



INTERFAITH
Family
Shelter

Summer 2020 Newsletter

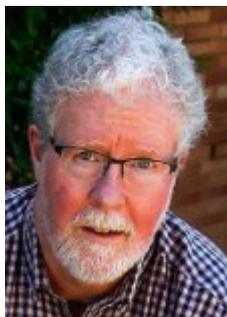
Uniting in service to families,
with children, facing homelessness

June 2020

From Our Executive Director:

Dear Friends of Interfaith,

Covid-19 is bad enough. The worst economic downturn since the Great Depression makes this worse. The heart-wrenching public response to very disturbing police actions in Minneapolis—and the ensuing protests and violence—are unimaginable.



The systemic racism that led to the death of George Floyd thrives in homelessness, too. In a recent discussion, a staff member observed that our shelter programs seem to have more people of color than expected. And recent statistics from *The National Alliance to End Homelessness* indicates that African American households make up 40% of the homeless population, yet only 13% of the national population. We ask: why?

Economic racism explains a lot of it. African American households are more likely to have low-paying jobs. Echoes of red-lining still influence our housing and zoning regulations. The most prominent civil rights complaint against rental property owners is racial preferencing. An African American family is several times more likely to be evicted than a white family for the same violation. And that eviction keeps this family out of the next available housing unit. Finally, any kind of felony conviction within the family negates their chances of finding a new home.

It's not just law enforcement that needs to do some soul searching right now. We all do, to identify and eradicate systemic racism.

Sincerely,

Executive Director

Coming Soon to a Theater near You

OUTBREAK: SEATTLE

What does a family go through as they struggle to overcome homelessness? Get ready for a behind-the-scenes exclusive, featuring the Interfaith Family Shelter.

This spring, we've been collaborating with a film crew on the upcoming documentary **Outbreak: Seattle**, from award-winning journalist and producer, **Soledad O'Brien**.



Exploring the nexus of public health, the ongoing pandemic, and homelessness, the film follows one of our client families. Share their incredible journey from our **Cars to Housing** program, to the **Family Shelter**, and finally to a home of their own.

The film will be screened on cable and in theaters later this year.



Case manager, Ty Curley, works with the family in **Outbreak: Seattle**

Follow our website & social media for updates, trailers, and more!

Website: www.interfaithwa.org/

: @InterfaithFamilyShelter

: @FamilyShelterWA

: Interfaith.Family.Shelter

How many families we have served since July 2019:



The Family Shelter
+ Miracle House = 63



Cars to Housing = 20

Rapid Rehousing (rent help through
the 1st year of housing) = 74



Preventing Homelessness

The easiest way to help a family facing homelessness: Keep them housed.

Have you ever wondered what it costs to run our shelter-and-rehousing programs? We typically provide a family with up to 90 days of emergency shelter. It costs about \$5,000 per month to shelter and feed a family of four—including case management to help them achieve housing, address mental health or substance-use issues, and improve employment skills. And once they find a home, our Rapid Rehousing program helps subsidize rent through the first year of housing, at about \$1,200 per month. Add those numbers up, and the costs of helping a family overcome homelessness total to a little over **\$29,000**. But what if that same family had never become homeless, in the first place?



At their annual retreat in October last year, our Board of Directors gave us a radical charge: rather than tackle the multiple and interconnected problems facing families once they lose their homes, why not try to prevent them from becoming homeless? Preliminary research indicates that the average intervention to keep a family housed through a temporary setback—whether it's an unforeseen medical issue, auto repair, or job loss—ranges between **\$1,500 to \$2,000**.

The benefits of a timely and well-diagnosed intervention are undeniable:

- ◇ It's tremendously **cheaper** to tackle problems upstream before they cascade and devastate a family's home stability.
- ◇ Families and children stay **housed and healthy**, and avoid the trauma and stress of experiencing homelessness.
- ◇ It's **pre-emptive** and **responsive** to the situation. Limited financial assistance and effective case management can help a family keep their home, while identifying the issues that threatened home stability and taking steps to minimize them from cropping up again.

We are excited to begin this bold chapter to address homelessness in Snohomish County. As many families see their home stability threatened in the uncertain months ahead—whether from job loss or furloughs, or as rent moratoriums get lifted—the Homelessness Prevention Program (HPP) is a timely solution to keep our neighbors housed and healthy during the ongoing pandemic. Working with community partners, property managers, and other supporters, the Interfaith Family Shelter hopes to connect with even more families facing homelessness, and help them keep their homes.

*Would you like to support the HPP? Are you a property / leasing manager interested in this program for your tenants? **Contact us** to learn more.*

Donor Spotlight

The last few months have been challenging for a lot of us. Yet so many of you have given generously, to help keep our programs and services operating during this difficult time. Thank you! We are especially grateful to these recent supporters:



We raised **\$5,788** this year!
(a **50% increase** from last year)

Thank you to the 27 donors
—including five
brand-new supporters—
who made this happen.



Interfaith Association of NW Washington

P.O. Box 12824
Everett, WA 98206 - 2824

www.interfaithwa.org | Ph: (425) 252-6672 | jdean@interfaithwa.org