

# SICM NEWS

Year 49, Number 1, Winter 2016

## Steering Committee 2015-2016

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*Executive Director*



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## SICM Gives Community Service Awards

At the December Assembly, SICM awarded the 2015 Community Service Award to individuals who are part of the SICM network and who have gone "the extra mile" in areas of ministry.

Bob Obrecht was honored with the SICM Community Service Award for the ways he has gone "above and beyond" especially with many aspects of the SICM Food Program. Bob worked diligently on the renovation at the new building; pinch hits to drive families home if needed; and most recently coordinated/worked on the proposed community garden on Hulett Street. Bob is an active member of Bellevue Reformed Church.



Bob Obrecht poses with Shirley Readdean, SICM President, and Rev. Phil Grigsby, SICM Executive Director



Shelly Ford, Deputy Director of the SICM Emergency Food Pantry, listens with Shirley Readdean to Rev. Phil.

Shelly Ford was also recognized for her hard work and dedication to the smooth operation of the Food Pantry in the Director's absence. Under Shelly's strong leadership, the Pantry and its staff provided continuous service to the food insecure people of Schenectady county. Her positive attitude provided motivation for staff and volunteers alike, and we are grateful for all her contributions during this time.



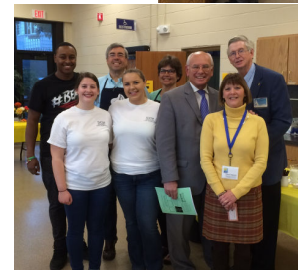
## Annual Harvest for the Pantry a Success!

In early November, SICM friends, volunteers, staff and even former interns came together to enjoy an evening of scrumptious food, good company, and wonderful options through the Silent Auction and Pick-a-prize. 200 people attended the dinner, including Congressman Paul Tonko. Food was prepared by Chef Nicky, who continues to amaze us and bless us with her culinary talents. This year's new menu of "comfort foods"—Shepherd's Pie, Chicken and Biscuits,



Ed and Jean Reilly, Jack and Susan Sweeney share in fellowship at the dinner.

and Vegetarian Chili—proved to be our most popular offering yet. Many thanks to all who supported us by purchasing tickets, donating items, and helping with the dinner in any way. We were able to raise \$15,000 for the Pantry, which provides almost 94,000 pounds of food!



Congressman Tonko joins volunteers & SICM staff for a photo op before dinner.

## Ministry Notes

*Schenectady Inner City Ministry (SICM) celebrates the partnership of 51 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](mailto:information@sicm.us).*

*Website address is: [www.sicm.us](http://www.sicm.us).*

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



### Hope with Housing

Let me share with you a story: A married mother with 4 children, who has history of domestic violence, came to SCAP (Schenectady Community Action Program) seeking rental assistance. Her husband was incarcerated for domestic violence and that loss of income caused her and her family to become homeless. She temporarily went to live with her mother who had a one bedroom (!) apartment. However, the Codes Department was notified and she had to leave that apartment and was temporarily sheltered by DSS in a motel. With the security deposit available from SICM working in collaboration with SCAP she was able to secure permanent housing for her family and move out of the motel.

Thanks to a grant from First Reformed Church in Schenectady, we were able to re-start the Security Deposit Program that had gone on the back burner when the City did not support the program (this sounds critical of the City: it is not; simply that the funding source for this aspect from federal sources was no longer available.) SICM's Security Deposit program provided a deposit of up to \$500 for a family; 21 families were helped. Many were similar to the situation described above.

Much of SICM's work, when possible, is collaborative, i.e. partnering with others. SCAP, located near the SICM Food Program (they are 913 Albany Street, SICM 839), sees people on a daily basis who are evicted or homeless. SCAP has what resources there are

available to help families get into permanent housing. In the situation above, SCAP linked the first month's rent payment to the security deposit to get the family into housing. Part of the reality of the current housing/rental market is that even with a high level of vacancy, rents still climb (if you are interested in the economics reasoning for this, give me a call). SCAP administered the program with SICM for no administrative charge.

