

Raising the ROOF

Dear Pastors and Church Leaders,

FACT: Skagit County has one of the largest per capita homeless counts in Washington State. (1,211 homeless adults and children were counted on one day in January 2006.) Additionally, 26% of respondents to the 2005 Skagit County Low Income Needs Assessment reported they needed to use emergency housing. Last year, Community Action was forced to turn away 1,600-plus requests for shelter due to lack of space.

What is RAISING THE ROOF?

Christian Ministry Network (CMN) heard about this need and the opportunity to partner with Community Action to “Raise the Roof” on a project that would greatly benefit our community. We prayerfully decided to call upon the faith based community to offer up a fast acceptable to our Lord (Isaiah 58) and show Christ’s love to those in need.

The proposed project will combine the two existing shelters and increase the number of available housing units from four units to ten units.



The full project costs \$1.75 million!

Community Action has raised \$1.6 million; however, these funds are contingent upon the local community raising \$150,000 to complete the project and access the remainder of the funds.

In effect, our gifts will be matched 10 to 1! How often does the “little guy” get to be the one to push a project over the top? A challenge? Yes! Impossible? No! Mark 9:23 says “If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes.”

Will you participate in the ***RAISING THE ROOF CELEBRATION*** by:

- 1) **Promoting** the opportunity to serve the homeless in our community to your church
- 2) **Taking** a special offering
- 3) **Bringing** the offering to the ***RAISING THE ROOF CELEBRATION*** at Bethany Covenant Church on Saturday February 24th from 7:00 – 8:00 PM and celebrate with God’s People
- 4) or **Writing** your check to Community Action (designate Raise the Roof) and mail to CMN, PO Box 2455, Mount Vernon, WA 98273

Why Should Christian Churches Be Involved in This?

- ❖ We have a chance to show the love of Christ in a united manner.
- ❖ Scripture compels us to love our neighbor and take care of the poor.
“Love your neighbor as yourself” Isaiah 58:6-8, Matt 19:19, Matt 22:39, Mark 12:31, Luke 10:27, Rom 13:9, Gal 5:14, James 2:8
Who is my neighbor? James 2:14-17, Luke 10:30-37
- ❖ Churches are constantly asked to help the homeless. Often, we are unable to provide in a way that facilitates and encourages long term success.

Is There REALLY a Need in Skagit County?

- ❖ The 2005 Skagit County Low Income Needs Assessment identified affordable housing as the No. 1 need in Skagit County.
- ❖ The one-day homeless count on January 25, 2006 was 1,211 homeless individuals in Skagit County (more than 50% from Mount Vernon), 398 children.
- ❖ Between 1988 – 2005, the current facility sheltered 575 families with 1,966 individuals, including 1,258 children. With the services in the Community Action network, approximately 85% have moved to safe and secure housing, long-term self-sufficiency, and are gainfully employed and starting businesses.
- ❖ *Eight* infants were born to mothers at the shelter between May 05 and June 06 – where would they have been without shelter?

But Isn't Skagit County Community Action a Government Agency That Will Limit the Witness of the Church?

No, they are not. They are a private non-profit organization. (Go to www.skagitcap.org and find out more.) They do receive government funding on many projects.

SCCAA also welcomes the continued involvement of the faith-based community in the shelter. For instance:

- ❖ Would your church adopt and decorate one of the family units?
- ❖ Would spiritually gifted individuals welcome a family as they come into the program, teach budgeting, be a big sister or brother, offer friendship, extend invitations to join them in church, dining invitations, offer non-compulsory Bible studies at the center.

Who Are the Other Funding Partners and Do They Have Strings Attached?

The largest funds have come from the Washington State Housing Trust Fund, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Medina Foundation, Boeing Employee Community Fund and others.

The only string attached to these funds is that the project must be fully funded before the funds are released. \$150,000 is all that needs to be raised to have these funds released! What a great opportunity for us, the faith based community!

Where Do We Send Our Donations?

Write checks to:

Community Action or SCCAA (designate **Raising the Roof** on the memo line of the check)

Mail checks and/or donations to:

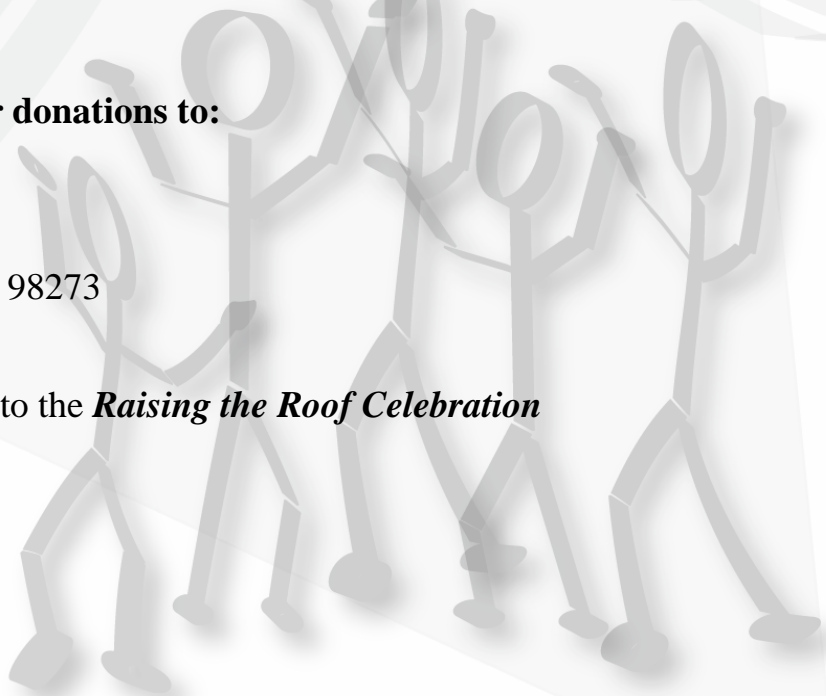
CMN

PO Box 2455

Mount Vernon, WA 98273

Or (Preferably)

Bring your offering to the ***Raising the Roof Celebration***



What Will the RAISING THE ROOF CELEBRATION on February 24th Be Like?

This hour long celebration will be at *Bethany Covenant Church* at 7:00 PM. *Bethany Covenant* is located at 1318 S. 18 ST, Mount Vernon. The event will include unique offerings from various churches; special music, testimonies, and information about the project itself. We have asked *Praise 106.5FM* to MC the event and are waiting for their response.

This celebration of gathering our offerings will be enjoyed by all ages and denominations.

Fellowship over coffee and desserts will follow the event. We are asking a few churches bring cakes and pies for dessert. Would your church be willing to fill this need? Coffee will be provided by Bethany Covenant.

Contact Information:

Questions about the event:

Pastor Jon Westra

360-708-0113

Email: JonWestra@CRChurches.net

Sharon Eldridge

425.830.6623

Email: skagitndp@comcast.net

Christian Ministry Network Board Members

Community Action:

www.skagitcap.org