into an emergency shelter, their search for transitional housing or permanent housing also starts right away. It is the sooner the better if women put applications in for low-income public housing because there are long waiting lists. Is the public aware that it takes five to eight years for the Section 8 Housing Program for families to kick in and six months to over a year for a single room occupancy (SRO) apartment with shared rest room, shower and kitchen to be available? There is yet longer waiting for better apartments with a private bath or kitchen.

Usually men or women are not aware of the existing housing resources. It is not only their poor knowledge of resources and the shortage of housing, but also their low motivation/depression that make them waste time, thus they sleep at shelters or on the streets for prolonged periods.

**Mission:** Churches may keep resource lists and applications for emergency shelters, transitional and permanent housing (low-income apartments and SROs) and also inexpensive motels in their neighborhood or in the city. Churches may help people fill out application forms, because many homeless people are not able to concentrate and finish filling them out. Churches can also help mail them (leaving a copy to refer back to later). Many homeless people are forgetful and sometimes applications never leave their pockets. A church can function as their reference since they usually do not have good references.

### **39. Housing: SRO (single room occupancy)**

**Need: History:** The term originated in [New York City](#), probably in the 1930s (the [Oxford English Dictionary](#) provides an earliest citation of 1941), but the institutions date back at least fifty years before the nickname was applied to them. SROs exist in many American cities, and are most common in larger cities. In many cases, the buildings themselves were formerly hotels in or near a city's [central business district](#). Others are former single family homes. Many of these buildings were built in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The United States saw a decrease in single room occupancy housing during the period of 1960s and 1970s [urban decay](#). For example, in Chicago 81% of the SRO housing stock disappeared between 1960 and 1980. Many SRO buildings face strong development pressure for conversion to more profitable uses. Some cities have regulated the conversion of SROs to other uses in order to prevent landlords from forcibly evicting SRO tenants. [San Francisco](#) passed an SRO Hotel Conversion Ordinance in 1980, which restricts the conversion of SRO hotels to tourist use. SROs are prominent in the [Tenderloin](#), [Mission District](#) and [Chinatown](#) communities. In San Francisco, the city may take over particularly squalid SROs, and renovate them for the disadvantaged. Landlords who intend to convert SROs may try to convince their tenants to sign releases, which may require relocation by the landlord and/or compensating the tenant.

The [United States Department of Housing and Urban Development](#) subsidizes SRO rehabilitation to combat homelessness, under the [McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act](#) of 1987.

In 2001, San Francisco Supervisor [Chris Daly](#) sponsored legislation making it illegal for SRO landlords to charge "visitor fees" - a practice long run in order for hotel managers to get a "cut" on drug-dealing or prostitution activities in the building. After a rash of fires destroyed many SROs in San Francisco and left nearly one thousand tenants homeless, a new program to reduce fire risk in SRO Hotels was initiated.

Single room occupancy (more commonly SRO, sometimes called a single resident occupancy) is a form of housing in which one or two people are housed in individual rooms (sometimes two rooms, or two rooms with a bathroom or half bathroom) within a multiple-tenant building. The term is primarily used in Canadian and American cities. SRO tenants typically share bathrooms and/or kitchens, while some

SRO rooms may include kitchenettes, bathrooms, or half-baths. Although many are former [hotels](#), SROs are primarily rented as a [permanent residence](#). Single room occupancies are often a form of [affordable housing](#) for low-income and formerly [homeless](#) individuals. The rents of many disadvantaged tenants may be paid in full or in part by charitable, state and federal programs, giving incentive to landlords to accept such tenants. Some SRO buildings are renovated with the benefit of a [tax abatement](#), with the condition that the rooms be rented to tenants with low incomes, and sometimes specific low income groups, such as [homeless people](#), people with [mental illness](#), [people with AIDS](#), and so on.<sup>25</sup> There was one where my clients used to live is in Seattle. It is an old hotel building. Each tenant has his/her own room with a bed, a dresser, small sink, toilet and shower. It is small but enough for one person to survive and affordable. Tenants are hooked up with mental health services.

**Mission:** Like Housing First model, churches can lease or purchase old hotel building in partner with other area churches and also and partner with social service/mental health treatment agencies. They need building and support services and church needs their professional services. The two can be a good partner offering chronically homeless people an affordable permanent home. As above statement said, it can be like section 8 for which government subsidy is available so that the homeless or poor can afford it. Churches can apply some or many of my 100 mission ideas and make the tenant life joyful and livable.

#### **40. Housing: Tent City**

**Need:** Every city is experiencing increasing homelessness but has a shortage of housing/shelters. Most existing shelters can't provide beds even for half of the homeless population. Many homeless people had often been turned away from existing shelters because there were no beds available; others had been turned away as they are found ineligible due to substance abuse, behavioral, or mental health issues; and some were couples who would have been separated in the shelter system. Some families also had to be separated due to teen-ager in the family who didn't meet requirement of age-limit.

---

<sup>25</sup> Single room occupancy From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia.

In 2012 and 2013 two of our homeless men who were regular guests of our Nest Mission (located in Edmonds, WA), died in parks in their sleep. There is no shelters for single men, women and families in the vicinity of small four cities of Lynnwood/Edmonds/Brier/Mt. Lake Terrace except only when temperature goes down below 34f. Then a temporary shelter opens. In a city like Lynnwood/Edmonds area how many days do we have such a temperature? Even it is above 34, person still can be sick and die. They had no other choice than sleeping in the park which is also illegal in this area. A couple of years ago I wrote a letter to mayors of these four cities about the needs of the tent city in our area. I even included in my letter a self-managed tent-city model by the homeless with minimum supervision with small cost. But none of the four mayors responded to my letter. My homeless friends who sleep sporadically in various parks in the four cities report to me that while a certain city police officers look the other way other police officers tore their tent down which caused them to lose all of their belongings. If I ask why not go to police station and collect them, they say if they shows up there they will be fined for sleeping in the park. So they ended up losing all of what they had.

The Law Center call it “violation to human rights:” “While maintaining that the existence of tent cities itself reflects a severe lack of affordable housing—and thus a violation of the human right to adequate housing--we find that when adequate housing or shelter is not available, forced evictions of tent communities may violate human rights, and may also violate principles of domestic law.<sup>26</sup> This is exactly the case we are talking about in the above four little cities. It had been my wish to have a tent city in our area although it is not a final solution but it can be an immediate alternative while we develop shelters or housing. It is better than dying in the park.

Most cities have created ordinances that prohibit sleeping in parks. Most residents don't want them to be around either. They can neither evaporate like steam into the sky nor sink deep into the earth like raindrops. After all, they too are human beings God created and blessed to have homes on earth. Without a place to sleep, most of them are residents of the city and county where we are reside. Where can't

---

<sup>26</sup> Hunter et al. *Welcome home: Rise of the Tent Cities in the United States* (WA. DC: Law Center for Homelessness & Poverty, 2013), 4.

they go? Do we blame them for hating their own existence and experiencing abandonment from God as we forsake them?

**Mission:** To help and to meet this urgent and immediate need, there must be a tent city, which is a very temporary living arrangement where they sleep together in a tent just like many war refugees did in the different war zones. To make a tent city possibility, some churches must open up their parking lots, not for a long period or permanently, but temporarily for a month at a time. In Seattle area there are a few tent-cities. Churches open up their parking lot for a month at a time. One church opens up parking lot and other churches donate beddings, food and daily necessities. Several churches together it is a possible and doable project.

Usually city governments place ordinances, rules and regulations, and building codes above the human welfare of homeless people. Usually churches place their own convenience and comfort above the welfare of homeless people. Reversing these priorities in itself will be a good mission; churches can call for a meeting with other churches, other faith traditions and city officials to discuss what their priorities should be and what they can do to solve together this problem of homelessness in their city or county.

#### **41. Hygiene Center**

**Need:** The most urgent of the hygienic item is restroom. There is no way to delay for human biological need of elimination. Therefore, the need for restrooms is an emergency not just for homeless people but for everyone, the rich or poor, the beggar or President. Human biological needs are the God-given order of nature. Those needs can turn into an emergency situation, especially for women. Some states and cities do not allow the installation of portable public restrooms on any corner of the streets. And many businesses and churches do not allow homeless people to come in and use restrooms. Many women have bladder problems. Restrooms are as important as meals and often more urgently needed than food.

Quite a few older homeless women suffer from incontinence. If they feel urge to go they have to use restroom immediately, otherwise they can wet themselves. People do not want to be around them. It is an emergency for them.

The next needed hygienic item is shower. Many shelters and some drop-in centers don't provide showers. Hygiene is a major health issue

of homeless men and women since it is difficult for them to clean themselves or change clothes on a regular basis. Poor hygiene affects their body, mind, whole well-being and their self-image. In order for homeless people to look for jobs, or go for interviews or go to work, they need to be clean and look professional. When they are clean and dressed up, they are attractive and likeable people.

**Mission:** Churches can open their existing restrooms to homeless persons or can build an additional restroom in one of their rooms. The church may allow them to use restrooms under the condition that they leave it clean. Or the church can hire a homeless person to clean the restroom. When a church opens its restroom to the public there should be volunteers who monitor the use of the restroom to see that they are cleaned properly. The church administrative assistant cannot and should not handle this project alone.

Churches can install showers/washers/dryers in the one room to help the homeless and their children to maintain their hygiene while they wait for low-income housing or look for a job or while they work. The church need to provide bath towels, wash towels, soaps, shampoo, combs, lotion, etc. for those who take shower. The church also needs to keep a stock of large size diapers for older women, sanitary napkins for younger women, and new underwear in different sizes for all homeless men and women. The church also keeps some clothes they can change after taking a shower. The homeless also need small traveler's size toiletry items to carry in their bags. Several churches can do this together, sharing volunteers and resources.

Members also can talk to city policy makers to convince them how important the restroom is. Homeless people have no choice but to urinate on the streets, if there are no public restrooms available. Not only the homeless but policy maker themselves have to do the same if public restroom is not available. Having public restroom is also for the healthy environment of the whole city. Some cities have changed their policies and placed portable restrooms in various spots in the cit

#### **42. Inclusive church**

**Need:** We are facing a painful decline of membership within the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) including other denominations, especially in urban/inner cities because many well-off members move out to the suburbs leaving the inner city churches in the hands of the

less wealthy members who cannot afford to move out to the suburbs. Many members of these inner city churches stop coming to church on Sundays due to parking problems. Therefore, many churches are held tightly by small remnant members. Contributions are getting smaller and the expenses to maintain the building are growing as buildings grow old. It is like suffering from a long-lasting chronic disease or watching a slow death. Pastors and remnant members work very hard to revive the declining churches. It is an energy draining, discouraging and a low process.

However, more often the inner city churches are reluctant to accept people of color, the poor or homeless into their churches. Memberships keep declining. Eventually pastors quit because churches cannot afford full time pastors. However, many such congregations wait to grow hoping that the same ethnic people will walk into the church and maintain the homogenous congregation. Often this is only a dream and not a reality. People won't come in from the suburbs and the population in the church's neighborhood is not homogenous any more. They represent diverse ethnic groups. People in the church neighborhood won't come in unless the church opens up the door for them, invites and welcomes them. Homeless people know so well that they are not welcomed into the church. They feel, therefore, excluded.

Finally, the Presbytery steps in and closes the church or gives the building to another growing ethnic church. There is a great need for the declining inner city churches to be redeveloped and revived. They don't have to die at all if they can do the followings.

**Mission:** I dare suggest the following as a way of living, not dying: 1) Let go of the dream of maintaining a homogenous congregation in a multi-ethnic community setting. 2) Dream a new vision to make your congregation a multi-cultural and inclusive church. 3) Open your church to the whole community, welcoming everyone from the community. 4) Consider everyone as God's child that God cares about dearly. 5) Determine to change your perception, attitude and even worship format to meet the needs of newcomers and embrace them. 6) Include homeless people in the church growth vision and plan. 7) Do some of the 106 programs suggested above and meet the needs of the community as well as the remnant's. 8) Fill your church with people who live in the community where your church sits. If your church sits

in a community with low incomes and the homeless, fill it up with those people. 9) Your church will grow. 10) Do not worry about how and what to pay your pastor because God will provide if you do the right thing that God is pleased with. 11) I want to name this church "a serving church" that walks into the community rather than waiting for the community to walk into the Church. 12) I want to name this church "an inclusive church" that welcomes everyone from every race. 13) I want to name this church "a reaching out church" that walks into the street to meet people where they are and as they are. 14) Churches will grow by meeting the needs of the community. 15) Then the church becomes a home for the whole community, especially for the poor and homeless of your own community. That is the model Jesus left for us to follow.

#### **43. Income generating: bazaar**

**Need:** Many homeless have no income at all unless someone give them cash, or panhandle or steal. Jobs hard to come by. Every day they need cash as everybody else. Can anyone imagine if you have no cash in your pocket for many weeks? Therefore, I am going to present a few ideas for the homeless to generate some income even in meager way:

Homeless people are gifted with many talents and can easily produce marketable products, but there is no outlet to sell them. It is extremely expensive to rent a store to display and sell them. Making marketable items is one thing and turn them into cash is a whole another issue.

**Mission:** A church may open one room and allow the homeless make some marketable items. The church may invite homeless people with their products to any church bazaar and allow them to sell them there. The hosting church can involve other churches to participate in this event.

While I was serving a homeless women's church in Seattle, we used to be invited by a dozen different church bazaars every year so that homeless women could sell their products that they had sewn or knitted or crocheted. I encouraged church members to buy them even if they didn't need them in order to encourage homeless women to experience confidence that they made marketable products. This experience will encourage them to improve their skills to produce



better items. They enjoyed it so much that they did their knitting and crocheting sitting on the sidewalks.

#### **44. Income generating: labor pool**

**Need:** Most homeless people have no income except food stamps they get from government. Some get disability benefits but not too many. More of the homeless don't have cash. We all need some cash. I observed many homeless men have muscles although emotionally they are not together. They can do some labor work under supervision. Many of my homeless friends appreciate to do some labor work because any other permanent job is very hard to come by.

**Mission:** I felt so bad to see them every day on the streets with no work. One day I made a flyer as follows:



#### **Nest Work Force**

**We want to repair or clean churches, homes, businesses, especially for seniors who need help. You may give us a "love offering." When you use our labor force you share your blessings with us.**

We are members of the Nest Mission. It includes worship, choir, Bible study, and Friday dinner. We try very hard to come closer to God under the leadership of Rev. Jean Kim, a retired, volunteer minister, and licensed mental health/ social service director of the Nest Mission. An incomplete 2012 One Night Count showed 583 of 2,249 homeless people in our small Snohomish County were sleeping outside. We are those who sleep outside. We used to have good jobs and supported ourselves. But due to the economic recession, we were laid off, became homeless, and it has been extremely hard to find work. Gradually we are losing our dignity and hopes. To introduce ourselves we can come to your church and sing for you

Rev. Jean Kim will drive us wherever we need to go. She will also bring us to work and stay with us as we work for you. For singing or work, contact Rev. Jean Kim at (425) 712-1677 or e-mail her at [jeankim1935@yahoo.com](mailto:jeankim1935@yahoo.com)

**NOTE:** The Nest Mission is a non-profit (501C (3) organization that is entirely supported by the Korean immigrant community in the State of Washington. It helps the shelter clients with rent or deposit when they are ready to move into housing; it offers dinner every Friday in partnership with Maplewood Presbyterian Church; and also offers bus tickets, daily necessities, singing; worship, bible study, counseling, social service, crisis intervention, case management and many more services. The word "Nest" comes from Matt. 8:20 where Jesus said, "Birds in the air have nests and foxes have holes, but I do not have any place to lay my head."

Internally we formed work group of homeless people who are able and willing to work. Then we sent the above flyers to many area churches. Those churches that knew me personally put up the flyer on their bulletin board and pastor made announcement to the whole congregation. We were getting calls. As we promised on the flyer, I drove them to work site and stayed with them the whole time. This way the church members felt better. At the end they were paid decently. They earned some "cash" this way. Job requests that came in were vary; moving, yard work, building repair (we were labor support for work crews), house clean, painting, and remodeling, etc. People wished to give our men work but somewhat reluctant due to insurance coverage in case of injury. Since some of them were Medicaid recipients we reluctantly signed waiver of liability because homeless men felt that was better than no work. They decided to be very careful to avoid injury.

Church may collaborate with local shelters. And announce the availability of labor force. A volunteer can accept the work request from the church members and make connection with the shelter. Shelter staff then will screen and provide worker for the church members. It is doable and possible mission. A retired former labor worker in the church can be a teacher and guide for these homeless labor force.

#### **45. Income generating: thrift shop**

**Need:** As I mentioned above, homeless men and women find it hard to find jobs with their lack of work experience and low skills. But they are all willing to work. When some of them are suddenly housed, they struggle with not enough funds. All of their checks from government

assistance go to pay rent. When the homeless finds unfurnished housing, they need household items, but cannot afford them. While they keep looking for work, they need to do something to generate some income regardless of the amount. Therefore, they use a thrift shop often to purchase needed items at a low cost. Some thrift shops give homeless people free clothes or needed items. Therefore, a thrift shop idea is one doable project for the homeless. It will give the homeless jobs and some income.

**Mission:** A church can use one room to open a thrift shop. It will not be hard at all for the church to operate a thrift shop as members of the church usually need to give away lots of clothes, household items and furniture. Department stores also give defects free of cost.