SICM pioneered the security deposit program years ago in the region. We appreciate deeply First Reformed Church's grant that made hope possible for homeless families. However the funds are depleted. While a security deposit is technically a loan, we view this as a grant program. If we were dealing with "bankable" families we would, frankly, be a bank. We are working with those on the margins. Therefore, additional support is needed. Please let me know if you can help bring hope to the homeless in our community (we helped families both in the city and county).

Rev. Phil Grigsby

***All are invited!***

**Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II**

**\*Leader of the Forward Together  
Moral Monday Movement**

**\*President of the North Carolina NAACP**

**\*Pastor of Greenleaf Christian Church in  
Goldsboro, NC**

**"Choosing the Path to  
Higher Ground"**

**Wednesday, March 30, 2016, 7pm  
Siena College**

More information at [siena.edu/mlk](http://siena.edu/mlk) or call  
518-783-2307

All are welcome!

#### **SCHENECTADY INNER CITY MINISTRY**

**Executive Director:** Rev. Phillip N. Grigsby

**Editor:** Janet Mattis

The Assembly of SICM includes one clergy and two lay delegates from member congregations: Alplaus UMC, Altamont Reformed, Bellevue Reformed, Bethel AME, Burnt Hills UMC, Carman UMC, Christ Church Episcopal, Church of St. Adalbert, Duryee Memorial AME Zion, Eastern Parkway UMC, Emmanuel Baptist—Friedens UCC, Faith UMC, First Baptist, Sch'dy, First Reformed, Sch'dy, First Reformed, Scotia, First UMC, Friendship Baptist, Good Shepherd Lutheran, Holy Name of Jesus PNC, Immaculate Conception, Immanuel Lutheran, Lynnwood Reformed, Messiah Lutheran, Mt. Olivet Missionary Baptist, New Consecration, Niskayuna Reformed, Our Lady of Grace, Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Our Lady Queen of Peace, Our Redeemer Lutheran, Prince of Peace Lutheran, Refreshing Spring, Rotterdam UMC, 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 UMC, Society of Friends (Quakers), Stanford UMC, State Street Presbyterian, Tabernacle Baptist, Trinity Presbyterian, Unitarian Universalist Society of Schenectady, Zion Lutheran.

### Summer Internship Program: WANTED—Summer Sponsors



SICM seeks potential sponsors for interns. The interns, typically college students from the local area, come from SICM congregations and the community. They gain valuable experience working with those in need in Schenectady, through the Emergency Food Pantry, the Summer Meals Program, Summer Camp, and the Home Furnishings Program. As one intern wrote:

“Stop the poverty, feed people. Even though to some that seems slightly crazy, to most it wasn’t. It is a base goal, something people wanted to work toward. Making the world a little bit better, and happier every single day. This is why I am so thankful, grateful for this opportunity. It was a pleasure. It was fun. It was simply, an amazing experience. The best part though was the fact that it opened my eyes a little bit wider. It gave me a chance to question myself, my beliefs, and what I’m here for. What every single one of is here for. It showed me that people are good, and true. This really made my summer one of the best summers I have had for a long time. With that I want to thank SICM, all those involved with SICM, and the various mix of people I had the pleasure of working with.”

We ask congregations to consider sponsoring a full-time position for \$2,800, or a part-time position for \$1,400. Then, congregations receive reports back from interns regarding their experiences. If a congregation would like to participate but does not have a full amount, we can arrange to find a partnership with another congregation.

The list of sponsors in the last newsletter was incorrect; the sponsors in 2015 were: Bellevue Reformed, Eastern Parkway UMC, First Reformed (Sch’dy), Lynnwood Reformed, St. George’s Episcopal, St. Kateri RC, Trinity Presbyterian, Union Presbyterian, Thaddeus and Syovia Raushi, and Austin and Marti Spang. Thanks to all!

Please contact Janet Mattis at the SICM office, 374-2683, X107, or [jmattis@sicm.us](mailto:jmattis@sicm.us) for more information on sponsorship. Internship information is available on our website, [www.sicm.us](http://www.sicm.us).



