

SICM NEWS

Year 45, Number 4, Fall 2013

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Harvest for the Pantry a Success Once Again!

Recently SICM hosted its Sixth Annual Harvest for the Pantry fundraiser for the Emergency Food Pantry. This year's event featured a homemade chicken dinner by famed Chef Nicky Boehm, who once again delighted the approximately 150+ attendees with her exquisite culinary creations! Held in the newly renovated Fellowship Hall of the First Reformed Church of Scotia, the evening was a festive time of food, fellowship and fun.



Congressman Paul Tonko joined us and shared his concerns of hunger in Schenectady.



The pick-a-prize table had lots of goodies to choose from!



Clara Laselle graciously supplied homemade cakes for dessert once again!



Diners enjoyed their homecooked meal prepared by Chef Nicky and her kitchen crew!

This year's pick-a-prize included donations from over 45 local businesses and individuals, and prizes ranged from hand-crafted jewelry items, to folk art puzzles, to restaurant gift certificates, to tickets to local college athletic games.

With the overwhelming support of the community through donations, ticket sales, honorary committee memberships, the pick-a-prize, and anticipated gift matches from GE and other employers we were able to raise over **\$15,000** for the Emergency Food Pantry. This amount will purchase almost 47 tons of food, or enough for the equivalent of 23,000 meals! Many thanks to all those who supported this important fundraiser in any way. Watch for an announcement of another SICM fundraiser to take place in late Winter!

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**For a list of Honorary Committee members and food and prize donors, see page 3.*

Schenectady Inner City Ministry (SICM) celebrates the partnership of 54 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 1055 Wendell Avenue, Schenectady, NY 12308 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

A Different Halloween



Halloween was a major event in the local religious community this year. It was not because of any of the usual things we think of; rather, it was the 75th birthday of Bishop Howard Hubbard. He put in his resignation, as required by church law. The church would choose another bishop.

Since we are so much a part of this area, we often do not realize the import on the region of the character of the Bishop. He was Bishop for 36 years but much more importantly reflected the real impetus of Vatican II and the move towards ecumenical and interfaith relations. The Roman Catholic Church says that this area is the 2nd most progressive area in terms of ecumenical and interfaith relations (they won't tell us the first; we asked). This is due to Bishop Hubbard.

For those of us old enough to remember, the 'bad old days' were not that far away. It used to be, growing up, that Protestants and Catholics did not go into each other's churches. For some, it was a sin. Intermarriage was very unlikely, if at all. You kept to your own. The mass was in Latin, the altar set so that the priest represented the people. Vatican II launched 'living room dialogues' that were the start of a group in New Haven that I di-

rected and a real part of the start of SICM. Catholics and Protestants realized that they had much in common. The more the conversation, the larger grew the vision.

A 'street priest,' he was not the likely choice for Bishop. When I came to SICM in 1986, SICM had two Roman Catholic members and we were fortunate to have almost every parish in the area become a member in the coming years. This was due to the culture established by Bishop Hubbard.

Every year he would write a letter encouraging parishes to take part in the CROP Walk. You may not know that other Dioceses actively opposed the CROP Walk. Thanks to Bishop Hubbard, they have flourished.

I remember him sending me a Christmas card. I did not receive one from my own denomination! I remember him coming to a SICM anniversary in Central Park. I remember him taking part with other judicatory executives in a session I led on the spirituality of Henri Nouwen. He took part and treated the other members as equal partners. He actively worked especially in rural areas to see ways that congregations could cooperate.

While Bishop Hubbard leaves many legacies in the Diocese and the community as he finishes his time as Bishop, certainly one of the most lasting is his strong support for the Commission on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, his support for the work of Fr. Jim Kane, and other interreligious endeavors. The breadth and warmth of those who gathered at a recent event held at St. Rose was testimony to this enduring legacy.

He shared a parting insight. Councils such as Vatican II take at least 100 years to fully take root. Now we are at 50; we have a ways to go.

Rev. Phil Grigsby

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The Assembly of SICM includes one clergy and two lay delegates from all member congregations: 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, Immanuel Lutheran, Lynnwood Reformed, Messiah Lutheran, Mount Olivet Missionary Baptist, Niskayuna Reformed, Our Lady of Grace, Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Our Lady Queen of Peace, Our Redeemer Lutheran, Refreshing Spring Community, Rotterdam United Methodist, St. Anthony's, St. George's Episcopal, St. Kateri Tekakwitha, 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.

