

Lutheran Episcopal Advocacy Ministry of New Jersey Weekly Witness | March 6, 2017

Part of our advocacy ministry is speaking the truths of our faith while supporting policies and initiatives to support God's love and care in the world. But the language we choose to use in sharing our faith can also detract from our statements, turning the narrative from one of God's love and mercy into a story of our own resourcefulness.

Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Ben Carson recently said while he was on a listening tour of HUD properties around the country. "Godly principles and loving your fellow man and caring about your neighbor, there's nothing wrong with that."

Maria Foscarinis, executive director of the [National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty](#) responded to Secretary Carson's statement by saying, "Not everybody can pull themselves up by their bootstraps. Nobody does that, including Secretary Carson. He had a lot of support — his mother, his family, and his faith. He had a whole context of support."

Psalm 23 reminds readers that God sustains, provides, and cares for his flock not once, but time and time again, in many and various ways: fleeing from Egypt, returning from exile, and while we are walking through darkness. Psalm 23 reminds us that goodness and mercy will pursue us still. In this Easter season, Psalm 23 serves as a reminder to live assured that in living we will be sustained, even in the face of struggle and in the shadows of darkness that sometimes surround us. The psalmist prays for an eternal home in the house of the Lord, but God works through every structure of society to bring life to those who struggle especially those who struggle to afford safe housing. We know that God works through programs funded by our government, non-profits, our community, our family and through our advocacy, to provide housing to our brothers and sisters here on Earth.

Non-profit directors declare that the trauma associated with homelessness is a crisis all over this country. Chris Estes, president of the National Housing Conference, tells us, "You have a lot of people working full time and they don't make enough money. That's non-debatable. It doesn't matter how much faith in God you have, that's not the fix." Our state of New Jersey is the fourth most expensive state for housing in the nation. It takes two persons working 3.5 full-time minimum wage jobs to afford a two-bedroom apartment.

Join LEAMNJ in advocating for housing policy that has a balanced public-private partnership. Be an advocate for housing in NJ so that every household (on any level of the income ladder) can afford safe housing. And when you see an elected official campaigning in the next few months, ask about housing affordability in New Jersey.

RESOURCES

- Housing and Community Development Network of New Jersey- [Build a Thriving NJ](#)
- [Monarch Housing](#)- Working for policy to end homelessness

EVENTS

- You're invited to the Anti-Poverty Network of New Jersey's Spring Social, honoring civil rights icon Edith Savage-Jennings. Sunday, May 7 at 3:00 pm. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit the [APN website](#).
- Consider joining us on June 15th at the State Housing for a Legislative Day; [click here](#) to register.