

SICM NEWS

Year 43, Number 1, Winter 2011

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Damien Center Re-Opens After Fire Center Was Temporarily Relocated to Emmanuel Friedens



615 Nott Street

The Damien Center has reopened its doors at 615 Nott Street, after a fire in late November closed it, temporarily moving its operations to Emmanuel Friedens Church. The Center opened its doors to a newly repaired and spruced up space, in part due to a successful "work day," held on Wednesday, December 29. Several people came out in good spirit and helped wash walls and drapes, clean carpets and gets things in order for the reopening on Monday, January 3. Many thanks to all for your patience and support in getting the Damien Center back on its feet!

Messiah Lutheran Church Covenants with SICM



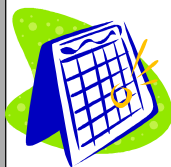
R to L: Rev. Phil Grigsby, SICM Executive Director, Pastor Jeffrey Kane and Messiah Lutheran congregation members.

On November 16, during the monthly SICM Assembly Meeting, Messiah Lutheran Church formally became a SICM Member Church through a Covenanting Ceremony. Messiah Lutheran has been involved in SICM programs and activities for quite awhile, including the Summer Lunch program, where their volunteers assist at the Hillhurst Park location.

Welcome, Messiah Lutheran!

****SAVE THE DATE****

SICM Day of Service Saturday, April 9, 2011



SICM is planning a volunteer day on Saturday morning, April 9, and we hope you and members from your congregation or group would like to help that day. Delegates at the September SICM Assembly expressed interest in a volunteer day, where teams from their churches could help with projects at SICM sites, member congregations, parks or other nonprofit organizations. We are seeking requests for work projects, which volunteers could complete within 3 hours.



Look for more details coming soon, and contact Crys Hamelink at 374-2683 or crys@sicm.us if you have questions or want to sign up.



Schenectady Inner City Ministry (SICM) celebrates the partnership of 58 member congregations "relating the resources of the congregations to the human needs of the city," which means ministries of social service, education, witness and social action. The SICM newsletter and more detailed financial and program information is available from SICM at 930 Albany Street, Schenectady, NY 12307 or (518) 374-2683. FAX: (518) 382-1871.

Email address: information@sicm.us.

Website address is: www.sicm.us.

SICM's finances are audited annually by an independent auditing firm.

Ministry Notes



Looking back and ahead

Looking back at this time of year I am very thankful – for the many gifts of time, talent, and treasure shared graciously in this ministry.

While so-called "leading economic indicators" say the recession is over, somehow that is not translated to the many more that come for help. Thanks to all of you and all in partnership with us for ministries of service and witness this past year.

Looking ahead, it would be easy to write "more of the same." It is true – yes we plan to give out groceries, provide summer lunch, host people affected by HIV, advocate for justice and all the rest. Demands are likely to be higher. We are still a community in transition.

But I am reminded of the third part of the Isaiah Agenda: "they shall build houses and live in them." (This is from Raymond Fung's book; call if you need the reference again, the first two parts are that "children should not die" and "old people live in dignity."). Anyway, in our community, at the root of much we are challenged

with is the transition, the real decline in homeownership. Some streets are less than 10% owner occupied! I don't mean just affordable housing; I mean simply people owning houses. Neighborhoods of all renters are usually not as stable. Renters are not bad people; it is just that in economically challenged neighborhoods they are often in transition. Homeownership is not only a community issue; it is a public safety issue.

Some years ago SICM had an active Housing Task Force. I hope we can begin again this year to look at housing, especially the need and then the strategies for encouraging homeownership. We have talked some with the Northside area folk about "live where you work." Some want to work on turning renters into owners. Others want to refocus governmental policies from a reliance on code enforcement towards broader policies and strategies.

If you want to help out with this, or learn more, please let me know. The Isaiah Agenda is an assurance and challenge of what God intends for creation. People of faith are encouraged to work so that "those who build the houses will live in them."

