



THE WELCOME
CHURCH
OF EL CAJON

The Welcome Church proclaims the hope and love of a gracious God to all people and especially to those experiencing homelessness.

News

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Ten Causes of Homelessness



1. 68% of US Cities report addiction is the single largest cause of homelessness in their communities. Effective addiction recovery programming is essential to transitioning hurting people from homelessness to stable housing.

2. Nationally, 50% of homeless women and children are fleeing domestic violence. When a woman is abused, she faces a crises of safety. If she stays in the home she will be beaten again. If she leaves she'll have little support. Either choice is a tremendous risk.



3. 20-25% of the homeless population suffers from chronic mental illness. For these men and women ordinary tasks such as maintaining physical appearance and health, managing a job and paying rent can be insurmountable without assistance.

4. Lately the economy has left many Americans under-employed at wages that can't sustain them, or in desperate circumstances after layoffs and job cuts. Unemployment benefits and savings run out, leaving people homeless who never thought it could happen to them.



5. Even people who have jobs have found themselves upside down with their mortgages. At the start of the recession, foreclosures jumped 32%. One survey estimates that as many as 10% of people seeking help from homeless organizations do so due to foreclosure.

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We welcome the faithful, the curious, the seeker, and the doubter, for God's embrace is wide and God's love and salvation are for all!



Pastor's Pen:

NEWS FROM THE FRONT LINES OF THE WELCOME CHURCH

Working with people that suffer from chronic homelessness is not easy. Working on homeless issues and programs, and building links with other organizations, outreach teams and people with similar goals is not only important, but it is also smart. Welcome Church is involved in both "hands on" with people who suffer from chronic homelessness and working with other organizations, churches, and individuals working together to end homelessness, and we work directly with people on the street that are experiencing homelessness.

The hardest part of this work is walking beside those we want to help. What does that mean for the Welcome Church? It means that we accept and love others in the same way that God accepts and loves us. Our mission is to love others just as they are, not for what they have been or done in the past, nor how they will be or what they do in the future, but right here, in the present moment, we will love them for who they are. No exceptions!

In East County there are a

number of outreach teams and organizations Welcome Church supports with as much staff and volunteers as we have available, and I know it never feels like we have enough resources of time, talent and finances to wrestle the complexity of the "giant in the room", chronic homelessness. But, it is encouraging to see everybody pitching in, willing to do their part, with the resources they have. Our goal has never been to work alone, but to walk together with others. One of my favorite proverbs speaks of this walking together and being united in ministry goals:

Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken. (Ecclesiastes 4:9, 11)

The Welcome Church is first and foremost a church called to do the work of ministry, and that work for us has always been "hands on". We meet in Wells Park to worship together in singing, prayer, passing the peace, sharing Holy Communion, and breaking bread together is what we call "coffee hour", or better

yet, "breaking bread" together at our church picnic. Everyone is invited, and we know many people join us for the picnic, but do not attend the service, and that's okay too. It is during this time of one-on-one conversation that friendships are developed, ministry is started and the work of the church is continued throughout the week.

The Welcome Ministry of El Cajon (legal name for our ministry) continues throughout the week. The work includes, but is not limited to walking through Wells Park, and getting acquainted with new people, listening to their stories, and doing what we can to direct them to services or resources needed, "putting names and stories with the faces". That work includes involvement with homeless outreach teams, especially those working together to establish emergency shelters, affordable housing for people transferring from "unhoused" to "housed". Another area of practical care is providing showers, laundry facilities, meals, day centers, job counseling, and medical treatment both physical and mental.

We have a team that works with a local Laundromat to provide a place for “unhoused” to do laundry every week. The Loads of Love team not only provides a place to do laundry, but a time each week to get to know people better. They also represent Paws EC and provide dog and cat food for the “unhoused”. WC Laundry team leader Marie will go the extra mile to care for those in need, and so will Chella. I appreciate this team that does practical ministry in El Cajon. It’s a way of saying: We think you are important, and we want to assist you in gaining self-respect, to provide a place to clean up before job interviews, doctor visits, and we all like to wear clean clothes.

Goliath raises his ugly head and challenges us daily. The opportunities to meet the needs of the chronically homeless are enormous, and we have not uncovered adequate resources in the area to meet the enormous amount of need, but we are working on it. We know resources, are around, and we hope to tap into that abundance.

Welcome Church faces the needs of those

suffering from chronic homelessness every day; in the form of people evicted from homes, families looking for housing, and so many other issues.

We do our best to find shelter, and sometimes that means temporarily providing motel rooms, making phone calls to social workers, or for me closing a meeting with these words. I can’t help you the way I would like and the way you so need, but would it be okay if I pray with you and ask God to meet your needs and to be with you on your journey. We can’t always do what needs to be done, but we can do our best to understand and to be present when people in need show up. That’s our call and the mission of Welcome Church. (Pastor Dave+)



Loads of Love

Our Homeless Laundry Ministry

This year we started the Loads of Love Homeless Laundry Ministry, managed by Marie Pedrin Gizoni and her assistant, Chella Beck. A local laundromat, not too far from Wells Park has agreed to partner with us. Our team registers up to 10 people from the park on Monday. They meet at the laundromat on Tuesday morning, where we supply laundry products and pay for the washers and dryers.

