

# 1. New Trend – Opening Number

\*There's a new trend  
On the horizon  
Supporting  
Affordable Housing

*\*Refrain*

Do you believe in equality?  
Do you believe in dignity?  
Do you believe in equal pay?  
Do you believe that there's a better way?

*\*Refrain*

Have you ever shivered through the night?  
Do you have the power to make the wrong right?  
Do you understand that everybody can care for each other  
Like sister and brother?

*\*Refrain*

*(Bridge)* Supporting  
Affordable housing

*\*Refrain*



Artis Swann and Cast  
Lyrics & Music by Christian Foushee-Green

## 2. Welcome to Church Mound

With this soaring harmony, our full cast welcomes you to Church Mound – a fictional town that may feel familiar, and whose issues are all too universal.



After this “visitors center” welcome, each of our distinct ensembles welcomes you to Church Mound, describing this place they call home (the way they see it). The ensembles wrote these lyrics together, responding to the prompt: **“How would your character in the musical describe the Town of Church Mound?”** Christian then worked with each group to put these words to music, coming up with 3 totally different styles that set a clear tone for each group.

### 3. A Great Place to Grow Old

*(Welcome to Church Mound from NIMBY Ensemble)*

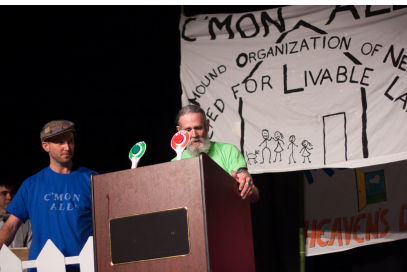
Welcome to Church Mound  
A liberal place without big city issues  
Olympic sized pools, kids can swim free  
Where even our trees have PhD's  
A town where salamander lives matter

Withy highly educated people, the most per capita  
Trees and doctors line our streets  
Even our bees have PhD's  
Cozy and safe with manicured lawns  
Students, yoga, Carolina blue skies

Welcoming and diverse  
A great place to be (a kid!)  
A great place to thrive  
A great place to grow old

#### **What's the NIMBY Ensemble?**

The NIMBY (or Not In My BackYard) Ensemble is a local advocacy group that all too often says, "We need affordable housing all over this town... just not *here*." In theory, of course they support affordable housing – but when it comes down to it, other values tend to win out.



*Lyrics collectively created by Ensemble  
Music by Christian Foushee-Green*

## 4. All Are Welcome Here (Welcome to Church Mound from Council Ensemble)



We're not like any Southern town you've seen before,  
We've got inclusion and diversity at our core  
The brightest minds, technological finds  
Research galore, and a very high community health score.

Built upon heritage and history,  
That's the soul and the bones of our community.  
This livable town's got a lot in a small package,  
All are welcome here.

*Lyrics collectively created by Ensemble  
Music by Christian Foushee-Green*



## 5. Holdin' On

*(Welcome to Church Mound from Advocacy Ensemble)*

SOLOIST

We welcome you to Church Mound  
It's a place of diverse opportunity  
And extreme indifference to poverty  
It's great to be here, an' stay awhile  
But keep a low profile

I'm working with my fixed income  
Trying to make it on a low income  
When some of us don't have no income  
We got to keep holdin' on

*Soloist takes us to church!*

### **What's the Advocacy Ensemble?**

The Advocacy Ensemble is a group of residents who have faced immense challenges finding affordable and safe housing. Through song and story, they are "trying to make people see" what it's like for the 1 in 5 residents who live here and earn less than 30% of AMI – those with "fixed income, low income, or no income."

ENSEMBLE

*Church Mound  
Opportunity  
Poverty  
Stay awhile  
Low profile*

*Fixed income  
Low income  
No income  
Holdin' on*

*(Refrain)*

*Our diversity is:  
Fixed income  
Low income  
No income  
Holdin' on!*

*Artis Swann and Advocacy Ensemble  
Lyrics created by Ensemble  
Music by Christian Foushee-Green*



## 6. You Stepped In

Sometimes...

Sometimes I feel I've lost all control  
Sometimes I feel no hope in my soul  
I'm in the midst of a struggle  
Crashing into each other  
Would you step in?  
We'd be so grateful if you'd step in

In the shelter we have plenty of mess  
But where can I, where can I find success?  
I'm sending out an SOS  
Would you step in?  
Because I need you, would you step in?

"You have no idea what it's like to wake up in the shelter every morning." With this declaration, actor Ronald Carnes takes us into this scene, depicting mornings in the shelter while Yvette Mathews sings this emotive piece.

The melody and refrain were written by Christian, and ensemble members added lyrics to capture the emotion of this scene.



