



Resurrection Lutheran Church

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October 17, 2023

Open Letter to Juneau Community

Urgent Call to Action: RLC's Warming Shelter Needs Your Support

We find ourselves at a crucial juncture and the fate of our Cold Weather Emergency Shelter (CWES) hangs in the balance. A vocal minority's misguided attempts to halt our operations threatened to leave the most vulnerable members of our community out in the cold. But, we have the power to ensure that doesn't happen.

Resurrection Lutheran Church (RLC) has been a steadfast provider of shelter and support for those in need, year after year. We stand ready, even now, to continue our mission and operate the CWES for one more year, while the city seeks a new permanent home for it. However, recent developments undermined the urgent availability of our hosting shelter, and the time for collective action is upon us.

Just last week, we received information that the Deputy City Manager, Robert Barr, may be making unilateral decisions about the CWES, moving it to the Thane Warehouse and contracting with St. Vincent de Paul (SVdP) to manage it. While the Thane Warehouse may have been an acceptable temporary solution in an emergency situation, it's crucial to remember that our community is no longer in a state of crisis since RLC notified the City Manager Office it was ready (before that office made the new decision). Therefore, any decision on the CWES's future should be made collectively, with input from various stakeholders.

This is where you come in. By allowing RLC to operate the CWES for one more year, we can ensure a seamless transition and give our community the time it needs to have a voice in this decision-making process. We have already received resounding support from CWES patrons, who are eager to be heard, along with numerous other service providers, other CBJ department employees, and neighbors. They are ready to mobilize, requesting blank and online petitions (warmingshelter.org) to show their consensus.

RLC has a proven track record of successfully managing the CWES, and we have consistently demonstrated our commitment to the well-being of our CWES patrons, our neighbors and the Juneau Community. In 2021, when the COVID-19 shelter at the JACC closed, RLC stepped up to ensure the CWES remained available to those in need. We overcame tight timelines and worked diligently to meet all requirements, securing a Conditional Use Permit (and renewing it with the Planning Commission's praise), holding community forums, and signing a contract in just nine days. We adapted and succeeded in challenging circumstances.

Our community depends on the CWES, especially as the population of people experiencing homelessness continues to grow. The nationwide housing crisis is not limited to larger cities; it has reached our doorstep. RLC's CWES has been instrumental in keeping our fellow Juneau residents from risking exposure on the streets. We've provided food, safety, and shelter to up to 70 individuals, even though our resources were originally optimized for 45-50. We have learned from last season's challenges and have researched the latest best practices from across the country. We committed to making improvements and ensuring that those who rely on the CWES receive the support they need this coming season, and the neighborhood is honored. We have been operating the CWES (initially at SVdP) in coordination with CBJ's former Housing and Homelessness Director, Scott Ciambor (currently

CBJ Planning Manager) for all but its first year of operation and two months (before conversion to the city's COVID-19 shelter at the JAHC).

Now is the time to come together as a community and make a difference. Let us support each other, the Juneau community, and, most importantly, our CWES patrons. We are ready to rapidly open the CWES, and we need to act today. We have attached our most recent draft bid document and are prepared to execute a contract immediately.

In these critical moments, we ask for your support in ensuring the CWES remains an essential resource this season for our neighbors in need. Together, we can make a lasting impact on our community and uphold the values of compassion, unity, and solidarity that define us.

Sincerely,



Bradley Perkins and Pastor Karen Perkins
CWES Contract Negotiating Team Members
RLC Warming Shelter Managers, 2020-2023

[Resurrection Lutheran Church](#)

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cc: CBJ Mayor and Assembly
CBJ Manager's Office
CBJ Planning Commission
Scott Ciambor, Planning Manager, CBJ Community Development
Shelly Klawonn, Senior Buyer, CBJ Purchasing Division
SVdP Board of Directors
RLC Partner Agencies
RLC Warming Shelter Supporters

Attachment: [RLC draft CWES bid](#)

Visit warmingshelter.org to:

- Send email letters CBJ officials
- Contact CBJ officials directly
- Sign the online petition
- [Download a blank petition](#)