### Damien Center Updates

The Schenectady Damien Center at 615 Nott Street experienced a fire in late November, and we are renovating the site, including rewiring to prevent future fires. We hope to be back in March, but until then, our friends at First United Methodist Church have graciously offered us their space to use; it is open Tuesdays and Fridays from 11am to 3pm (except the first Friday of each month, when we are closed for training). Offerings include lunch, activities, and speakers! Entrance is off of Chapel Street (just down from Nott Terrace), in the Wesley Room. Parking is available in the Chapel Street lot, which has 30 spots. Questions? Contact Barb at 449-7119 x108 or Anne at x110. The Schenectady Damien Center is now a program of The Albany Damien Center. SICM owns the building and partners with the Albany Damien Center on outreach and in other areas.



### CROP WALK COMING MAY 1!

Come celebrate May Day with Schenectady’s CROP Walk starting at 1:30 pm from Emmanuel Friedens Church, 218 Nott Street 12307. **The Recruiters’ Workshop will be March 15 from 5:30 to 7 pm** (light supper) also at Emmanuel Friedens; all are welcome. The workshop is designed for those who engage others in congregations, companies, etc. For information call Rev. Phil at the SICM office.



@SICM\_NY



Follow us on Instagram!



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Follow us on Twitter!

SICM is grateful to all who have provided support through prayers and financial support. The insurance company is finalizing the payments and we hope to break even with the insurance and other gifts.



## SICM Food Program

The food program has been abuzz serving the equivalent of just under 430,000 meals in 2015! Additionally, we served over 3,500 families through mass distribution on the last Thursday each month and delivered almost 350 bags of groceries to seniors who are unable to leave their homes. We thank you for all of your support, whether time and energy volunteering, monetary donation, or food or other necessity donations which all contribute to our ability to serve the hungry in Schenectady!



Traci Daye



We extend a warm welcome to our new interns, Eboni Linen from Hudson Valley Community College and Traci Daye from Schenectady County Community College. Both Eboni and Traci are earning their Associates Degree in Human Services and will be helping out with various activities.



Eboni Linen

The pantry is seeking volunteers who are able to commit to helping at the pantry 1 day a week from 9am to 12pm to help distribute groceries to our pantry guests. Volunteering for the pantry is a great way to serve your community and to spend time with a fun group of people. Please contact Shelly Ford ([sford@sicm.us](mailto:sford@sicm.us) or 346-4445) for more information on this and other volunteer opportunities at the pantry.

For current volunteers, please be aware that when **Schenectady City Schools are CLOSED OR DE-LAYED** the food pantry will also be **CLOSED**. In the event that the weather seems questionable and schools are not closed, we ask you to look at the non-profit category of the school closing listings (on news stations or online) under Schenectady Inner City Ministry Food Pantry for closing-related updates that may not coincide with school closings especially during school breaks. We will post any pantry closings on our Facebook page, send an email to those of you on our distribution list, and the answering machine at the pantry (346-4445) will be updated by 7:30 am that day with any closing information.

We seek to build our volunteer email list to keep you all updated. If you are interested in being added to the email list please email Shennan at [sjarboe@sicm.us](mailto:sjarboe@sicm.us).



## Interactive Food Resources Map Available!



SICM is committed to addressing the issue of food insecurity in Schenectady; it can occur when an individual or a family is unsure how they are going to obtain their next meal. We partner with Ellis Medicine, Schenectady Community Action Program (SCAP), Schenectady County Public Health, The Schenectady Foundation, the City Mission, the United Way of the Greater Capital Region and others to address this; a major result is an interactive map of Schenectady County ([sicmfood.com](http://sicmfood.com)) showing the location of available food sources. This map is intended to be a resource for low income residents in particular, by identifying available food resources (e.g., grocers, food pantries, vendors who accept SNAP benefits).

This interactive map includes SICM's Summer Meal sites (fixed and mobile stops), as well as current SNAP vendor locations. We will soon launch an "app" for Smart Phones; if you use a computer, instructions for use are on the SICM website. You may access the link for this interactive map via any device that has a browser and can link to the internet. This includes PCs, laptops, tablets, and smart phones. The link is: [sicmfood.com](http://sicmfood.com). This program is supported through a contract with Schenectady County Public Health from a Partners in Community Health (PICH) grant from the Center for Disease Control (CDC).

