



Resource Packet

Losing Sleep, Losing Homes 12-hour Vigil

Tuesday, November 25 from 7 pm – Wednesday, November 26 at 7 am

Vigil Overview

Thank you for joining us for an hour or more of this 12-hour vigil. We gather in solidarity and prayer all night as we resist sweeping changes to the nation's funding for local responses to homelessness. This packet can guide your practice at home or in the Chapel at The Basilica of St. Mary in Minneapolis. We are grateful you are participating.

This packet includes:

- *Vigil Overview* and information about the ritual that will be repeated during each hour of the vigil
- *Words of Wisdom and Prayer* provided by our community of faith leaders
- *Stories for Reflection* from people with lived experience

Please also use this letter writing activity for US representatives [on Beacon's website](#)

Hourly Vigil

Ten minutes into the hour, those on Zoom will hear the following happening in the Chapel. You can also do these things at home:

- Bell ringing
- Candle lighting (one large candle will be lit every hour, and individuals will be invited to light a smaller one)
- One or more readings (see submitted readings below)
- Silence
- Bell ringing
- Activities – letter writing or video story sharing

The Importance of this Vigil

This is a critical time for supportive housing residents and advocates.

Read: "[Minnesotans Sound the Alarm](#)" on Beacon's website to learn more.

Speak out: Use these key messages to help us spread a unified message about why this vigil and federal funding for supportive housing is so important in our communities. If you share anything on your social media platforms, please use #losingsleep4homes

Losing Sleep, Losing Homes Vigil Messaging:

- I am here participating in the "Losing Sleep, Losing Homes" vigil — a 12-hour act of solidarity, prayer, and advocacy for supportive housing.
- Supportive housing solves homelessness and provides a safe home for thousands of vulnerable Minnesotans.
- Recent HUD policy changes threaten the homes of people who are elderly, living with disabilities, with lived experience of homelessness, and families working to rebuild their lives.
- I urge federal lawmakers to take action to stop these policy changes.

Capturing Your Story or Reactions

Share your thoughts, reactions, or story in a brief video using this link.

<http://mnhomestories.memfox.io/losingsleep>

During the vigil, staff at the Basilica or over the Zoom link, can also show you how!



Words of Wisdom and Prayer

Submitted by Rabbi Samantha Thal, Bet Shalom Congregation, Reform Judaism

“In the Jewish tradition, the separation between prayer and action is slight. We’re mindful of the admonition in Isaiah where God says, “I don’t want your fast and your sacrifice. I want you to deal your bread to the hungry, tear apart the chains of the oppressed.” And Leviticus 19 tells us that to be holy in the way God is holy means to set aside a corner of our fields for the poor and homeless, to pay the laborer a timely and fair wage, and to remove stumbling blocks. These are religious activities just as much as prayer is. They are all woven together.” Deuteronomy 15:7-10 teaches of our societal commitment to helping those in need: “If there is a person in need among you...do not harden your heart and shut your hand against your needy kin. Rather, you must open your hand and lend whatever is sufficient to meet the need.” And when the work feels overwhelming, our Rabbis teach that “it is not your duty to finish the work, but neither are you at liberty to neglect it” (Mishna Pirkei Avot 2:16).

Submitted by Ben Connelly, Minnesota Zen Meditation Center

Just as a mother protects with her life, her child, her only child
So with a boundless heart should one cherish all living beings. - Metta Sutta, Buddhist

Submitted by Bishop Jen Nagel, ELCA

Greetings supporters of safe and affordable housing,

My name is Jen Nagel, and I serve as the Bishop of the Minneapolis Area Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the ELCA. Our Synod is made up of 137 worshipping communities, and more than 140,000 members on the western side of the Twin Cities metro.

I’m grateful for the invitation to speak out for just housing policies and the appropriate funding to make them possible. The ELCA’s social teaching is clear – housing is a fundamental human right. As Christians we have been called to walk alongside our neighbors who are experiencing homelessness as we ensure the fulfillment of that right.

- It is not just to cut funding to essential permanent housing projects.
- It is not just to make it more difficult for people to have access to safe and secure housing.
- It is not just to pull the rug from under our most vulnerable neighbors.

These housing opportunities must be funded as a part of our commitment to care for one another, to pursue a just future distinct from the past, and to resist the false stories of scarcity. It's in our pursuit of justice alongside our neighbors that we encounter the face of Jesus.