A church may recruit volunteers who are willing to help collect, sort and sell the items given. A church can hire homeless men and women do these jobs under their supervision. Honest homeless men and women can do cashier work also. They can be hired to run the shop, clean the shop or sort the items, etc. If it is a strain for one church to operate it, you may invite neighborhood churches to join you. I have seen this project in several churches throughout the nation. It is doable and enjoyable thing.

#### **46. Income generating: vendor business**

**Needs:** I cannot emphasize enough that our homeless friends need some kind of work. Most of them have lack of education; many didn't finish high school. Even with a high school diploma what can you do this day and age? And some struggle with some emotional issues. But they need to find something they can handle.

**Mission:** So one of the things I came up with is vendor. We have seen or even purchased something from a street vender or peddler at some point – whether on vacation or in our own town. I am talking about self-employment and the opportunity to work outdoors with a schedule that is always convenient for my homeless friends. Becoming a street vendor may seem like a relatively easy goal to accomplish but it involves diligence and patience to acquire the proper [licenses and permits](#) and operate it as a legal business. So training them how to do it along with values and ethics.

I used to help a few of our homeless brothers to sell newspapers on the streets. Some diligent ones do well. But it is a work standing all day on the streets and soliciting people to buy them. Whenever I see the homeless do sell homeless paper I pay double or triple out of my deep appreciation for their effort. One friend gave up and another sell drugs instead of paper because he earns more. What can I say? It is another disappointment. But I would never give up and keep on trying to convince them to do it right way.

How churches can help? They might partner with homeless service agencies, for example, like our agency –Nest Mission. Churches can get to know these people, a few at a time. Help them to acquire vendor license, collect or buy some simple items at the whole sale price and let the homeless friends try to sell them. Different cities might have different kind of vendor. Some cities allow to street vendor. Others allow to have something like farmer’s market. Our farmer’s market sells not only farm product (produce) but also other kind such as art works. So search what are available in your city or town. Before getting into actual vendor I would suggest to get applicants together, have a gathering (meeting) to prepare them and let them know what is involved. You have to pick those who are able to sell. I took several of my homeless men to yard sale for and with them. The total income was going into their pocket. Some do well soliciting customers and encourage them to buy, but others just sit there doing nothing. It takes a certain personalities I think to do the vendor.

#### **47. Income generating: Yard Sale**

**Need:** Needs are already described above several times. No one gives our homeless friends jobs and so we generate jobs.

**Mission:** Another way of generating income is idea of yard sale. Some churches are reluctant to allow homeless to do yard sale but others are willing to allow. I contacted several clergy friends and asked them to allow us to use a corner of their parking lot on the street side so that cars passing by can see yard sale sign. And it wasn’t hard at all to collect marketable items. I let my friends, family members and churches know that we collect items for yard sale. Throughout the year we collect whenever there is a chance. We had a small storage in the backyard of our hosting church for the Nest Mission. We kept stacking up items

and hold yard sale 3-4 times during the summer. Seattle is raining country in winter and therefore, we couldn't do it in winter. It took a pickup truck. Homeless men can help to load and unload the items. Some homeless members are good in sorting them when the time for yard sale comes.

And the total earning is divided up among the homeless who worked on that day. The Nest Mission assumed necessary cost. When we didn't have a pickup truck available, we rented U-Haul van. It was costly for rent, gas and lunch for the workers. The Nest Mission assumed these expenses. If we let the worker pay the expense there is nothing left for them to take at the end of the sale. Therefore, in case a church hosts a yard sale, I would suggest to assume the necessary cost and let the homeless keep all the sales.

For several churches together it is doable project. I saw a church in California had little storage shag in the back of the church yard and they kept collecting items and deliver them to homeless service agency when time comes.

#### **48. Job Bank and Job matching**

**Need:** Most homeless men and women want to work regardless of their health or life condition. But not everyone is healthy enough or skilled enough to work. Some, however, are able to work and move on to independent lives. But many do not know where to look for jobs and need help to prepare resumes or handle interviews.

**Mission:** Churches can open one room as a job search center and help men and women find the work that they can handle. In order for the church to help a homeless person find job, the church's Job Center must have job resources posted on daily basis for example, information from the daily newspapers ads, Worksource, the employment security office (Job Services), and address and direction how to get there. And also announce to the whole church to bring job information and add to the job post.

While church volunteers interview and assist to prepare resumes, they can assess the skill level of each homeless person. Accordingly volunteers can help them to prepare for jobs.

Not only a church's job search center should post jobs but also all homeless shelters, meal programs and housing sites must do this although they might already be doing this. For example, Nest Mission

is offering weekly meal and we can set up a board where we can collect job information and post them there. We haven't done this yet but must be doing it soon. We can not only function as a job bank by gathering up all job information but also can do job matching with local employers. We didn't have any space during the week. So we are securing a small space at a local church. So we are going to do this as I am suggesting. Along with job search and job match we need to offer some of the classes out of 100 mission ideas such as literacy, job training, and educational classes on how to develop good work ethic and values, etc. For many finding job is not the all answer but need to learn how to handle the job and how to be a decent employee, etc.

National Coalition for the Homeless survey team suggested to create a Mobile Employment Service but didn't suggest any method. But I would picture that this mobile van mission might be doable by several churches together. In mobile van we can carry job resources, information of job openings, applications and volunteers to help fill application out with the homeless and mail them immediately. This van can be parked one day at a time at different free meal program sites or outside of shelters. It could be the same idea as medical van.

#### **49. Job Training: Barbershop**

**Need:** Needs for job for the homeless are many as described all along.

#### **Mission:**

Another idea for the homeless to be trained and can do seems to be barber skill. Churches again develop a partnership with social service agency that offer case management service so that they know clients really well and are able to pick the appropriate personality to be trained. This trainee must have healthy emotions and able to handle and control his emotions. Church might set up a barber shop in one of the rooms just simply so that other times church can use the room also. You might utilize existing neighborhood barber shop and invite him in to offer training. First few or more months he may do it together with a trainee and share the income. Church can solicit customers from congregations. For the barber to share the income it might be rather attractive in offering training.

If the local barber wants to offer training at his own barber shop church volunteers can offer the homeless friend transportation and offer necessary support for him to carry out this training. A men's

group of a church can take this as their project. If there is a barber school, church can sponsor to send the trainee to school.

#### **50. Job Training: Beauty shop**

**Need:** 1) The need of homeless people for work has been mentioned enough already. Woman's need for work is as desperate as man's. For woman to find employment is as hard as man's case. So we try to find something women can do. 2) Another need for women is fixing their hair; homeless women cannot afford to fix or cut their hair. This is why they often look so disheveled that their appearance immediately proves that they are homeless. Some of them cannot wash their hair as often as they need to, and have lice in their hair. A hairdo is crucial for anyone for job interview. It is especially important for women (men as well) to not show that they look like homeless. Their appearance makes an impression on others. If they are very obese, some homeless women (men as well) cannot cut their own toenails or wash their feet. A pedicure/foot washing can be a wonderful preventive service for their foot problems.

**Mission:** 1) Beauty operator's skill is one of the popular one for women. It is same idea that a church build relationship with local beauty shop. Often there is beauty operator in the congregation. Again as man's case, church volunteers prepare woman candidate for training by getting to know them fairly well. Choose a woman with cheerful sociable personality and can handle customer appropriately. Again church can set up a beauty shop in one of the rooms and invite local beauty operator (s) to offer training. And suggest to split the income. Church can supply necessary tools and solicit customers from the congregation. Most church women need haircut and hair set. Deaconess group might take on this as their mission project. If there is beauty school church can sponsor to send them to school to be trained as a beauty operator.

1) If a church opens one room to set up a beauty shop to train beauty operators, their first customer can be homeless women. Church might donate equipment and tools. It will be easy to set up a sink if the room is adjacent to restrooms. If not, hair-washing can be done in the restroom sink if the church does not have shower facility. There might be some hairdressers in the congregation. Usually it is rather easy to get a beautician (s). A volunteer hairdresser can kill two birds with one

stone – train some women to be a beautician and cut hair for homeless women as well. A volunteer manicurist or pedicurist could come to give their services also. A church may contact a neighborhood beauty shop and ask if they can offer free service once a week or once a month for homeless people and train someone as well. Some will do it. Beauty supply companies might give some free supplies. For our Nest Mission a couple of volunteer hair dresser come in a monthly basis. On that day we have a long line for those want hair-cut. We make them all feel good. It is a wonderful service to offer. Beauty shop does not only means hairdo but also all aspect of person's beauty and appearance that can increase their self-esteem. But above all, for homeless women (men as well) haircut is the most crucial.

### **51. Job Training: Car Repair**

**Need:** I have already said numerous times why the homeless cannot find work but they willing to work. One obvious thing is the fact that many of them don't have any job skill. Better late than never. They can learn something even now.

Below I am lining up a few doable jobs that homeless people can possibly perform with some training and under some or no supervision. I have already said that homeless men and women have some physical and emotional limitations and can do a certain things at a limited level only. But many have God-given talents.

**Mission:** One job skill for men is auto mechanic. Most church members know car repair shops. We can talk to them to train our men. Some might be willing to do. I have an auto repair man who has warm heart to fix cars for our homeless friends free of labor charge which usually amount to half or more than half of the total cost. Nest Mission helped to pay for parts. Person like him will be willing to train some of our men. We had a man who are being trained car repair through local community college. That is another way to get it. A local church can assume the cost if he cannot get any grant from school. Our man got the grant which was not covered tools. So we helped. Auto mechanic skill is good one to have to maintain their independent life with decent pay. So again, a church can sponsor homeless men to go community college to learn the skill unless you find some auto repair shop that is willing to train homeless men.



## **52. Job Training: Carpentry**

**Needs:** Refer to many of above statements why they need jobs and earning. Because they don't have work and therefore, there is no earning. They need to earn income so that they can maintain their life. Carpentry skill is already a very common one among men. It won't be hard for them to learn. Some of them have talents in art although not all the artist can be trained as a carpenter.

**Mission:** Jesus was a carpenter. Carpentry skill is one of God-given skill that quite a few pastors, lay people and even homeless have. People can also learn the skill. Our homeless friends can learn simple things first and then improve to larger tasks.

Once they acquire they will never lose the skill.

A church can set up a workshop in one of the rooms. Recruit church volunteers. Put announcement out to shelters and invite homeless friends who are interested in this. Church volunteers will enjoy teaching them sharing their gift of skills with those who have none. I noticed that carpentry is a hobby for many men and some of them might enjoy working with homeless fellows.

## **53. Job Training: Computer Skill**

**Need:** Computer knowledge has become an international language, and it became a part of our life today, for young and old. In this day and age, learning computer skills is crucial. Many homeless already know how to operate computer even not a professional level. Many sits in the library to kill two birds with one stone; have a place to sit during the day and use the computer and have some fun. I exchange e-mail with some of them.

There are many men and women among homeless people and welfare recipients who can be employed. But many are not employed because they do not have enough education, job skills or work experience along with their emotional health such as motivation, patience, social skill. Therefore, teaching them concrete skills can prepare them to move forward toward employable, productive, self-sufficient and independent lives.

While computer skill is universal there are many who don't have the skill. But there are also those among homeless population who

have skills using old office machines such as typewriters or 10-key adding machines that are outdated. These people want to learn computer skills. And it is teachable and most needy skill. Even all the grocery stores and department stores including small businesses all use computer these days. With computer skill door is wide open. Without it, most doors might be closed.

Churches don't need to buy new computers because it will be rather easy to get donations of used computers and notebooks. Many families usually have more than one computer.

**Mission:** A church can open one room and set up a computer training class. The host church can work with existing local social service agencies cooperatively in managing the computer class. These days teen-agers can teach basic computer skills. Often social service agencies need a space to do this program. Churches can provide a space and volunteer teachers and the social service agencies can bring students (homeless) who want to learn. Social service agencies and churches can also help find jobs for them. Together we can do anything and everything.

#### **54. Job Training: Cooking**

**Need:** For most women including some men, cooking seems to be a very natural skill they already have or can acquire. While many homeless men and some women have never learned how to cook, many already have basic skills in cooking. Many of them however, need to improve their cooking skills to an employable level. Becoming employable cooks not only leads them to self-sufficient lives, but also increases their confidence as productive persons. Offering a cooking class can achieve double goals for homeless people, particularly women - cooking of nutritious and healthy food and create an opportunity to become employable.

**Mission:** Churches may open their kitchens for cooking classes. Although many church women feel special and protective about their kitchen as most women do with our personal kitchen. However, if they have mission mind, they can open the church kitchen. Volunteer cooks not only teach them but also train them how to keep things in place and clean the kitchen after every use. Some incentives will be helpful and encourage them to learn.

Volunteers can teach homeless women to make menus and to cook first for themselves and gradually improve to an employable level.

Churches may hire homeless people to clean the kitchen. It can be an opportunity for homeless women to learn how to cook, clean the kitchen, and earn some incentives.

When the church has an event with food, hire the trainees to practice!

Churches can help these women to receive the catering order and help them to cook for it, beginning with a small order.

A few volunteers can take a turn to be responsible for teaching, recruiting the homeless through shelters or social service agencies, shopping groceries and cleaning afterwards.

### **55. Job Training: Gardening/Landscaping**

**Need:** Gardening and landscaping has been with us and around us always. Homeless men and women have lots of time to kill. Raising flowers or vegetables is a productive way of using their time. Some of them are interested in gardening and farming simple crops. Some are interested in landscaping, although they are amateurs.

They also need to feel the worth in doing or producing something. Gardening will offer them an opportunity to go somewhere with a purpose of doing something. Gardening is something a man or woman can do alone without much interaction with others, since some of them have trouble relating to others. It is also a project that a few men and a few women can do together if they so wish.

Seeing products such as fruits, vegetables, flowers or a well-groomed lawn, will be an extremely joyful experience. Productivity in such activity will increase their self-esteem, confidence and motivation.

**Mission:** Many men have already been doing yard work on and off as odd jobs. They know how to use lawnmower, trim trees, using pressure washer etc. already. Many can do these jobs without much supervision. But they are not professional gardeners and will need some training. Churches might offer a small piece of garden for homeless women to plant vegetables or flowers in the churchyard or in the yards of church members. When the church train them they may offer some stipend to encourage them to do the training. Churches may refer them to farms in picking seasons. When churches offer them a small garden space on the church premises, they need to provide seeds and gardening tools because homeless women wouldn't have any tools for gardening or

money to buy seeds. Churches might work with the shelter system to recruit women who are interested in gardening.

Churches might leave some bus tickets with the shelter staff to give out on the day of gardening. The most effective way would be for church members to pick them up at a certain place where the shelters designate if not at the shelter. When their picked vegetables at a farm or the produce they harvested are ready for sale, churches might allow them to sell them in the churchyard on Sundays when more people are there. They can be trained to be professional gardeners, farmers or landscapers. Churches might also invite them to church services and other activities. It will be also an opportunity for them to associate with God as well as with health people.

#### **56. Job Training: Housekeeping**

**Need:** Regardless where we may live, at house, apartment, in cars or even in parks housekeeping is part of our daily chores. However, I have seen some women who were evicted because they did not keep their apartments clean and became fire hazards. I have also seen many churches that are reluctant to open the door for the homeless because they don't want to clean up after them. Many women need to acquire housekeeping skills because this is one of the jobs they can acquire easily with some training. Therefore, learning housekeeping skills will not only help them in their own life situations but also can help them find employment. I have also seen some women do housekeeping work on and off. Housekeeping work needs some training and experience but not need a professional skill.

**Mission:** Churches can create opportunities for homeless men and women to come and learn to clean the church or kitchen after programs or cooking. Churches can create housekeeping training at private homes or offices, hospitals or hotels through church members who might have access to these resources. To encourage their motivation some incentive will be helpful, not in cash but in in-kind items. Churches might help find jobs among church members who wish to have someone to clean their homes.

#### **57. Job Training: Massage**

**Need:** Homeless people often come from experiences of past abuse, and they still suffer from long-lasting effects of their past hurt. Many of them carry double and triple layers of stress, resentment, hatred and

anger, which then develops into depression. Some express themselves in exploded anger or violence. The stresses and angers they experience in present day homelessness are eating their minds and souls away. This is often expressed in mental anguish and physical pain. I have already mentioned gym/exercise. However, there is another way of dealing with this pain; that is massage. Massage will not help them to feel relieved from their pain but also can be a job skill if they are trained how to perform it.

**Mission:** A church can set up a room for the massage treatment and training. Massage can be a very therapeutic not only physically, but also emotionally for stress-stricken homeless men and women and anybody. It can release or loosen up physical as well as emotional up-tightness and pain. Homeless men and women can learn by receiving massage themselves and with training how to do it and become employable. Local massage schools may provide volunteer massagers or trainers. Or in congregations, there might be someone who would like to do volunteering with the skill.

Some church members can use the church massage service as customers as well as supporters of the homeless. While in training the homeless trainees may be given some stipend and after completion of the training will be paid decently but not as high as professional massage services. So it will be beneficial for customers as well as the homeless trainees. And capable trainees can find some work in job market. But when you pick a candidate for massage training, like everything else, perhaps with more caution because it handles human body. Trainee must have sound mind and appropriate behavior. When they give someone massage the trainer should be in the room together. It will be a judgment call.

