



**Making
Housing &
Community
Happen**

The Home Report

Educating and Empowering Congregations for Housing Justice

March 2019

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Dear Friends and Supporters,

On Dec. 17th, 2018, Making Housing and Community Happen (MHCH) not only won a huge victory for our homeless neighbors when the City Council unanimously voted to build 69 units of homeless housing at Heritage Square South, but that evening Pasadena's Mayor Terry Tornek astonished us all when he recommended using the YWCA building designed by Julia Morgan in 1921 to house low-income women.

Julia Morgan is best known for designing Hearst Castle, but she also had a heart for the poor and vulnerable and designed several YWCAs. So, our local Greater Pasadena Affordable Housing Group (GPAHG) under the new nonprofit MHCH, has launched this new campaign!

We feel this property is ideal for housing some of our homeless neighbors for many reasons: It's a compatible use because it's across the street from Centennial Place, a former YMCA that now houses 144 formerly homeless residents; there is funding for this kind of housing; and a rehab project is faster, getting our homeless neighbors off the street sooner.

Sadly, this landmark building adjacent to the City Hall has sat vacant for nearly 20 years, falling into disrepair. Finally, via eminent domain, the City purchased it for \$ 8.3 million in 2012 and is now hoping to recoup these funds. The city courted a Kempton hotel on the site, but the idea was poorly conceived, resulting in a huge pushback by the community, and the project was rejected.

We've been meeting one-on-one with key folks to learn all we can about the building, researching the land use laws that apply to this site to better understand what is feasible. In this process we have developed some wonderful partners to launch this new campaign: Pasadena's Faith Partnership to End Homelessness and our local homeless service provider, Union Station, and continued support of many of the churches that already have outreach programs for our City's 677 homeless residents.

Just as the Early Church ended poverty (see Act 4), our goal is to lower our

homeless count by 50% in the next 5 years, ending the cycle of poverty for our most vulnerable residents. Research shows that permanent supportive housing (PSH) is a best practice for ending homelessness. A striking example is Cynthia, whom you will read about in this “Home Report.” Homes end homelessness. And the added support in the form of case management assures that those who have experienced homelessness begin the process of turning their lives around. It’s our prayer that this Y be restored not only to its original beauty, but also for its original intent, as homes for those in need.



Circling the Y...

The First Baptist Church sits directly west of the Julia Morgan YWCA. When Jill Shook attended First Baptist about 10 years ago (where Anthony and Jill married on 9-10-11), she circled this Y like the Israelites circling the walls of Jericho, shouting for victory. After church a small group would cross the street and walk and “wheel” around the Y with some of the older ladies at church who had once lived there, pushing one in her wheel chair. They asked God to use this building to house our city’s most vulnerable. She felt this is what Jesus would do. The most vulnerable are featured at the center of virtually every parable of Jesus. When the mayor recommended that this Y be used for homeless housing, she wondered, “Has God answered our prayers?” Using historic tax credits, the decaying Rosslyn Hotel in downtown LA, with marble walls and an ornate skylight, was restored to its original glory and converted to homeless housing. This hotel now houses 250 formerly homeless residents, standing as a tribute by providing the best for what

society deems as the “least of these.” We’d like to see this happen in Pasadena at the YWCA.

Circling the Y ten years later, for a candle light vigil...

... On Wed. Feb 20, we had a party celebrating our successful campaign of winning 69 units for homeless seniors (scheduled to be completed within three years). We intentionally hosted our “This Little Light of Mine” festivity at Centennial Place across the street from the YWCA so that at the end of the celebration, together with formerly homeless Centennial residents, we could again circle the Julia Morgan Y, this time as candlelight vigil. We prayed and sang with our LED candles!



One-Year Housing Justice Institute Launched!

On Jan 2nd, Rosten Callarman from Abilene, TX, and Tommy O’Brien from Colorado Springs flew in to join our first One-Year Housing Justice Cohort. At this one-week retreat in the Pasadena and the LA area, we witnessed some of our 53,000 homeless neighbors in tents and sidewalks in LA’s Skid Row, toured numerous affordable housing developments, interacted with developers, played the Unjust Housing Policy game, scanned the Bible for what it says about land use, bonded with each other and more. It was a fabulous week!

The Cohort now meets online monthly for eight three-hour sessions. Then we convene in October in Atlanta for a national affordable housing conference. Our

first 3-hour on-line class was held Feb 23 with Rosten and Tommy and Mercy Young. This session's focus was on homelessness. During the 2nd hour, our guest speaker, Doug Gillen, Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Santa Ana United Methodist Church, joined us to share how three UMC churches in Santa Ana merged, and together with their multi-cultural church (Cambodian, Caribbean, Filipino Hispanic, Tongan,) envisioned affordable housing on one of the church's sites: one third of the 93 units will be for their homeless neighbors and the rest for low-income families. Their chosen development partner, National Core, will cover all the funding, construction, case management, and property management of the housing units. The church contributes their vision, their land and their love for those in need a home. While Doug was speaking, Jill Shook reflected on Acts 2-4, where the evidence of the Holy Spirit was manifest in the church by having a united voice, sharing all things in common, and alleviating poverty.



Housing Hero: Cynthia Kirby

Cynthia, a San Gabriel Valley native, was raised in South Pasadena, residing in the greater Pasadena area for most of her adult life. Unfortunate life circumstances, including disability, divorce and addiction led to a decade of chronic homelessness. Many of those years were spent in East Pasadena, living in run down motels, rampant with drug use and prostitution. Thankfully, with the assistance of Union Station Homeless Services and Housing Works, she was able

to obtain permanent supportive housing through the City of Pasadena Housing Department's Continuum of Care program.

