

A Place to Call Home

As Christians, we are being called to become Beloved Community which includes making sure all “God’s children have good, safe, and dignified places to live and thrive.” (Bishop of Episcopal Diocese NC)

If you are reading this article, you probably have a solid roof over your head, but for many in our county, this is not the case. Affordable housing for low-income people is an issue. Rent is among the highest in the state and Section 8 housing (HUD) in our county is at capacity with a long waiting list.

“According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition to afford a modest, two bedroom rental home in North Carolina, someone would need either to earn at least \$17.67 per hour or to work 97 hours per week at the current minimum wage of \$7.25 and hour.” These numbers vary across the state, but the average quoted above is enough to give us pause.

. A small group of people from St Mary of the Hills, Holy Cross, and Faith Bridge have started to gather and bring a renewed focus and energy to this problem. We are not aware of any solutions or even definitive progress, and we are very much aware of the time and energy a project like this will require, but we feel called as communities of faith to try and address this problem. Faith communities around the country have become involved in creating affordable housing because the first step in getting out of poverty is to have a roof over your head.

In our area, it appears Habitat for Humanity has been the only real path to affordable home ownership,, and they do an incredible job. They have recently been able to build two houses a year for families, despite the pandemic and the tripling of costs for construction materials. Clearly, they cannot solve this problem by themselves. We are aware there are affordable housing projects, but they are both small and serve fairly specific communities “Building the beloved community” a letter from Jonathan Reckford, CEO, Habitat for Humanity and the Building a Beloved Community Web site are places we will start.

For this venture to be successful, we need to build a strong team of professional folks to help us navigate the logistics of such a project. It certainly won’t happen overnight and may even take two or three years from start to finish, but with a good team in place, the road will be less bumpy.

If you have an interest, skill or calling to work in the area of affordable housing, please call: (enter the name/phone/email of the person in your parish to contact.)

To learn more:

Google: Disciple: A Safe and dignified Home for All God’s Children Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina