

PROPOSAL - Endorsed by Vestry – June 30, 2020

All Saints Church

Safe Haven Bridge to Housing

Developed in collaboration with Union Station Homeless Services

Goals

In accordance with our values of Radical Inclusion, Courageous Justice, Joyful Spirituality and Ethical Stewardship to:

1. Provide a safe and healthy environment where people without housing may sleep while they work actively and proactively with local homeless services providers on a path toward permanent housing.
2. Break down the class barriers of “us and them” that exist between people experiencing homelessness and much of the rest of the All Saints community as together we more fully become the Beloved Community of All Saints Church.
3. Strengthen our historic partnership with Union Station Homeless Services
4. Create and hone a model that other faith communities can adopt as a part of our mission to “reverently invite all faiths and peoples into relationship for the healing and transformation of ourselves, our community and the world.”

What is ASC Safe Haven Bridge to Housing?

When fully implemented, ASC Safe Haven Bridge to Housing would provide for up to 12 people who are unhoused:

- *Outdoor space to sleep in designated areas on the campus of All Saints Church
- *Storage lockers they can access 24/7
- *Connection and accompaniment with an outreach worker, care coordinator or housing navigator through Union Station Homeless Services.
- *An experience of human dignity and love and intentional invitation into the All Saints Church community.

A Brief History

All Saints Church has both values of radical inclusion and courageous justice and an open campus that is wonderfully inviting to people 24 hours a day. For decades we have been in the forefront of advocating for housing justice and meeting immediate needs in collaboration with Union Station. In recent memory, our campus has always been a place where people without housing have sought refuge at night. Our hospitality is primarily a consequence of our values and also reflects that we are an open campus without 24-hour security.

A little more than a year ago, the City of Pasadena began using security to keep people sleeping at City Hall at night. This resulted in more people coming to sleep at All Saints Church. Because of our values and history, we chose to identify designated “safe spaces” on campus where people could sleep between 10 pm and 6 am. Security was employed to enforce the covenant of where people were permitted to sleep and when they were permitted to be there.

When the office closed for COVID-19, several things became clear:

- *Our values led us to claiming a mission to “prioritize the care of the most vulnerable.”
- *Because of COVID, shelters were reduced to ¼ - 1/3 capacity at night and all day centers, libraries and other places people could stay during the day were closed. This and other factors drastically increased the number of people on the streets.
- *There were no open public restrooms in at least a seven-block radius of All Saints Church.
- *The City of Pasadena was doing little or nothing to address this crisis.
- *There was no physical need to move people off campus at 6 am because the campus was not being otherwise used.
- *Even if we thought moving people off campus was in line with our values, the combination of no 24-hour security and an open campus left us no way to enforce this.

Instead, as more and more people sought refuge on the All Saints campus, we saw this as an opportunity both to provide compassionate care and to help Pasadena in a time of crisis. We took the following steps:

- *Continue the food table on Sundays (originally using Ralph’s gift cards, now shifting to sandwiches and water from Hope Kitchen) and the Food Ministry on Mondays.
- *Provide a porta-potty with washing station that is available 24/7, cleaned three times a week, in the north parking lot.
- *As people began to encamp in three primary locations on campus (the covered parking area in the north driveway, the atrium, the south patio adjacent to Plaza de las Fuentes), we worked to:
 - build relationships with those who were taking refuge on campus
 - establish a covenant of behavior and identify community leaders who could support and hold people accountable for it.
 - reach out to Union Station Homeless Services and Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority to visit the campus to assess, provide case management and move people into hotel rooms through LA County’s Operation Roomkey (in addition, the Keck Street Medical Team has been making regular visits)
 - hand out masks and encourage their use and practices that would mitigate the spread of COVID-19.
 - engage members of the community taking refuge on campus in helping with the task of picking up trash and keeping areas of campus clean.
 - engaging other All Saints parishioners to team with staff who volunteered, to regularly come to campus to assist with cleanup and to build relationship.

This has been the system in place for the past 3+ months. Matching the chaos of the lives of people living on the street, it can mostly be described as “managed chaos.” We have had the campus cleaned and disinfected three times during this time prior to Red Cross blood drives. The number of people on campus has fluctuated from a high in the upper 30s or low 40s to a low of 8-12.

In early June, after a sizable increase in people staying on campus who brought with them tents and large amounts of possessions, we worked with the leaders in the community of residents to add two rules for sleeping on the main campus rooted in public safety:

- *No sleeping or encamping in doorways.