Sometimes, my sisters and my brothers  
We're pushing and we're pulling, and nobody's willing  
Would you step in?  
We'd be so grateful if you would just step in

Sometimes we struggle to stay alive  
Mental illness, diabetes, heart disease, and high blood pressure  
Would you step in?  
We'd be so grateful, if you would just step in

Sometimes I was lost without a friend  
Sometimes I was wondering, is it gonna end?  
But you stepped in  
We'd be so grateful if you would just step in  
Would you step in?



*Yvette Mathews*  
*Lyrics created by ensemble*  
*Music by Christian Foushee-Green*

## 7. I Believe

I believe (*vocal echo*)  
In affordable housing  
Yes, we believe  
In affordable housing  
Issue #1  
On the campaigns we've run  
(and won!)

\*Affordable housing  
Without a question  
Is the biggest challenge  
Facing our town,  
And without a question  
Is the most  
complex issue  
Facing our town

It requires a  
Comprehensive,  
Holistic,  
Collaborative  
Approach

No one solution  
No easy solution  
But working together,  
With birds of a feather  
With all of our partners  
And all of our neighbors  
Pooling our resources  
(We already invest a  
great deal of resources!)  
For affordable housing

\**Refrain*





So what do we need?

We need...

Concrete goals

Multi-faceted approaches

Strong collaboration

A long-range investment plan

Mixed-use designs

Of the market-rate kind

Public-private partnerships

With reduced development restrictions

More density

'Cause no one entity

Can solve this alone

Yes, we believe

In affordable housing

To create this show-tune, we pulled quotes from campaign speeches by local elected officials. These were compiled into lyrics by Maggie West, and then set to melody and rhythm through a collaborative workshop.

*Vocals by Cast*

*Music composed & arranged  
Christian Foushee-Green*

## 8. Something for Everyone

\*We've got something for everyone  
Something for everyone under the sun  
We've got something for everyone

*(Councilwoman interjects)*

We're proposing 200 luxury apartments  
With pickleball for the residents  
With solar panels on the roof  
Just marvel at our progressiveness!

\*(Chorus)

And that's not all!



This song introduces us to two new characters – a developer team interested in building mixed-use market-rate housing.

Lyrics were inspired by transcripts from local public hearings with developers, and turned into this catchy tune to capture the manner in which these negotiations all too often gloss over affordability in favor of flashier community benefits.

With green space and dog parks  
that are open to all  
And for the salamanders,  
we'll preserve a waterfall  
We'll have commercial space  
on the ground floor  
Boosting tax revenues  
without a big-box store

Aren't we amazing?  
You might not think it's feasible  
There's something for everyone

\*Chorus

And that's not all!

We'll have – 4 whole units of affordable housing  
(for families earning 80% of AMI, that's area median income  
That oughta do it!)

Aren't we amazing?

\*Chorus

(Advocacy Ensemble interjects; back-and-forth)  
*So how exactly do you think a bunch of luxury apartments will  
create more affordable housing?*

Well, it trickles down,  
it trickles down,  
it trickles down, there's  
something for everyone

It's the basic tenets of economics!

Aren't we amazing?

\*Chorus

Aren't we amazing?



*Abigail Washburn, Juno Fleck, Yvette Mathews & Cast  
Composed by Abigail Washburn, Kai Welch,  
Maggie West & George Barrett;  
Arranged by Christian Foushee-Green*



## 9. Bench Blues

I came to this bench to rest my head  
And this bench, it became my bed  
I'm out here all alone  
This bench is the only one I can rely on  
Until I get myself together, together again

So now if this bench belongs to anyone  
It belongs to me  
Wintertimes, summertimes,  
Only place I have to be



Every night I take off my shoes  
And for just a moment I'm free  
Hoping nobody makes me leave

Please, please, please  
Please, please, please  
Just let me be



The sign says closed after dark  
But you never know around this park  
Can't do much sleepin'  
Don't know if evil's creepin'  
I wake up ready to drop  
Weary mind, and my thoughts won't stop  
Deadbeat, dead tired, but I'm not dead yet

Surely there's gonna come a time  
When I'll make it off this bench, you bet  
Until I get myself together,  
Until I get myself together again

Lyrics were crafted through an image theater workshop, which led to a free-writing session, which then in turn fueled a ballad-writing exercise. Finally, our vocalist and musicians built the draft lyrics into this bluesy ballad.

*Synthia Bethea*  
*Music by*  
*Christian Foushee-Green*

## 10. Something Has Got to Give



I've been searching all over  
Trying to find a place to stay  
Seems like nothing ever come my way  
I've been trying, trying to hold on  
Sometimes I feel like I'm giving up  
On everything  
That's when I got to say

Something has got to give (x4)

My credit is going down  
Seems like life is trying to get me down

Lyrics were born through improvisation by Artis Swann, with the title created first through a theater activity around the barriers to housing, which then inspired a whole movement workshop to collaboratively devise choreography, with music and movement responding dynamically to one another. This final song and show-stopping scene solidified over the course of many months.

