

# Resources

## 1. Websites and institutes thinking about Faith based housing and redevelopment

Enterprise Community Development: <https://www.enterprisecommunity.org/>

Enterprise works to offer solutions through participating in policy discussions and program funding assistance, capital through investment in homes and communities, and community development through listening to the needs of residents. Enterprise follows a cohort model, which brings about ten congregations together to focus on the “how to” of housing development. Enterprise also offers a useful guide in [this PDF](#), and hosts an annual virtual conference on Faith-Based development and progress on the public policy front, planned for December 5, 2024. Additionally, Enterprise offers extensive loans for community partners and investors to assist in affordable housing development and preservation through their Community Development Financial Institution.

Sympara: <https://www.sympara.org/home>

Sympara is highly focused on discernment and working with faith-organizations to decide if affordable housing development is the right decision for a faith community. Sympara operates using a cohort model plus offers individual church discernment consultation. They are based in North Carolina. This resource is especially useful for faith organizations who need assistance with discernment, but are not yet ready to embark on development.

Rooted Good: <https://www.rootedgood.org/>

Rooted Good is based in Wisconsin and offers a variety of educational materials to congregations reworking their assets and discerning if faith land housing is a viable option. Rooted Good has prepared a self-guided course for congregations called the Good Futures Accelerator that answers questions like how to rent, develop, and sell. See: <https://www.rootedgood.org/good-futures>. This group also produced *Gone For Good?* a useful book described in more detail below for faith communities.

Notre Dame Church Properties Initiative: <https://churchproperties.nd.edu/>

A project of the University of Notre Dame, the Church Properties Initiative (CPI) aids churches in proactively stewarding their property for sustainable development. The CPI conducts comprehensive research on faith-housing issues and publishes it on their website, including case studies and a comprehensive list of church redevelopments across the country, and many other issues. The CPI offers a fall research conference on Notre Dame’s campus, and recordings on its website.

Partners for Sacred Places: <https://sacredplaces.org/>

With a specific focus on historic sacred spaces, Partners for Sacred Places offers grants to historic churches for restoration purposes in partnership with the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Partners for Sacred Places also have specific programs

available for Nordic Churches. Partners offers consulting for faith communities looking to transition their spaces, along with funding for feasibility studies and historic preservation.

Ormond Center: <https://ormondcenter.com/>

In partnership with Duke Divinity School in Durham, NC, the Ormond Center is staffed by practitioners, researchers, pastors, writers, and entrepreneurs to provide guidance to faith organizations interested in converting their spaces and conducting research in the field. The Ormond Center also offers classes through their Church and Community Placemaking Lab, which has three gatherings in North Carolina, and seven meetings on Zoom. Link to the Lab: <https://ormondcenter.com/church-community-placemaking-lab>

Trinity Wall Street (Mission Real Estate): <https://trinitywallstreet.org/grants-partners/mission-real-estate-development>

Trinity is an Episcopalian church in New York City that empowers other parishes within the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion to develop sustainably on church property and to maximize community impact. Trinity offers feasibility study grants, grants for development after the conclusion of a feasibility study, and real estate advising to interested Episcopalian churches. This resource is focused on **Episcopalian churches** interested in mission real estate development, but sometimes works with churches from other denominations. Trinity Wall Street also sponsors an online conference for congregations interested in mission real estate, planned for November 13 & 14 of 2024.

Bricks and Mortals (NYC): <https://www.bricksandmortals.org/>

Bricks and Mortals is a member organization for religious professionals and advocacy organizations in New York City. Their website includes case studies of faith land redevelopment across the country, in the areas of housing, health, economic development, arts, and community. Bricks and Mortals hosts an annual Faith-Based Affordable Housing Summit and has recordings available on its website from other housing events they hosted over Zoom. You can see their events (including recordings of past events) at: <https://www.bricksandmortals.org/events>

## 2. Books for more information

*Gone for Good?: Negotiating the Coming Wave of Church Property Transition*

This publication, produced by Rooted Good and edited by Mark Elsdon, includes essays and insights from pastors, scholars, developers, and urban planners on how to transform congregational properties to serve neighborhoods. This book seeks to empower churches and communities to use congregational land that would otherwise be sold or repurposed to carry out a mission of good rather than one of private interest.

