

## It Is Who We Are. Montpelier Congregations of Faith

Our faiths inform us that we know God and life's ultimate meaning in welcoming and caring for our neighbor. Our traditions challenge us to do so. The love and care that we receive from God is not ours to keep. It is ours to share. It is who we are.

As congregations of faith striving to be partners with God and to serve the common good, we demonstrate care and love through our actions as individuals and as participants in community organizations, in businesses, in our corporate voice during elections, and our feedback to the elected.

We are dismayed and outraged that Vermont has arrived at the brink of terminating indoor shelter for our neighbors without housing. Among them are hundreds of children, elderly, and disabled people. No plan has been offered to support their need for a roof, a bathroom, ways to store and prepare food, electricity to meet their medical needs, or a home base to accomplish the tasks of moving on with their lives. This is not who we are. Love and care means using all the resources available to meet the very basic needs of our neighbors in ways that preserve their dignity, honor their value, and allow them to thrive. We are exhausted by applying band-aids as more and more people fall out of permanent housing, yet we remain motivated to do what we can to support them.

**As congregations of faith, we pledge to set a tone of radical welcome for our unsheltered neighbors. Their distress is our distress. Their peace is our peace. We will welcome them as individuals in relationship with us. We will actively participate in pursuing and supporting community solutions that address their needs. We will actively advocate for a state government plan that provides humane shelter for all who are without permanent housing.**

**It is who we are.**

Bethany United Church of Christ and the Rev. Amy Pitton

The Board of Directors, Beth Jacob Synagogue

Capital Community Church and Pastor Matthew Nunnely

Christ Episcopal Church and the Revs. Kevin Holland Sparrow and Beth Ann Maier

St. Augustine's Catholic Church and the Rev. Julian Asucan

The Unitarian Church of Montpelier and the Rev. Joan Javier-Duval