With God's love, the strong support of her church community, and housing stability, her life has been radically changed for the better. Cynthia is both a wife and a mother and has recently returned to school to complete her degree in psychology, as well as receiving training through Stillpoint to become a Spiritual Director. Today she is part of our local core group which provides guidance to our housing advocacy work, and she serves on our Permanent Supportive Housing team. Cynthia is especially passionate about our group's efforts to ensure that some of the motels where she once lived will be converted into permanent supportive housing. She also will be a liaison between GPAHG and her congregation at First Baptist Church Pasadena, where she serves both in an administrative staff capacity and as a lay leader and director of their Children's Choir. Cynthia has a beautiful, calm, and hopeful spirit despite all she has gone through and describes herself as a contemporary mystic and introvert, who loves to worship in song and seek God in the natural beauty of creation.

Dates to Celebrate

Friday, Jan 25 - It was a joy and an honor for Jill, representing MHCH, to be invited as a judge for a contest focusing on the housing crisis. She was on a panel with the mayor and other experts, as they listened to the students present their projects in the city council chambers. Dr. Anderson, principal of the Marshall Fundamental School, 6-12, initiated this contest, challenging his student body to design projects to address the housing crisis. We are so proud of this next generation's ability to imagine and put their ideas into practical plans!

Thursday, February 28th - our inclusionary housing team—John (a scientist), Connie (a pastor) and Daniel, whom we have been mentoring on how to start an inclusionary policy in his city of Monrovia—entered the hearing room, sat around the large conference table and felt a bit overwhelmed by the unexpected people

that the planning staff had invited—city and LA county department heads. It was with some of fear and trembling that we shared our proposal to strengthen the existing policy, but our ideas were well received. We asked to double the percent of affordable units, from the present 15% to 30%, that each housing developer seeking to build in the city would be required to provide. Ours was a courageous ask, but not unreasonable nor without precedent. We were part of crafting this policy in 2001 and since then it has produced 577 affordable units without any government funding, mixed with higher income housing units. Some developers opt to pay a fee, and by leveraging this fee, 690 affordable units have been either built or preserved. We are very proud of the hard work and diligent research on the part of our inclusionary team over the past year.

Future Dates

March 15th - Citi Bank and Grounded Solutions will host an event in LA on Community Land Trust, a model we have long been promoting as way to create lasting affordability—too many landlords of affordable units today are opting to go market rate once their affordable agreements have matured.

March 25 - the YWCA should be on the city Council's agenda.

March 30th - The MHCH Board will have an in-person one-day retreat March 30th. Those present will be: Jerome Garciano from Boston, a lawyer doing green tax credits; Pastor Deb Myers from Denver; and Margaret Lee, professor of Policy in the MA Social Work Dept. at APU. Robert Baird from LA and Andre White, from Pasadena who works with Related Companies as an affordable housing developer, and more one potential board member may also be joining us. Pastor Camelia Joseph, from Huston, TX, will be our facilitator

April 14th - Jill Shook will be preaching on a theology of land and housing at an LA Church



Featured Donor: Tanja Sacco

Tanja, a longtime friend and roommate of Jill Shook, who played a significant role helping to start the STARS tutoring program with Jill in 1996, remained involved as a tutor and mentor for many years, especially using her skills as a college math professor. Today she resides in Sacramento, CA with her two smart and energetic sons, Nathan and Aaron teaching at the American River College. We are grateful for her friendship, belief in our advocacy work today, and her steady contributions that help to sustain this work.



Four ways to be involved

1. We so appreciate your part with us in making housing happen. Thanks to the generosity many of you, we have raised \$18,000 since we launched Making Housing and Community Happen in October 2018! This has enabled us to hire Morgan Tucker, part-time administrative help, who started with us last week. She is

a delight to work with. Jill knew her mother, Pat, when they served together on the board of Pasadena Neighborhood Housing Services and she was always impressed with her.

Morgan grew up in Pasadena, and studied screen writing at USC. She has work at several studios in the entertainment industry. With her excellent help, no wonder our newsletters look so much better! To retain her and hire other staff, we need to reach our goal of \$40,000 this year. Below you will see how to be involved financially.



2. You might consider hosting a One-Day Housing Justice Institute in your community. See this link on how to do this: <https://makinghousinghappen.net/2019/03/08/how-to-plan-a-one-day-housing-justice-for-your-community/>

3. Pray. Pray for continued healing for Jill, with her cancer. The treatments are going well. Pray for the Y, wisdom for the MHCH Board and for hearts to be open to housing our homeless neighbors as we seek housing solutions.

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We can't thank you enough for your generosity, friendship and prayers! It takes all of us to make affordable housing happen in our communities. Your part is not insignificant!

With joy,

Jill Shock



Mercy Young served as part-time staff for six months. We miss her, but thankfully she is enrolled in the One-Year Housing Justice Institute, and will remain involved focusing on Altadena. She plans to remain involved with our local advocacy group in Pasadena.

How to give:

On behalf of Making Housing and Community Happen we'd like to express our heart-felt thanks for your generous contributions towards our efforts to successfully promote housing justice.

You can contribute in two ways:

Online: <https://makinghousinghappen.wedid.it/>

Or, send checks made out to “Social Good Fund” with “Making Housing and Community Happen” in memo line to:

Social Good Fund, PO Box 5473, Richmond, CA 94805-4021

If you wish to contact Making Housing and Community Happen, please send an email to Jill Shook, at jill@makinghousinghappen.com or call (626) 675-1316