- *No bringing more than two suitcases and one bicycle onto the main part of campus.

Over the past three weeks, we have been working with Anne Miskey and Shawn Morrissey at Union Station to develop the Save Haven Bridge to Housing plan as a sustainable way to continue and improve our living out of our value of prioritizing the care of those among us who are most vulnerable. With their assistance, we have begun this phased approach toward the Safe Haven model.

A Phased Approach

Phase I – Implemented, Monday, June 22, 2020

- The process described in Phase II was communicated verbally and through signs to people currently staying on campus and to visitors to the Sunday and Monday food programs.

- All people were asked to move off the North Parking Lot so it could be opened for business. People were allowed to relocate to other areas of campus under the covenant of no more than two suitcases, etc.

- Leaders in the community of people living on campus were engaged to communicate the changes and opportunities in the new Safe Haven Bridge to Housing program as it unfolds.

- A subgroup of the Community Care Team has been formed to work with the rector and others on building relationships with those who have found their way to the All Saints campus during this time and to help phase in the Save Haven Bridge to Housing program.

Phase II – Implemented Friday, June 26

- The campus is now be available for people to sleep in designated areas (North Driveway Parking Shelter, Atrium, Cloisters, South Driveway patio) from 8 pm to 8 am (7 am for the north parking lot).

- From 8 am to 8 pm, space is provided in the South Driveway patio for people to gather with a limited number of possessions (two suitcases and one bicycle maximum) for shade.

- The non-gated exterior portions of campus will remain open to all people provided they are wearing masks and observe physical distancing. Anyone refusing to wear a mask and observe physical distancing will be asked to comply with .

- Security is now 24 hours a day temporarily to enforce this new covenant until such time as patterns of behavior become set and the patrols can be reduced (we are planning for at least three weeks of increased patrols). The security team has a history of learning people's names and treating people with dignity and respect.

- *Union Station, LAHSA and the Keck Street Medical Team are continuing to visit and provide services and case management.

Phase III – Beginning sometime in July or August*

-A population of up to 12 people will be identified from the regular community of those who have been sleeping on campus to be the first participants in the Safe Haven Bridge to Housing Program.

-All participants will agree to a covenant that will include being accompanied by a caseworker on a pathway to housing and behavioral requirements for staying on campus. The behavioral requirements are what would be expected of any member of the All Saints community.

-12 lockers will be installed outside, at a place to be determined by the Building and Grounds Committee and staff, for participants in the program to store belongings safely. These are the same lockers that are used at Union Station's shelter.

-Union Station or a similar service provider will provide case management for program participants.

-Security will ensure that only people in the program are sleeping on campus (observing a capacity is a matter of public health and safety and also our value of ethical stewardship) and will also keep an eye on them for their own safety. The number of security patrols a night will be determined.

-As people move into housing, we will work with USHS and others to identify others to take their place in the program.

*The timeline for this is still being determined based on available staff and funding (see below).

Funding and portability

We (ASC and USHS) believe there is funding available for this as a pilot project potentially from either the City of Pasadena, local community foundations and granting agencies, or both.

ASC is approaching 6-7 other faith communities in Pasadena with this idea in hopes that at least two or three of them will agree to try it, which will increase the attractiveness of this for grant funding.

Union Station will be approaching potential funders and working to secure grant funding that ideally would cover the case management, security and some other expenses.

Part of creating a model that is portable (easily adoptable by other congregations) is that the financial burden be low. For this to be an effective, high-impact response to increased homelessness we need something that faith communities can sign onto with minimal financial burden.

Working with the City of Pasadena

We all have responsibility for caring for one another, particularly those most vulnerable among us. For the past three months, All Saints Church has joined Union Station and others in stepping up to address a crisis of homelessness during a pandemic. Much of our need to step up was because the City of Pasadena not only did not step up but actually exacerbated the problems by closing public buildings and not providing alternatives.

Representatives of All Saints Church, Union Station, Friends in Deed and several other homeless service providers are meeting regularly to engage the City of Pasadena in doing its part both to alleviate this crisis and deal with the chronic issue of homelessness that is reaching crisis proportions. This includes continuing to insist that the City provide

- Increased shelter beds ... either indoors or outdoors
- Safe, cool places for people to go during the day ... particularly in the heat of the summer.
- More housing for people to move into.

We are more than happy to continue to do our part, as the Safe Haven program shows. We insist the City do its part as well.