#### **58. Job Training: Secretarial Duties**

**Needs:** Some homeless men and women or those formerly homeless who now live in low income housing can learn to be secretaries. Some of them have low level computer skills already and can improve their skills. If they can be trained in secretarial work with some computer skill they can become employable.

**Mission:** It won't be hard for a church to train these people since most churches have secretarial staff, who can train them. At first they can help the church as a volunteer until they learn the job. It will be a

wonderful service a church can offer them. Small churches don't have a secretary because they can't afford. These trainees can be hired on a stipend. It will be good for the church as well as the trainees. With a good secretary and administrative duties church might experience growth.

### **59. Job Training: Sewing/Knitting**

**Need:** Many homeless women have God-given talents: making things with their hands such as arts, crafts, knitting and sewing. Some are willing to learn and able to catch up with new skills. Many of them have never worked before and lack the confidence that they can do anything. They have heard throughout their lives that they are no good and can't do anything.

**Mission:** One room in a church could be used as a sewing room with sewing and knitting machines provided. There are many women church members who do sewing. First, these homeless trainees can make small items such as doll clothes or handkerchiefs, aprons etc. and then gradually move on to sewing clothes. They can find a job as seamstress or who do alterations. A church can bring piece work in to do training. The church needs to provide women with sewing machines, materials, yarns and necessary tools for sewing, knitting and crocheting. Volunteers can teach them skills, and trainees can produce marketable items. This is a wonderful way for talented church members to continue to make their God-given talents useful for and with needy people.

Let other church events (bazaars) know that items are available for sale. Homeless women may get some extra income, which then becomes the source to enhance their self-esteem and confidence that they can produce something. Giving some incentives will increase interest and consistency.

### **60. Jubilee Court for the homeless**

**Need:** I see my homeless friends get in and out of jail and prison too frequently. Their stories are depressing. Here is how that happens: Homeless people are often engaged in a "cat-and-mouse" game with the police, who sweep an area and issue citations for criminal misdemeanors to move the homeless on. The citations cover public nuisance offenses such as being drunk in public, "illegal lodging,"

urinating in public, camping in a park or on the beach and "habitation in a vehicle." The homeless are then forced into a new area, the police again sweep in an effort to clear the area, and a new round of citations and removals ensues. In the process, a homeless person can often collect numerous citations, each one demanding bail, which he or she cannot meet, and threatening incarceration or fines, which he or she cannot pay. Many defendants then fail to appear in court because of their personal condition or circumstances, or for fear of being fined or jailed. Arrest warrants for nonappearance start to accumulate, unpaid fines pile up, but the underlying misdemeanor charges go unresolved. When defendants do appear in court, the traditional system relies on levying fines, requiring community service or imposing jail time. And then the defendants are back into the streets. This approach leaves many prosecutors, judges and police officers frustrated. They recognize the traditional routines and tools -- citations, fines, jail time, then back on the street -- create a "revolving door" for the homeless that burdens the system and clogs caseloads without addressing the underlying problems of homelessness. The homeless cycled through the system come out much the same as they went in, still having to face the daily struggle for food, clothing and shelter; only now the trials of everyday life are compounded by unresolved legal problems, which can prevent getting a job, housing a driver's license or qualifying for public benefits.

**Mission:** So stories are so frustrating that I have conceived a notion of "Jubilee Court" that so I named. I didn't start it yet but I would like to develop one. As soon as Nest Mission finds volunteer lawyers we are going to open a "jubilee court." In Israel history, Jubilee meant that every 50<sup>th</sup> year debts are cancelled, those who were sold as slaves to pay the debts will come home, the land that was sold for debt will return to the original owner, and farm lands take a rest for a year. From this concept of liberation, I envision the freedom from warrants, penalties, fines for citations and tickets can be cancelled for the homeless. They may lay down bag-full of burdens from their back and start their life all over. So I call it "Jubilee Court."

So I am sharing my dream because the same thing goes on every city every state. While I was on speaking tour I heard there is such a court I have been dreaming of in San Diego area. I learned how it operates and introduce it here.

I am quoting its full picture here as a good model that I would like to adopt for our own Nest Mission: In contrast with our recent history of abysmally inept local governance, San Diego's Homeless Court Program, or HCP, stands out as a beacon of excellence. HCP is an alternative to the traditional court system for dealing with homelessness, and is designed to "bring the law to the streets, the court to the shelters, and the homeless back into society." It has received recognition and support from the American Bar Association and in 2004 was a finalist for the "Innovations in Government Award" at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. Moreover, since its founding in 1989 by Steve Binder, an attorney in the Office of the Public Defender, HCP has become a model for a growing number of homeless court programs across the country (at this writing 16 in California and some 15 more nationwide). To understand how HCP works, and why it does, it is useful to consider first how the traditional system deals with the homeless.

While the traditional approach is coercive, HCP's approach is voluntary and relies on a partnership linking homeless shelters and related service agencies, the homeless who wish to enter the program, prosecutors and public defenders, and the San Diego Superior Court. HCP works like this:

Homeless shelters and related service agencies are the entry points for HCP. They sign up homeless people who wish to participate, and work with them to develop a rehabilitation plan appropriate to each participant. The participants in turn undertake to carry out the plan and meet its standards and benchmarks for completion. Rehabilitation can include classes and counseling in life skills and dealing with chemical dependency, attendance at AA or NA meetings, completion of computer training or literacy classes, training or searching for employment, or volunteer work.

On signing up, participants provide basic contact information on an HCP Interest List, which is forwarded to the public defender, the prosecutor and the court for a review of open misdemeanor cases and warrants, fines and penalties outstanding against participants on the list. Only misdemeanor cases such as public nuisance offenses, petty theft and traffic violations are considered for HCP; felony



crimes do not qualify (nor do parking tickets). The court clerk then places active cases on the HCP calendar, and participants are given a court date for a hearing.

The public defender and prosecutor negotiate, case-by-case, plea agreements for participants who have active cases on the list. The agreements acknowledge steps participants have taken in their self-rehabilitation plans before their appearance in court. In effect, the plea agreements seek to have the rehabilitation activities that participants already have completed accepted by the court as "alternative sentencing," instead of the more traditional sentencing a court might order.

Superior Court judge "brings the court to the shelters" by holding monthly HCP session in a homeless shelter to hear HCP cases with all the formality and dignity of a regular court session. Each defendant appears individually before the court, with the public defender and prosecutor, and submits his or her plea agreement with proof of completed rehabilitation activities and other supporting documents. The judge reviews the defendant's submissions, often questions the defendant and consults the public defender and prosecutor. In some 90 percent of cases, the judge accepts the defendant's completed rehabilitation activities as "alternative sentencing" and, as envisaged in the plea agreement, formally dismisses outstanding charges against the defendant. The defendant leaves court with a clean record.

The program is an effective alternative to traditional "revolving door" routines that, because they fail to address underlying problems, trivialize the police and courts in their efforts to deal with the homeless and waste taxpayer dollars. Because HCP asks homeless people to take responsibility and find opportunity in adversity, it helps them return to productive lives. (Reference: People in Purple, Volume. 4, No. 94, page. 292).

#### **61. Kitchen service/dietary facility**

**Need:** Homeless people usually eat whatever food is available at shelters, or anywhere else. They can buy only cold food with their food stamps. Those who suffer from diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, obesity, heart problems and blood clot problems need a

special diet. They have no choice but eating whatever given. That's why their longevity is short. Their average life span is 48 years while others with good medical care and good diet live twice of that. However, for homeless people, having a special diet is an impossible task. Only when they get food from a food pantry or buy food with food stamps, do they have some choice over what to eat and how to cook. However, they often have no place to cook. Very few soup kitchens cook special diet foods for those who have particular health problems. They need a little space to cook what they got from food pantries. And it can be a wonderful opportunities for church members can hear their stories, relate to them and understand their circumstances better. And it will be also an opportunity for the homeless to have a real conversation with real people because they are very lonely people. Many homeless men and women cannot name a person as a close friend. They usually have little contact with their families. They seldom have friends whom they can trust although they might have drinking buddies. More often than not they take advantage of each other rather than helpful to one another.

**Mission:** Churches can open a kitchen for those I described above with special needs. They can bring their own raw groceries. Or a church can provide food items to cook for these men and women. A church can cook for them or train them to prepare their own food. A church can also make non-perishable and low-fat food packages available for them to keep in their bags and eat as needed as emergency food. A church can prepare enough of special diet dishes and deliver the left-overs to where they gather, such as the drop-in-centers or shelters for people who need special diets. Church may announce to the whole congregation and many women and some men would volunteer to be present at the church kitchen and even help to cook. Let the homeless help clean up. They will love to participate.

## **62. Laundry service**

**Need:** Some shelters and some drop-in-centers provide laundry facilities, but people have to be on a waiting list to wash their clothes. Most overflow shelters do not have laundry facilities.

Those who sleep in their cars, abandoned buildings, bus terminals, in parks and on the streets need to clean themselves and wash their clothes, but often they do not have money to do so. Wearing the same clothes over and over again without changing or washing for some

time can produce lice and other health problems. Most people are self-conscious about how they look and don't feel like going anywhere or doing anything if they don't feel good about themselves. This is not only a physical need, but also an emotional, social and spiritual need. They do not feel right going into the church if they are dirty and shabby where everyone looks clean and well or decently dressed.

**Mission:** The church can use one room to install a washer and dryer. It will not take many volunteers to operate it. Let the shelters that don't have washer and dryer know about this service. Let homeless men and women come to the church to use washer and dryer. Or church van can pick them up at one location on a certain day of the week. Church doesn't have to be open every day, but just once a week. The church can train and hire homeless women to operate them and clean them. The Church that offers a washer and dryer may provide soaps.

Our Nest Mission made a contract with local Laundromat that we may use laundry voucher we issue. For one full load it cost \$1.75 and \$1.00 to dry a load. To wash sleeping bags it costs \$6.00. So we prepared coupons of \$2.75 and \$6.00. We pass them out according to their needs. Nest Mission staff drop by weekly basis and pay for the voucher they accumulated. Vouchers are signed by Nest Mission staff, Laundromat staff and the user. So we pay for the voucher that show three signatures. If local churches cannot install washer and dryer this is another way of doing. If a church cannot afford several churches can do it together. It is doable and very important mission that we the homed people usually take for granted.

### **63. Legal service**

**Need:** Many homeless women lose a divorce battle, the collection of child support, suffer eviction and many other legal matters for which they cannot afford legal fees. Homeless men got into legal problem as well. Often they need legal representation but there is a shortage of pro bono lawyers. In most cases women end up facing eviction in the second month of their rent delinquency. In many divorce cases most poor women lose child custody. Those who are represented by legal counselors usually are able to prevent eviction.

As I mentioned somewhere already if we don't see our homeless friends for a while they used to sit in jail. They usually carry incarceration history on their backs. Traffic tickets, citations for drinking in public place, ticket for jaywalking, all for petty issues they easily get citations. When they cannot pay fine, it piles up on warrantee list. And fines they owe swell like snowballs by adding more penalty over penalty. These burdens follow their life like a devil. Quite often I wish I just break all their heavy jokes off. To do that we need pro bono lawyers who has the angel's heart. We wish more lawyers volunteer for pro bono services.

**Mission:** Are there lawyers in the congregation? May God bless those lawyers who are willing to share their expertise to help the losers in our court system because they cannot afford the legal fees! (for more information, refer to Jubilee Court #60). Jubilee Court will deal with group of homeless but in this section I mean individual representation at the court for different fight such as custody, child support and eviction, etc. Even when a church faces zoning issues upon opening a shelter, lawyers may help fight the battle, claiming the rights of the church to welcome guests and the residential rights of the citizens. For legal issues involving a church's service for homeless people, contact the National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty at (202) 638-2535.

#### **64. Library**

**Need:** There are two kinds of needs to develop a library in the church: The first is a need of the homeless people, as many love to read books. They have no place to go. They often sit in the public libraries to read or rest. Our area library has too many homeless sitting in that they are thinking of limiting entrance of homeless people. The other is a need of the congregation to learn all aspect of homelessness, and study how a church can be involved. As I mentioned in No. 27, there are unbelievable number of people who are illiterate. They need to come and practice of reading books.

**Mission:** Many churches have libraries already. It would not be difficult to add more materials for homeless women and men, and for the congregation, and to add a few more seats for people. If space is too small the church can designate another room for reading. There are many good books written about the issues we are dealing with here.

Conferences produce audio or video resources on the issues as well as Bible study materials. Church librarians may request the national church body to encourage church conferences to develop more theological materials on ending homelessness. A church library may also set up a section for the resource of homelessness. The more the congregation gain knowledge, the deeper they will be motivated to do something to end homelessness. Resource centers and libraries may be combined. You may order some books from the listing of reading resources in the end of my five volumes.

Yet another service can be offered for the homeless is literacy program as I mentioned above in No. 27. In the library set up in church must carry easy books also for those who have reading problems. Church can also assign volunteers to work with homeless friends who walk into church libraries. It is not ideal to allow anyone walk in while secretary is alone in the building.

### **65. Life skill training**

**Need:** Many homeless men and women come from broken family backgrounds. Many of them moved around to different foster cares or lived unorganized street lives. Very few of them had good role models nor stable family life. Many were on their own even from childhood. Therefore, their life skills are poor. Some of them have been homeless so long that they lost their life skills in dealing with simple matters and people. They often display poor judgment which results in making wrong decisions. This is another reason why they cannot hold gainful employment in the job market.

### **Mission:**

Life skill classes can be run by experienced volunteers in one of the rooms in a church to teach homeless men, women and even children. Most mental health centers in cities have life-skill programs. One may call them to get some help including useful materials. Some of the life skills may include nutrition, job interview skills, anger management, money management, parenting, smoking cessation, maintain sobriety, stress management, housekeeping, get along with neighbors and co-workers, how to behave at work, and many others. Churches have retired teachers or even working teachers might be willing to volunteer to teach them life skills so that their behaviors match their ages.

## **66. Lingerie Ministry**

**Need:** An especially important item for the homeless is underwear. Anybody can wear used clothes, but wearing used unfitting underwear can contribute to lowering their self-esteem and pride. Offering clean, new underwear in the right sizes, means so much for the self-esteem and pride of the homeless, especially for women. I used to make people laugh by saying, “Feminist theology starts from lingerie theology.” Women’s pride can be boosted by wearing well fitting, beautiful, brand new clean underwear. It might be same for men also.

**Mission:** The Church of Mary Magdalene I developed and served in Seattle,

Washington, has been giving a new pair of lingerie to homeless women on a quarterly basis. Older women do not like to wear high-cut panties. Obese women do not like bras with wire in them. We were able to purchase them at discount price at stores if the store manager understands the purpose for them. Women from the community and lingerie departments of large department stores will respond very favorably in supplying new underwear for homeless women. Volunteers need to keep an inventory list by sizes and kinds and record keeping as well. Will church open a lingerie room? Wouldn’t that be something? Or church will partner with local shelters where women and men need to change their underwear when they take shower.

## **67. Mail box service**

**Need:** Many homeless men and women have no correct address because they constantly move around. Often their temporary address is invalid. When their mail from the welfare office, housing authority or an employment office is returned to the sender, it often causes cancellation in their job interview, benefits or housing.

Homeless men and women cannot do much without a permanent residential address: Few employers will hire them without an address. No banks will open an account for them without an address. Even to vote they need to do voter’s registration for which they must have residential address. Having an address is like having personal identity. Having no address means no existence.

**Mission:** A church can do a great service for homeless people by being their address. The church can allow them to use the church address for

mailing. The church can receive mail for them. Church may set up a mail folder by names in alphabetical order in their file cabinet. It is a good way of keeping in contact with homeless people too. Homeless men and women need to be advised to keep in touch with the church because housing may come up in the near future or their benefit checks might arrive soon. If the homeless has a cell phone or contact number keep them on a separate roster. When they do not contact for their mail in time, church volunteers may call them. One risk is that the church ends up keeping all the mail when homeless women and men move around, do not check in, or pick the mail up. In Seattle, the Lutheran Compass Center receives mail for homeless people. So I would suggest the church makes a contract with homeless people 1) to check in (by calling or in person) to pick up the mail. 2) If they do not check in due time (a week?), if the church volunteer cannot find the mail receiver by phone, the church staff is authorized to open the mail, and responds to the sender if the mail requires immediate response. 3) if mail is not picked up for a month, the church staff is authorized to discard the unclaimed mails. Therefore, it is very important that the homeless friends who use the church mail box need to leave their contact numbers. If there is a change of their phone number the homeless need to update the church with the new or right contact number. This service can save lots of trouble for homeless people. If the church is located within the vicinity where the homeless hang out and walk by might be very helpful. In a worse case, a church volunteer may visit the local free meal sites since most homeless persons go there for food.

When I served homeless women church in Seattle downtown, they used or office address. So I used to receive their mails. If they didn't check in for mail I knew where to find them but the mail senders couldn't do that.

One new approach will be helping utilize more mail services and text messages on the cell phone or computer. Nowadays, many homeless use computer in the library and carry cell phones. Perhaps churches can offer classes how to utilize these services and provide cell phones. No. 76 phone service and this mail service (No. 67) can complement each other.

#### **68. Material contribution**

**Need:** There are so many non-profit social service agencies that operates by the contribution made by the public. Not every social service agencies receive government funds. Out of their shrinking budget they can hardly purchase all needed items to run the program. Social service agencies need all kinds of equipment for their work and material things to distribute to the needy people.

**Mission:** In the United States we have too many “things.” Most of us accumulate too many “things.” If we don’t have talent or money to give we can make non-monetary material contributions. If you have old equipment such as cameras, photographic gear, binoculars, spotting scopes, camping gear, laptops, bicycles and used cars that you no longer have a use for, donate them for good use. Most of us have too many clothes. I put a paper bag under in the closet. If I find any clothes that I don’t wear more than a few times a year, they go into the bag. When the bag is full I take them out to donate. I do the same with any household items. We had so many donated items that all homeless couldn’t handle them, we had a yard sale and the homeless persons are paid wages with that sale.

#### **69. Meal Program for the Homeless**

**Need:** Many homeless people experience hunger. Imagine when you wake up in the cold park, and have no money to go for a cup of hot coffee. Imagine you are very hungry but do not know where you can eat lunch or dinner. Wouldn’t you be physically starving and emotionally depressed and angry and feel sick?

Hunger can lead to sickness, malnutrition and even death.

**Physical and economic effect of hunger is reported by several sources:**

According to Feeding America, a critical component to a healthy life is nutrition. From birth, the intake of vital nutrients is essential to the growth and development of a healthy individual. Good nutrition, particularly in the first three years of life, is important in establishing and maintaining a good foundation that has implications on a child’s future physical and mental health, academic achievement, and economic productivity. Unfortunately, food insecurity is an obstacle that threatens that critical foundation. Insufficient nutrition puts



children at risk for illness and weakens their immune system. The immature immune systems of young children, ages 0 – 5, make them especially vulnerable to nutritional deprivation and as a result, the ability to learn, grow, and fight infections is adversely affected.<sup>27</sup> The same thing can happen to adults also.

Brandeis University reports; “hunger costs our nation at least \$167.5 billion due to the combination of lost economic productivity per year, more expensive public education because of the rising costs of poor education outcomes, avoidable health care costs, and the cost of charity to keep families fed.” The individual cost of hunger: “the impact of being held back a grade or more in school resulting from hunger and its threat resulted in \$6.9 billion in lost income for 2009 dropouts in 2010 and that high school absenteeism led to a loss of \$5.8 billion, also in 2010. In total, food insecurity led to a loss of \$19.2 billion in [life-time] earnings in 2010.” A breakdown of the cost of hunger: the annual cost of hunger or its threat (i.e. “food insecurity) includes: \$130.5 billion: Illness costs linked to hunger and food insecurity in America. \$19.2 billion: Value of poor educational outcomes and lower lifetime earnings linked to hunger and food insecurity in America. \$17.8 billion: Value of charitable contributions to address hunger and food insecurity in America.<sup>28</sup>

Feeding the homeless for many decades I learned that feeding will serve not only for physical nourishment, but also for emotional, social and spiritual satisfaction. I would say that the meal is a good tonic for the sick; strength for the elderly and weak; comfort for the lonely; welcome for the alienated; love for the deserted; hope for the discouraged; joy for the depressed; a fellowship for the loners and a community for all. It is a place to meet other human beings and experience a social life. It is also a place to meet God through people. We all need physical, emotional social and spiritual food for our survival. Although human beings cannot live by bread alone but it is an essential for survivors.

**Mission:** Churches can cook meals as often as or sporadically depending on the availability of food resources and volunteers. In our area (Lynnwood/ Edmonds/Mt. Lake Terrace) each of 5

---

<sup>27</sup> The Center for American Progress’ reported online of Feeding America. <http://feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/impact-of-hunger.aspx>

<sup>28</sup> NOKID Hungry. <http://www.nokidhungry.org/problem/economic-impact> (Posted online)

churches/missions cook once a week. Monday through Saturday. This means there is free dinner every evening. Homeless as well as poor neighbors are invited to church meal programs. There are many small cities or rural areas homeless people find it hard to count on any regular groups that offer hot meals. If members provide groceries, it will not cost much. It will take volunteers to cook. Churches can utilize homeless men and women to help clean up afterwards. Some of them will enjoy volunteering also.

While I served a homeless women's church, thirty-five churches or non-church groups took turns to cook on weekly basis for homeless women who come to worship at the Church of Mary Magdalene. This means each church doesn't have to cook on weekly basis, which is not that easy. We fed them a major holiday meal, which is usually the meal of the week for them because quite often they live mostly on sandwiches or cold food. We treated them as we treated Jesus at our table. They feel like somebody very important on that day.

We still do the same: We, the Nest Mission is one of the five churches. We offer one hot meal every Friday evening, and one cold meal with bible study every Thursday evening because we meet at Subway Sandwich shop. As I mentioned above it is my conviction that our Friday dinner must be prepared in ways that we invite Jesus to our table (Matt 25: 40). It is a communion with Jesus. Therefore, we sing a communion song – “let us break bread together” – before each meal. We are mindful of those who have health problems or are vegetarians for religious reasons. Thus we add vegetarian dish and fruits to the hot meal. Our Friday dinner is provided by local Korean-American congregations. One meal a month is cooked by the only Caucasian church – the host church. Many church women and men have been serving meals. It is a doable significant mission for the churches.

#### **70. Mentoring service**

**Needs:** Most of us had parents who loved, cared for us and acted as our mentors.

However, as I mentioned somewhere already, these homeless friends had no parents or parental figures who could mentor them in their growing up process so that they could mature in to adults who think, act and judge appropriately and healthy way. While their body – bones and flesh are matured in to adult body size, their emotion, judgment

and behaviors had never grown to match their ages due to lack of mentoring. Therefore, they ended up being non-conforming individuals to social norms which resulted in living contrary to societal values and ethics.

Although there are many public and private agencies that address short-term needs of homeless and needy families, long-term, consistent support is often lacking. With the new time limit on welfare benefits under the welfare reform program, many more families, especially single mothers with children, will be desperately looking for jobs and child care. However, due to the lack of support, many women don't make it and return to homelessness with their children.

Many homeless men, women and especially children suffered due to lack of mentoring in their early life. While many men need mentoring service, single mothers with children need it more than ever so that they can mentor their own children in order not to lead them to wrong direction that mother themselves have been going. Mentoring can serve as after-care, so that people can maintain their housing, jobs and independent living and never repeat homelessness again and prevention for the future generation.

**Mission:** Let me share the Mentoring Program that the Davies Community Presbyterian Church offered in Davies County for homeless women and children: Teams of two church volunteers are matched with families (usually single mothers with children). The teams help make sure children are enrolled in school and attend school, communicate with the school if problems occur and also help with school work. Volunteers help families find adequate child care options and provide transportation for them to doctors, dentists, counselors, and prospective employers. They help families find affordable housing. They encourage participation in the Welfare-to-Work program with resumes, by rehearsing for job interviews, etc. They provide and support in parenting skills and help with choosing nutritious groceries and with meal preparation. They help with financial management, budgeting and balancing a checkbook. They plan special outings, field trips, and generally help families with healthy decision-making. The Community Mentorship Ministry is in Community Mentorship Partnership with the Yolo County Department of Social Services and the Davis Interfaith Religious Network to help low-income families gain skills, education, confidence, child care, transportation and

necessary support. Mentoring involves counseling, case management and role modeling by the church volunteers. It is doable mission for a church.

### **71. Mobile Clinic**

**Need:** Health problems of homeless people are severe. Those who are in a decent health condition easily get sick in a homeless life style because they sleep in cars and outdoors. They also walk on cold streets, exposing themselves to sick people, maintaining poor hygiene, poor nutrition, poor sleep/rest, emotional stress, frustration, discouragement, hopelessness and anger. Those who were in poor health already, get worse living in homeless life style. I noticed many homeless folks who come to our dinner exhibit health problems such as hypertension, diabetes, obesity, heart problem, acid reflux problem, liver problem, and easily catch cold, broken bones, back pains, just to name a few. Due to their low motivation and other reasons they do not seek out doctors.

Some are eligible for Medicaid. Up to this time many do not have. Some doctors don't accept Medicaid patients. But Obama Care is accepting their applications. Things will be better for the poorest Americans. Many of them are connected to existing health care systems, but the managed care system allows only a certain number of treatments. Those who are not chronically ill have less access to doctors. Therefore, it is easy for homeless men and women to ignore their health care if they are not acutely ill. A couple of men who were abusing alcohol didn't seek out medical care, just being laid down in park and died without anyone's notice. It is very sad world. Another young man in this late 20s told me after the dinner that he couldn't walk any more. Not knowing what was wrong, I took him to local emergency room. That evening was the last time he stood on his feet. He was hospitalized for a few months and died in the hospital bed. Numerous homeless men and women also have dental problems as stated in No. 22.

**Mission:** Several churches do fund-raising together to set a mobile clinic van. Or a church may open a room and set up a very simple clinic; and other churches support in any way they are able. They can find medical professionals in their congregations or within their local community or local hospitals, medical or nursing schools, who want to

volunteer for homeless men, women and children. If it is difficult for homeless people to go to the place where the mobile clinic is parked or to a church where a clinic is set up churches may offer transportation by meeting them at some shelter sites. Health care professionals may assess their health condition, and make referrals if not able to offer treatment or dispense medication.

A church may offer the homeless lectures on health issues on how to care for their own health. Another sad news is that we can give them all good lectures but do they have choice in their homeless life? Our Nest Mission dinner began to include diet food for those who need to watch what they eat to control their blood pressure and sugar level.

I have seen some churches set up a clinic or medical van so that homeless folks can freely come and check it out (refer to volume 4: see 155 program examples).

## **72. Monetary contribution**

**Need:** The recession crippled the budgets of many nonprofits just as demand for their services rose. Many organizations struggled with ongoing payment problems from one of their biggest funders—government agencies. As a result, many were forced to cut services and staff or close program sites, hurting the communities they serve. According to Urban Institute, government agencies have approximately 200,000 formal agreements (contracts and grants) with about 33,000 human service nonprofit organizations. 60 percent of organizations with government grants and contracts count those grants and contracts as their largest funding source. As the recession cut deeply into tax revenues, many state governments slashed nonprofit funding. Individual contributions also dropped, just as the need for human services was on the rise. Fifty percent of human service nonprofits froze or reduced employee salaries. Thirty-eight percent laid off employees. Twenty-three percent reduced health insurance, retirement contributions, and other staff benefits. Twenty-two percent borrowed funds or increased lines of credit. Twenty-one percent reduced programs or services.<sup>29</sup> This means many non-profit services rely on private funding and individual donations.

---

<sup>29</sup> **Urban Institute: Nonprofits and Government Collaboration:** Findings from the 2010 National Survey of Nonprofit Government Contracting and Grants. Elizabeth T. Boris, Erwin de Leon, Katie L. Roeger Milena Nikolova. Center on Nonprofits and Philanthropy. Posted online October 2010

In this section on giving money, I remember many people ask “shall we give money to the individuals who stand at intersections with a signs of begging?”

**Mission:** We need to let our supporters know about this dire financial situations although many of them already are aware of this. Those of us who cannot make contribution with time, talent and other gifts can make monetary donations, which is very crucial in this day and age. The Nest Mission (for the Homeless) in Lynnwood/Edmonds, Washington is completely depended on individual donations most of which comes from Korean immigrant community. As needs grow we might need to expand it to the wider community. I remember reading that in time of economic recession of 30s people made more contributions than other good times. We all need to survive and overcome this trial time together. People can make an affordable donation not above their ability. A Korean proverb says, “the high mountain starts from the accumulation of dusts.” A little donation will make a big human service possible for the needy poor/homeless in our midst.

To deal with the question “shall we give money to the sign holders at the street corner?” many people feel differently: Some adamantly refuse to give from the perception that they should work instead of begging. Or some think that they make lots of money by begging than working, and therefore, we should walk away. Some others claim that giving them money adds to their habit of substance abuse and therefore should not give. Still others feel that we should give in order to ease our own conscience because walking or driving away from this begging person shame our conscience. Some are simply confused and do not know how to think about them and what to do. Therefore, each person has to make a different choice because we simply do not know the circumstance of the sign holders and cannot judge them.

### **73. Money management**

**Need:** In the section referred to as Protective Payee, I acknowledge that many homeless men and women have money management problems. They haven't learned how to manage funds. In addition,

---

they have impulse-control problems, especially in relation to substance abuse. Some of them spend most of their funds for substances and become delinquent with rent payments, causing evictions. In homeless life often their meager earning is spent for substances. Many not only abuse substances but also abuse money. Therefore, money management skills will prevent their eviction or the temptation to steal or even prevent a fast broke. Homeless men and women will keep themselves out of a lot of trouble if they learn money management and impulse control.

**Mission:** A church can open one room for people to learn money management skills. Keep in mind that they will not come for just this purpose, as few men and women believe that they have a money management problem. A church should combine this with other programs, such as the lunch program and some programs for fun. They would come for food and also attend the class, if a church offers lunch as an incentive, because money management classes would be one of the least popular classes, although it is perhaps the most needed.

This program can assist women and men to open savings accounts to save a part of their public assistance checks or earning from odd jobs. Dilemma is that they don't have address. A church member can open an account on behalf of someone. I have done it and it is possible.

#### **74. Music and Singing**

**Need:** As I mentioned frequently homeless people are not well physically and emotionally in their homeless lifestyle. Many homeless men and women are victims of violence - physically, emotionally and/or sexually. They live with the everlasting effect of deep wounds and have had little chance to resolve them, and end up carrying hidden resentment, anger and hatred. It would not take much for them to blow up and lose control which can be hurtful for self and others.

Music will be very beneficial to all of us including homeless people without any side effect. [Positive Psychology](#) reports a number of research findings about the immediate psychological and medical benefits of music:

Increased [happiness](#), lessen [stress](#), reduced [depressive symptoms](#), greater autonomy, and increased competence, hope, and [optimism](#). Music offers an easy, natural way to relieve anxiety, increase alertness, feel happier, sharpen [memory](#), improve mood, and fight off

insomnia, depression and even addictions, without any side effects. Research shows that children who are involved with music programs grow up to have lower rates of addictive behaviors, better academic performance, and greater preparedness for college and the work force. Music making (playing an instrument or singing) is a multimodal activity that involves the integration of auditory and sensorimotor processes. Music listening can enhance the emotional and cognitive functioning of patients affected by various neurological conditions. Intensive singing practice can lead to long-lasting effect in both the cardiovascular and pulmonary problems.<sup>30</sup> Because the act of singing requires long, repeated contractions of various respiratory muscles, this type of training may help to preserve the maximal expiratory pressure of patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.<sup>31</sup> Singing has been identified as having important therapeutic potential for individuals who stutter.<sup>32</sup> Several studies show the result that singing reduced the frequency of stuttering by over 90%. Research has shown that an intensive voice therapy can be effective in reducing the speech abnormalities experienced by patients with Parkinson's disease.<sup>33</sup> Research has shown that singing has been shown to produce improvements in chronic stroke patients. Studies have described the positive effects of singing on the development of speech in children with autism. Singing reduces the risk of heart disease. They also found that combination of physical activity while listening to your favorite music improved the lining of your blood vessels and showed impressive benefits on cardiovascular health.<sup>34</sup>

**Mission:** Whenever I develop homeless missions I add music not that I am a musician or singer but because I am aware of the positive healing effect of music. Homeless men/women I served sang out all of their pain, frustrations, problems, grief, anger and hatred. We sang with our bodies and souls by shaking scarves, musical instruments, and dancing. Shaking our scarves, we shake away our pains and troubles.

---

<sup>30</sup> Grape, Sandgren, Hansson, Ericson, and Theorell, 2003.

<sup>31</sup> Bonilha et al., 2009.

<sup>32</sup> Healey, Mallard, and Adams, 1976.

<sup>33</sup> [Ramig, Countryman, O'Brien, Hoehn, & Thompson, 1996.](#)

<sup>34</sup> Christopher Bergland in *The Athlete's Way*, Published on September 2, 2013.



Shaking musical instruments, we wake up our souls toward the presence of God, new joy and a new possibility of life. Singing for a whole hour has been extremely therapeutic and spiritual and brought healing to those who are wounded deeply. Our members confessed that they could not sing and be angry at the same time, and that in singing they experience joy, energy, solidarity, and satisfaction with one another, becoming one community among themselves. More than anything, they experienced the presence of God in their midst and became ready to move into the worship service.

One advantage of the church is the fact that every church has a piano and often there are volunteers with musical talents. It doesn't matter where the church is located. A church could be within walking distance from where homeless women hang out or distant from them. Any interested church can let the shelters or drop-in-centers know that you offer singing and food. Go down to pick them up. It will be fun!

Leading by a song leader with a singing voice was helpful. Musical instruments were very useful tools to add sounds and noise when homeless people have low voices to sing and that also boost energy and add joyful and excitement. I heard that mental health hospitals in China use singing, exercise and acupuncture as their treatment methods. Churches are not able to offer acupuncture but can offer singing and exercise. There must be good food whatever you do.

#### **75. Offer sites/building/house**

**Need:** For non-profit programs to offer the services they need site gather together with people who need variety of help and services. And also to avoid cold, snow and rain, but purchasing and owning buildings is almost impossible.