It's appreciated, and a good way to get acquainted with people, listen to their stories and to better understand what life on the street is like. Marie and Chella also represent PAWS EC, and distribute pet food to homeless people that have pets.





Ten Causes of Homelessness

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6. On any given night as many of 200,000 military veterans sleep on the street. Post traumatic stress can cause them to be emotionally withdrawn, or physically unable to cope with daily responsibilities.

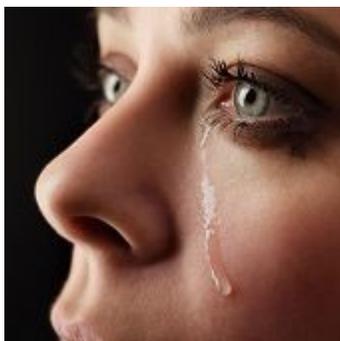
Ashamed, they may leave their families and homes as they succumb to addiction.

7. Homeless teens often become so due to family conflicts. They're kicked out or choose to run away over issues of abuse, teen pregnancy, addiction or sexual orientation. 63% of these teens have been physically or sexually abused.



8. By the time hurting men or women come to social services for help, they've burned through every supportive relationship possible. Friends and family are no longer able or willing to help. What relationships they have left are usually predatory. In a sense, their situation is less about homelessness and more about unwantedness.

9. It's not uncommon to discover that homeless men and women are burdened by grief. Unable to deal to with the death of a loved one or other significant trauma. They numb their pain in addiction. They are consumed with grief, which causes them to neglect their job, lose their home, even abandon their will to live.



10. "Once you get down this low, it's hard to get back up", we often hear homeless men and women say. The longer they are homeless the more difficult it becomes to combat the lies they hear in their heads. They believe there is no way out, they don't deserve another chance, they'll never break free from addiction, they will always be a failure. More than anything, these men and women need hope to combat despair.

49%
of people experiencing homelessness report being victims of violent attacks, versus

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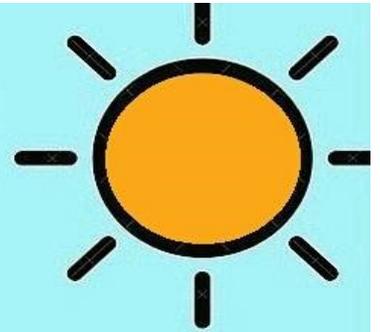
2%
of the general population.

Women experiencing homelessness are 39% more likely to receive inadequate prenatal care.*

www.nhchc.org www.nhchc.org

Source: Research Alert: Homelessness Increases Vulnerability to Violence *Prenatal care begun after the 4th month of pregnancy or less than 50% of recommended visits received Source: Healing Hands: Decreasing Unintended Pregnancy among Women Experiencing Homelessness

Why Build a Wall so Far... When Poverty is so Near?



**THIS WALL =
\$21,600,000,000**

1BR costs
\$14,813.16
per year

X

HUD PIT Count
564,708
Homeless in 2015

=

It would cost
\$8.3 billion
to house homeless
population for a year

We gather together





**THE WELCOME
CHURCH
OF EL CAJON**

The Welcome Church proclaims the hope and love of a gracious God to all people and especially to those experiencing homelessness.

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**Proclaiming the hope and love of a gracious
God to all people and especially to those
experiencing homelessness.**



<https://www.facebook.com/The-Welcome-Church-of-El-Cajon-248275668660855/>

Proclaiming the hope and love of a gracious God to all people and especially to those experiencing homelessness. The Welcome Church in Wells Park is a place where everyone is welcome to participate in a short worship service that includes communion. Everyone is welcomed and accepted for who they are—No exceptions! People from the street; people from “housed churches”; people from no church; people who are poor or marginalized; or people who just happen to be in the park and decide to drop in. It is a non-denominational and ecumenical gathering. It is the Church with a capital ‘C’, ‘God’s house’. We meet at 3 pm on the 4th Sunday of the month. The service is simple. We gather; we pray; we sing; we pass the peace; we receive Holy Communion; we share a picnic lunch. We share the great fellowship of the Spirit – the same treasured fellowship that all experience when meeting in “housed” congregations. All receive the precious gift which none of us has earned, but which is given freely to all – a place at the Lord’s Table.

Upcoming Welcome Church El Cajon Meeting Dates



Sunday - June 24, 2018

Sunday - July 22, 2018

Sunday - August 26, 2018

Sunday - September 23, 2018

Sunday - October 28, 2018

Sunday - November 25, 2018

All meetings of the Welcome Church of El Cajon take place in Wells Park located at 1199 E Madison Avenue, El Cajon, CA 92021

Welcome Ministries of El Cajon Board of Directors

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