Rev. Phillip Grigsby

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Editor: Janet Mattis

The Assembly of SICM includes one clergy and two lay delegates from all member congregations: Albany Street United Methodist, Alplaus United Methodist, Altamont Reformed, Bellevue Reformed, Bethel AME, Burnt Hills United Methodist, Carman United Methodist, Christ Church Episcopal, Church of St. Adalbert, Duryee Memorial AME Zion, Eastern Parkway United Methodist, Emmanuel Baptist—Friedens UCC, Faith United Methodist, First Baptist, Sch'dy, First Baptist, Scotia, First Reformed, Sch'dy, First Reformed, Scotia, First Unitarian Society, First United Methodist, Friendship Baptist, Good Shepherd Lutheran, Grace Lutheran, Grace Temple Church of God in Christ, Immaculate Conception, Sch'dy, Immanuel Lutheran, Koinonia Christian Ministries, Lynnwood Reformed, Messiah Lutheran, Mount Olivet Missionary Baptist, Niskayuna Reformed, Our Lady of Fatima, Our Lady of Grace, Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Our Redeemer Lutheran, Refreshing Spring Church of God in Christ, Rotterdam United Methodist, St. Anthony's, St. George's Episcopal, St. Helen's, St. John the Evangelist, St. Joseph's, Sch'dy, St. Joseph's, Scotia, St. Luke's, St. Paul the Apostle, St. Paul's Episcopal, St. Stephen's Episcopal, Scotia United Methodist, Society of Friends (Quakers), Stanford United Methodist, State Street Presbyterian, Tabernacle Baptist, Trinity Presbyterian, Union Presbyterian, Woodlawn Reformed, Zion Lutheran.

Can you help spread the word?

M=Ministry

Many times SICM is referred to as the Schenectady Inner City Mission—including in the media—and we are trying to educate folks that the M actually represents "ministry" and not "mission." Using the word "mission" causes an assumption that the City Mission of Schenectady and Schenectady Inner City Ministry (SICM) are one and the same. . . which is not true! Please take the opportunity to educate people when you hear them refer to us as the "mission."

We are . . .

Schenectady Inner City Ministry!

SICM Community Service Award Recognizes Key Volunteers

In December, SICM held its annual Holiday Potluck Dinner in conjunction with the December Assembly Meeting. It was a festive evening, complete with a wide variety of home-cooked food, award presentations, and entertainment consisting of a piano player and storytellers.

At this meeting, SICM honored some special volunteers with its Community Service Award: Nicky Boehm ("Chef Nicky," as she is affectionately known), Don and Pat Wheeler, and the Circle of Care group from Calvary Tabernacle Church. Nicky has participated in the last two Harvest for the Pantry fundraising dinners, taking on the role of "Chief Chef." She prepared and cooked a scrumptious chicken marsala meal for 180 people in 2009, and just over 200 people in 2010. The event successfully brought in \$15,000 in 2009, and \$20,000 in 2010.

Pat & Don Wheeler have been involved with SICM for 8 and 2 years respectively. Both are deeply involved with the pantry as well as with the preparation of food for the annual Harvest for the Pantry dinners. Pat is also a member of the Food Task Force, and is the SICM delegate from Trinity Presbyterian Church. In May 2010, she received the Sister Rachel award for her work with the CROP Walk.

The Circle of Care Ministry at Calvary Tabernacle is a group of five individuals who volunteer at the Schenectady Damien Center twice each month to host arts and crafts activities with guests. The group members, coordinated by Reggie Harris, know all the guests by name, their stories and circumstances. Guests look forward to seeing this group, who participates on their designated Thursdays, without fail.



L to R: Elaine Bair, Nicola Boehm, Pat Wheeler, Reverend Phil Grigsby (SICM Executive Director), Don Wheeler, Gail Van Valkenburgh (Food Program Dir.), Dan Butterworth (Damien Center Program Mgr, rear), and Carol and Pauline, of the Circle of Care Ministry.



Storytellers Kent Busman (L) and Joe Doolittle (R) provide entertainment for the audience at the December Holiday Potluck Dinner and Assembly.

