

December 2019



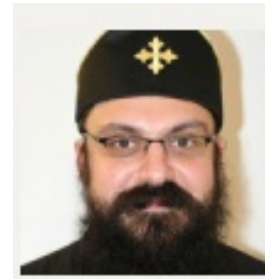
REACH
News

REACH believes that HOUSING IS A HUMAN RIGHT

**The problem is not homeless men and women,
but a shortage of truly affordable homes.**

Shelter Committee - REACH Home 2019-20

Our 2019 REACH Home was **opened on the week of Thanksgiving** at 720 W. Main in a beautiful building that in former years served as the Rectory to Saints Peter and Paul Church, now belonging to the Coptic Christian Community. We are so blessed by our Coptic Christian friends, especially Brother Antonios, who have made this possible and we thank them for the many ways in which they have welcomed us in these early weeks. On Sunday, December 8, Andy and Peter will be making a presentation about REACH's story to the community following their Sunday service.



As we open, we are pleased to report that the majority of our volunteer staff, who help with the day to day operations of the REACH Home, are formerly guests of REACH and are giving back in thanks for all that REACH has come to mean to them.

REACH Home is now next door to **St. Peter's Kitchen** and **Patty Lorenzen** who has been the director of the Kitchen for the past seventeen years has extended a welcome to us and to our guests, many of whom will find their way to the Kitchen for lunch

Before we opened, we had a large turn out from the providers who assist us in supporting our guests. We look to collaborating with these agencies in this coming season and thank them for their part in the REACH story. We also had an OPEN HOUSE on the Sunday before we opened. A big thanks to Deb Peiffer who led the way and to all who made this possible. We had a good number of visitors and three local TV stations dropped in! You can see one of the TV reports [here](#). We collected \$94 in our donation jar.



It was **Thanksgiving Day** just after we opened, and our guests enjoyed the hospitality offered by many of our REACH Home volunteers. Thanks to all who assisted. We had about 30 guests at this stage.



We welcome back to our team, Evelyn Penn as our Home Manager. We are appreciative of her service to our work and the gifts that she brings that help to set a truly home like atmosphere to the REACH Home.

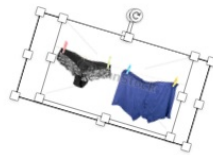
This week, due to the code blue weather conditions, we are full to capacity of men and women needing shelter.

As our chair of the Shelter Committee, Andy says, "We are off to a great start!"

WE ARE ALWAYS LOOKING FOR PARTNERS!!

Would your church, work, or community group be willing to partner with us to provide necessary supplies for the shelter? Please consider taking on one of these ideas:

Bring an evening meal--there are openings in January. You can sign up on line [here](#). The evening meal is one of the most important ways we help to create community among our guests. If you have any questions please drop us an email.



Help us with our supplies.

Most Needed:

- Men's boxer briefs and women's underwear sizes M-XL
- T-shirts
- Waterproof/lined gloves
- Gallon refrigerator storage bags
- 13 gal. and 33 gal. trash bags
- Powdered drink mix such as Iced tea, Lemonade, Fruit Punch



Cereal

Pillows, now that we are full to capacity

PLEASE CONTACT US if you have a small size refrigerator that we can use in the office for medications.

We always need gently used winter boots for men and women, and winter coats/jackets, especially in larger sizes.

We CANNOT accept bags of used clothing as we do not have the facilities or staff to process them. Also, we are a winter shelter, so we need specific warm winter items for adults only. Thank you for your consideration!

AND WE NEED FINANCIAL SUPPORT

It will take \$100,000 for us to operate the shelter this winter. Please consider donating as we prepare to provide a home for men and women who have no home. You may donate on line by going to our [website](#) or you may send checks to REACH Advocacy, PO Box 10845, Rochester, NY 14610. All donations are tax deductible.



A big thank you to Jon Saulsgiver, Deacon Dan, and Angel Concepcion who have worked so hard to get our plumbing and bathing facilities in good working order. Also we now have hot water and a really good laundry facility for both staff and guests. Jon Curran has created an efficient system for our guests laundry needs.



Tiny Home Committee

From Susan Maxwell, Chair:

December is a time for us to look back and review what we have completed this past year and identify the next steps needed to realize our Tiny Home Village in 2020. This has been a year spent on land preparation and surveys, completion of architectural designs, meetings with various city departments, grant writing and sharing our vision of a Tiny Home Village with community leaders and the community at large.