**Mission:** It will be a huge blessing for anyone who own extra space and share -with needy service program by rent-free or low rent. Maplewood Presbyterian Church in Edmonds Washington shares social hall with us, the Nest Mission for Friday evening meals, worship and other services. We are renting a small house owned by a Lutheran Church in the area with a low affordable rent. There are many churches or any businesses that share their spaces with the needy social service agencies. If we have no time to do a volunteer

work, no talent to share, no money to share, share a house, store front space or any building. It will be a blessing for both parties.

#### **76. Outreach**

**Need:** My experience has been that most homeless men and women who are lack motivation to improve themselves do not come to treatment, or social programs offered by churches even if they are beneficial for them. They need to be contacted personally by someone and build trust to get ready to go to programs. Another aspect is that they will come to gain something tangible. While having poor insight and low motivation to enhance themselves they will come for material gains. Is it human survival instinct? This might be because many of them come from abusive backgrounds, were deprived of blessings and opportunities and have never been encouraged to dream or hope. They have given that up a long time ago because their dreams have never come true.

Many homeless men and women will have difficulty in trusting you right away because they have been "ripped off," used, abused, and exploited all their lives by their so-called "loved ones" and society in general. The wish to be "wanted" or "invited" is not only in the hearts of homeless people but also in people in general. Therefore, "outreach" can be the crucial starting point as well as a sustaining source for the church operation in general and the homeless program in particular. Positive human relationship is also sought by most of us.

**Mission:** As a first step, you may call one of the drop-in-centers or women's shelters in your town. Make an appointment with the director of the agency. Go in, sit and share what the intention of your church is. Obtain the support of that person for what you are trying to do at your church. She or he can become an excellent resource person for you. Before you relate to homeless people, learn from the director what are some of the things that you must not do when you talk to homeless people. One thing that I know is the fact that these agencies will not welcome you if you try to proselyte them in to your religion. That is something you must avoid. Premature evangelism might hurt people more than helping. Then get permission to come in to that particular setting to visit homeless men or women. Go as often as you are allowed or are able and get to know homeless folks. Introduce yourself first and let them know why you are there. Be

friendly, polite and positive. Some might be cold or unfriendly or even give you an angry response because you are a church person. Don't take it personally as she responds from her own past experience. If some of them will not want to talk to you, respect that, and move on to another person. Don't ever impose your ideas or faith on them because you will lose more than you will gain by doing so. Be aware of the fact that many of them are coming from other or no-faith traditions, or may even be hostile towards the Christian church. We need to respect that too.

Before you invite them to the program at your church, it is crucial that you get to know them. Get to know a few very well. They can become your helper for publicity of your program. When you relate to them at the agency or at your church, don't fear them. They are good and lovable God's people just as we are. President Roosevelt said "do not fear. The only fear we have to fear is our own fear." Decide to love them unconditionally and then your fear will go away.

Agency staff might be able to bring homeless women to your church or come with them if you provide transportation. Your church group should invite staff from agencies of the area closely related to the program you are doing to learn more about the field. When you visit the agencies they might invite you to be their supporters in any way you can. I would suggest you find a way to work together with the existing programs.

Homeless men or women are likely to ask you to lend them some money. This can be the most important issue you will discuss with the staff of the agency you are visiting. Most agencies will warn you not to get into cash handling, which can create problems. I always had no cash policy. When you get any request form homeless friends, tell them you need a permission from the agency staff.

### **77. Parenting Class**

**Need:** As I mentioned already that many homeless women live with the everlasting effects of early abuse without resolving the hurt and anger. Frequent abusive language or behavior is their learned behavior, coping mechanism and survival skill. They, too practice abuse as a way of disciplining their own children or as a way of expressing their anger. Children of many mothers, especially homeless or poor women, are taken by the state's Child Protective Service (CPS), because many of

them not only physically abuse their children but emotionally neglect them just as they were neglected. Not only homeless or poor mothers, but also many other families in the wider community, experience the pain of going through a court order to take parenting classes. Parenting skills are crucial for all parents- not just homeless women but homeless men also.

**Mission:** There are shelters for women and children but I haven't seen a shelter for men and children. Therefore, we give priority to homeless women who are with children. Churches can use one room for a parenting class. Since there are quite a few mothers who have lost children to CPS, it will be a top priority for them. Sometimes the parenting class is required to get custody back. Churches may invite someone from Parenting Effectiveness Training which exists in most states to help create the class. Churches may also recruit in their congregations professionals who are willing to teach homeless women parenting skills without pay. They can prepare written materials and give them to the women to read. Along with parenting classes, a church also can offer a program for these women who need to experience healing from their early abuse. Therefore, the two, learning parenting skills and healing for themselves, must occur at the same time.

#### **78. Partnership church**

**Need:** A national trend threatening most mainline churches is a membership decline. Many well-off suburban churches usually say that they are so distant from the needy population in the inner or urban city area that they cannot reach out to them although some of them do. However, they own funds and resources. In rural areas, on the surface it looks fine, but there are many needy or homeless people hiding out. There are many small congregations in rural areas as well as inner cities. They cannot afford to hire a full time pastor or to maintain the operation of the church. In rural areas there is a serious housing problem for farm workers who are living in inhumanely substandard living conditions. I already mentioned that they are another homeless population. We see a trend that people move out to suburbs leaving inner city church in the hands of the poor. While inner city or rural churches struggle most suburban church are doing well. So what can we do to help the small rural or inner city churches?

**Mission:** Therefore my suggestion is that suburban churches may establish a working relationship with churches in the rural and urban/inner city areas. Suburban churches may adopt those needy churches as their sister-churches and support them in any way they can and are able to help. For example, the suburban churches chip in toward pastor's salary, program expenses. They may also support the rural and urban/inner city churches in reaching out to their needy poor or homeless people in those areas. Instead of going overseas to do mission, adopt poor dying inner city churches and their homeless as the mission site. Suburban churches can even share leadership and resources with their sister churches. The two together can end poverty and homelessness.

### **79. Partnership Mission**

**Need:** I have been mentioning the partnership all along. After all, no one or no agency can stand alone in this world. We all must stand together leaning on each other. Marital life is partnership. Parents and child relationship is partnership. Members and church relationship is partnership. Relationship between God and us is also a partnership. The relationship between government and people is partnership. The relationship between an employer and an employee is a partnership. There is almost nothing that is not partnership. Even if we are thrown into no-man's island, we must be in partnership with the nature. All the above 105 mission ideas are also about partnership. Once Martin Luther said, "The wealth we own is not for us but to share with the poor. The knowledge we own is not for us but to share with the ignorant. The health we own is not for us but to share with the sick".

**Mission:** If we cannot do anything alone, we don't need to put our hands up and give up because it is possible to do anything together with others which I call "partnership." Many people easily give up because the job looks too big or hard for one person to do. Do it with others in partnership. A Korean proverb says, "Even a piece of paper will be light if we lift it up together." Do develop homeless mission in partnership. Donate something or volunteer in partnership with others. We the Nest Mission do a yard sale in partnership with the one who owns a yard.

We do meal program in partnership with another church. Do picnic in partnership with other organization or a church. Do a homeless shelter in partnership with another shelter or a church. Do GED program in partnership with local community college. See what happens when you work with God in partnership!

#### **80. Phone service**

**Need:** Quite often homeless people need to communicate with service agencies, counselors, doctors or case managers by phone because they cannot get around freely without a means of transportation. Often they have no quarters to make calls. Some drop-in-centers provide phones and take messages for them. But not every homeless is connected to the agencies. Some areas there is no such a service. When agencies call day centers to reach their client but most of the time the line is busy and they cannot get through and give up. Homeless people often disconnected from agencies that work with them. Often I get a call from churches to bring homeless men to do labor work, but I can't reach them because they do not have phones. Especially in holiday seasons, homeless men, women and children need to contact their family members. Children need to call their fathers or grandparents. Very few agencies allow them to make long distance calls. Therefore, most of the time they are disconnected from the world including their close families and supporters.

**Mission:** The church can set up a phone service in one room and allow homeless people to use the phones and/or church volunteers can take messages for them. Let homeless people to check in if they got any phone calls. This is a similar service as the mail box service. If this church with good heart is located near where the homeless hang out it will be ideal. The church may install several different phone service – either having limitless calls available, or restricting long-distance calls, or a phone for local calls and another for long distance calls. Whatever way within the church's ability to handle, the homeless would appreciate. Another way would be supplying them cell phones with limited calls only for emergencies. It is costly but churches can donate 5-10 cell phones a month through shelters. The church also can give out prepaid phone cards for homeless people to use.

Another way would be voice mail service. The church also can help homeless people who try to get a job by providing a voice mail service.

The church pays for the voice mail until the homeless people find jobs and begin to earn. Since policies of phone company changes often churches may consult with phone companies to see what is the best available deal to help homeless people to have phones. There were phone companies offered free phones to the needy but they needed to have physical addresses. Some homeless people used their relative's address but many did not have anybody. That was the problem. Churches may check into this deal.

### **81. Protective payee**

**Need:** Many homeless men and women have money management problems as I have already mentioned. Money management problems often cause eviction. Social Security Offices or Welfare Offices often require the recipients to have protective payees, if a money management problem is known to them but the recipients must wanted to have one. For many men and women who have money management problems, having protective payees is a good way of preventing recurring homelessness.

**Mission:** The church that decides to be a protective payee for someone may let the Social Security and welfare offices know about its availability and follow their instructions. A protective payee receives checks for homeless person. The protective payee takes the responsibility of handling funds such as rent, utilities, food, and any other payments for the check recipients, and allows them to have a weekly allowance.

The protective payee might open a checking account. Each time the protective payee gives an allowance to the client, the client should sign a receipt. This will avoid accusations from the client about the misuse of funds. The protective payees can also teach the homeless money management skills. The protective payee and the homeless can make payments together, although checks will be signed by the protective payee. The protective payee can teach the homeless person to write and keep an expense record. The homeless might learn money management skill while having the protective payee.

### **82. Public policy advocacy**

**Need:** Neither churches nor social service agencies alone can solve the housing and homeless problem. After all, it is a public policy issue. Building more SROs and low-income housing is a policy issue. Raising

the minimum wage and increasing the numbers of affordable day care for welfare mothers is a policy issue. Homeless people unable to sleep in the park or sit on the sidewalks is a policy issue. There is nothing that is not related to policy. Therefore, the business of ending poverty and homelessness must involve policy makers.

Many Christians take the view that "*politics and the Gospel don't mix; faith has nothing to do with politics; the government's welfare and poverty programs are not the concern of the church; our commitment to and our moral obligations for the poor should be expressed in deeds of private charity and through humanitarian groups.*"

However, some Christians misunderstand "the separation of the church and state." The original intention of the constitution was "to forbid the establishment of any religion by the state" or "forbid the state's interference with religious matters," but not the influence of religious values in the public square. Government and public seem to twist the original intention and ended up opposing any relationship between government and the church.

God commanded Moses to go to the Egyptian government, speak the truth to Pharaoh and demand him to release the people of Israel. How much more can God be political? Many prophets courageously confronted political leaders of their days by saying "thus says the Lord." How much more can they be political? Quite often Jesus criticized unjust policies and actions of political leaders of his day. How much more can he be political? Many Christians in our day forget our deep involvement with politics by paying taxes to the government, electing leaders and supporting the government policies. Aren't we political? Politics is not dirty, as many people think. It is a genuine action of citizens out of the spirit of caring for our nation. Many people also maintain their distorted thinking that supporting government policies is not political action, but opposing or criticizing it is a political action. For me, both are political actions of responsible citizens.

If the good Samaritan, who helped the wounded man once, keeps meeting a wounded, half- dead man every day on the road to Jericho, wouldn't he raise a political question as to the safety of the neighborhood, the police patrol, and the economic conditions that push people into robbery? Wouldn't he be motivated to talk to



political leaders about the safety issue? This is clearly a political as well as a religious action.

But still many people are reluctant to speak up if the issue is not related to them directly. Someone in Germany expressed very clearly the consequence of his apathy to people who were murdered by the Nazi persecution:

“They came first for the Communists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Communist. Then they came for the Jews, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Jew. Then they came for the trade unionists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a trade unionist. Then they came for me, and by that time there was no one left to speak up.” (attributed to Pastor Martin Niemoeller, 1892-1984).

**Mission:** The public must speak with policy makers to allocate funds for the poor and homeless in this country as mandatory in budget rather than discretionary; and create jobs and more housing for the homeless. The public must speak to the local city or county government to dismantle the ordinance to prevent homeless people from sleeping in the park, develop an ordinance to allow homeless people to set up a camp in parks until local government is able to provide more shelters and low income housing. The public must speak the local city government to allow churches to offer shelters regardless of sprinkler system in the building. The public must speak to federal and state governments to set a policy to end homelessness.

Churches usually have social concern committee. Members of such a committee or any members must speak to their own church and denominations to adopt policy to end poverty and homelessness and be engaged in any way they can to help the poor who suffer from poverty and homelessness. Since public policy issue is so important that I am going to designate below – at the end of 100 mission ideas – a separate whole chapter for it. Therefore, here what I presented is suffice for now.

### **83. Resource center**

**Need:** Most agencies keep quite a few resources related to homeless issues. However, quite often these resources are not accessible to the homeless, especially to those who come from out of town, who became homeless for the first time, or mentally ill. Thus, many homeless persons are not aware of the existing services in the community. Due to the lack of motivation or too disorganized, or lack

of transportation many homeless persons can't get to the resources. Most churches are not aware of those resources either. It is very important for all homeless persons to get to available resources to help themselves. It is equally important for churches/faith communities in town to learn about the resources in order to help the homeless to utilize them and refer them to the right resources as well. What is the best way to handle this then?

**Mission:** In order to achieve this goal, church needs to open a room or using existing church library system, and fill it up with printed resources; first educate church leadership and make them available to the homeless. This room or church library may function as Resource Center not only for homeless people, but also for the congregation and the wider community with information on shelters, emergency assistance, feeding programs, clothing banks, or social service agencies, housing authority, employment offices and legal assistance etc. The Resource Center must also have educational and Bible study materials on poverty and homelessness. Few churches have them in their libraries. Advertise the Resource Center in the neighborhood newspapers and on the crisis line.

Someone could contact local shelters, crisis lines or the Coalition for homeless. They will be able to provide the church with resource lists or packets. The Presbyterian Hunger Program, Urban Ministry, Health, Policy, Peacemaking and other areas have wonderful educational resource packets on many issues. A church may keep enough application forms for low-income housing and jobs, and help homeless people to fill them out. A church may stock stationary and postage to help homeless women and men mail the applications as soon as they are filled out.

The Resource Center can also serve the wider community on social welfare policy issues and guide people to discussion and advocacy by and letter writing to government representatives. Homeless women who are familiar with local resources may be assistants to the church resource center with or without stipend.

#### **84. Retreat for leadership development**

**Need:** There are needs for some homeless people to be trained as leaders. Some are trainable. There are also different needs for a certain group of homeless people to deal with their particular issues such as addictions, legal issues, or health issues. Yet, another group might have

spiritual needs to go to conference to renew their faith, pray and experience healing. Even if some of these want to join leadership training or conferences on the related subjects offered in society, they cannot go. Because more often they are not acceptable or no money to register those expensive conferences.

**Missions:** To nurture these homeless into leadership or help a certain group to deal with particular issues, agencies or churches may take a certain number of homeless people to retreat. Nest Mission does this annually: Usually pick around 7-8 homeless people, taken them to retreat for two nights three days with meals and resources provided at a certain retreat center in Seattle. This summer (2014) we invited around 10 homeless who struggle with substance addiction problem. We invited professionals who treats addicts, a medical doctor, and a man to share his testimony of healing from substance addiction, drug selling, stealing, incarceration, and homelessness. Through educational lectures, discussion, book review in related topics, sharing, testimonies, singing, prayer, worship, Bible study and good food all participants and leaders have a life-changing experience. Usually it is a powerful experience for the homeless. Each time wonderful leadership is born out of this retreat. What the homeless most enjoys are; each has own room with shower, three full meals a day in a wonderful beach environment; the fact that they are being invited to such an event as important guests. That made whole world difference. Since they had never dealt with their issues in depth it is a huge challenge and awakening time for them. It usually cost several thousand dollars. If a few church chip in and do it together it is most meaningful doable project. You may partner with local service agency to pick the appropriate clients.

#### **85. Self-defense class**

**Needs:** Sometimes women are attacked at night or even in the daylight, being pushed into a car, taken to an unknown place and raped. Sometimes they are knocked down on the street and robbed of their belongings. Self-defense skills are desperately needed and wanted by the homeless, especially women. Women are not safe and are vulnerable to be victimized in the homeless life. This gets worse around check time or the holiday seasons.

**Mission:** One room in a church can be used for self-defense training. Churches usually have gym for the youth. This space might be ideal for this project. There might not be people who are equipped with self-defense skills. Call the local CSO (Community Service Organization), a police station, a Martial Arts school, or a Karate school in the community and invite instructors to teach homeless women. If they understand the purpose of the class and for whom, they might offer their services for free. Or they might invited these women to their own facilities.

#### **86. Share house**

**Need:** As a result of enormous efforts of community services, many homeless people find low-income apartments. Now they will need furniture and household goods. But their income is limited to one small check they get from the government or part-time work. Those items are very expensive and they cannot afford them. Not only homeless people, but poor people who live with limited incomes, need help obtaining household goods.