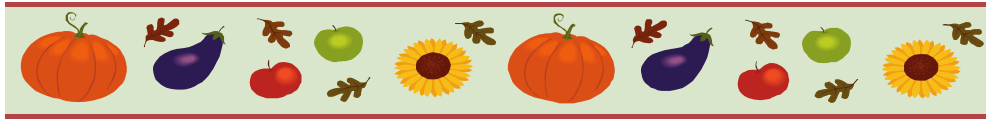


Kerry Lewis provides piano accompaniment to Christmas hymns and carols being sung.

In Memoriam

SICM mourns the loss of several friends: Annette DeLavallade, Rev. Mel McGaughey, Rev. Rodger Day, Rev. Bill Barney, John Van Schaick, Patti Stringfellow, and Bob Ludwig. Mel was active with SICM in the 1970's as an associate at First UMC; Rodger was pastor at Trinity UMC before it merged with Calvary to form Faith UMC; Bill was a former District Superintendent for the UMC and former Troy Conference. John Van Schaick was an active member of FUSS and a strong supporter of the SICM Food Program. Bob Ludwig, from Temple Gates of Heaven, was very active with the Interfaith Community, and Patti Stringfellow was a former staff member at SICM.





3rd Annual Harvest for the Pantry Raises Much-needed Funds for the Emergency Food Pantry!

On Sunday, November 7, 2010, the gymnasium at St. Helen's School was transformed. Tables adorned with tablecloths and festive decorations brightened up the hardwood floors, and the aroma of scrumptious food filled the air. The occasion? SICM held its third annual fundraising dinner, "Harvest for the Pantry." Once again, the goal of the event was to raise money specifically for SICM's Emergency Food Pantry. Chef Nicky provided a tasty chicken marsala entrée as well as a vegetarian ziti option, and local restaurants contributed salad and sundaes. Many local businesses donated goods and services for the auctions, the silent auction being held in the adjoining foyer, and the Pick-a-Prize being held in a corner of the gym.. Bidding took place throughout the evening for the many items and combined, the two auctions brought in over \$3000, contributing to the grand total of \$20,000, which also included several Honorary Committee members! Watch for the 4th Annual Harvest for the Pantry Fundraising Dinner to take place in the Fall of 2011!



Over 200 people shared an evening of good food, good shopping and good friends!



Worker bees Chris Rush and Pat Wheeler



SICM Intern Abby Foster explains the Pick-a-Prize auction to Carolyn Canova and Marilyn Essmann



Another classic cake donated by Clara Lassalle—thanks, Clara!



Service with a smile! Volunteer servers Anna Mattis, Grace Strong, Rachel Bickauskas

2010 Harvest for the Pantry Honorary Committee Members

Executive Chef (\$300 level)

Robert & Anastasia Fenton
 Jacqueline & Michael Foster
 Friends of SICM

John & Sally Van Schaick

Maitre de (\$150 level)

Alfred W. Canova
 Sharon Carter & George Warner
 Mr. & Mrs. William Clasen
 Edward & Mary Cummings
 Bill Eberle
 Philip Fields
 Mr. & Mrs. James Gibney
 Joan & George Gould
 Rev. Phillip and Janet Grigsby
 Drew & Crys Hamelink
 Paul & Susan Houpt

Clara & Ralph Lasselle

Marvin & Company

Jim & Peg Miller

Peter & Barbara Notch

Bob & Pat Obrecht

Friend of SICM

Ellie & Gene Rowland

Chris & Pat Rush

Schenectady Federation of Teachers

Helga Schroeter

Marianne and Roy Scott

George and Paula Shaw

Austin & Marti Spang

Don & Pat Wheeler

Server (\$75 level)

Albany Print Inc.

Assemblyman George Amedore

Thomas & Cheryl Della Sala

Virginia & Richard DePaula

Karen B. Johnson

Shirley Joosten

Margaret King

Sam Lefkowitz

Dr. Merle Longwood

Cynthia Shultz

St. Helen's Church

Brian U. Stratton

Assemblyman James Tedisco

Tom & Sharon Therriault

Ruth Varley

William Vullo

Chuck Welge



Thank you to everyone who contributed to the success of this event! We truly appreciate your support!