There is still much to be done but we are confident that we will begin to build the Village mid-year 2020. We cannot do this alone. It takes collaboration and support from the community and you are an integral part of our effort to help those who are housing vulnerable. Your financial support will help us realize the Tiny Home Village. Please consider donating to REACH this Holiday season, and designate your gift to the **Tiny Home Fund**. We are so grateful for your support and on behalf of the Tiny Home Committee we wish you and yours Happy Holidays.

Advocacy Committee

Since last month there is nothing to report, but there are now three Board members who are interested in this important work of our organization. One thing we will be tracking is the legislative agenda proposed by the Upstate - Downstate Housing Alliance. To learn more of this network [click here](#). By the next newsletter I hope to have a list of the bills, both State and Federal for which we seek your active support.



We are also developing a presentation to take to churches and other faith communities to speak about the story of REACH and more importantly, the growing housing crisis we face. Please consider inviting our team to come and speak at your place of worship.

Peter W Peters, Chair pro tem.

REACH Board

Board Orientation.

On Monday, December 2, we held a Board Orientation. The purpose of this orientation was to help the Board members and officers get to know each other, and for those who are new to REACH, to let them know the story of REACH and to hear the goals we have for the coming year. At this Orientation each Board member signed a commitment statement outlining the expectations of Board members. We were all excited by the helpful facilitation given us by Mary Hadley of Causewave. Regular Board meetings are on the first Monday of the month, next regular meeting will be on January 6. Here is picture of our board:



Beginning at the top center and going clockwise our Board members are:

Deacon Dan Callan - Assigned to St. Charles Borromeo and Jail Ministry

The Rev. Dr. Marlowe Washington - Pastor Seneca United Methodist Church

Susan Maxwell - Retired psychiatric nurse

Andy Carey - Social worker and founding partner of McCollaborative

Larry Knox - Community organizer with SEIU 1199

Jeanette Creighton - Social worker

Rudy Rivera - Executive Director Fr. Larry Tracy Advocacy Center

Matthew Alexander - Assistant Manager, Canandaigua National Bank

The Rev. Peter W. Peters, Ph.D. - Retired Episcopal Priest

Kevin Aiken - Health Educator/Test Counsellor, Action for a Better Community

Deborah Peiffer - Retired DHS Social worker

Samra Brouk - Fund raiser for non-profit organizations.

Meet the Board - This month Peter Peters.

I am a retired Episcopal Priest and it has been my privilege to be a part of the REACH Team for the past five years. I was present at the public meeting where over a hundred people came to discuss the recent City's action against the homeless encampment. About thirty of us joined to see that this kind of action would never be repeated in our city. For me this was my first experience in facing the issue of homelessness. Soon I learned that Rochester has about 800 homeless persons seeking shelter every night and that many of these



homeless people are not able to go to many of our shelters due to sanctions of one kind or another.

Another thing I learned about is that there is a national movement, called Housing First, which recognizes that the best way to assist people who are homeless is to make sure that they have a safe and supportive place to stay. So, I joined REACH committed to the idea that the real issue is the need for housing, but in the meantime, we needed to be sure that chronically homeless men and women were kept safe during the Rochester winters.

Now, after helping to create emergency shelters for the past four years and presently a fifth for this coming winter, it has been my privilege to see REACH develop from a group of volunteers to an organization that has clarity about its long-range goals: we shelter to assist as many as we can into supportive housing, we are planning to build a Tiny Home Village of supportive housing, and we are actively advocating for changes in how we treat women and men who are housing deprived.

My personal interest is to contribute to REACH's effort to change the whole narrative around homelessness. All too often we look at men and women who are without homes as either the object of charity, or as those who have failed. Instead, I hope that we will learn that the problem is complex, and that at least one of the factors is the lack of housing for those whose income is way below 60% of the AMI (Area Median Income). Our housing system just does not meet the needs to of the very poor.

Upcoming Events:

December 6 & 7 REACH will be here, look for our booth :

ALTERNATIVE FAIR!

Dec. 6th and 7th
Friday: 5-9, Saturday: 10-3

First Unitarian Church of Rochester
220 Winton Rd. Rochester, NY 14610

Fair trade and
Hand-crafted
gifts by local
artists/Prices fit
for the whole
family/ Free child
care for children
8 and under/ \$3
suggested
donation

Metro Justice

December 19. National Homeless Persons' Memorial Day Service. [Click here](#) for more information.

Can you Help?

Donations needed as we prepare for the next Point in Time count of the Homeless. Read the details [here](#).

Resources that may interest our readers:

Good news about a decline in veteran homelessness. It is an example of what could happen to the population at large with better funding. Read about it [here](#).

Thank you for your interest and support of REACH.
For more information please check out our Website at reachadvocacy.org.
and please like us on Facebook!