## Schenectady County Embraces Diversity (SCED)

Reverend Horace Sanders, Jr. has taken the reigns of this program, specifically Study Circles, which are groups of people who meet to talk about the topic of diversity. They are voluntary and highly participatory. Participants share their ideas, listen to others, and explore answers in an open, comfortable setting. All viewpoints are taken seriously, and each participant has an equal opportunity to contribute. At the conclusion of the process, all study circle participants come together at an open forum to identify actions that might be taken to reduce the problem of intolerance and other topics they might want to pursue in the future.

As part of the Study Circles program in the schools, Rev. Sanders hopes to successfully engage children with an understanding and appreciation of our diverse nation. He hopes to open their minds to become a more inclusive nation, with respect for all.

Following are the training and program schedules:

### Facilitator Training for the High School Study Circles

Date: March 8 and March 10, 2016, 5-9pm

Location: First Reformed Church, Schenectady

### SCED High School Study Circles

Dates/Times: March 22 and March 24, 2016, 9am to 1:30pm, both days

Location: Union College

### SCED Middle School Study Circles

Dates/Times: April 19, 9-11:30am and April 21, 9am to 1:30pm

Location: St. Gabriel's RC Church Community Center

Plans are "in the works" for launching the "Dialogue to Change," a structured six-part series for adults on the theme "Facing Racism in a Diverse Nation." Sponsored by Everyday Democracy (the successor to the Study Circles Resource Center) this curriculum provides a structured way for constructive dialogue, deepening understanding, and reflection that leads to action. The curriculum can be previewed at [www.studycircles.org](http://www.studycircles.org).

All are welcome to join. The impetus comes from 7 congregations from diverse backgrounds that indicated interest in participating. The plan is for groups to begin in April. The groups will range in size from 10 to 15 and the number of groups depends on interest. Groups will meet once a week, with various time slots available.

For more information, contact Rev. Sanders at 374-2683, X112 or email: [fearnot@sicm.us](mailto:fearnot@sicm.us).



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***Help us spread the word!***



## SICM Staff Changes

In late January we bid farewell to Jack Sweeney, who served as the Assistant Director for the past 3 1/2 years. Jack accomplished much in his time here, most recently the Food Resource Map (see article on p.4), which will assist many in locating food resources in the City of Schenectady. Jack has retired "again" and looks forward to spending more time with family; he and his wife, Susan, recently built a new house, which they are busy making into a home. We thank Jack for his many contributions and wish him well in this new chapter of his life. We will miss his friendly face and wonderful sense of humor!



## Special Drives/Donations: Thank You to:

### **Ten Thousand Villages**-Stuyvesant Plaza, Albany

In early December, Ten Thousand Villages, a store that offers only fair trade items, held a Community Shopping Event to benefit SICM. A percentage of sales during a specific time period was donated to SICM.



### **Sow's Ear**, Upper Union Street, Schenectady

During the month of December, the store held a collection of baby items for the SICM Food Pantry. Over 500 pounds of diapers, wipes, toiletries and baby food were collected and donated. Special thanks to the Youth Group at **Our Redeemer Lutheran Church of Scotia** (under the leadership of Randy Jerreld) for their special contribution to this effort!



### **Van Antwerp Middle School**, Van Antwerp Road, Niskayuna

Once again the middle schoolers held a "Read-a-thon" to encourage reading among students. During their reading breaks, the students assembled over 200 "Warm up Goody Bags" which they decorated and donated to the Pantry for distribution to guests. They included hot chocolate, soup, granola bars and other snacks; also donated were 448 pounds of pet food.



**Chris Gibbs** from the Chris Gibbs Foundation conducted a diaper drive asking the community for diapers. He collected and donated 83 pounds of baby products.

### **Knights of Columbus**-Schenectady

Our Lady of Guadalupe Council 8121 and St. Kateri Tekakwitha Assembly 1654 gave a gift of \$1,500 to SICM from a Golf Tournament held at the Edison Club on Columbus Day.



### **Brown School Summer Camp**-Schenectady, NY

Summer campers donated school supplies with money raised through a car wash.