Damien Center

It has been a very busy season for the Schenectady Damien Center! After an electrical fire damaged the Damien Center's facility at 615 Nott St. in late November, we were able to continue with our programming without significant disruption, thanks to the generous donation of space from Emmanuel-Friedens Church. Our World AIDS Day celebration continued as planned, despite fire and inclement weather, and about 40 people from the community came to hear speakers share their personal experiences with HIV/AIDS and to add their own well wishes and prayers to our red ribbon banner.



Our holiday party, held at the First Reformed Church of Schenectady on December 18th, had over 60 attendees and was a great success. Many thanks to all those who helped ensure that Damien Center guests had a happy holiday season, including our dedicated volunteers who helped prepare our Christmas dinner as well as the donors who contributed gifts and funds for the season.

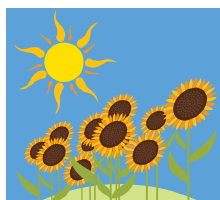


As the restoration work at 615 Nott St. nears completion, the Schenectady Damien Center program has already returned home. 2011 promises to be another exciting year for us as we continue to evaluate and expand our services to the HIV/AIDS community. Our Community Task Force, as well as many Damien Center guests, will be participating in a strategic planning process to help develop an organizational plan for the coming year, and our needs assessment survey has already been distributed to people living with HIV/AIDS to help gather information about our strengths and weaknesses. If you would like to add your input about Schenectady Damien Center services or if you would like to be involved in the strategic planning process, please contact Daniel Butterworth at the SICM office or at damiencenter@sicm.us.



Summer Internship Program

Each year, SICM seeks summer interns and sponsoring congregations. Older high school students and college students spend approximately 10 weeks working either part-time or full-time in the various SICM programs, including Summer Lunch, Damien Center, Emergency Food Pantry, Edible Playgrounds and in the SICM office. Interns meet as a group on a regular basis with the Internship Coordinator to discuss and reflect upon their experiences. Position descriptions and application materials are available on the SICM website (www.sicm.us) now. Click on SICM Programs on the sidebar, then select Summer Programs, and scroll down to the Summer Internship Program. Questions? Contact Janet Mattis at 374-2683.



In the Deep Mid-Winter...Think Summer Lunch

We may still have snow on the ground, but SICM is planning for summer lunch to begin again on June 27. Last summer, at the end of the lunch program, a 9-year-old boy rode his bike 3 miles to our SICM Office because he heard that we had free food for kids. His mother had run out of food and money and they would have nothing until the next week, when school would start again. His 3 brothers were hungry and he was the oldest, so he was on a mission for food. We were not serving lunches at the office, but we gave him other food and information about where they could eat until school began. Just as quickly as he appeared, he vanished.

This child is one of hundreds who will depend on the SICM program and volunteers for their lunches this summer. The latest census data shows that 21% of the population in Schenectady lives below the poverty line, and this number is much higher for our children. Seventy percent of the kids qualify for free or reduced rate lunches in school, and SICM steps in to address this need during the summer break. We hope to recruit over 60 volunteer teams from churches and other organizations to feed them this summer. Look for more information in our Spring newsletter, or contact Crys Hamelink at 374-2683 or crys@sicm.us if you have questions.



Healthy Homes-Healthy People

Healthy Homes-Healthy People is a three-year project funded by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation to promote environmental justice. Led by Nancy Peterson (delegate from First Unitarian Society of Schenectady) and Allison Williams (the project's Community Outreach Educator), the project is addressing multiple environmental risks by educating low-income inner-city residents about the identification and proper disposal of common household hazardous wastes, as well as suggesting and encouraging the use of alternative products. On Saturday, October 30, HH-HP hosted the first Collection Day, in the parking lot of SICM's Emergency Food Pantry on Albany Street in Schenectady. 35 participants brought many pounds of household hazardous wastes. 18 volunteers turned out to assist in the project.



