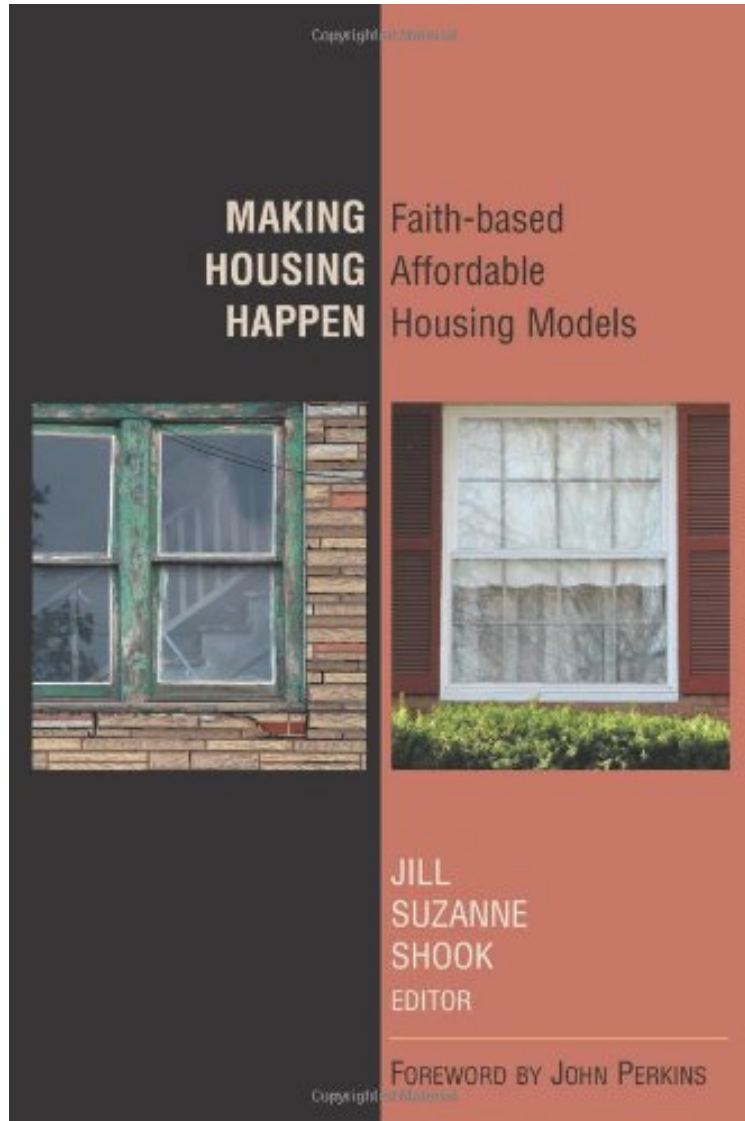


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Making Housing Happen: Faith-Based Affordable Housing Models

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From Brand: Chalice Press : Making Housing Happen: Faith-Based Affordable Housing Models before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Making Housing Happen: Faith-Based Affordable Housing Models:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A must read for anyone in community development By corinn01 This book was a required reading for a class and I actually enjoyed it. The housing models presented in the book are very easy to understand and Shook does a great job of showing "case studies" of organizations/ministries that

