

## Our Challenge as a Community

An average of 11,000 people are homeless in the 10-county Atlanta metro community on any given night. Existing shelters can accommodate less than half that number. As a result, more than 5,000 people are turned away from overcrowded shelters every evening. Among them are hundreds of women and children who will spend the night in cars or abandoned buildings, under bridges or, at best, in hotels they cannot afford.

However, despite being homeless, many of these people are employed. They are the "working homeless," who simply do not earn enough money to afford permanent housing. The shortage of affordable housing is a problem well documented in the Atlanta region and on the nationwide level, where nearly one of every five homeless adults is working.



Be a treasure to the poor, an admonisher to the rich, an answerer of the cry of the needy... Be a home for the stranger, a balm to the suffering, a tower of strength for the fugitive.

*Bahá'í: Writings of Bahá'u'lláh  
Messenger of God*



## What is Faith And The City?

Former U.S. Ambassadors James T. Laney and Andrew Young founded Faith And The City in 1999 and continue to serve as its co-chairs. The nonprofit organization's mission is to nurture a spirit of mutual community, shared responsibility, and common destiny among citizens of the Atlanta region.

Faith And The City initiatives include:

- Seminary Partnerships
- Faith Leadership Institute
- Mentor A Family Program
- TV Program: Interfaith Dialogue on Public Issues
- Forums on Public Issues
- Website, Newsletter, e.Letter

For more information on how you can support or participate in Faith And The City initiatives, contact:

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# Dozens of Families in Your Community are Homeless Every Night...

## How Does Your Faith Call You To Respond?



FAITH AND THE CITY  
MENTOR A FAMILY PROGRAM

# Mentor A Family



For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat ... I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me.... I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.

Christianity: The Holy Bible (NIV)  
Matthew 25:35-40

## Our Commitment to the Community

**M**entor A Family – endorsed by the Regional Commission on Homelessness – works closely with the Atlanta metro area’s faith and civic communities. Through these partnerships, we “mentor” working homeless families – helping them to get off the streets, out of shelters, and into stable housing. We facilitate their efforts to achieve enduring independence and self-sufficiency.

For a family to qualify for the program, the head of household must be working and must identify an affordable apartment or house. Mentor A Family staff members then match the family with a volunteer “partner,” typically a religious congregation or civic organization that commits to a supportive relationship with the family for six months to a year.

For the LORD your God... upholds the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and befriends the stranger, providing him with food and clothing. You too must befriend the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.

Judaism: The Tanakh, Torah  
Deuteronomy 10:17-19

Each family/partner match is unique, and the nature of the partnering organization’s support depends on its capacity and on the family’s needs. Examples are:

- ◆ Regular contact with the family, encouragement, and moral support.
- ◆ Donations of household supplies and furnishings.
- ◆ Limited financial assistance, for example, utility deposit, rent deposit, and/or first month’s rent.
- ◆ Connections to developmental opportunities for the family’s children.
- ◆ Self-sufficiency planning, such as job search, career planning, or budgeting and financial planning services.

Established five years ago as the Shelter A Family Program, Mentor A Family has worked in partnership with many congregations and other organizations spanning the Christian, Jewish, and Muslim communities. These partnerships have helped hundreds of people – half of them children – to escape homelessness and secure permanent housing.

Seest thou one who denies the Judgement (to come)? Then such is the (man) who repulses the orphan (with harshness), and encourages not the feeding of the indigent.

Islam: The Holy Qur’an  
Surah 107, Ayah 1-3

## How You Can Help

**REFER A HOMELESS FAMILY.** Put us in touch with a family that meets the program criteria. Contact Yolanda Frierson, MSW, Family Liaison, at 404.523.5554, ext. 229, or [yfrierson@faithandthecity.org](mailto:yfrierson@faithandthecity.org).

**BECOME A MENTORING PARTNER.** Encourage your church, synagogue, temple, mosque, sorority, fraternity, or other group to mentor a family. Whether your organization is large or small, you can offer vital help to a family in need. Contact Rev. Debra Hall Walters, Congregation Liaison, at 404.523.5554, ext. 224, or [dwalters@faithandthecity.org](mailto:dwalters@faithandthecity.org).

**DONATE FUNDS.** You or your organization can become a financial supporter of the Mentor A Family Program. Contact Margie Shannon Telfair, Program Manager, at 404.523.5554, ext. 230, or [mtelfair@faithandthecity.org](mailto:mtelfair@faithandthecity.org).

Faith And The City’s Mentor A Family Program is vital to our efforts to eliminate homelessness in the Atlanta region and, as such, is one of seven priority programs of the Regional Commission on Homelessness.

Horace Sibley, Chair  
Regional Commission on Homelessness