Food Program

SICM Food Pantry and the Animal Protective Foundation: Working Together to Care for Pets

The Animal Protective Foundation, or APF, is a non-profit humane society which cares for over 3,000 homeless animals every year. The APF receives food donations that cannot be used for their animals, because they use a specific brand of food. Rather than having all this perfectly good food go to waste, they wanted to get it to pet owners in need. Sometimes people who have trouble getting food for their families also have trouble getting food for their pets. Where do people go when they're having a hard time getting food for their families? The SICM Food Pantry! So where can people go if they're having a hard time getting food for their pets? The SICM Food Pantry!



Kim Jess, of APF, and Bob Donohue, of the SICM Food Pantry, stand in front of pet food donations.

The APF is partnering with the SICM Food Pantry to help those in need feed their pets, so they will not be forced to surrender them. They are regularly supplying both extra cat and dog food, along with cat litter or small animal food when they have it. A variety of pet food is donated and brought to the APF and then picked up every week by SICM for distribution at their Food Pantry. ***Thousands of pounds are donated monthly—thank you APF!***

2010 Food Drives over 500 pounds:

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| ARC | Hannaford | Transfinder Corporation |
| Brown School | Holy Name of Jesus | NYS DEC Region 4 |
| Capital Region BOCES Career | Hospice of Schenectady | Ups & Downs Women's |
| Curves (Burnt Hills) | La Bella Salon | Bowling League |
| Daily Gazette | Montessori School of Burnt Hills | Valued Options |
| Dept. of Transportation (Region 1) | Mount Carmel Seniors | Wal-Mart Vision Center |
| GE Corporate | MVP | |
| (Global Business Services) | Schenectady Democratic Women | |
| Glenville Seniors | SI Group | |

Thanks to all who contributed!

Food Program Statistics:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Individuals Served</u>	<u>Meals Served</u>
<u>Totals for 2007</u>	29,701	267,309
<u>Totals for 2008</u>	37,721	339,489
<u>Totals for 2009</u>	40,333	362,997
<u>Totals for 2010</u>	43,787	394,083



HELP!

We need volunteers at the Emergency Food Pantry! If you have one hour a month, a few hours a week, or a regular day that you can volunteer, please contact Gail Van Valkenburgh at 346-4035.

Gifts & Grants

SICM is blessed with continued volunteer and financial support from a variety of individuals, congregations, religious organizations, businesses and foundations. SICM is grateful to all of them.

Thank you to the Consolidated Federal Campaign; Contributor's Choice of United Way and State Employees Federated Appeal. Record numbers responded to the GE Foundation's Gift Matching program (and the previous double match)! Thank you also to congregations that hosted SICM summer lunch sites.

Many thanks to all for your support! In recent months, SICM programs received support from:

Overall Support

Troy Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church (now the Upstate NY Conference of the UMC)

Bechtel Corporation (KAPL)

Emergency Food Pantry/Organization

Edward D. Cammarota Foundation

Evangelical Lutheran Church of America

Lounsbury Family Foundation

Reformed Church World Service
SEFCU Foundation
WGY Christmas Wish
The Wright Family Foundation
Schenectady Community Action Program
Troy Savings Bank Foundation
Stewarts Holiday Match

Schenectady Damien Center

William Gundry Broughton Charitable Foundation (for Renovations)

Community AIDS Partnership of the Capital Region

Equinox Foundation

Troy Savings Bank Foundation

Stewarts Holiday Match

SEFCU Foundation

Summer Lunch

Jr. League-Schenectady & Saratoga Volunteer Award

REMINDER: SICM is registered with the **State Employees Federated Appeal (SEFA)** and the **Combined Federated Campaign** (federal employees) of the Capital Region making it easy to contribute on a regular basis. SICM's SEFA # is 50 - 00396.