**Mission:** The church can open one room for a Share House program, which is a warehouse filled with furniture and household items that can be recycled for the needy people. We are living in an age where we have become the captives of consumerism; too many new items are available, and we are tempted to own too many THINGS. Many people are as eager to get rid of some of their collected items as they were to buy them. It does not take much time for a warehouse to fill up. People don't want to throw items away, but are willing to give if they know that their gifts can be useful for some people.

Since the one room in a church may only hold a small quantity, several churches on the ecumenical/interfaith level can rent a larger space together, such as an old factory or an abandoned house, storage, or an old barn and organize a Share House program. This Share House can hold large size items in large quantity and benefit many more people.

Churches can set rules, such as the agency staff must accompany the client; one person or family can take a certain number of items per month or quarterly, etc. Churches will need many volunteers to sort the donated items, store them in a well-organized way, distribute them, and even carry them out to their cars. Churches could keep documentation on who got what, when, and so on. So when they show

up too frequently, you have records. I have seen a Share House that was a place where people brought food to be distributed to poor and homeless people.

### **87. Shelter for Domestic Violence Victims**

**Need:** The wellbeing of women and children depends on the health of family life. The family needs to be a safe place, free from violence. It needs to promote respect for all of its members. Some family relationships are life-threatening. Domestic violence includes physical, emotional, sexual and social abuse. Domestic violence is reported to be one of the leading causes of homelessness among women in this country. Half of the homeless women are fleeing from domestic violence. Some reports that approximately 63% of homeless women have experienced domestic violence in their adult lives.<sup>35</sup> Battered women who live in poverty are often forced to choose between abusive relationships and homelessness. A staggering 92% of homeless women experience severe physical and/or sexual assault at some point in their lives. For many homeless women, abuse started at an early age. Over 66% of these women experienced severe physical violence by a caretaker and 43% had been sexually molested during their childhood. Abuse often continues into adulthood. 63% of homeless women have been victims of intimate partner violence and 32% are current or recent victims of domestic violence.<sup>36</sup> A significant number of families experiencing homelessness are single parent with their children fleeing abuse. 50% of the cities surveyed by the 2005 U.S. Conference of Mayors identified domestic violence as a primary cause of homelessness for women. Statistics are different when and where they are taken. However, all of the research shows that domestic violence was the major cause of women's homelessness. These women who are abused physically and emotionally often in the name of God became physically, emotionally and spiritually homeless and profoundly damaged. I concur with this report because I noticed high percentage of homeless women who have been staying at shelter, and request the Nest Mission for rental assistance giving domestic violence as their reason for being homeless.

---

<sup>35</sup> Network to End Domestic Violence.

<sup>36</sup> *Violence in the Lives of Homeless Women*, the National Center on Family Homelessness.

These women have double layers of stress from being homeless and by living in daily fear of being pursued by their abusive partners. Women who are running from abusive situations need a secure place in which to protect themselves and their children from chasing partners/fathers. Although there are some shelters for victims of domestic violence in most cities, the resource is very limited for the demand.

**Mission:** The church could use one room for women who are fleeing from domestic violence. It has to be a secured place that is unknown to the public, even to church members. If it is difficult to have a shelter on the church premises because of security concerns, a church can rent a room in some other place for this purpose. A few churches may put funds together to rent or purchase a house as a home for domestic violence victims. Since many women come out of abusive situations with their children, a program for them (emergency intervention, prevention and education) would be very helpful. Mothers and children would benefit from counseling to overcome their hurt from their loved ones and to find a new life.

Churches that are close to the vicinity of Native American reservations must pay special attention to abusive situations in some of the Native American Reservations. Some of the 100 mission ideas can be very helpful (substance abuse, anger management, parenting skills, job skills, etc.)

### **88. Shelter for the elderly**

**Need:** Of the 684,000 older American homeowners in delinquency, 50,000 were in foreclosure or had already lost their homes.<sup>37</sup> These people are at risk of being homeless. The rate of homeless elderly population has gone up and many elderly end up sleeping in cars, RVs.

The Seattle Times one day carried an article stating, *“Usually because they can’t afford rent, many live in cars, trucks and RVs and pray they aren’t ordered to move on. We are seeing more elderly people living out their final years on the streets”* (Seattle Times, April; 8, 2009). What kind of society is this that puts children, veterans, elderly and sick people on streets?

---

<sup>37</sup> September 08 – National Low Income Coalition for the Homeless)

We are walking into an era of aging. Researchers predict that the next homeless population will be older people. Increased homelessness and an increased risk of being homeless among elderly persons is largely the result of the declining availability of affordable housing and increased poverty among a certain segment of the aging.

We have already begun to see more older people show up on the streets or at shelters. I have seen chronically homeless older women who move around from shelter to shelter or city to city. When they are fragile and old, they can easily be exploited and abused by tough younger homeless women. Many elderly have chronic health problems. Therefore, the need of shelter for older persons is as crucial as the need of shelters for children. Both of them are very vulnerable populations. **Mission:** Churches can use one room to welcome these fragile homeless elderly. This shelter must accompany nutrition programs and health care services, including dental care. Churches must also help them to apply for low-income housing for the elderly. While they wait for their turn, a shelter at a church would be of great assistance to them. Some of the 100 mission ideas can be done also with the elderly population.

#### **89. Shelter for emergency**

**Need:** National statistics and most shelters throughout the nation report that they see more and more people becoming homeless, especially women with children. A study of homelessness in 50 cities found that in virtually every city, the city's official estimated number of homeless people greatly exceeded the number of emergency shelter and transitional housing spaces.<sup>38</sup> Moreover, there are few or no shelters in rural areas of the United States, despite significant levels of homelessness (Brown, 2002). The Council for Affordable and Rural Housing estimates that about nine percent of the nation's homeless are in rural areas.<sup>39</sup>

It takes over five years to find a low-income apartment. Usually people need some place to sleep "tonight," but often it is hard, especially for women with children, to find a place to sleep. In 1996, 50% of the requests for emergency shelter in Nashville and 41% in Phoenix were not met. This is a national trend. The urgent need for more emergency shelters is great although they are not the final

---

<sup>38</sup> National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty, 2004).

<sup>39</sup> The Council for Affordable and Rural Housing.

solution but to meet immediate needs while they look for transitional or permanent housing.

Emergency shelter is usually a short-term crisis-oriented housing service, offering little attention to the long-term needs of the individual. Many emergency shelters limit stays to 30 days. In many cases the structure of emergency shelters makes it difficult, if not impossible, for residents to work toward stabilization, since sheltering is for a short time and support services are minimal. However, some emergency services do more than crisis housing.

In the area I live (Lynnwood, Washington) there are no emergency shelters except one shelter for single women with children. Therefore, it is difficult and frustrate us for not finding emergency shelters. We feel very helpless. Several area churches are willing to open up a shelter in winter but local city government wouldn't allow them to do so because their old church buildings do not have sprinkler system. It is for safety but city officials do not seem to pay attention to the safety of homeless people who sleep outdoors. Recently two men died during their sleep in the park.

**Mission:** In many cities, quite a few churches are offering emergency shelters in church buildings either on an ongoing or rotating basis - in the basement, social hall, Sunday School rooms, whole top floor, or even in the sanctuary - for homeless individuals or families with children.

If one church cannot operate an emergency shelter alone, then invite other churches to join. Some churches take turns on a weekly basis. The church that does not run a shelter can provide volunteers and food for that week, or these tasks may also be shared among different churches. This way, there is a shelter somewhere every night, and every church experiences running a shelter and comes into direct contact with homeless people, learning more about them and knowing them better.

Some social service agencies work with churches to operate "overflow shelters" for those who don't find beds in emergency shelters. While homeless people are at the church, the shelter program can put to use any one or more of these100 ways. As soon as shelter space is offered, the church needs to help the homeless person/family to find transitional housing or permanent housing so that emergency shelters at churches are only short term and temporary.



## **90. Shelter for ex-prisoners**

**Need:** Men and women are often discharged from prisons back into the community with no housing or job arrangement. They are homeless from day one that they came back to society. As a volunteer chaplain at the women's prison in the state of Washington, I observed that the prison system does its best to rehabilitate female prison inmates to enable them to adjust to society when they are released. However, these homeless men and women struggle to get into permanent housing as their past criminal history becomes an obstacle in their reference for housing. Their dreams and motivation to start a new life usually goes down the drain when they end up on the streets again with those who caused them to be incarcerated in the first place. Disappointment and a sense of helplessness lead them back to drugs, alcohol and shoplifting and they experience the revolving door syndrome, often going back to prison.

Unless society accepts them with housing and helps them with rehabilitation skills and motivation to be productive citizens, we as a society are failing them and thus perpetuating the destructive behaviors and lifestyles these people want to end. Homeless people with criminal histories belong to a group with special needs. They can get into shelters like everyone else because shelters accept them. They are tough enough to handle the shelter situation. But for permanent housing they have a trouble because of their history. For this group, like other groups with special housing needs are great from the beginning of their release until they settle down in permanent housing. They do not experience “the second chance” as government want them to.

**Mission:** While we work with public policy-makers to develop better programs for ex-prisoners when they are released from prison, a congregation could provide permanent housing by renting or purchasing one themselves or with other churches. These women and men need not only housing, but also continuous rehabilitation and support until they adjust to the community. The church's involvement with this community would mean more than meeting their physical needs, but also emotional and spiritual needs, so that their life can be transformed in God's love that is shared by a church. Once you start a program, then you can add some of the 100 mission ideas.

## **91. Shelter for families**

**Need:** As I reported in Volume one No 2, according to National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH), every year, 600,000 families experience homelessness in the U.S. Families are the fastest growing segment of the homeless population, primarily comprised of single mothers with children. The average age of a homeless person is 9 years old. According to The National Center on Family Homelessness (NCFH), on a single night count in January 2012, 62 percent of all homeless were persons in families. 64 percent of the cities surveyed reported an increase in family homelessness. Most attributed the increase to economic factors, including high unemployment and the lack of affordable housing. 44 percent of the cities surveyed observed an increase in the number of employed persons who were homeless. Survey results suggest that for most people, homelessness is a result of a short-term crisis rather than a way of life.

There are shelters for single women and children although we don't have enough of them. But shelters for families are scarce in these days.

How we treat our poor children tells us what kind of a future we will have as a nation. Although there are some shelters and programs for children, the need for safe, supervised and caring shelters is great and the resources are scarce. Women with children wandering on the street are exposed to real dangers of assault, robbery, rape or even murder. The need for shelter, especially for these women, is great because it takes so long to get into a Section 8 housing program.

**Mission:** A church can use one large room, or the whole floors or several rooms for a shelter for a mother and children including fathers. For their privacy of each family partition must be used. A United Methodist Church in Columbus, OH did this. They used a fireside room for children's play room. Church children came and joined the homeless children to play, which was very educational for homed children and homeless children grew up as normal as the church children. It was beneficial for both groups. Madrona Presbyterian Church in Seattle opened up the whole basement and used partitions to make walls between units for each family. There is a shower, kitchenette, toilets, washer and dryers. During the day, they are picked up by Mary's Place, a local social service program and spend the day

there receiving necessary services including search for housing while children were in school.

It is doable and can be collaborated with local program. But if this is not possible, and children are not able to go to school, then the family shelter should offer a tutoring program at their grade and age levels along with counseling, so that these poor young children have the opportunity to overcome the trauma and stress they are going through and keep up with their education. The shelter might work with schools so that they can go back to school or bring a schoolteacher or experienced church volunteer in to teach these homeless children.

One of the ways to publicize the shelter at the church is through the existing local shelters and social service agencies. They will be glad to have extra space at the church. If the distance is short, they can walk to the church. If it is not within walking distance, women can use public transportation. Some churches transport the women by a van because it is almost impossible for the whole family with their belongings and babies to get on the bus and often times transfer or walk some distance to get to the church.

It would be nice for the church to offer a simple snack or supper when they arrive. It would be very helpful if the church could offer a washer, dryer, and shower so that the families can clean themselves up or wash their bedding or clothes, always under the supervision of the church volunteers. Many churches that operate shelters do not have showers or washers and dryers. Therefore, it is optional.

I am quoting "What is solution"? - Letter to the Editor; Washington Post: 02/07/2014:

Nationwide, impacts of the recession, foreclosure crisis, inadequate wages, and entrenched unemployment have challenged families who were at the lowest levels of the socioeconomic scale even before the recession. The resulting increase in family homelessness in the nation's capital should not be surprising, as families who previously were able to maintain stable housing are now often failing to do so, no matter how hard they work nor how hard they try. Over-burdened homeless services systems cannot keep up with the increasing need, and families already in the system cannot leave because of the lack of affordable housing. Recognizing that "stable housing" provides the vital base for successful engagement with mainstream systems (including education, child and family services, healthcare and mental healthcare, and workforce development, to name a few), helping families maintain housing they currently have and facilitating access to affordable housing for those who have no home, should be given a new priority at federal, state, and local levels. We support rental assistance vouchers, which we know prevent and end homelessness, as well as funding the National Housing Trust Fund to provide more housing for the lowest income people. The fix is alarmingly quite simple.<sup>40</sup>

## **92. Shelter for Farm Workers**

**Need:** While the United States is the nation with high technology and many people develop high-level skills and earn a good living, there are people who struggle in occupations that have unrecognized monetary value as related to our lives. These are the farm workers, who are willing to work anywhere to make ends met. This occupation includes families of racial and ethnic minorities, white folks, poor homeless people coming from all over the country to harvest the fruits and vegetables during the summer season. Many workers who harvest these crops are recruited from Mexico for the season or are transient workers. Because of inadequate living conditions for these workers, very often they end up on campgrounds, living out of their cars or in substandard shelters. As the Seattle Times featured article, August 2, 1998, lamented, they live in Third World conditions in unlicensed farm worker camps! With no refrigeration the families resort to primitive ways of keeping food. They use inadequate toilet facilities causing pollution and they live in overcrowded housing conditions. Housing is expensive to the grower. Rather than building housing, the grower is destroying what housing he/she provided. Then workers are on their own to find shelter. This is another homeless population in this affluent country.

Figures tell us that out of one dollar, the grower's labor costs, including the farm worker is 4.6 cents, plus the grower gets 7.9 cents; packing house labor costs 4.75 cents, plus 7.75 cents for the fruit packing house. The retailer and wholesaler get 75 cents. Although these figures are subject to change as years go by but show us intolerable disparity between farm worker and wholesaler. It is unforgivable exploitation of the poor.

The farm laborer's earnings are so meager that they can't afford to rent a regular apartment, for which they have to sign the lease, pay the deposit for the first and last month, and pay the monthly high rent. Retailers and wholesalers make most of the profits, and we eat fresh vegetables and fruits at the cost of the work and sweat of those farm workers. Do we realize we enjoy the fruits of

---

<sup>40</sup> Ruth White. National Center for Housing and Child Welfare. ruthwhite10@gmail.com

exploitation and sweat and tears of farm workers? Don't we all share the responsibility? Unfortunately this is often a political hot potato. What does the Christian conscience say about such an exploitation?

**Mission:** This is an excellent opportunity for many rural churches to use their “one room” as a temporary house for these farm workers and their families. The least we can do is to open up just one room for them. If one church cannot do it alone, several churches can gather energy together and share the burden.

This will be also an excellent opportunity for many suburban churches to join in and support the housing program for those farm workers. Since farm workers have some meager earnings, they can share the cost for food. Rural and suburban churches might work with Habitat for Humanity to build temporary housing for them. This also can be a good project for the summer youth camps of many churches.

### **93. Shelter for Pregnant Women**

**Needs:** The needs of pregnant women are different from non-pregnant women. Especially pregnant teenagers have a worse time finding a place to go and easily victimized in streets and even in shelter system. Homelessness for this group becomes a serious and urgent problem. Physically they feel more fatigue and need to lie down often; many of them also suffer from morning sickness and cannot eat certain foods. Emotionally they need more and different kinds of support because they experience extra loneliness in an absence of the baby's father or family support. They also need a different kind supportive counseling including how to deal with baby in their homeless life.

**Mission:** Churches may offer a program to meet the needs of pregnant women in one of their rooms including a housing for them. Churches can offer prenatal care which could include not only physical nurturing but emotional and spiritual nurture for the mother and fetus together. Churches can meet their particular dietary needs in an early phase of pregnancy as well as in their later stages. Churches can help the mother plan for her future, education, jobs, job training and any other needs. Churches can also offer counseling for possible adoption if the mother's homelessness or emotional problems will prevent her from raising a child. All of these can be done in coordination with local agency that deals with the issue. Local agencies will be more than happy to have partnership with the church and it will also be helpful for the church if mission is done together with agencies.