Submitted by Deacon Lauren Morse-Wendt, Edina Community Lutheran Church

Oh God, as we enter into the Advent season, we await the story of your birth. A story of overly crowded, homes, doors slammed in faces, and “no room at the inn.” Oh God, we pray alongside Mary and Joseph that every family would have a home. That every baby would have a crib to sleep in. That no one would fear being homeless tonight. Oh God, we know resources are needed for all families to be housed. We pray for government action to re-open funding for supportive housing. That you would open our hearts as a country to caring for ALL of our neighbors.”

At this time, you are invited to close your prayer by repeating the following petition as many times as you like: “We envision a home for all. We envision a home for all. We envision a home for all.”

Submitted by Father John Mitchell, Church of St. Pascal Baylon, St. Paul

Scripture: Thus says the Lord, “Is this the manner of fasting I would choose, a day to afflict oneself? To bow one’s head like a reed, and lie upon sackcloth and ashes? Is this what you call a fast, a day acceptable to the Lord? Is this not, rather, the fast that I choose: releasing those bound unjustly, untying the thongs of the yoke; Setting free the oppressed, breaking off every yoke? Is it not sharing your bread with the hungry, bringing the afflicted and the homeless into your house; Clothing the naked when you see them, and not turning your back on your own flesh? Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your wound shall quickly be healed; Your vindication shall go before you, and the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard. Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer, you shall cry for help, and he will say: “Here I am!” - Isaiah 58:5-10

Prayer: Loving God, we come before You today with hearts full of compassion and love for our homeless brothers and sisters. We lift them up to You, knowing that You are a God of mercy and grace, and that You hear the cries of those in need. We pray for those who find themselves without a place to call home, without shelter and warmth. Surround them with Your Divine Protection, keeping them safe from harm and danger. Provide them with the basic necessities of life, such as food, clothing, and a comfortable place to rest.

Submitted by Rev. Kyle Hanson, Lutheran

Spirit of the Living God,
Source of Compassion,
Holy One of many names,
Bind us together in the work of justice.
Let no one be without shelter.
Let no family lose hope.
Let roofs rise, walls strengthen,
and communities awaken to your call.
Make us courageous, generous, and persistent
until all your children have a place to call home.
Amen.
Amen.
Ashe.
Shalom.
Peace.

Submitted by Tamim Saidi

﴿وَأَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَبِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَالْجَارِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْجَارِ الْجُنُبِ وَالصَّاحِبِ بِالْجَنبِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ وَمَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ مَن كَانَ مُخْتَالًا فَخُورًا﴾ (٣٦)

Being good to our neighbors is a command of God, in Islam:

“Worship God ‘alone’ and associate none with Him.
And be kind to parents, relatives,
orphans, the poor,
near and distant neighbours,
close friends, ‘needy’ travellers, and those who serve you.
Surely Allah does not like whoever is arrogant, boastful people”
Quran 4:36

Prophet Muhammed, peace be upon him, said:

“You are not a true believer if you are full and your neighbor is starving.”

And

“The best of you are those who are the most helpful (beneficial) to others.”

Submitted by Rev. Susie Hayward, Creekside United Church of Christ

Scripture:

“Woe to those who build their palace by unrighteousness,
their upper rooms by injustice,
making their own people work for nothing,
not paying them for their labor.

They say, ‘I will build myself a great palace
with spacious upper rooms.’

So they makes large windows in it,
panels it with cedar
and decorates it in red.

“Does it make you a king
to have more and more cedar?

Did not your father have food and drink?

He did what was right and just,
so all went well with him.

He defended the cause of the poor and needy,
and so all went well.

Is that not what it means to know me?”
declares the Lord.

- Jeremiah 22:13-16

Prayer: God of righteousness, We gather here in richest country in the world, a maker of billionaires, a sanctuary for the corrupt who live in palaces while their neighbors go unhoused ... while they are kept awake by the pains of hunger and the harsh elements: the arrival of winter’s winds, the groans of their children, the indifference of those with comfort who look away.

Mothering God, You do not abandon any of Your children. You offer your Love first to these who are forgotten by the world, gathering them into your warm bosom to offer comfort and safe sanctuary.

May you discomfort the rest of us, those who hoard resources, those who build ballrooms of marble and gold while Your children go hungry. Afflict us with a Love that melts mindsets and systems built on scarcity, transform us into conduits of your generosity and mercy,

remind us of the truth shared at your table of reconciliation: that there is always enough for everyone, when we share. Amen.

