How a church can partner

Ideas only — not a signup, and not a promise from this site.

The most useful thing a church can often do is point people to help that already exists, and walk with them while they take the next step. You do not need a new program to be useful.

Point people to existing help

- Use gfhelp.org together, or call 211 (or 406-268-1337).
- For housing intake in Great Falls, call Opportunities, Inc. at 406-761-0310 — the Coordinated Entry line.
- For a bed or a meal tonight, start with the Rescue Mission. See the contacts handout.
- Don’t try to become a shadow shelter or a food bank unless you are truly set up for it and already working with the agencies that do this work.

Meals

The Rescue Mission already serves lunch at 12:15 PM and dinner at 6:15 PM every day. Call to confirm times. Set Free Montana serves a Saturday dinner at 5:30 PM. If your church hosts a meal, pick a time that fills a gap, say the time clearly, and don’t require worship in exchange for food.

Rides

A ride to a shelter, to Opportunities, Inc., or to a clinic can matter more than a new program. A few local churches say to call about a ride — call first, and don’t assume a ride is waiting. Go in pairs. Don’t offer a ride if you feel unsafe.

Coat, sock, glove, and blanket drives

These are useful in a Montana winter. Call a place that already serves people — for example the Rescue Mission or the Angel Room — and ask what they can actually use and how to drop it off. Don’t invent a drop-off that isn’t real.

Vouchers for clothing and household goods

Emilie Center offers free clothing, furniture, baby items, and household goods, and it accepts vouchers from partners such as a church, Opportunities, Inc., Salvation Army, or the Rescue Mission. If your church wants to be a voucher partner, call Emilie Center at 406-771-6695 and ask how. Don’t assume you already are one.

Volunteer where the work already happens

Call the agency and ask what they actually need. Don’t show up unannounced with a large group, and don’t start a parallel list of phone numbers that can go out of date. Keep a simple church plan: who to call, where these handouts live, and how to use gfhelp.org together.

There is no fee and no sign-up through gfhelp.org. These are ideas you can take or leave.