### **94. Shelter for Prostitution Victims**

**Need:** Among the significant number of homeless teens on the street there are many who have been reduced by circumstances to prostitution. The most common is called ‘survival sex.’ Typically, a person will offer a homeless youth a place to stay and expect sexual activity in return. Sometimes the teen is not aware of the arrangement until after they’ve stayed with a person for a few days or weeks. This form of predatory behavior is not confined to targeting the female gender. Homeless males find themselves being pushed into these compromising situations as well: Lack of resources can drive people to desperate measures. Add in the possibility of mental health or substance abuse issues, and the situation gets rapidly worse. When you don’t know where your next meal is coming from it become easier to rationalize things like this. The escalating harshness of life on the streets over the recent years is also a factor. Young homeless girls in particular are at risk of rape, assault, and descent into prostitution. Without the normal support infrastructure provided by family and friends their vulnerability escalates.<sup>41</sup>

As mentioned above, often many homeless women, not just young girls and boys, turn to prostitution for survival. Sometimes some of them cannot make healthy judgments, and follow anyone who offers a place to stay with food or some allowance. Then they are often abused physically, emotionally or sexually. Homeless women confessed to me that once she falls into the life of

---

<sup>41</sup> Laura Rillos, KVAL News, reports: [Chris] Mirabal [program manager of Looking Glass New Roads, a day shelter dedicated to homeless youth]

prostitution, it becomes a habit and is hard for her to get out of the habit. Many of these women are trainable if job training is offered. They can find a new life with support, counseling and a safe place to live. Their needs are very unique and need special attention.

**Mission:** Churches can work with other agencies that are working with this particular population. Or churches can open a room or church-owned house or parsonage to be used as a home for this population. To help them to be freed from this life style, there should be a housing, daily needs met, and heavy counseling offered. For a career change, new job training must be offered also. Church members can be mentors for them to follow in developing a new lifestyle. Amateur case management services can also be offered by church members. This group will benefit from some of the 100 mission ideas also.

### **95. Shelter for Respite Beds**

**Need:** Men and women who are mentally or physically ill, injured, or being discharged from hospitals have no place to lie down to rest and recuperate. Often hospitals discharge homeless patients into the streets or to shelters if they can't find a bed. Many homeless people also get sick in the winter while basically living on the streets. They are exposed to cold weather and to the sicknesses of other people in crowded drop-in-centers or shelters. Their poor nutrition and personal hygiene along with their despair, anger and hopelessness all contribute to their illnesses. Walking daily on the cold streets, they get worse. Homelessness is bad enough, and being sick and having no place to rest is the worst thing that any human being can experience. They also feel depressed about the conditions they are in. It is depressing to sleep with hundred others in a shelter system or to live outside. It is depressing to have no choice in what to eat, what to wear and where to sleep. It is depressing to have lost everything they owned, including their own identity. It is depressing to become nobody from being somebody. It is depressing to be victims of poverty in an affluent nation. It is also scary to live on the street. Many of them quickly develop fear around people. Most shelters insist that men and women leave early in the morning and return in the evening. During the daytime those who are sick have to walk around the streets because a few existing respite beds are not enough to accommodate all those who are sick on the streets. Yet the bad thing is that they are not sick enough to be hospitalized and not well enough to tolerate street life.

**Mission:** Most of us experience to lie down and feel good when we are sick. Churches can set up a few beds in one room for ill homeless. Volunteers can look after them with good food and care. Church volunteers can take them to doctors or clinics to be examined and treated. If the congregation has doctors and nurses, they can offer help. Those with broken bones will take longer care than those with only a simple cold. Hospitals don't keep those with broken bones except severe cases. Once I broke my ankle in my parking lot. Medic picked me up and transported me to emergency room in my area. After binding, and given crutches and with pain pills I was sent home with an appointment to come back for a cast to put on. First day I couldn't even walk on a crutch and kept falling down. Had I not have a home how would I function on the street. This happens a lot to homeless people. I had a homeless man who had hernia surgery. As soon as he woke up from anesthesia he was told to leave the hospital. He was carrying many bags. What does he do with his bags and his sick body? Those of us who have homes wouldn't be able to imagine what that will be like.

Recent years the Nest Mission put these sick homeless people in motel rooms with some food. I frequently visited them. When needed, as the last resort, I assigned another homeless person to stay with and care for the sick person because we don't have a nurse and I can't be there all the time. Our Nest Mission still does that from a few days to a couple of months depending on the level of sickness. Churches have many rooms. How wonderful if they could open one room and help the sick homeless to lay their sick body down and rest.

### **96. Shelter for Substance-Addicted Women and Men**

**Need:** I have seen many homeless women and men who kept going in and out of treatment centers for their substance abuse and addiction but they continuously relapsed, especially when they did not have a place to live. Treatment without housing won't be effective. And housing without treatment and after-care service won't work either. There are many substance abusing men and women in the homeless population who are able to work if they receive long enough treatment and if they can stop abusing substances. They need help with this. They can't do it on their own. Leaving them on the streets only make their substance abusing behavior worse, not better. They need temporary beds somewhere until they get into permanent housing. Only housing in secured environment will help them motivate to stop substance abuse but with treatment and not without it.

**Mission:** Churches may develop permanent housing for this group. Churches can cooperate with community substance treatment programs in developing housing, support services, and mentor programs. Local treatment agencies would love to collaborate with churches. Even temporary shelter in one of the church rooms will be of great help. Partnership of the church and treatment agency will be effective in helping these people because churches have resources that treatment agencies don't have. The treatment agencies have skill that churches don't have. However, the two put what they have together and will bring tremendous miracle to homeless substance addicted people.

### **97. Shelter: Transitional Housing**

**Need:** Contrast to emergency housing, transitional housing is longer term. While emergency housing allows homeless individuals or families to stay up to 30 days, transitional housing allows up to two years. For singles or mothers with children who are staying at an emergency shelter, usually it is very hard to find transitional or permanent housing within three months. Thus, they have to move around from shelter to shelter. Often there is no transitional shelter or permanent housing to move to. It becomes quite devastating when they have young children. Some agencies put them in a motel room for a few nights or a week in an emergency. In contrast to emergency shelters, transitional programs are a smaller-scale, offer a greater degree of privacy, and expect active participation by residents with concrete goals to achieve. The duration of a stay ranges from 6 months to 2 years.

Professionals operating shelters begin to feel that we need to build more transitional housing, instead of emergency short-term shelters. The longer they stay at transitional housing allows women more time to find schools, job training, jobs and permanent housing. And children can enroll school and have a steady attendance and build longer relationship than emergency shelters. It also allows transitional housing staff more time to work with homeless individuals or families while they resolve life issues and settle down in independent life. Although neither emergency shelter nor transitional housing are answers to end homelessness for individuals or families. But they are desperately needed temporary residence for the homeless to stay until find a permanent housing from their long waiting.

**Mission:** A church may open one room or one floor for one family or a few families for a longer period until they find permanent housing. Families have different needs from the singles. Keeping more than one family in one room might not work as each family needs privacy. Some churches open a whole floor or a few Sunday school classrooms and use office partitions to create a private room for the families. Some churches use church-owned parsonages or a house if they own one as transitional housing for women with children. Several churches may choose a site at a certain church facility or at other space in the neighborhood and manage such housing together. Existing shelters in the area will help to set it up if you ask for assistance.

### **98. Social Support System**

**Need:** Homeless people in general have little social support system most of their life because many were reared in broken homes or by mentally disabled parental figures who were often involved with substance abuse, and also abuse of their children. The homeless youth in particular often are abused children or thrown out of home by their parents. Therefore, not only youngsters but also most homeless adults don't have social support system.

According to medical research - Haefen, et al – social support can come from good relationships with family members, good friendship, professional associates, and members of the church congregation, neighbors, people who belong to the same bowling league or bridge club, the presence of people we know we can lean on. These are the people one associate and to whom one could turn in time of need:

Social support enhances health and well-being. The enhancement may result from an overall positive feeling and a sense of self-esteem, stability, and control over one's environment. Social support acts as a buffer against stress by protecting a person from the diseases that stress often causes. Strong social network and healthy social ties gradually lead to a greater, more generalized sense of control. A sense of control improves and protects health, whereas a feeling of little control can have serious health consequences. Social support - play an important part in our good health. Social support not only reduced mortality, but was a key in protecting health as well - individual's health and longevity. Research reports that strong social support can be shown to reduce complications in pregnancy, aid in recovery from surgery, reduce the need for medications in some chronic illness, combat the symptoms of stress, protect against a variety of emotional and psychological problems. The mandate to "Love your neighbor as you love yourself" is not just a moral mandate. It's a physiological mandate. Caring is biological. One thing you get from caring for others is you're not lonely. Positive personal relationship with others is our safety-network.<sup>42</sup>

Therefore, we all and the homeless people in particular need social support system. It will lead them to ending their homelessness.

**Need:** Whereas these homeless lost all of their social support, whereas the society they are born into and the church, religious groups in particular that preach love all failed to be their social support, I dare urge Christian churches and other religious entities to repent and open our hearts, space in our church, share our abundant blessings, and create social support system for the homeless – by setting up a shelter or by developing a few mission program out of my 100 ways – thus associate with them in genuine love, care and loving discipline, and accept and embrace them as emotional and spiritual family members. Restoration of their social support system would not be created by lectures and classes but by positive and loving relationship with caring people. Then they can slowly recover from their past wounds, loneliness, despair, hopelessness, helplessness to whole persons.

### **99. Special Events Celebration**

**Need:** Homelessness is a life of loneliness. Homeless people experience more loneliness on their birthdays and special occasions, such as New Year's Day, Easter, Mother's Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas. These are days of depression and guilt because many were rejected and abandoned by their loved ones and many lost their children through the State's Child Protective Service either because they could not physically/emotionally care for them or just because they are homeless.

**Mission:** Churches could have a Birthday party for homeless men, women and children. Include homeless people in your special church events on the dates indicated above. Some of them might not want to mingle with "clean and wealthy people" and it might be a good idea to prepare a party just for them. Let the shelters and day centers know about your plans and ask for help. Transport them to and from your church.

For gifts, discuss the needs with the shelter or day center staff so that you would not get things they cannot use or what they get too often, such as toiletry bags, socks etc. Don't give winter clothes in summer because they have no place to keep them. Don't give large heavy item because they can't carry it in their backpack. Our Nest Mission celebrate their birthdays on monthly basis with cake, candle light and gift cards or underwear or non-perishable nutrition bars, or special item by their request in advance. Nobody including themselves remember their birthdays because no need to

---

<sup>42</sup> Haefen, Karren, Frandsen & Smith, *Mind/Body Health* (Boston: A Simon & Schuster Co.,1996), 263-268.



remember them, no one ever celebrate them. As I mentioned already in No. 15, our Christmas gift for them is 3 nights stay at motel.

#### **100. Storage service**

**Need:** While people are homeless, there is no place for them to store their belongings. It is extremely difficult for the homeless, women in particular to carry heavy bags since they walk a lot or use public transportation. When they leave their bags at drop-in-centers, they are often stolen. To rent storage space costs money. When homeless people come into town they can't go anywhere or do anything with their luggage. Often they end up storing luggage at the Greyhound Bus terminal. Then storage fees go up on a daily basis. Pretty soon, the fee amounts to an unaffordable figure. They end up losing their bags because of delinquent payments.

Many men and women end up carrying many bags. Numerous homeless women have pains in their back, shoulder or in their knees, which are very likely developed by carrying too heavy bags. Many damage their body by carrying heavy bags. For homeless women and men their luggage or bags become unbearable burdens on top of the stress of being homeless.

**Mission:** I have seen some churches that build storage bins in one room; or place wooden storage boxes in one room; or place an old-fashioned trunk with a lock by each bed. The church can install storage boxes in any of the above styles. Each woman or man locks up her/her own valuables and keeps her/his own keys. Church volunteer monitor to get things in and out of their boxes. It will be wise to set a date for them to come in to place or take things out unless some volunteer is willing to be there on daily basis – at least weekly basis. The risk for the church will be keeping bags occupying the space for an indefinite time period because some women/men might disappear and never come back to claim their belongings. Professional storage businesses have strict rules on discarding items or putting them on auction when they do not show up or do not pay in a certain time period. They sell items to pay for the delinquency. However, for the church to keep their bags will be lessening their heavy burden. It is a very needed service and doable also.

#### **101. Youth Addiction and Mission**

**Need:** In our times we have more problems with youth, their addictions and homelessness. It is such a serious and large issue that I struggled to find a place to put the issue in this group of 100 mission ideas. So I put this under the title, “Youth Addiction and Mission.”

In our times, it is heart-breaking to see so many youth are running away from their homes. They are the ones who should be growing up in a warm and tenderly caring home of dearly loving parents. Instead, they are on the streets and suffer in the tough street life and further abused by cold-blooded adults of our society. As I am writing their stories I experience heart-ache. We the grown-ups, citizens, Christians, churches and government all together are gravely responsible for this outcome; where our youngsters ended up today.

We often hear that there is little chance for this age group (17 and younger) to find a place to sleep because agencies are not allowed to keep them without parental approval, as they are minors. Some of them are not wanted by parents. Often kids don't want to contact their parents for approval claiming that they ran from abusive environment. Abuse is not just physical assault but includes a lack of love, hostility, neglect, emotional and sexual abuse, unhealthy environment with drugs, alcohol and fights around, all of which are called a home of one or two parents or parental figures. If they don't get help, they can be further hurt and exploited in street life by the older homeless youth and homed or homeless adults. Neither their home nor street is a place to put their feet down. They belong nowhere. Their body and soul wander around nowhere. I might quote here more disturbing, heart-breaking, and soul crushing stories of their substance abuse.

Hal Joseph Recinos, professor of theology, culture and Urban Ministry at Wesley Theological Seminary claimed the following shocking points: Nearly 20% of innocent infants in America born in city hospitals are substance addicted.<sup>43</sup>

Research by CASAColumbia reports the following disturbing findings:

More than 90% of people with addiction began smoking, drinking or using other drugs before age 18. Three-quarters of high school students have used addictive substances, including cigarettes, alcohol, marijuana or cocaine. 46% of all high school students currently use addictive substances, and 12% meet the clinical criteria for addiction. 90% of Americans who meet the medical criteria for addiction started smoking, drinking or using other drugs before age 18. 1 in 4 Americans who began using any addictive substance before age 18 are addicted, compared to 1 in 25 who started using at age 21 or older.

This study also identified the risk factors for teen substance use and addiction, including genetics, family history, psychological factors and environmental factors, and examined how American culture—specifically, messages sent by adults, as well as the media’s glamorization of smoking, drinking and other drug use—normalizes teen substance use and ultimately undermines the health and future of teens nationwide.

Addiction involves changes in the structure and function of the brain, which can result in compulsive substance use. These changes in the brain may be brought on by risky substance use or may pre-exist. Disease model: Like heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes and asthma, addiction has specific risk factors and, if not effectively treated, can lead to other illnesses and even death. Long-term use can also dramatically affect judgment and behavior. In some cases, it can drive a compulsion to obtain and use nicotine, alcohol or other drugs, even when the individual knows the consequences are harmful or dangerous. These changes in the brain can remain even after the person stops using substances. These changes leave those with addiction vulnerable to physical and environmental cues that they associate with substance use, also known as triggers, which can increase their risk of relapse.

**Cost:** Teen substance use or addiction is the origin of the largest preventable and most costly public health problem in America today. Immediate costs per year of teen use include an estimated \$68 billion associated with underage drinking and \$14.4 billion in substance-related juvenile justice programs each year. Total costs to federal, state and local governments of substance use, which usually has its roots in adolescence, are at least \$468 billion per year—almost \$1,500 for every person in America. Each year federal, state and local governments spend close to \$500 billion on addiction and risky substance use, but for every dollar that federal and state governments spend, only 2 cents goes to prevention and treatment.<sup>44</sup>

Alcohol is the substance abused most frequently by adolescents, followed by marijuana and tobacco. In the past month, 40 percent of high school seniors reported drinking some alcohol, almost 15 percent of adolescents abused marijuana, and 13 percent of adolescents reported smoking cigarettes.<sup>45</sup>

---

<sup>43</sup> Source: Sojourner – May-June 2003.

<sup>44</sup> CASAColumbia. 633 Third Avenue, 19th Floor, New York, NY 10017. [www.casacolumbia.org](http://www.casacolumbia.org). Published online: June 2011. ([A Note on the Language](#): In 2012, CASAColumbia stopped using words like “drug abuse”/“drug abuser” because the terms are imprecise and have negative connotations. Instead, we now distinguish between “addiction” (clinical criteria for the disease) and “risky use” (use of addictive substances in ways that increase the risk of harm but do not meet criteria for addiction). Some reports and other publications published prior to 2012 still contain this language).

<sup>45</sup> Office of Adolescent Health. Department of Health and Human Services. Office of the Secretary. Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health. 1101 Wootton Parkway, Suite 700. Rockville, MD 20852. Phone: (240) 453-2846. Email: [oah.gov@hhs.gov](mailto:oah.gov@hhs.gov)

After leaving home many homeless adolescents find that exchanging sex for food, clothing and shelter is their only alternative for survival on the streets. Without help, these youngsters will be profoundly damaged and are more likely to become the next generation of homeless adults. Therefore, this group has its own special needs different from adults because they are the most vulnerable people. What can the citizens, the church and government do for them? If we don't do anything they will grow into adult body with teen-ager mind, mentality and behavior which will be destructive forces for all of us.

**Mission:** From above reports we learned that people who are addicted to substances didn't appear suddenly from nowhere. Many of them started out from their mother's womb and some in adolescent stage and yet others in adult ages. Therefore, whether it's alcohol or some other drugs, a large percentage – 25% -30% of homeless people experience addiction. Many of them never received help and stay under the influence of their addiction. Thus, rates of alcohol and drug abuse are disproportionately high among the homeless population. These people have more difficulties to get out of homelessness.