have carried out each one successfully. I was definitely taking notes as I read. Also, it is a faith-based book, but I highly recommend it to anyone concerned with [affordable] housing or redeveloping blighted communities. 0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Fabulous Book Full of Strong and Valuable Examples By Richard C This is a fabulous book, full of great examples of making housing happen. I particularly love Chapter II titled "Ownership, Land and Jubilee Justice" which gives us many insights from the Bible on the subject of justice for all e.g. the Jubilee law. It also reminds us of Jesus's abhorrence of greed and the exploitation of the poor and his own ever-present focus on the need to show justice to all. The book correctly points out that many common translations of the Bible have incorrectly substituted the word "judgement" for what should read as "justice", and which opened up many new insights for me in particular. The great examples of creating affordable housing in this book include a chapter by the founder of Habitat for Humanity, and chapter by other tireless leaders in the affordable housing movement. The book also describes in good detail the history of housing initiatives in the country and abroad, the successes, failures, best practices and so on. For anybody interested in creating affordable housing, especially from a faith-based perspective this book is a must read. 14 of 22 people found the following review helpful. Worldly-based housing affordability models By Wayne Lusvardi Through her new book, Jill Shook, a housing activist in Pasadena, California, has become the de facto spokesperson of the Evangelical Left's new social movement to combat the so-called "affordable housing crisis." The book jacket contains endorsements by many leaders of the Evangelical Left - Tony Campolo, Ronald J. Sider, and oddly has a preface by Dr. John Perkins, who doesn't fit the label. I found Shook's book problematic on both empirical and theological grounds. In Shook's hometown of Pasadena the reality of housing affordability is the reverse of what Shook portrays. One-third of the population by the U.S. Census is low income, mostly migrants from Mexico (God bless them). If there truly was an "affordable housing crisis" for the poor, how could one third of the populous afford housing in such an upscale suburban community? By doubling-up in housing and gobbling up the lowest rungs on the housing affordability ladder, migrants have driven up rents, driven the working class out of affordable housing and driven the homeless out of former flophouses. Contra Shook's notion that scattered gentrification drives the poor out of affordable housing, California court decisions, urban riots partly fomented by those on the political Left, anti-landlord enforcement of eviction and relocation laws, and rent control have made migrants into a protected class in the first concentric ring of neighborhoods surrounding Los Angeles. Moreover, Shook has no comprehension that her advocacy of inclusionary housing, "smart-growth," rent control, landlord divestiture of properties to the poor, and her opposition to gentrification actually will worsen the affordable housing crisis rather than lessen it. Many of the housing projects described in Shook's book entailed the removal of older, "affordable" housing units at lower densities and replacement with luxury housing at higher densities, with some units set aside for low income occupants subsidized by the rents of other tenants. Since when do we consider the entitlement to luxury housing (or a luxury car or gourmet food) a religious or Christian obligation? Shook and her co-authors fail to tell readers that nearly all of the "faith-based" affordable housing case studies in her book relied on government funding. Theologically problematic is Shook's disguising of the neo-Marxist advocacy model of Saul Alinsky and the Industrial Areas Foundation as what she calls the Biblical "Nehemiah Strategy" (Chap. 15). The theological underpinning for her cafeteria of affordable housing models is mostly based on the Old Testament concept of "justice," by which she means wealth redistribution by coercive government. The highly selective use of Christian scripture in the book to support secular political methods and agendas is problematic. Shook is oblivious to Jesus' observation that "man does not live by bread (or housing) alone." As such she doesn't recognize that religiosity (i.e., Max Weber's Protestant Work Ethic) can be conducive to affording housing in a capitalist society. Her advocacy of compulsory "inclusionary housing," which diminishes the value of land of small property owners (not real estate developers) without "just" compensation, is contrary to the commandment "thou shall not steal." Even Shook's Biblical preference for homeless migrants runs against the moral of the scriptural story of King David confiscating a sheep from a rich man to give to a traveler in II Samuel 12. The short chapter by Millard Fuller on Habitat for Humanity is worthwhile. A Christian approach to such a complex issue as housing affordability in a modern technological society should entail the necessity of economic and sociological competency; but also an understanding that even our best efforts may lead to unintended consequences for which we need humility, grace and repentance not moral superiority and works righteousness.

With the acute need for affordable housing a national crisis we need workable solutions. In the U.S. there are an estimated 3.5 million homeless men, women and children each year. One in four U.S. households reported spending more on their housing than is considered affordable (30 percent of household income according to the federal government). This crisis affects very low- to middle-income households and companies unable to pay salaries that adequately cover housing costs and therefore cannot recruit and retain their brightest and best employees. Churches are effectively addressing the housing crisis from Washington State where the largest apple producer has built 150 single-family homes for their employees to New York City where an alliance of 60 churches has now built 4,000 homes. In New York, the investment of low-income homeowners has transformed Brooklyn and South Bronx, dramatically decreasing crime, recreating the kind community pride that continues to infuse health and vitality to all sectors of those communities public schools, local businesses, and thriving congregations. The national affordable housing crisis

is something congregations and faith-based groups often want to address, yet feel powerless to do so in the face of this daunting and confusing problem. *Making Housing Happen* provides workable solutions illustrated by true stories that inspire as well as provide a theological basis for a housing ministry. Each story features a different model of how affordability was achieved, a different denomination, and different geographic locations that span the United States. This book is about vision and faithtrusting God to do more than any church imagined in meeting the needs of homeless families, the working poor, and even middle-income earners such as teachers and police officers, who cannot afford to live in the city they serve. Its three parts, "The Foundation," "The Tangible Structures," and "The Intangible Structures" motivate the reader to action.

