



## How faith communities can help end homelessness

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Littleton — How severe is the problem of homelessness in Massachusetts? Each night, over 3,100 families, many with young children, are being housed in temporary shelters or motels. Thousands more are doubled or tripled up, sharing apartments or moving from one location to another. The nation's economic crisis has increased family homelessness about 100 percent throughout the state.

Addressing this serious concern, Rev. Liz Walker will share her personal faith journey as the keynote speaker at the sixth annual interfaith forum on family homelessness, "How Faith Communities Can Help End Homelessness: A New Vision." The forum will be held on Sunday, Feb. 28, 3 to 5 p.m., in the sanctuary of First Parish in Concord, 20 Lexington Road.

Residents attending the forum will learn of the goals and progress in the new initiative against homelessness. More than that, they will hear about the vision for a new system in which shelters are used only for emergency transitions, everyone has a permanent place to live, and congregations and individuals join together in comprehensive programs to end homelessness. As a note of hope, attendees will discover how this vision is already being implemented, despite the lean state budgets due to the recession.

Speaking on the goals and progress of the new programs to end homelessness will be Elizabeth Curtis, Executive Director, Mass. Interagency Council on Housing and Homelessness; Mary Doyle, Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership / MetroBoston Regional Network; and Paul Mina, MetroWest Regional Network convener. In addition, Alex Kern, Executive Director of the Cooperative Metropolitan Ministries, will tell attendees how faith communities can and are helping to end homelessness. State legislators from area districts, including Sen. James Eldridge (D – Acton, Boxborough, Maynard, Littleton, Hudson, Sudbury, Stow, and Shirley) and Reps. Cory Atkins (D – Concord, Carlisle, Chelmsford, and part of Acton), Jennifer Benson (D – part of Acton, Boxborough, and Shirley), Kate Hogan (D – Maynard, Stow, Hudson, and Bolton), and Thomas Conroy (D – Sudbury, Wayland, and Lincoln), will also be invited to comment on the issues. Forum moderator will be Miriam Stein, MSW, advocacy consultant.

The forum is sponsored by the interfaith Advocacy Network to End Family Homelessness. For more information, contact Carl Miller, Coordinator, [NormanCMiller@comcast.net](mailto:NormanCMiller@comcast.net) or 978-369-3755, or visit the Advocacy Network & CMM on line at [www.coopmet.org](http://www.coopmet.org)