

The City of Atlanta’s most recent [Point-in-Time \(PIT\) Count](#) has been compiled, and the results paint an optimistic picture. For those unfamiliar, the PIT Count is a count of sheltered and unsheltered people experiencing homelessness in Atlanta on a single night in January. Required annually by [HUD](#), the PIT Count provides an important snapshot of the largest concentration of homeless in Georgia. It also serves as a gauge for analyzing the effectiveness of several interventions and strategic solutions offered by [Atlanta’s Continuum of Care](#).



[The COVID-19 pandemic increased risk factors that contribute to homelessness](#) and disrupted the collection of accurate data. Because of this, this PIT Count is one of the most anticipated in years. One could imagine a sharp increase in homelessness throughout Atlanta, given the rise of mental health conditions, the disruption of our economic system and subsequent employee lay-offs, and the challenges of affordable housing—but the data speaks otherwise. In anticipation of pandemic hurdles, several efforts were made to align public and private resources. [Home First](#) and other organizations launched building projects to create hundreds of new units of permanent supportive housing. Aggressive and rapid rehousing strategies were designed, some ingeniously repurposing non-congregate hotels to house those without a home. These solutions along with the injection of federal stimulus funds “resulted in a 38% reduction in the total population of people experiencing homelessness since 2020.”

## Demographics on Homelessness

The PIT Count Report has data on focus sub-groups, giving a more holistic picture of who is affected by homelessness. These include: families, youth, veterans, and a wide range of races and ethnicities (although it’s important to note African Americans are impacted disproportionately more than any other racial group). In addition, homelessness is not just an urban concern, but widespread, reaching rural Georgia as well. While homelessness in Atlanta reduced in the last year, and homelessness overall has reduced in Georgia over the past decade, the total number of homeless in Georgia has remained relatively steady in recent years throughout the state. There is still more work to do.

## Good News and Good Opportunity

The good news of this report is that homelessness can be addressed. By strategically implementing resources alongside holistic and data driven approaches, we can mitigate and prevent such a societal ill. This tested approach is weaved into ECF’s very own values and initiatives, as revealed by our 2022 grant recipients. [72% of last year’s grants](#) went toward supporting homelessness or homelessness adjunct work. These [grants](#) reveal creative collaboration between local churches and organizational partners. Together, with data and resources, we can address the complex issue of housing. We can join other reliable partners in this work who seek to make homelessness “rare, brief, and nonrecurring.” [Download a PDF of the 2022 PIT Count](#)



The Rev. Trey B. Phillips (he/him) is a past member of the ECF Board of Directors and is the curate and Director of Youth Ministries at St. Catherine's Episcopal Church (Marietta). There his work focuses upon the Christian formation of the youth and wider parish. Trey's passion is to reinvigorate the local parish as a center for deep theological learning by employing the rich intersection of human learning sciences and religious education.

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