From the Author Pasadena is known for the Rose Parade, its old money, its architecture, the Norton Simon Museum of Art, and some of the best higher learning intuitions in the country, including Cal Tech and Fuller Theological Seminary. It is not known for what I found when I moved to Northwest Pasadena. I found a city that struggles with housing affordability, overcrowding and segregated neighborhoods. Few notice that beneath Pasadenas urban forest, some stately old Pasadena homes house up to ten families. Shrubs and freeway streetscapes hide the 1,200 homeless living in my city (54% of them women and children). That number doesnt include the 600 plus children in our school district considered homeless. In our city half the 2006 State of the Schools address was about the need for affordable housing. Pasadena is closing four of our public schools this fall, primarily due to residents wanting to purchase and cannot due to soaring rents and home prices. (Unlike LA and Beverly Hills, Pasadena has no rent stabilization). The families of many of these students struggle daily to make ends meet. It is for these children that my heart is broken. It is for them that I wrote and edited this book. Im in awe of the amazing practitioners who created award winning best practice models featured in this book. They wrote of their own journey into affordable housing, how their congregations became engaged, how they funded their projects, the reality and lessons learned. In working with these authors, I learned of the national scope of this crisis and what God is doing in churches across the country to house those in need. The research for this book has changed my own life. My role now is that of a catalyst to bring about housing justice. God has raise up a team of amazing leaders, and together we seek to help the poor find a voice and help the body of Christ to live out Jesus stated mission: "to bring Good News to the poor." From the Back Cover "Jill Shook has collected wise and astute commentary from the experts in the field of housing. Together they offer seldom-considered theological and biblical insights that we need to motivate us to address a crisis in America. Church people need to do something about this crisis, and this book will aid them immensely if they are willing to take up the challenge outlined in these pages." Tony Campolo, author of *Speaking My Mind* and *Which Jesus?* "The lack of affordable housing is one of the major contributing factors to poverty in the U.S. *Making Housing Happen* collects the stories of diverse local faith-based programs that are making a difference in their communities. I commend it to all Christians looking for ways to work at improving the conditions of people in poverty which should be all Christians." Jim Wallis, editor, *Sojourners* "Making Housing Happen is an excellent and greatly needed text! It is a book that will be most welcome in many circles of readers who care about the housing crisis in America. Besides providing a solid historical, theological, and human rights rationale for affordable housing, what makes this book special is its comprehensive and paradigmatic models of faith-based and church-oriented approaches for a housing ministry. Its in-depth, faith-filled stories and testimonies of successful housing ministries should prove inspirational, instructive, and challenging to all congregations endeavoring to seek the peace of the city. (Jer.29:7)." Eldin Villafane, Center for Urban Ministerial Education (CUME), Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary "An invitation to imagine how the provision of safe, affordable, energy-efficient, and human-scale housing might be liberated from the dictatorship of market forces to serve as a sign of Gods new order. I can think of few issues more urgent, and few books which interpret it with such theological wisdom." Richard Slimbach, Azusa Pacific University "In this volume, Jill Shook brings together information about the breadth and severity of our national shortage of affordable housing with the biblical themes and mandates that make this very much the churchs business. A wealth of contributors of diverse talents and broad experience share the stories of successful, church-based projects to provide alternatives, along with the insights gained therein. It reminds one of the Johannine admonition, Let us love not in words on the tongue, but in deed and truth." Sondra Wheeler, Wesley Theological Seminary "Most Americans, particularly those in the religious sector, would be deeply moved to learn that 1.37 million American children are homeless. It is indeed a vulgar society that does not safeguard its young. Coming straight from the Word of life, Jill Shook shakes the foundations of our lives in *Making Housing Happen*, a work that moves from description of the problem to prescription for the problem. Ours is not a lack of know-how so much as a lack of will. If we will it, the Creator will breathe into the clay of commitment the wherewithal to make a garden existence. Jill Shook invites us to inhale." Rev. Cecil L. "Chip" Murray, Minister Emeritus of First A.M.E. Church, Los Angeles and Tanzy Chair of Christian Ethics at the University of Southern California "This is the best book Ive read on housing for years, probably since Bowerlys classic *The Poor House*. The issues emerge with clarity. The amazing range of resources and documentation is superb. Above all, the theological vision comes with power and passion. Somehow Shook has gotten some of the most experienced people in the whole urban world to share their practical and inspiring stories in successive chapters, making it a must-read for

anyone serving our Lord in cities today." Ray Bakke, Bakke Graduate University "An important book on an urgent topic. May the church answer this powerful call to action." Ronald J. Sider, president, Evangelicals for Social Action

About the Author Jill Suzanne Shook is a doctoral candidate in "Transformational Leadership for the Global City," Bakke Graduate School. Among her extensive and devoted work in support of the underserved, Shook designed a program for Food for the Hungry International, an effort utilizing work-teams from Berkeley to Harvard to serve developing nations and she is now engaged in community organizing.