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Georgia church uses tiny houses to build neighborhood of hope

By [Jason Queen](#), posted [February 18, 2025](#) in [Churches and Ministry](#)



Tiny homes in Pleasant Grove Baptist Church's Neighborhood of Hope in Bowman, Ga. Submitted photo

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BOWMAN, Ga. — Across the street from Pleasant Grove Baptist Church in Bowman stand five tiny houses filled with stories of heartache and tragedy. Pleasant Grove hopes to use the buildings to turn them into stories of hope and recovery.

Eleven years ago, Senior Pastor Chris Pritchett heard a call to minister to first responders, EMTs and firefighters. The Neighborhood of Hope ministry followed a few years later and currently serves fire victims.

“We are to love people, and we started going after people,” said Pritchett. “When someone gets burned out of their house, if they qualify, we put them in one of our houses until they get back on their feet or they go back to a home.”

The Pleasant Grove Road neighborhood, built on church fundraising and volunteers, is in a community with approximately 600 residents, Pritchett said. Stays are typically 90 days. The neighborhood consists of three houses of 480 square feet (2 bed, 1 bath) and two houses of 400 square feet (1 bed, 1 bath). One of each is handicapped accessible. There is also a laundry building and a homeless shelter for men called Adams Place currently under construction.

Residents don't have to be believers to stay, but they are going to hear about the Lord.

“Basically what we do is we go by and see them and we invite them to church or we get to sit down with them and talk to them about the Lord,” Pritchett said. “We’ve had quite a few people saved from those houses that have come to church. These houses stay full.”

At first, Pritchett, a volunteer firefighter, said he and others began taking a trailer to the scene of fires to provide shoes, clothes and gift cards for victims and their families. Fire victims are put up in a hotel for a night and never heard from again, he said. The homes are a next step for some after the hotel.

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One current resident, Dusty Neese, can't say enough about the place.



"They knew nothing about me. They have helped me so much," he said. He arrived at the neighborhood in early 2024 after a series of life-changing events. First, he suffered severe injuries in a car accident, which claimed the life of his daughter. Then, his Hartwell, Ga., home burned the day he was leaving for rehab from a North Charleston, S.C., hospital.

In a wheelchair and with little to no help before moving in, Neese was made to feel like family by Pritchett, Assistant Pastor John Todd, who is the director of the neighborhood, and other church members. They check on him and make sure he has food. He said he's in the best environment he's ever been in before.

"If I need to talk to somebody, I don't have to go call somebody or go 5 or 10 miles to another place to talk to a preacher or a counselor," Neese said. "I've got everything right here. John is available. Chris is available."

Neese believes his time there has taught him to stay strong and positive, saying, "God loves you and there is always help."

The under construction homeless shelter is located next to the neighborhood homes. It will have three bedrooms, a kitchen, showers, a washroom and a living room.

Pritchett said more growth is possible. "We've got the land to do it. The need changes all the time now. Our MO is instead of saying, 'This is what we are going to do,' let's find out what's going on and try to meet people where they are."

Pritchett hopes residents see people that love Jesus and are real. "I want them to know that we are no different than they are. Our ultimate goal is for all of them to go to heaven," he said. "They are not going to do that without the relationships being built."

Pritchett said churches must be willing to receive people who aren't like them for these types of ministries to succeed.

"[Trust] is a big deal right now," he said, "because maybe they have been burned, so when they start trusting you, then that opens the door for you."

This article was originally appeared at [The Christian Index](#).

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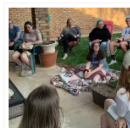
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