In *Gone for Good?* practical and logistical questions such as how to navigate zoning laws, how to partner with Indigenous Peoples to return land, and assessing community impacts of churches as well as many others are answered by experts in the field. Some congregations have also found an earlier book by Mark Elsdon useful: “We Aren’t Broke: Uncovering Hidden Resources for Mission and Ministry”.

#### The Color of Law: *A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America*

Written by a leading authority on housing policy, Richard Rothstein, *The Color of Law* delves into the history of segregation in American cities. Rothstein disproves the myth of *de facto* segregation (segregation caused by personal prejudice, income disparity, and private institutions like banks and real estate agencies), and argues that it was instead *de jure* segregation (segregation caused and promoted by national, state, and local policy decisions) that still results in discriminatory patterns today. Rothstein describes the destruction of previously integrated neighborhoods, the creation of segregated public housing through government policies, and the impacts of the 1968 Fair Housing Act, as well as many other impactful moments and mechanisms in American housing.

#### Evicted: *Poverty and Profit in the American City*

Authored by Princeton sociologist, Matthew Desmond, *Evicted* follows eight families in the lowest-income areas of Milwaukee, WI during the 2007-2008 financial crisis and its aftermath. These families all struggle to pay rent to their landlords, and many face eviction. Desmond’s fieldwork highlights the issues of extreme poverty, affordable housing, and economic exploitation.

#### Transitioning Older and Historic Sacred Places: *Community-Minded Approaches for Congregations and Judicatories*

This guide, published by Partners for Sacred Places, takes a serious look at the reality of religious properties. *Transitioning Older and Historic Sacred Places* seeks to assist congregations in answering how their spaces can best serve the needs of their communities, with special attention to the cultural value added by the age and character of their spaces.

### 3. Other housing partners (for information and advocacy)

- Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy
  - <https://virginiainterfaithcenter.org/>
  - Member congregations of all religious faiths across the Commonwealth
  - Engages in legislative and community advocacy for racial equity, justice reform, affordable housing, economic justice, and health equity

- Hosts legislative action days to get members and students involved with its issues
- Virginia Housing Alliance
  - <https://vahousingalliance.org/>
  - Richmond-based, member organization but collaborates throughout the state
  - Participates in legislative advocacy to improve housing equity
  - Offers conferences and forums on housing access
  - Link to upcoming events page: <https://vahousingalliance.org/get-involved/calendar/>
- Northern Virginia Affordable Housing Alliance
  - <https://nvaha.org/>
  - Serves Northern Virginia and collaborates with Northern Virginian nonprofits, for-profits, and government agencies
  - Conducts original research and provides educational outreach on housing needs in the region
- YIMBY (Yes in My Backyard)
  - YIMBY is a grassroots collective dedicated to organizing for increased housing development and affordable housing
  - Mostly focused on increasing housing supply, without regards to affordability
  - Local chapters:
    - Northern Virginia: <https://www.yimbysofnova.org/>
    - Hampton Roads: <https://www.yimbyhamptonroads.org/>
    - Richmond: <https://www.rvayimby.org/>
- Virginia Poverty Law Center
  - <https://vplc.org/>
  - Offers legal advice and representation to those struggling in housing as well as many other issues some of which include consumer and family law
  - Advocates at the Virginia Legislature in support of tenant protections (among other issues)
  - Eviction defense center, which answers questions and provides advice to those facing eviction or potential eviction: <https://www.evictiondefensecenter.org/>
- HOME (Housing Opportunities Made Equal) of Virginia
  - <https://homeofva.org/>
  - Richmond-based, offers HUD-approved housing counseling assistance, fair housing violation legal advice and representation, and foreclosure prevention statewide
  - Virginia's only HUD-affiliated Fair Housing Initiative (FHI)
  - HOME conducts fair housing tests, which you can learn more about and apply to be a tester for here: <https://homeofva.org/get-involved/become-a-tester/>

- HOME also participates in legislative advocacy efforts, and offers talks (primarily in Richmond) on fair housing issues, upcoming events link here: <https://homeofva.org/events/>
- Housing Forward Virginia, including Zoning Atlas
  - <https://housingforwardva.org/>
  - Housing Forward is a collaboration between key stakeholders in the housing sector including nonprofits, local governments, and businesses working to promote affordable housing options across the Commonwealth and share policy recommendations to our leaders
  - Virginia Zoning Atlas
    - The Zoning Atlas is an interactive online map that currently covers Hampton Roads, Northern Virginia, and Greater Richmond. It offers insights on land use and accessibility to development.
    - Information: <https://housingforwardva.org/focused-initiatives/zoning/atlas/>
    - Explore the Zoning Atlas: <https://www.zoningatlas.org/virginia>

