

I first heard about relational tithing from Darin Peterson, in a talk he gave at a workshop on living in community at The Simple Way. He asked us what stood between people surviving a crisis and losing everything, ending up on the street. I was thinking "one paycheck," but the answer he gave was: friends.

If people had someone who could take them in, let them sleep on the couch while they got themselves together, that was the difference.

For me Common Change is a way to help that is restorative. There's no institution to place its own power and self-preservation as the highest value. It's just us, contributing what we can, bringing in needs as we become aware of them, discussing them with our group to figure out how we can best help (not whether to help, but how).

It's an honor to be a part of a group where we bring our most serious intent to working together for our neighbors. Dealing with new needs, weighing in, reading discussion—it's a part of everyday life, not some special compartment that's separate from regular life. That's great, the way Common Change makes thinking about helping a normal part of the day, not something you dress up for or go to a certain place to do.

This is what I want to create more of in my life: connecting with my neighbors to help each other, like it's nothing special at all, like it's the most normal thing in the world.

*Herby Cusper*