A note on the Damien Center: as many are aware, I hope, the Albany Damien Center suffered a total fire in late August that rendered their site unusable. They are operating from the First Lutheran Church in Albany and seeking a longer run facility. However, they plan to utilize the resources of the space in Schenectady and are moving ahead towards the Schenectady site to become a satellite. Check out their website for updates.

Harvest for the Pantry Honorary Committee 2013

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Executive Chef (\$1,000 level)

Jim & Peg Miller

Pastry Chef (\$325 level)

Bob & Stacey Fenton

Fingerlakes Construction

James Gibney

Paul & Susan Houpt

Friends of SICM

Lutheran Thrivent

Maître de (\$175 level)

Al & Carolyn Canova

Pastor & Mrs. William Clasen

Edward & Mary Cummings

Evelyn Currie

Bill & Martha Eberle

William & Cheryl Gerstler

Joan & George Gould

Rev. Phil & Janet Grigsby

Drew & Crys Hamelink

Bishop Howard Hubbard

Ralph & Clara Laselle

Bob & Pat Obrecht

Ellie & Gene Rowland

Schenectady Federation of Teachers

Helga Schroeter

Austin & Marti Spang

Jack & Susan Sweeney

Congressman Paul Tonko

Don & Pat Wheeler



Server (\$85 level)

Catholic Charities AIDS Services

Chamber of Schenectady County

Virginia & Richard DePaula

Marilyn Esmann

Joseph Filippone

Carla Hernas, VMD

Hon. Karen B. Johnson

Shirley Joosten

Rev. James J. Kane

Hon. Margaret King

Sam Lefkowitz

Merle Longwood

Chris & Pat Rush

St. Kateri Tekakwitha

Cynthia Shultz

Sam & Dot Thompson

Bill Vullo

Thank you, one and all, for your support of the Sixth Annual Harvest for the Pantry!

Ambition Café
Blue Ribbon Restaurant
Bonnie White
Carol Troost
Center Stage Deli
Chipotle
Clara Lasselle
Computer Sense
Creekside Café
Cusato's Pizza
Divinitea
Englehardt's Liquor Mart
Fo' Castle Farms

Homestyle Pizza
I Love NY Pizza
Lakeside Farms
Lavender Nail & Spa
Lumelia's
Mail 'n More
Niskayuna Barber Shop
Niskayuna Co-Op
Niskayuna Wines & Liquors
Nott Street Office
Open Door Bookstore
Panera Bread
Pietrow Designs

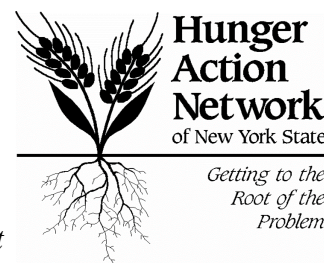
Pig 'n Whistle
Roots & Wisdom
RPI
Scarborough's
Schenectady Green Market
Sow's Ear Studio & Gallery
Starbuck's of Niskayuna
Stewart's
Sweet Frog
Tara Kitchen
The Lighthouse Restaurant
The Right Touch
Union Café

SICM Program Updates

Food Program

Reflections on the HANNYS Annual Meeting

By Shennan Jarboe



I recently attended the Hunger Action Network of NYS' (HANNYS) Annual Membership conference which came at the perfect time in conjunction with this month's SICM Assembly. Both the Assembly, where we viewed the film, *A Place at the Table* focusing on issues related to hunger in the U.S., and the HANNYS conference surrounding strategies for combating hunger in NY State, kept returning to three themes. One, using a human rights framework when looking at U.S. hunger and food security issues by viewing access to good quality, nutritious food as a right for all, not a privilege. Two, recognizing the increasing need for charities like SICM to address the immediate issue of hunger, and three, emphasizing that legislative change is necessary in order to address the longer term issue of hunger.