I can't get no help  
I got nobody  
Got to depend on somebody  
To help me make it through

Something has got to give (x4)

*(Bridge)*

Something has got to give (x3)

I said, something has got to give  
I'm doing the best I can  
I'm fighting out here  
Does anybody care?  
What about me?



*Artis Swann & Synthia Bethea*  
Lyrics & Music by  
Artis Swann & Christian  
Foushee-Green

# 11. We Need

We need affordable housing  
But we can't do it without you (x4)

People need a home to rest and retreat  
But we can't do it without you (x2)



No more sleeping bags on cold hard streets  
But we can't do it without you

A mattress, a shower, a good night of sleep  
But we can't do it without you

Soooo      Lend a hand  
                 We know you can  
                 We can't do it without you!

*Lyrics & Music by  
Christian Foushee-Green*

# “Affordable Housing: The Musical”

During 15 months of weekly workshops in 2018-2019, our 30-person, community-based cast created this musical from scratch. Every Friday, after fellowship over dinner, we: danced (and formed the choreography); goofed off (and came up with the jokes and jabs); played all kinds of theater games (and crafted the scenes); wrote poems (and crafted the lyrics); got out of our comfort zones (and learned a lot together), and improvised constantly. Truly, the process that created this musical was even more amazing than the show itself – joyful, healing, powerful, and often hilarious.

We were brought together by our shared belief that *all* members of our community deserve a safe place to call home. This musical is rooted in the lived experiences of workshop participants, many of whom have faced immense challenges finding affordable housing in Chapel Hill. Alongside stories portraying the realities of living on the streets or in the shelters here, our cast took our experiences witnessing local debates about affordable housing, combined them, stirred them up, and put a magnifying glass to them – specifically, a magnifying glass held by those who are facing the consequences of the *lack* of housing here.

Technically speaking, “Affordable Housing: The Musical” is an ensemble-generated devised original musical. Speaking plainly, you are experiencing the magical culmination of this company of creative people’s talents and personal stories.

In Orange County, there is a gap of almost 5,000 housing units for households earning less than \$20,000. And while 1 in 5 residents makes less than 30% of Area Median Income, there are 0 available units of any size affordable to these families.

This is the crisis we are facing – in Chapel Hill as in countless towns across the country. This musical is our collective response: an **outpouring** of stories to illustrate this crisis in a new way, an **outlet** for dismay at the pace of change, and an **outcry** for a greater sense of urgency.

Learn more, get involved, take action: <http://affordablehousingmusical.org>

# Acknowledgments

Special thanks go out to:

- **Christian Foushee-Green** – music director, lead composer & piano sensation. Without you, this would have been a musical without music!
- **George Barrett** – choreographer & workshop extraordinaire. Thanks to your joyful, improvisational self, “We made a musical!”
- **Maggie West** – producer, casting coordinator, & workshop chef. Thank you for bringing this community together!
- **Chinita Howard** – advocate, poet, & PR guru. Your words inspire us all to act for change!
- **Rachel Thomas-Levy** – collective creation advisor & devised theater practitioner. The gift of your expertise is profound & immeasurable!
- **Eric Breit** – set designer, prop artist, & stage dad. You brought Church Mound to life!
- **Leah Whitehead** – stage manager & organizing wizard. Thank you for diving in, taking us to the finish line flawlessly!
- **Carolina Performing Arts**, with gratitude to **Amanda Graham** and **Aaron Pickett** for making our premiere possible
- **John McNeill** of **Asharp Productions** for recording & producing this soundtrack, and **Rachel Despard** for helping us get it out to the world!

## Credits & Thanks

This musical was made by and for community. The cast and crew truly crafted this musical together – week-by-week in our workshops, and scene-by-scene over the course of many months.

Thank you to the entire cast for all the time and care you poured into this work, and for bringing your stories, your creativity, and your whole selves to the “stage” every week.

Cast & co-creators include:

George Barrett

Synthia Bethea

Luke Beyer

Eric Breit

Juliet Breit

Leonora Breit

Ron Carnes

Fred Cates

Tamar Chukrun

Laura Little

Luke Congleton

*(guitar)*

Liz Evans

David Lyles

Dorothy Faulkner

Juno Fleck

Christian Foushee-Green

*(piano)*

Kaelan Forbes

Zach Goldstein

Brentton Harrison

Chinita Howard

Jaden Johnson

Shodeah Kelly

Keely Kriho

Margaret Lillie

Val Lucas

Jackie Jenks

Yvette Mathews

Heather Nash

Reatha Riggsbee

Laurel Shulman

Kristina Smith

Artis Swann

Rachel Thomas-Levy

Hudson Vaughan

Will Vaughan

Abigail Washburn

Maggie West

Leah Whitehead

Joyce Yao

Jonathan Youngpenn