**Submitted by Rev. Meta Herrick Carlson, Bethlehem Lutheran Church Twin Cities,
from *Ordinary Blessings for the Christmas Season***

Home

There is One who journeys
all the way here to live with us,
who finds unlikely refuge
in mangers and mother's breast,
in foreign exile and Temple,
who watches foxes in holes
and wonders aloud whether
he has a place in this world,
who shakes the dust off his sandals
and breaks bread as a guest,

whose breath is broken
by the powers of this world
that tell him to stay in the grave,
that he belongs only to death,

who rises to announce
his love for this world and a plan
to make his body a home
on heaven and earth for all
who are hungry for refuge.

**Submitted by Rev. Lisa Friedman, Unitarian Universalist Church of Minnetonka,
Beacon board member**

We Need One Another by George Odell from the Unitarian Universalist Hymnal
We need one another when we mourn and would be comforted.
We need one another when we are in trouble and afraid.
We need one another when we are in despair, in temptation,
and need to be recalled to our best selves again.

We need one another when we would accomplish some great purpose,
and cannot do it alone.

We need one another in the hour of success,
when we look for someone to share our triumphs.

We need one another in the hour of defeat,
when with encouragement we might endure, and stand again.

We need one another when we come to die,
and would have gentle hands prepare us for the journey.

All our lives we are in need, and others are in need of us.

In This Small Flame Dwell by Jean L. Wahlstrom

In this small flame dwell:

the beacon light of lanterns guiding travelers home;

the warmth of hearth fires tended through the generations;

the transforming energy of furnaces and the power and life of our sun.

May these blessings —

warmth and light and life-giving energy —

be kindled in each of us.

Justice is Our Prayer written by Rebekah Savage

We gather together today with sacred intention to declare that Justice is our prayer.

We affirm in covenant with the Beloved Community that is possible.

Not here, not quite yet.

The seeds have been planted time and again,

and we remember all those who went before us who made Beloved Community a dream
that could be realized.

Justice is our prayer.

May our time of worship/service together continue to water the budding trees of our
diverse interdependence.

May our time of worship give air and nourishment to the parts of our collective spirits
that need to grow and thrive;

that embrace equity as a known way of being.

Justice is our prayer.

We affirm in covenant with the Beloved Community that is possible.

May it be so.

Written by Rev. Lisa Friedman

Spirit of Life and Love,
Mystery beyond all naming
And known by many names:

We live in a fragmented world,
filled with bright fragments of light,
random glimpses of insight,
ragged pieces of our hearts and dreams.

So many slivers of meaning lie around us,
waiting for us to discover them,
to see their promise,
to make them whole again.

We live in a fragmented world,
which we would glue back together,
piece by piece, if it was ours to choose.

But help us to remember
that sometimes the fragments are enough
to save us from despair.

In a world of cruelty,
there is still power in every act of kindness.

In a time of doubt,
there is still power in every act of hope.

In an age of division,
there is still power in every dream of unity.

Help us to remember that sometimes
The fragments of meaning we find
Are just the right size to hold in our hand.

Stories for Reflection

Transcribed verbal story summaries from people with lived experience of homelessness.

Betty A

My name is Betty Allen. You see, I don't sleep well at night, for fear that I'm going to turn on the news and find out there isn't any more housing. There aren't any more programs that are around, and it scares me because where will I go? I never was someone that watched the news a lot, but I find every day I wake up at the same time, I grab my phone and I look for the news. I don't look for it because I want to. I look for it because I have to. I need to know what's going on. I need to be able to be of sound mind. I need to have a night of sleep without wondering is today the day? Is today the day that I I'm gonna hear I don't have no place to go.

Talia C

...trying to feed a family, trying to feed my kids, trying to feed me, is a full time job. It's hard when everything is so expensive, we can have the house, but then it's like, what do we sacrifice in return? You have to choose what bills to pay because everything is so expensive. It's a debate, do you want food this month? Or do you want to be able to have the roof over your heads? Do you want to be able to have car insurance? Or do you want to have whatever it could be. Do you want to pay the utilities or have car insurance? I think there's a big stigma like, Oh, they're lazy, or they're criminal. They don't pay their car insurance. It's like, well, maybe that that was too expensive this month, and I'd rather have food on the plates for my kids.

