

"Never place a period
where God has placed a comma"
(Orin Aiken)



God is still speaking.

**PARKROSE COMMUNITY
UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**



March 2, 2009

SENT BY FAX

Mayor Sam Adams
Members of the Portland City Council
City Hall
1221 SW 4th Ave
Portland, Oregon 97204

Dear Mayor Adams and Portland City Commissioners:

As leaders in Oregon's religious community, we are writing to ask you to oppose budget cuts aimed at homeless youth. The city's Bureau of Housing and Community Development is requesting that the City Council eliminate 100% of current City funding for both Transitional Housing and Short Term Shelter in the Homeless Youth System.

Such a cut will have a system-wide impact and will be felt throughout Multnomah County and beyond. Because the city funding, \$400,000 in total, is used to leverage other private funds the real loss to the community will be over \$900,000, according to county officials. The result will be increased pain and lost opportunity for this region's most vulnerable youth.

We recognize the deep financial difficulties currently faced by our region. We see it in the reduced donations coming into religious organizations and in the faces and voices of people coming to us and requesting emergency assistance. As you know, the religious community provides money and volunteer support to many agencies. A number of homeless programs are run by the faith community and others, like Transition Projects (Multnomah County's largest provider of homeless services), were founded by faith groups.

It has been said that every great economic crisis is in reality a great moral crisis. How we treat children is without question one of the most important moral issues of our time. We know from years of research that 80% of homeless youth involved with transitional housing leave the streets. Short Term Shelter is the place where homeless youth first access services and is the place – particularly during cold winter months – where their lives are literally saved.

We know that the Portland City Council and other jurisdictions have difficult choices to make but we implore you to prioritize funding for the most vulnerable – for the "least of these" – in our midst.

Please contact The Rev. Chuck Currie at 503-253-5457 or e-mail him directly at chuck.currie@parkroseucc.org with any questions.

Sincerely,

The Rev. Dr. Arvin Luchs
Senior Minister
First United Methodist Church, Portland

The Rev. Dr. Chuck Cooper
Director of Ministries
Micah's Village

The Rev. Chuck Currie
Interim Minister
Parkrose Community
United Church of Christ

The Rev. Denise Andersen
Pastor
Clackamas United Church of Christ

David Leslie
Executive Director
Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon

The Rev. Peg Pfab
Pastor
Southminster Presbyterian Church,
Beaverton

Sister Mary Kay Lampert
Sisters of the Holy Names

The Rev. Gabrielle Chavez
Pastor
Christ the Healer
United Church of Christ

The Rev. Dr. Walter John Boris
Conference Minister
Central Pacific Conference
United Church of Christ

Pastor Clyde Vernon Hartline, III
Vibrant Covenant Church
NE Portland

The Rev. Kate Lore
Minister for Social Justice
First Unitarian Church, Portland

The Rev. Dr. Paul Davis
Minister of Congregational Life
First Congregational
United Church of Christ, Portland

The Rev. Douglas Wirt
Regional Minister
Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ) in Oregon

Rajiv Hatcher
Deacon
St. Ignatius Syrian Orthodox Church

The Rev. Donna Faith Eldredge,
Interim Senior Minister
First Congregational
United Church of Christ, Portland

The Rev. Susan Maginn
Pastor
Wy'east Unitarian Universalist
Congregation, Portland

The Rev. Richard B. Skidmore
Pastor
Kairos-Milwaukie
United Church of Christ

Doug Holcomb
Director of Operations
Mosaic, Portland

The Rev. Charlie Ross
Pastor Emeritus
Parkrose Community
United Church of Christ

The Rev. Mary Sue Evers
Senior Pastor
Cedar Hills United Church of Christ

The Rev, Steve Kim
Associate Pastor
Korean Bethel Presbyterian Church

Anabeth Moseley
HOMEpdx team member, church liaison
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The Rev. Cathy Tinker
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Baher Butti
Mental Health Counselor
Oregon Health Sciences University

John August Ph.D
Visiting Prof. Math Computer Science
Pacific University and member of
Cedar Hills United Church of Christ