Employment Opportunities at SICM

SICM anticipates having job openings in the near future. For more information, check out the website: <http://sicm.us/employmentopportunities.html>



Schenectady CROP Walk: Sunday, May 1, 2011

Grab your tennies, get some exercise, and raise some money for a great cause! The CROP Walk is a celebration where people from all walks of life join to fight hunger here and overseas. Funds raised are used locally for food pantries and meal programs and funds overseas are used for relief, refugee resettlement, and self-help development through partner agencies or designated by contributors. Schenectady's CROP Walk has consistently been in the top 25 in the country, thanks to many supporters. In the past 25 years, SICM's CROP Walk has raised over \$1 million and over \$250,000 has been returned to Schenectady to address hunger locally. The CROP Walk reminds people that 1.3 billion of the earth's 6.5 billion live at or below \$1 per day income and 80% of the world's people live at less than \$10 per day. Recruiters are needed to recruit others in a congregation, company, school, etc. A Recruiter's Workshop will be held on **Tues., 3/15**, (snow date 3/22) **from 5:30-7:00pm at Emmanuel Friedens Church**, 218 Nott Terrace, Schenectady. A light supper will be provided at the program, where materials will be distributed. Materials will be available afterwards at the Church and at the SICM office. Sponsored by SICM, this year's walk will continue the route of starting and ending at Emmanuel Friedens Church, with parking available in the MVP Garage. For more information contact Rev. Phil Grigsby at revphil@sicm.us or call 374-2683.



The Last Word *by Peter Notch, SICM*



Where will SICM be in 10 years?

While we can dream about the future for ourselves, (Personally, I see myself as thinner and more fit!), we know that to even have a chance of achieving our goals, we have to do some planning. (So much for skipping exercise today and eating whatever I want!)

SICM's future is just like each of ours. There's the dream part, and then there's the necessary planning part.

We may dream that our ministry to care for the people of Schenectady will be less urgent- that there will be fewer hungry people to feed at the Pantry, fewer people to support at the Damien Center, fewer children to nourish with the Summer Lunch Program.

When we awaken from our reveries, however, we realize that to achieve our goals we may have to do some long range planning as an organization:

- to look at our structure as an organization,
- to see if our staffing is appropriate for the goals we seek to accomplish,
- to work harder at keeping our member congregations engaged,
- to safeguard our resources,
- to raise additional funds for our activities,
- to lobby our State and Federal representatives to help with our concerns for social justice.

Ten years out will be here before we know it. If we do our planning job now, and do it right, our goals will have a greater chance of being achieved. Long Range Planning will be what keeps SICM alive and ready to jump into action. Because even if all our current dreams can be accomplished in 10 years, we know there will be new ones.

Peter Notch, President



Spotlight on Volunteers

When guests arrive at the Damien Center on any given Thursday evening, they are likely to be in the company of volunteer Elizabeth LaRosa, a junior at Siena College. Elizabeth first learned of SICM and the Damien Center at a Volunteer Fair hosted at Siena College last September. She approached the outreach table on campus, spoke with Janet Mattis and Dan Butterworth about volunteer opportunities, and has been volunteering ever since! Elizabeth has consistently shown up on Thursday evenings to assist with making meals, cleaning, and the monthly calendar mailing. She also calls BINGO and helps with arts and crafts activities for children with volunteers from Calvary Tabernacle.



Elizabeth LaRosa,
Siena College student



Eliza and Elizabeth
preparing dinner in the
Damien Center kitchen

Elizabeth decided to volunteer at the Damien Center, in part, because of the schedule. She attends classes during the day, making it difficult to engage in volunteer opportunities at many organizations. Because the Damien Center is open in the evening, this worked with her schedule and allowed her to volunteer on a regular basis without conflicting with classes. What Elizabeth likes best about volunteering at Damien is the continuity that allows for her to really get to know the guests. She would definitely recommend this experience to others, and hopes to continue volunteering next year, too.

A junior at Siena, Elizabeth is from Peru, New York (near Plattsburgh). She is a Sociology major, and would like to pursue a career in the non-profit arena. She is considering a variety of careers, but her main goal is to be involved in helping people. She certainly is off to a good start!

Thank you, Elizabeth!