

Demoted, overspent, unemployed, lack of steady work, lost house, working poor, lack of affordable housing, no vacant places to rent, did you see they tore down another affordable house, built a large one, no chance for me, outbid, tried my luck in another city, no family to help, or willing to help, high prescription costs, no benefits, lived in my car, had to sell it, abusive or unsafe home, kicked out, left, sickness, cared for one who was sick, lost job because of it, medical and funeral costs, mental illness, programs cut, long waiting lists, inconsistent care, all alone, LIFE can change, it could happen to you, it has happened to sadly so many and our number of homeless people grows. No one grows up and plans on becoming homeless, it is not a dream, sadly though homelessness is indeed a reality.

What to do? We turn to Jesus who was himself homeless at times in his life. When He was born far from His parents home, there was no room at the inn. Our Saviour was born humbly in a stable. As He taught, He was homeless, journeying, teaching and preaching about how to honour Our Father and do His will. He survived on the kindness of others. We were asked to become His hands and feet and so we responded, through the Spirit to God's call.

Our region experiences a high level of homelessness. We donated \$3,400 this past Christmas, 135 pairs of pajamas, boxes upon boxes of clothing, enough to fill a few vehicles, in addition socks, hats, gloves, scarves, backpacks, toiletries, blankets, gift cards for food went to those in need. The homeless often hides or shys away from help. The ten organizations we donated to work tirelessly to reach out and help in any way they can. There are some success stories, stories of turn around. Together we pray, volunteer and give whatever we can and encourage government to take proper action. Thank-you Region of Essex for truly "seeing" the homeless and their needs.

Madame President this respectfully ends my report.