Randy U

But so, you know, I had been using during this time, and I just, I felt like I couldn't do anything but use at the time and there was these, this two male and a female working at on the second floor because I was paying to stay on the second floor of Salvation Army, Harbor Lights. And, you know, it was so difficult... She reached out to me and said, "Are you interested in permanent housing?" I said, "Good lord, yes," you know. And so, you know, it just worked out, how it worked out. And I got into housing with Aeon....And the great part about that was they have Simpson housing services working alongside them to make my transition from homelessness much better.... That was, I want to say, five years ago, you know, so, yeah, six months of homelessness, and, you know, drug use during that time...the impact they made was so big that I want to say that I was done using any substances within like, a month or two after I moved in.

Melissa B

Boojoo ogechi Dade Quaker, new Indigenous Mika miwizaga, evening indunji bar. Mika do dame. My native name is Golden Eagle, warrior woman. I'm enrolled in Red Lake reservation. I am Bear Clan. I was raised in South Minneapolis. My real name is Melissa. I was born in South Dakota, and I was in foster homes over there, and I ended up my mother got me back and moved me to Minneapolis, Minnesota, and I've been here ever since. And I'm 48 years old now. I came here when I was nine to Minnesota, and I was going through foster homes over here also, and we experienced homelessness like a few times.

And when I turned into a teenager, I ended up really being homeless on my own. So I go work at Target, at Burger King. So I experienced homelessness a lot of most of my life, and I ended up drinking a lot of alcohol, being an alcoholic since I was like 20, and so now that I'm 48, I have seven years sober, but I went through a lot being homeless. You know, I had to sleep under bridges and couch hop and, you know, I had to be aware of my surroundings at all times so that I wasn't, you know, hurt or trafficked or murdered, and I survived all those years, you know, I went through a lot, you know, drinking on the streets, hanging here and there, but now that I have seven years sober.

Darryl C

My name is Darryl Carlson. I experienced six and a half nine years of homelessness, and I was in Red Wing, Minnesota, and I didn't know that MACV* program even existed, and they came to my rescue, put me up into a motel room and then they moved me to Maplewood for a year and a half, and then they moved me to Rochester a year ago in July, which has made a big transformation in my life. Wow, I am very grateful for that, for that, I experienced a lot of homelessness in Red Wing, Minnesota, and so I'm so grateful. I didn't even know MACV existed. And I'm so grateful this and now I became part of a group called the table in Red Wing, Minnesota. I've been here since July of last year and so and I've been a member of the table for about five, six months now, which has helped...me help other people, and I guess that's about what I got to say with my story.

*MACV's mission is to end veteran homelessness in MN

Jude D

Apparently, a little bit about me is my story kind of starts when I was born, I was born in Haiti, and I was living in an orphanage until I was around two and a half. So I would consider that my first form of homelessness, even though I don't remember it, I still believe it very much impacted my life up until now and then, I was adopted when I was two and a half, and I was given a home, and even though it wasn't a greatest home, but it was still, it was still somewhere else, other than a third world country, but that home ended up being

very abusive, and by the time I was a senior in high school, I was homeless once again, and I had a very great support system outside of that home, and was able to live with my friend's family and those individuals I still call my family to this day, I was able to work my way into the work I do now, which is rapid rehousing program in the Central Minnesota region. I support nine counties with my work. I remember thinking when I was 12 or 13 that this is kind of the work I wanted to do. I wanted to give everybody a safe and secure home, and that's where I ended up.

Cassandra P

Where I stand with housing right now? Well, I was currently homeless not too long ago. I am, I do have stable housing right now, but I don't know how long that will last. I have experienced homelessness most of my life, since as far back as I can remember. I lost both my parents to age about 15, in a year, one right after another. My mom passed away in a head on car crash, my dad passed way of diabetes complications and a heart failure when being that age, I guess people I was too young for anybody to give an opportunity to and too old for anybody to really care about like that.

Lesia

I moved to Minnesota 31 years ago with two children, a dislocated shoulder and a box of belongings – I had left my husband because of abuse. When I arrived in Minnesota, I was promptly taken to the homeless shelter, where me and my kids were in this very foreign atmosphere, an atmosphere that I did not know how to navigate. I didn't know anything about the system. I had never known anything about food stamps or housing assistance or anything. So I had to be brought up to speed really, really fast.

I was given a section eight housing certificate and went into a town home that section eight paid for. And basically, that was really good. A program for us also, but I did that for almost two years and was able to take that certificate and turn it into a down payment for my first home. So, my homeless or unhoused situation was very unique in where I learned quickly how to use the system to my ability.

Please capture Your Story or Reactions

Share your thoughts, reactions, or story in a brief video using this link.

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