

OUR REDEEMER'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

2400 Northwest 85th Street, Seattle, WA 98117

206-783-7900 • www.ourredeemers.net

May 13, 2009

Re: SHARE Interim Housing Community Meeting
Wednesday, May 20, 2009 @ 7:00 pm
Our Redeemer's Calvary Campus (7002 23rd Ave. NW, Seattle)

Dear Neighbors,

Beginning May 30, 2009, we will host SHARE Interim Housing at our Calvary campus for up to one year. Our congregation made this decision after a three-month process of talking with and listening to neighbors, shelter residents, and other churches who have hosted SHARE groups. The men of SHARE Interim Housing look forward to being a part of their new neighborhood.

Thank you to everyone who asked questions, and expressed your support and concerns. We look forward to continuing our work together. The input we received is valuable to us and influenced our decision-making process. Based on what we learned, we have a deeper commitment to be present at the Calvary campus and we feel confident that SHARE Interim Housing will not only be a safe place to sleep, but will also provide safety for the surrounding community. SHARE has committed to treat our facility and the neighborhood with care and respect. With their presence, evening neighborhood patrols of the 2-3 blocks around the church, and 911 calls, if necessary, the men will discourage illegal activity.

SHARE Interim Housing at Our Redeemer's Calvary campus will operate from 7pm to 7am each day. Limited to a consistent group of 20 pre-selected and screened men, residents will arrive between 7pm and 10pm. No one may enter the shelter after 10pm. SHARE strictly prohibits residents from being in the neighborhood surrounding the Calvary campus at any other time.

A self-managed community, SHARE residents support and are accountable to each other. Everyone must do chores and be drug-free, sober, and non-violent. Many residents have jobs. As men move on from SHARE Interim Housing, new members are screened. Screening of new members is done downtown by experienced residents at three set times each week. Less than one-third of those who apply are accepted. New members are monitored closely to make sure they understand the rules, meet their responsibilities, and can be good members of the community. SHARE wants to keep their hard-earned reputation, so they are strict about their code of conduct.

SHARE has been around for 18 years. They provide a safe place to sleep at 17 locations throughout King County. The SHARE group who will make their home at our Calvary campus has a 13-year history of successfully providing shelter and community for men who are homeless, while at the same time being a good neighbor wherever they have moved. A current neighbor of the group in West Seattle vouches for them saying, "I hope that your neighborhood can benefit, as we have, from the presence of the shelter." Other neighbors say, "As long as there is a need, we look forward to their return." We thank West Seattle Church of the Nazarene for continuing to offer safe shelter for this group during our extended decision-making process.

There is a need for interim housing. According to the Committee to End Homelessness in King County, every night 8,000 people in the county are homeless; 2,800 of those sleep outside where their safety is at risk. Already this year, 10 people have died outside in King County. In Seattle a person must work 95 hours a week at minimum wage to be able to afford a two-bedroom apartment. Wait lists for low-income housing are years long. Domestic violence, job loss, and medical crisis each account for a significant portion of the homeless people in Seattle.

At Our Redeemer's we believe one of our missions is to serve our community, including those members of our community who are struggling economically and need a safe place to sleep. We also share our blessings with the Ballard Food Bank; volunteer with the Ballard Ecumenical Homeless Ministry; support local programs such as The Compass Center; give to global relief; work on Habitat for Humanity houses; provide meeting space for community groups; and provide two city lots for a community P-Patch garden. We housed a shelter for more than eight years and hosted Tent City 3 with SHARE/WHEEL in 2008. We work with the Ballard Food Bank to distribute food on Monday evenings to clients who are not able to get to the Food Bank's main site during regular "mid-day" hours of operation.

We invite you to learn more about SHARE Interim Housing at a **Community Meeting on Wednesday, May 20, 7pm**, at our Calvary campus (7002 23rd Ave. NW, Seattle) in the Fellowship Hall. SHARE and Our Redeemer's spokespeople will provide details about the operation of SHARE Interim Housing. Our Redeemer's leaders will answer questions about hosting the SHARE group. Please join us in welcoming SHARE Interim Housing.

We would be happy to have you call us with your questions. Our office number is 206-783-7900, email: office@ourredeemers.net. SHARE/WHEEL will gladly answer questions, as well. Their office number is 206-448-7889.

Thank you in advance for your thoughtful participation.

Sincerely,

Rev. Kathy Hawks
Lead Pastor

Rev. Steve Grumm
Pastor of Church & Community