To reflect on my final point regarding legislative change, hunger is a complex political issue that HANNYS works hard to address. The International Human Rights Clinic (IHRC) and many others highlight that food insecurity and hunger in the U.S. are a result of poverty, not a shortage of food and that these issues have not been a political priority in this country. Interrelated problems including poverty, income inequality, and allocation of Domestic Nutrition Assistance Program (DNAP) funding and implementation all contribute to food insecurity and hunger in our country.

This is where we come in. In addition to the current support we offer to SICM, we can use our voices to make these issues a political priority. In 2012, Governor Cuomo promised to create an anti-hunger task force. This has not been created as of yet, but we can work on reminding him of his promise by calling, writing, or visiting his office. Also, the group of HANNYS conference attendees voted on what they thought HANNYS priorities should be for the upcoming year suggesting showing policy makers the faces of hunger and "taking to the streets" in grassroots activism. Lastly, SICM owns a copy of the film, *A Place at the Table*, which is available for friends to borrow if you have interest in showing it to a group to raise awareness, start a conversation, and gain support in fighting hunger in the U.S.

In continuing this conversation, please consider this: "the *right to food* is a universally recognized norm that calls on governments to ensure that all people have access to food that is safe and nutritious, meets their dietary needs, and is appropriate to their cultural backgrounds" (IHRC).

Food Pantry Statistics:	<u># of Individuals Served</u>	<u># of Meals Served</u>
Jan-June 2012	23,370	210,330
Jan-June 2013	25,586	229,824

Summer Interns 2013

As a requirement of the summer internship program, interns are asked to write a paper reflecting on their experiences; here are some of the insights from last summer's interns:

"Working at SICM this summer has given me memories that I will never forget and taught me lessons that I will use frequently in the future. I strongly believe that one of the most important things in life is to be exposed to ways of living other than your own."

"Working with SICM has been the most rewarding job I have ever had. I honestly can't imagine another job ever measuring up to how amazing interning with this organization has been."

"My time [sic] as an intern with SICM was one of the most eye-opening and educating experiences of my life thus far."

"Each day at SICM brought new experiences and stories and every second at SICM was the most rewarding experience I could hope for. This summer at SICM showed me that my heart lies in serving my community. I couldn't imagine a better summer job, and I will never be able to thank SICM enough for all that it has done for me personally. I am eternally grateful to be one of the many people that has had their life altered by the astonishingly brilliant work of SICM."



Union College students helped Rev. Phil spruce up the Damien Center in October.



Rev. Phil speaks at the AARP Press Conference addressing the unique needs of seniors dealing with food insecurity.



Shennan and Gail lend a hand packing groceries at Shop Rite of Niskayuna.



SICM had a presence at this year's Carrot Festival, hosted by Congregation Agudat Achim.



The Last Word *by Rev. Stacey Midge, SICM President*

'Tis the season of giving! It's not just presents; at Christmas, people seem to be a little more generous. We think more about people who are in need. More contributions come into non-profits this time of year than any other. Churches distribute their end-of-year funds. We put change into bell-ringers' buckets, buy extra outdoor gear for the mitten tree, drop our unused cans of vegetables into the annual food drive, and collect money to adopt families who can't afford Christmas.

In part, we give more this time of year because people make it easy for us. Everywhere we look, there is an opportunity to be generous. But I want to challenge us this year - not to be less generous, obviously, but to be *thoughtfully* generous. Spend a moment thinking about what you are giving, and why you are giving it. Is it something people actually need, or something you want to be rid of? Are you giving it to a reputable and responsible organization? Perhaps more importantly, is this a cause to which you could be committed year-round?

Christmas is a good season to give, and an even better season to think about needs that will continue past the holidays. How might you be generous in the year to come? SICM continues to address the food needs of our community all year, and could benefit from your time, energy, and resources, both to meet immediate needs and to advocate for just systems that will alleviate poverty and hunger in a long term way. As the holidays warm our hearts and encourage us to acts of generosity, please consider how you might make giving a habit and spiritual practice all year. In sustaining the lives of others, you may well find your own life stretched and grown as well.

Schenectady Inner City Ministry

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****SAVE THE DATES**SAVE THE DATES ****

SICM Winter Fundraiser

Friday, March 7, 2014

7pm to 10pm

Mohawk Country Club

Upper Union Street

Schenectady, NY



Details coming soon! Check our website for updates: www.sicm.us



CROP WALK 2014

Sunday, May 4

