

It is time for us to consider redefining our response to homelessness across Middle and North Georgia. We often default to numbers. We list counts of unhoused neighbors, available shelter beds, or rent-to-income ratios. But statistics alone rarely capture the core reality of housing instability. Statistics seldom convey the profound loss of safety, connection, and belonging.

Redefining Response to Homelessness: From Shelter to “Homefulness”

In my work with ECF, I have realized that addressing homelessness is not merely about providing shelter for our unhoused siblings. Following Christ’s example, our calling invites us deeper. Our calling challenges us to build “homefulness.” “Homefulness” means transforming spaces of acute crisis into lasting communities of dignity, hope, and relational restoration.

Moving Beyond Temporary Band-Aids

Across the Diocese of Atlanta, [the factors leading to homelessness are as varied as the individuals experiencing them](#). A sudden medical bill, systemic wage gaps, family trauma, or job loss can quickly displace a household. True solutions require us to move beyond temporary band-aids toward sustainable, community-driven partnerships.

Strategic Investment Through Committed Partnerships

This is where parish outreach and community investment align. Through targeted grants, ECF partners with local worshiping communities and nonprofits to fund practical, long-term interventions. ECF equips churches to launch transitional housing. We collaborate with parishes and nonprofits seeking to expand capacity for supportive services. Our ministry support assists families in securing household stability. ECF forms these partnerships, because this good, holy work targets root causes rather than symptoms. Over the years, ECF has partnered with several Family Promise affiliates[1], [Rainbow Village](#), [MUST Ministries](#), [Crossroads Community Ministries](#), among many others.

Living Our Baptismal Covenant

Crucially, this work transforms the giver as much as the receiver. When we step into service, we cease being distant benefactors and become neighbors and allies. In this way, we fulfill our baptismal covenant to seek and serve Christ in all persons. And we begin to recognize that our unhoused neighbors do not lack inherent value. Our unhoused neighbors lack access, resources, and a supportive community to walk alongside them.

A Vision of Safety, Dignity, and Belonging: Redefining Response to Homelessness

Ending homelessness requires both compassion and strategy. This endeavor asks us to combine data-informed practices with faith-filled hospitality. And to ensure that every grant awarded and every volunteer hour served builds toward systemic change.

Our vision across the Diocese is clear: to ensure that every individual in our communities has a place to sleep. But not only that. Our goal is also to help our unhoused neighbors find homes where they are known, safe, and valued. Through prayer, parish engagement, and sustainable community support, we can make this vision a reality.

[1] ECF has partnered with the following Family Promise affiliates: [Family Promise of Athens](#), [Family Promise of Gwinnett County](#), [Family Promise of Hall County](#), and [Family Promise of White & Habersham](#).



The Rev. Rhett Solomon (he/him) serves as Vice Chair of the ECF Board of Directors and is Associate Rector at Holy Trinity Parish (Decatur) where he oversees Children, Youth, and Adult Formation. In the Diocese of Atlanta, he serves as Secretary of the Standing Committee and Diocesan Chaplain for The Order of the Daughters of the King (Diocese of Atlanta). In the wider community, he serves on the board of Memorial Drive Ministries and as a formation community chaplain and adjunct faculty at Candler School of Theology (Emory University). [Learn more about the ECF Board of Directors](#)

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