

REFLECTION & PRAYER IDEAS ON THE THEME OF HOMELESSNESS:

- Make a list of the characteristics of your home that you value. Talk as a family about how it would feel to live without these characteristics.
- As a part of your spiritual practices, reflect on the concept of home. What people, places, or activities help you feel “at home”?
- For ideas to do with children, consider trying some of the activities posted at this website: http://www.habitat.org/youthprograms/parent_teacher_leader/resources/parent_teacher_leader_resources.aspx
- Read biblical stories about wilderness, homelessness, hospitality, and care for the poor. What promises does God offer? What directions does God give?
- Listen deeply to the stories of homeless people. Look intently at their pictures. What themes do you hear and see? What are the commonalities and differences between your story and theirs? Sit with the emotions you experience—respect their stories by choosing not to run from their pain.
 - Some stories are available at these websites:
 - <http://ststephensmpls.org/oralhistory/seehear.html>
 - <http://familypromisecle.org/successes/>
 - <http://www.lutheranmetro.org/Success-Stories/success-stories.html>
- In a journal or in conversation with someone else, explore the stereotypes, biases, and fears you have about homeless people. Be honest. What values and assumptions might be underlying these beliefs?
- Think about a time you experienced extreme pain (emotional or physical). What helped pull you through? How are those things offered (or not) to people experiencing homelessness in Cleveland?
- Visit the websites of 2100 Lakeside Men’s Shelter (<http://www.lutheranmetro.org/2100-mens-shelter.html>) and Family Promise of Greater Cleveland (<http://familypromisecle.org/about/>). What is similar and different about their approach to addressing homelessness & housing? How do they compete or complement each other?
- Consider this: what might it look like to really live out our identities as beloved children of God together with homeless people, to give and receive “beloved-ness” in community? Draw or write your version of one way this might become a reality.
- Pray for the people experiencing homelessness and poverty in our broader neighborhood, for the FHC Service Day volunteers, and for the people who work at our mission partner organizations. Whenever possible, use people’s names as you pray.
- What ongoing questions do you have about homelessness and poverty? What else would you like to learn, see, & do in 2012 around this or other social justice issues and community needs? Please let the members of the Ministry and Justice & Mission know!

SERVICE DAY 2011 QUICK QUIZ

1. On a single night in 2010, approximately how many people were homeless in Cuyahoga County?
2. This equates to approximately what total estimated number of people who experienced homelessness at some time during the year 2010 in our Cuyahoga County neighborhood?
3. Family Promise of Greater Cleveland is a combination of which two organizations (merged this year)?
4. Interfaith Hospitality Network is a national program that started in 1986 in New Jersey. What year did IHN begin in the Cleveland area, and which church was the first host congregation?
5. How many congregations participated in Family Promise volunteering in greater Cleveland in 2010?
6. What percentage of people participating in the interim housing program at Family Promise leave with employment?
7. 2100 Lakeside Men's Shelter is part of what larger organization?
8. How many men can be sheltered per night at 2100 Lakeside Men's Shelter?
9. How many people who are homeless or have unstable housing have you talked with in the last 6 months?

Answers to all questions except #9 can be found by visiting the following websites:

<http://www.mhs-inc.org/HowManyHomeless.asp>

<http://www.lutheranmetro.org/2100-mens-shelter.html>

<http://familypromisecle.org/about/>

LOOKING FOR MORE WAYS TO GET INVOLVED IN COMBATING HOMELESSNESS IN OUR COMMUNITY?

Check out some of these upcoming or ongoing opportunities to build relationships and give your time!

UPCOMING FOREST HILL CHURCH ACTIVITIES:

Contact Laura Steiner at lauramsteiner@yahoo.com or any member of the Ministry of Justice & Mission.

- Purchase a holiday gift for children at Family Promise as a part of the Holiday Angels program.
- Look for announcements and sign up to volunteer with others from FHC for the 2012 Homeless Stand Down (Jan 22 or 28, 2012) or donate items for hygiene kits or other needs.
- Bring food regularly for our Abundance Food Cupboard – helping families meet food needs is one way to help prevent housing crisis.
- Help with Family Promise hosting in 2012 – dates to come.

FAMILY PROMISE OPPORTUNITIES (FROM THEIR WEBSITE):

Contact Marilyn Wright at 216.767.4060 or mwright@FamilyPromiseCle.org or visit the website for more ideas:

- Assist with special events.
- Prepare a meal for families.
- Help a resident write a résumé.
- Donate furniture, clothes, or supplies.
- Paint a room.
- Tutor individuals to help prepare them for the GED.
- Deliver furniture to newly housed families.
- Clean and prepare apartments for a new family's arrival.
- Work outdoors in our gardens.

2100 LAKESIDE OPPORTUNITIES (FROM THEIR WEBSITE):

Contact Lydia Bailey at 216.566.0047 or lbailey@lutheranmetro.org or visit the website for more ideas:

- Computer Lab: Assist the men with basic computer skills, on-line job search and resume writing. Hours are flexible.
- Listening: Be a pastoral presence with a team of volunteer listeners.
- Kitchen: Due to cuts in 2100's food budget, the shelter is in need of volunteers to provide all or part of a meal.
- Community Garden: Help maintain the shelter's vegetable/flower garden.
- Art: Share individual and group expression through the visual arts.
- Book Club: Take part in a discussion group that uses current fiction and non-fiction books to explore ideas.
- Music: Teach a few chords on the guitar, or provide keyboard skills for our shelter's Gospel Group.