What can we do as the church mission? Since problem is so enormous that it can easily overwhelm us. But as CASA Columbia recommends; 1) it is essential for the church to educate the congregations that teen substance use is a public health problem and that addiction is a complex brain disease that, in most cases, originates in adolescence. Therefore, it is crucial that churches must be educated on this issue in order to be motivated to do something. 2) Churches must intervene by urging our health systems to prevent or delay the onset of substance use through effective public health measures. Routine screenings should be conducted by health care providers to identify at-risk teens. Once these teens are identified, health care providers must intervene to reduce risky use and provide appropriate treatment if needed.<sup>46</sup> 3) We as the church must be involved in advocacy by talking to our local and national government leaders to carry out the recommendations. 4) The church needs to be in partnership with local drug treatment programs because the church is not trained to be treatment agency. There are many such agencies but not enough. They need citizen's and church's support. Once you establish partnership with them, they will tell you what the church can do. I had seen residential treatment facility for which churches provided daily necessities, fixed up rooms and beddings, and provided food, clothes and supplies for mothers as well as children's education and many other support services. At times the local treatment agencies need rooms of the church. There is a chance for the church to open one or more rooms for them.

In relation to the law that these youngsters must be sent back home. When they refuse to go home, society must find a way to help them. Law should not send the abused teenagers back to abusive situations. This is policy issue and professional agencies should work this out with lawmakers. Church should intervene to change such an unworkable laws. Churches must be able to help these children without being sent back home. Church must be able to offer them a safe place to sleep so that they don't fall into prostitution. Youngsters and parents both need counseling or treatment. And then, the church needs to work things out in a collaborative effort with social service agencies, such as Family and Children's Services. On the other hand, church volunteers must work with this age group to be guided to a positive solution. In order to achieve this goal, volunteers must be educated also.

Many youngsters have a trust problem with adults due to their past abuse by parental figures. They won't come to an agency or to church to receive help. Outreach can be a good way to reach

---

<sup>46</sup> **CASAColumbia.** 633 Third Avenue, 19th Floor, New York, NY 10017. [www.casacolumbia.org](http://www.casacolumbia.org). Published online: June 2011. (**A Note on the Language:** In 2012, CASAColumbia stopped using words like “drug abuse”/“drug abuser” because the terms are imprecise and have negative connotations. Instead, we now distinguish between “addiction” (clinical criteria for the disease) and “risky use” (use of addictive substances in ways that increase the risk of harm but do not meet criteria for addiction). Some reports and other publications published prior to 2012 still contain this language).

them. Church volunteers can reach out to them with the basic daily necessities, such as food, clothes and hygiene kits, without asking too many questions. You may take them out to lunch. Just provide love and care for a while until the youngsters open up and trust you.

After meeting immediate needs first with a room and board, churches must offer opportunities for these youth to continue with their education (GED or college), job training and employment, transitional living programs, permanent housing and health care.

## **102. Substance Treatment Mission**

**Needs:** It is known fact that approximately 25-30% of homeless people are substance abusing or addicted. According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA's) National Survey on Drug use and Health, 23.5 million people 12 years of age and older needed treatment for an illicit drug or alcohol abuse problem in 2009. Of these individuals, only 2.6 million – 11.2 percent – only received treatment at a specialty facility. Increasing drug and alcohol abuse is a dangerous trend in the United States. According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, nearly 2.1 million hospital Emergency Department visits in 2009 were the result of drug abuse. Alcoholism and alcohol abuse are among the most common, devastating, and costly problems in the United States. In fact, recent studies have shown that approximately 53 percent of adults in the United States have reported that one or more of their close relatives has a drinking problem. U.S. alcohol statistics reveal that approximately 50,000 cases of alcohol overdose are reported each year. In 2009, an estimated 30.2 million people 12 or older reported driving under the influence of alcohol at least once in the past year.<sup>47</sup>

American Psychological Association reports: Prevalence rates of Alcohol, Drug, Mental disorders are much higher in homeless groups than in the general population. As is true of homeless people in general, homeless substance abusers and mentally ill persons are characterized by extreme poverty; underutilization of public entitlements; isolation from family, friends, and other support networks; frequent contact with correctional agencies; and poor general health. Knowledge of these disadvantages should be used to advocate for better services to prevent homelessness and support homeless people.<sup>48</sup> According to American Journal of Public Health, Participants in the Housing First program were able to obtain and maintain independent housing without compromising psychiatric or substance abuse symptoms.<sup>49</sup>

Rather than wait for help from the government, individuals are urged to fight back against drug addiction at the “home level.” That means, anyone who has a friend, family member or loved one who is struggling with drug addiction needs to get them into an [addiction treatment](#) program so that they can receive the proper care required to defeat the problem: Michael's House is crying out: The story of Michael goes like this:

A child of privilege, Michael Rosen grew up in Bel Air, CA., and graduated from Beverly Hills High before becoming a racecar driver. He was handsome and outgoing—and a drug addict. At the age of only 25, Michael was found dead in a hotel room in the Fiji Islands. Michael's House opened its doors in 1989 [in Palm Springs, CA] as a mother's response to her son's drug addiction and subsequent death. Far from an emotional reaction, though, Arlene Rosen put a lot of thought into the type of treatment center she wanted to lend her son's name to and pursued the professional expertise to make it successful. Already holding a Master's degree in psychology, Rosen took courses at other treatment facilities and went back to school to study marketing. She also pulled from her experience living with a drug addict. What she didn't know, she picked up along the way, growing into the role.<sup>50</sup>

---

<sup>47</sup> National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIH) <http://www.nida.nih.gov/Infofacts/nationtrends.html>. Online source.

<sup>48</sup> PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2013 APA (American Psychological Association).

<sup>49</sup> <http://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/abs/10.2105/AJPH.94.4.651>

<sup>50</sup> Michael's House, Palm Springs, CA. 877-345-8494.

The National Coalition for the Homeless survey report covers the results of 182 homeless men and women respondents that were a random sample of the over 700 homeless people attending the Homeless Connect event. The three-fold goals of the survey are:

Educate policymakers, including the Mayor, City Council, Board of Supervisors and members of the Ending Chronic Homelessness Policy Board and Interagency Council to break down the stereotypes of homeless people as well as educate them about the work skills homeless people possess as well as the barriers that keep them from working; 2) Use the results of the survey to help inform the agencies that work with homeless people to change or expand their employment services to homeless people to better meet their needs; 3) Use the results of the survey to help inform the ECHI in its next iteration of the “10-Year Plan to End Homelessness” to include employment and income recommendations as part of a holistic approach to end and prevent homelessness in the Sacramento region.

**Key findings: Top 10 findings include: Demographics:** 1) **69% were between the ages of 21-50** with 30% over the age of 50; 60% were people of color with the largest percentage being African-American [25%]; 60% male and 40% female; 2) **70% stated several economic reasons** why they were homeless - 38.9% had insufficient income and 31.1% lost their job; while over one quarter [26.1%] stated a disability contributed to their homelessness. 3) **Over 40% were homeless** for more than two years while one-third [29.5%] were homeless for six months or less;

**1)** Over 90% were not currently working, however, 87.4% wanted to work either full [70.9% of this total] or part time [20% of this total]; 2) Nearly 60% needed accommodations for their disabilities in order to work either full or part time; 3) Barriers to work: Almost 65% cited either a disability [37.6%] or health issue [37.3%] as significant barriers to work; 60% stated they could not find work or had given up looking; 43% cited a combination of lack of training and education as barriers to work; over 40% indicated that being homeless was a major barrier; 40% indicated lack of appropriate clothing and/or appearance was a barrier; while one third [30%] stated lack of transportation was a barrier to finding work; 4) Job Skills: 40% of those surveyed had a license or certificate for their job skill. Over 40% of the homeless respondents had job skills in either warehouse; while over a third had computer, hospitality; construction and/or retail skills. This was reflected in the job sector they would prefer, with one quarter preferring to be employed in the construction, warehouse or the food service industry sector. 5) Education and Training: 81.3% stated they wanted to go back to school to receive additional training, with one half wanting to attend either a four-year college or technical school [27.7% and 22.6% respectively] and over one-third wanting to attend community college. 6) Agencies that were helpful: Homeless service agencies were the most helpful [22.4%]; one-third stated that the welfare office [Department of Human Assistance (DHA)] was helpful, divided between General Assistance [18.8%] and CalWORKs [14.3%] followed by the Social Security Administration [18%], and One-Stop Employment Centers [17.3%]. The Employment Development Department and Veterans Administration were the least helpful [14.5% and 10.3% respectively. [Note: we did not ask respondents a specific question about their veterans status.] 7) Reasons for lack of help: Several barriers to receiving employment assistance were noted. 31.6% indicated that they were denied services because they were homeless. 30.6% stated they were unaware of services available to homeless people, while about 25% stated lack of transportation was a major barrier to employment. Other

---

significant barriers included being disabled or having a criminal background. Bureaucratic barriers included long waiting lists, red tape and lack of agency follow-up.<sup>51</sup>

**Mission:** The above survey result gives us some ideas what the church and faith-based communities can do. Let me introduce some of the recommendation made by the above survey team: 1) Expand permanent, affordable housing; 2) Expand free and/or affordable and accessible health care for homeless and low-income people [Obamacare is making this to happen]; 3) Launch an education and public relations campaign; 4) Increase education and training opportunities to homeless people; 5) Address disability issues; 6) Create a Mobile Employment Service Van; 7) Expand transportation opportunities; 8) Expand mail, email and voice mail services;<sup>52</sup>

Recommendation 3-8 can be done by churches in their own congregations. Some of them were already mentioned throughout the 100 mission ideas.

Churches and treatment agencies can establish partnership in treating homeless substance addicted. Churches can set up an outpatient program in one of their rooms by inviting professionals from treatment agencies. Another way is establishing a partnership between churches and treatment agency which accepts candidates who need substance treatment at a reasonable or reduced cost and the church assumes the discounted portion of the cost.

### **103. Transportation Service**

**Need:** Transportation is not only a problem for homeless people, but also for housed poor women who need to go to work, visit a doctor's office, go for an interview, or move to their residence. Many women are able to use public transportation, but quite often they do not have bus fare. According to the government's Workfirst welfare reform law, women found jobs, but often they could not go to work for they had no bus fare. Bus fare is very costly.

A welfare mother was hired for a job that required her to report to work by 6:00 a.m. The first bus available took her to work at 6:15 a.m., which was not acceptable to her employer. She was finally fired and dropped by the welfare system because she did not comply with the WorkFirst welfare reform law. She was blamed and punished for not having transportation. This situation can be same for homeless men as well.

**Mission:** A church may offer a ride under certain circumstances and at the availability of volunteers with cars. Vans or even small sedans are useful for that purpose. The church can transport employed women until they save up money and rent an apartment near their employment. A church also can offer a monthly bus pass or tokens for those who work or visit a doctor's office on a regular basis.

Churches can also purchase several bicycles and loan them to needy women and men if they can utilize them to go to work, shopping or to a doctor's office, etc. (Refer to 11: Bicycle Mission). Giving cash is not recommended. Two volunteers going together would be helpful when they transport people whom they do not know.

I used to transport homeless women and their luggage in my small station wagon for 4 years and in my van for another 3 years. I used to take them to events and to go shopping. I helped them move to new apartments. Without transportation the ministry would have been impossible. We live in a

---

<sup>51</sup> National Coalition for the Homeless: HOMELESS EMPLOYMENT REPORT: Findings and Recommendations: August, 2009 reported by Julia Acuña and Bob Erlenbusch

<sup>52</sup> National Coalition for the Homeless: HOMELESS EMPLOYMENT REPORT: Findings and Recommendations: August, 2009 reported by Julia Acuña and Bob Erlenbusch

country where things are so spread out that we cannot go anywhere on foot as we used to do in our old days. That's why transportation – cars – is called “our legs.”

#### **104. Volunteering**

**Need:** Contributions are not limited to a donation of money; we can also contribute by giving of your time and knowledge. There are many mission programs, homeless mission in particular. Most of all missions use volunteers who can contribute time and talent. Let me share the status of volunteering in the United States:

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that about 62.6 million people volunteered through or for an organization at least once between September 2012 and September 2013. The volunteer rate in 2013 was the lowest it has been since 2002. The volunteer rates for both men and women (22.2 percent and 28.4 percent, respectively) declined the year ending in September 2013. **Women** continued to volunteer at a higher rate than did men across all age groups, educational levels, and other major demographic characteristics. **By age, 35- to 44-year-olds** were most likely to volunteer (30.6 percent). Volunteer rates were lowest among 20- to 24-year-olds (18.5 percent). For persons 45 years and over, the volunteer rate tapered off as age increased. Teens (16- to 19-year-olds) had a volunteer rate of 26.2 percent. **Among the major race and ethnicity groups**, whites continued to volunteer at a higher rate (27.1 percent) than did blacks (18.5 percent), Asians (19.0 percent), and Hispanics (15.5 percent). **Married persons** volunteered at a higher rate (30.7 percent) in 2013 than did those who had never married (20.0 percent) and those with other marital statuses (20.5 percent). The rates declined over the year for each marital status category. In 2013, the volunteer rate of **parents with children under age 18** (32.9 percent) remained higher than the rate for persons without children (22.7 percent). **Individuals with higher levels of education** engaged in volunteer activities at higher rates than did those with less education in 2013. Among persons age 25 and over, 39.8 percent of college graduates volunteered, compared with 27.7 percent of persons with some college or an associate's degree, 16.7 percent of high school graduates, and 9.0 percent of those with less than a high school diploma. **Volunteers by Employment Status: Among employed persons**, 27.7 percent volunteered during the year ending in September 2013. By comparison, 24.1 percent of unemployed persons and 21.9 percent of those not in the labor force volunteered. Among **the employed, part-time workers** were more likely than full-time workers to have participated in volunteer activities--31.7 percent, compared with 26.8 percent.<sup>53</sup>

Volunteering will help expand our longevity with better physical and emotional health because giving time and talents and whatever is joyful experience. I mentioned the use of volunteers throughout this book.

#### **Mission:**

If we have no money to give, give your time, talent and knowledge. Most social service agencies cannot survive without volunteer's services. I have done 8-years- volunteer work for the Nest Mission (for the Homeless) up to this year (2014) as a volunteer minister/mental health/social worker. The mission saved much overhead cost this way and has been able to spend more funds on the needy poor/homeless.

Volunteers can do a variety of activities from mentoring, coaching a sports activity, directing a craft activities to preparing meals or preparing clothing donations for families, organize collection drives. Nest Mission has many volunteers filling in these duties. We have even volunteer music

---

<sup>53</sup> Source: United States Department of Labor; Bureau of Labor Statistics. Volunteering in the United States 2013. Posted on line 2/14/2014.

directors and volunteer preachers. We operated by all volunteers for 7 years and then hired a parttime staff.

### **105. Women's Support Group**

**Need:** When I say “women’s support group” I mean homeless women’s group. As I mentioned numerous times in the preceding pages on the plight of homeless women, they are in a unique situation. Many of them come from abusive background already –physically, emotionally, spiritually and/or sexually. In homeless life they have no one they can freely relate to. Since they are so lonely that they open up to homeless males but they are often exploited and abused physically and sexually. Women have their own need to raise self-esteem different from male’s to survive in such a tough and cruel homeless life. Therefore, they need their own support group at non-threatening environment where they can spend time with other women and relate to each other.

**Mission:** Church can open a room to welcome such a support group of homeless women. Church volunteers who are experienced in group facilitating skills can run the group. Or the church can invite one from local women’s shelter. Or church build partnership with local homeless programs and church provides necessary supports besides offering a room. Church can offer women’s outings, women’s worship or women’s bible study focusing on women’s faith and self-esteem.

### **106. Worship**

**Need:** lastly I include worship but not the least. It might be the most important for Christian organizations not that we impose worship on everyone but to offer opportunity for those who want and need worship God.

Human beings are known to be spiritual beings. Spirituality for homeless people is very important as the homeless often raises serious spiritual questions as to who they are, what is the purpose of their life, and where God stands in all of their struggles. Many homeless women and women have faith in some god, including the Christian God. While some are hostile toward the Christian church, some express their need to cry out to God for help. Some carry little Bibles in their bags.

Many homeless people are victims of our traditional church by being condemned, blamed, alienated and avoided. Many of them are turned off by the church rather than being welcomed. From the abuse of their parents/parental figures, many of them also experienced God as scary, a judging and condemning God. Many homeless women shared that their parents abused them sexually in the name of God.

Christian churches must undo the damage done to homeless people by helping them experience a positive, loving and forgiving God rather than a judging, condemning and punishing God. And thus they can come home physically, emotionally, socially and spiritually. They can experience this God through our actions and behaviors of the church.

**Mission:** In one room, a church can create an atmosphere to welcome homeless people in a loving and caring spirit. Christian churches can create an environment for homeless people to sit quietly, meditate, pray, read the Bible, talk about God, sing or worship God. Keep hymnals and Bibles in the room. It is crucial for the church volunteers to offer them the option, but not impose any religious activities on them. The church may consider offering a small pocket-sized Bible for them to take with them. In our Bible study we used to relate every Scripture text to their homeless situations and they found some encouragement, hopes and solutions.

Churches can also help develop a worshipping congregation of homeless women and men, such as the Church of Mary Magdalene and Nest Mission in Seattle, WA., House of Prayer in Chicago and some others (Refer to volume No 4 – Spiritual Programs).



