



MIC

MISSOULA INTERFAITH COLLABORATIVE

HOUSING ADVOCATE NETWORK • FAMILY PROMISE • MISSOULA WORKS • BUILDING BRIDGES, BUILDING LEADERS



MIC and Missoula Works have MOVED!

The MIC and Missoula Works offices have moved! We are now located at Atonement Lutheran Church, **2205 34th Street**, at the corner of Schilling and 34th street, near the Brooks Street Missoula Federal Credit Union. Thank you St. Paul Lutheran Church for hosting us for these last six years, and thank you for still housing Recycling Works! Many more exciting updates to come!

Inspiring Stories **Housing Advocate Network**



Another win to celebrate for the Housing Advocate Network!

E., his wife, and two young children found themselves on the streets after the home they rented for seven years was scheduled for an extensive remodel. Camping, staying in motels, splitting the family up to stay at separate relatives' houses – he estimates the family spent as much as \$8,000 over four months just trying to keep things together.

The most frustrating part? E. and family have rental assistance support in the form of a Section 8 voucher. Despite this guaranteed funding, landlords were not interested in overlooking the family's bad credit due to several outstanding medical bills.

A few months in, they finally found a place that would accept them – only to find the Section 8 voucher had expired.

One of Missoula Interfaith Collaborative's longest-serving volunteer housing advocates, Joe Loos, had been accompanying the family for several months when he learned about the Section 8 snafu. Joe wrote a note, showed up for them at a hearing, and Missoula Housing Authority agreed to reinstate the voucher.

Within two weeks, E. and family moved into their new rental, a big three-story yellow house with a yard for the kids.

E. said that his experience with Joe and the Housing Advocate Network played a big role in finding a stable, comfortable place for him and his family to live.

"It's not a waste of time," E. said. "Having a housing advocate is good because you can't stop, you can't give up – you gotta' stay on top of things, and they can just help by staying two steps behind. You don't know what kind of ideas they can come up with or connections they may have."

Joe admitted that aside from the letter, his role really was minimal. Rather than playing "problem solver," he instead just accompanied the family, listened to their struggles, and provided relational support.

"Working through the process was my role," he said. "Walking through this with them."

And in the end, Joe also grew a little bit, too. He learned about some of the barriers to housing, he got a chance to connect with a family with whom he might never have otherwise encountered, and he participated in making his community a little bit closer to ideal.

“I think it’s good to connect with people who are still in the struggle,” he said. “It opens your eyes to things that are going on with the community so that you can have a better idea of what needs to be done to make the community even better.”

Every day, hundreds of individuals and families in Missoula face the stresses of homelessness. While they sit on waiting lists and wait for solutions, volunteers with MIC’s Housing Advocate Network use relational currency to help keep these people connected to resources and community. Interested in being trained as a volunteer housing advocate? Call 207-8228, ext. 5, or email zeke@micmt.org.

Missoula Works

Know any neighbors or friends who need some work done at their home? Call **Get it Done** and we will get you on our schedule!



Partner Agencies - Please let us know if you are interested or know of an organization that might be interested in partnering with us to achieve our goals and employ fellow Missoulians. We are in need of partner agencies to place alumni for full-time permanent jobs using to apply their vocational skill sets. Contact paige@micmt.org for more information.

Mama's Promise

Little Red Trunk



Events

- No Room at the Inn: **December 13 & 14**
Blessed Trinity Catholic Community
Festival of the Creches
- A Classic Christmas: **December 20**
Limitless Ministries
An evening of music from the Bing Crosby Era.

Several businesses, congregations, St. Joseph's Elementary School, and individuals are decorating and using **Houses for Change** to collect donations for the campaign. So far, we've given out 400 houses. Immanuel Lutheran has a house for children's offering from **September through December**.

- **January 18th** Houses will be displayed at our See Them Home Celebration. If you would like to be one of our volunteers putting the display together, let us know.

Houses for Change is a fundraising opportunity through Family Promise National. We purchase the houses, and the proceeds go directly to the projects that we are raising funds for. If you would like a House for Change to support the new family housing center, please contact Rebecca a rebecca@micmt.org. We have some in the office and more coming soon.

Community Organizing - Bridges and Leaders



Last Tuesday, our very own **Rev. Stacey Siebrasse** was recognized for her work as a community organizer for MIC by the denomination into which she was ordained 6 years ago, the Montana Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. This recognition designates her position as an official call in her church, meaning she can continue to work for MIC while remaining a rostered clergy person.

What does all this mean? Glad you asked! According to Stacey, it allows her to expand her denomination's conception of welcome and understanding, especially as she engages community groups throughout Missoula and Montana across social, religious, and ideological divides. It encourages society and the church to bridge a common sense of justice and purpose, whether or not actions are motivated by faith or the conception that people and all creation are deserving of health, dignity, and wellbeing. Finally, it allows her to do what she loves while being endorsed by her church and the many people she loves!

Stacey would like to say thank you to Immanuel Lutheran Church for hosting. Thanks to everyone who attended, either in body or spirit. Thanks to her helpers and volunteers too! Your support means a lot to her and all of us at the Missoula Interfaith Collaborative!



A CALL FOR DONATIONS!

- **Standing Coat Rack**
- **Paper towels**
- **Bathroom and Kitchen Cleaning Supplies**

Give us a call at (406) 207-8228 Thank you!

- **Volunteer Sunday driver needed:** Pick up families from their congregation at 6:30 a.m. and drop them off at the Day Center. Return to the Day Center at 5 p.m. to take them to their new congregation. E-mail Marilyn@micmt.org or Emma@micmt.org

We have 4 families in the program. There are 11 faith community hosts, 14 support congregations and groups, and 2 faith communities that are sites only. total of 27 groups!

Recycling Works



RECYCLING WORKS IS NOW PICKING UP FROM ALL OF MISSOULA. PLEASE SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT MISSOULA'S ONLY GLASS RECYCLER.

We sent our first shipment down to Salt Lake City! Thank you all for making Missoula more sustainable.

We offer:

- Once-monthly glass pick-up schedule.
- Every week compost pick-up.

Sign up here: [Recycling Works](#)

Welcome Back

Welcome Back is a coalition of men and women directly impacted by incarceration who are joined by community supporters to discuss the impacts of incarceration and re-entry, and to work together towards breaking down the barriers to re-entry. We do this through regular social gatherings and fellowship, through direct mentoring and advocacy with folks coming out of the corrections system, and by organizing to identify the pressures impacting these individuals and working with community partners to identify solutions.

Join Welcome Back at its monthly potluck 7 p.m. on the third Thursday of every month at St. Paul Lutheran Church, find us on Facebook or email

welcomeback2missoula@gmail.com

Easy ways to give to MIC!



THRIVENT ACTION TEAMS

Are you a Thrivent member?

Do you have an Action Team that MIC can utilize?

Please contact us so that we can talk to you about an upcoming event that would be a great use of Thrivent Action Teams!

Call 406-207-8228 or email rebecca@micmt.org

Every act of your generosity helps us to further our mission. Thank you for making the world a better place. Love from Family Promise, Housing Advocate Network, MIC, Missoula Works, and Recycling Works.

Our Contact Information

Missoula Interfaith Collaborative

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