

FIRST AND CENTER
Pastor's Blog
December 11, 2018

This is a picture of a cardboard structure that a homeless man erects every night at the front porch of our Church House. Every morning, our sextons dismantle it so people can get in the building. They have to be careful, because sometimes this man, and those who erect similar structures in front of the Meeting House, leave drug paraphernalia and human waste.



This winter, we have seen a tremendous uptick in the numbers of homeless, mentally ill, and/or addicted folk in downtown Hartford. We pray for them. We struggle with the need to keep our staff, visitors, members, groups who use the building, and our children safe, while also seeking to follow Jesus' call to love our neighbors as ourselves. The shelters are all full in Hartford. The warming center does not open for another few days and the temp last night went down to 13 degrees.

We need to advocate with city and state for more shelters, supportive housing, and rehab centers. In the meantime, what shall we do? Please pray for those who sleep at our doors, and for us, that we may faithfully respond to all the challenges this situation presents. And -- write to the Mayor and Governor to urge help for these vulnerable residents of our city. I will.

~ The Rev. Shelly Stackhouse,
Transitional Minister