#### 4. Religious development partners and resources

- Virginia Episcopal Real Estate Partners
  - Based in Richmond (grew out of the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia, formerly Virginia Diocesan Homes)
  - Helps congregations discern how to use land for mission purposes, including affordable housing
  - <https://episcopalvirginia.org/organizations/homes/>
- Commonwealth Catholic Charities Housing Corporation
  - Based in Richmond, covers most of Virginia
  - <https://www.cccofva.org/ahd>
- Wesley Community Development Corporation
  - Based in North Carolina, covers the whole mid-Atlantic region
  - Primarily works with United Methodist churches
  - <https://wesleycdc.com/>
- United Church of Christ Church Building and Loan Fund
  - <https://cblfund.org/>
- “How to Develop Well” from the Presbyterian Church (USA) and Rooted Good
  - [https://www.presbyterianmission.org/wp-content/uploads/2024.05\\_PCUSA\\_Rooted-Good\\_How-to-Develop-Well\\_US-Letter\\_v4-SCREEN.pdf](https://www.presbyterianmission.org/wp-content/uploads/2024.05_PCUSA_Rooted-Good_How-to-Develop-Well_US-Letter_v4-SCREEN.pdf)
- Crossing Capital Group
  - Offers thoughts on how to revitalize congregations, including affordable housing and responding to other community needs
  - <https://www.crossingcapitalgroup.com/>

- Nonprofit housing development arm, Oikos Development (<https://oikosdevelopment.org/>)

## 5. Other nonprofit development partners in Virginia

- Affordable Homes & Communities (<https://www.ahcinc.org/>)
  - Serves the entire NOVA region, developing affordable housing and offering resident services focused on youth development, community building, and economic mobility
- Better Housing Coalition (<https://www.betterhousingcoalition.org/>)
  - Serves the greater Richmond area, develops affordable housing and restores neighborhoods
  - Offers services to residents including youth academic enrichment programs and financial support for higher education as well as many others
- Community Land Trusts
  - A model for affordable homeownership in which land is owned by a nonprofit, and families can purchase the house. This decreases the cost of the house, and allows the family to build equity
  - Virginia Statewide Community Land Trust serves the Commonwealth in communities where there is no active CLT, in partnership with Habitat for Humanity Virginia. VSCLT was featured in a PBS Documentary series called “Life in the Heart Land.”
  - Regional Land Trusts
    - Maggie Walker Community Land Trust serves the Richmond region as a partner and developer.
    - Piedmont Community Land Trust serves the Charlottesville region.
    - Lighthouse Beloved Community CLT is building a new CLT neighborhood in Lynchburg City.
    - New River Home Trust operates as a program of Community Housing Partners and serves Blacksburg and Montgomery County.
    - Charity Means Love Foundation in Norfolk/Virginia Beach is bringing together partners and looking to be operational soon: <https://www.facebook.com/CharityMeansLoveFoundation/>
- Habitat for Humanity (<https://www.habitat.org/>)
  - Operating nationwide to help build housing from the ground up
  - Many local branches throughout Virginia
  - Works on a model of “sweat equity”, where families with low incomes help build the house, and receive a zero-percent interest mortgage
- LISC (Local Initiatives Support Corporation)
  - Local branches in a national network supporting community development with a focus on affordable housing
  - LISC of Virginia (<https://www.lisc.org/virginia/>) serves the Richmond area
  - LISC of Hampton Roads (<https://www.lisc.org/hampton-roads/>) serves Hampton Roads

- Piedmont Housing Alliance (<https://piedmonthousingalliance.org/>)
  - Serves the city of Charlottesville and Albemarle, Greene, Fluvanna, Louisa, and Nelson counties developing affordable housing, and offering HUD-certified housing counseling
- Project: HOMES (<https://www.projecthomes.org/>)
  - Richmond based
  - Focused on restoring and replacing manufactured and mobile homes
- True Ground Housing Partners (formerly Arlington Partnership for Affordable Housing) (<https://truegroundhousing.org/>)
  - Serves the DC metro area with sustainable housing development and resident services
- Wesley Housing (<https://wesleyhousing.org/>)
  - Based in Northern Virginia; focused on developing affordable housing and resident services