## Gifts & Grants

SICM is deeply grateful for the following:

**Edward D. Cammarota Foundation** – has provided funds for our Emergency Food Pantry annually for several years. Edward D. Cammarota was born and lived his entire life in Schenectady; he graduated from Union College in 1937 and was a major developer in Schenectady. His legacy is to help the people here.

**Hannaford Helps/Times Union Hope Fund** provided funding for our Urban Camp 2016.

**Upstate NY Conference of the United Methodist Church - Reaching Our Neighbors** provided funding to help with our Summer Meals program with a focus on Mobile Meals.

**New York Newspapers Foundation** – a first time funder, provided funding to purchase books to distribute to children and youth through out Summer Meals Program.

**The Golub Foundation** and the **Unitarian Universalist Society of Schenectady's Women's Alliance** provided for Summer Meals.

**Greater Capital Association of Realtors®, Inc.** and **SEFCU** provided funding for the SICM Emergency Food Pantry.

**Schenectady County Dept. of Health** (through a PICH - Partners in Community Health) grant provided funding to finish the data analysis, design a mobile "app" for food access, and pilot a Community Supported Agriculture program in the Northside/Yates area.

**Schenectady County Youth Bureau** provided for the Schenectady Basketball Club to get uniforms (SICM is the fiscal agent for SBC).

### **Key Bank-Albany**

Through its Capital Region **Gifts to the Community**, Key Bank made a donation to SICM in December.

## Memorial and Honorary Gifts Given in 2015

### In Honor Of

Paul & Bernice Andrews  
Ruth Anker  
Mrs. Ward Bailey & Family  
Elaine Bair  
Earl & Bonnie Barnes  
Nancy Bedard  
Andrea Branch & Wildwood Staff  
Tim & Diane Brennan  
Rev. & Mrs. William Clasen  
Kathy & Bob Dillon & Family  
Donald & Marilyn Humphry  
Fr. James Kane's Retirement  
Bonnie Koshofer's Retirement  
Ralph & Clara Lasselle  
The Leon, Brough/Birbilis, Hoenzsch & Jettabi Families  
Jeanne Peck  
Shirley Readdean  
Florence Reed  
Sr. Rosemary  
Bette Schofield  
Helga Schroeter  
Marianne & Roy Scott's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
The Scott Family  
Cynthia Seacord's Siblings: Kim, Rich, Holly & Robert & spouses Bill, Wolfgang, Sandra & Dan  
Jack Sweeney's Birthday  
George Tongue  
Gail Van Valkenburgh  
Jose and Rosa Velasquez Quiros  
Will Vining  
John & Rita Warner  
Murray Weissman  
Helen Wilford  
Pastor Dustin Wright's Installation  
Thelma Zeh

### In Memory Of

Floyd & Dorothea Baker  
Peter Beals  
Marilyn Berrigan  
Ron Bigley  
Rev. Charles Blacklock  
Gary Bonk  
Bill Borthwick  
Clarence & Ruth Browne  
Ruth Carver  
Richard Catozzi  
Robert Chylinski  
John M. Cummings  
Dominick DeMaria  
Patrick Duff  
Ronald C. Edmonson  
Jean Esposito  
Patricia Fall  
Fred & Margaret Friello  
Raymond J. Gonda  
Robert Grot  
Bess Haile  
Dorothy Harlow  
Anne S. Harrington  
O'Hearn Herskind  
Fr. Mike Hogan  
James E. Hudson  
Wookwan Hwang  
William Kochem Sr.  
Ava Liscio  
Alma Mele  
Regina Michener  
Donald Alfred Moldenhauer  
Peter Morra  
Justin Morris  
Jacqueline E. Mosher  
Steven Munson  
Robert Mustico  
Andrew Nicodemi  
Joe & Marianne Notar  
Delores Ostrander  
Anthony Pirrone  
Robert Powell

### In Memory Of (cont'd)

Dr. James Purcell  
Helen Ringlee  
Tom Rourke  
Alice Rozek  
Marjorie L. Schmid  
Betty Schwarting  
Richard & Dorothea Seacord  
Ann & Herb Speanburg  
Scott Theriault  
Robert Traxler  
Geraldine Troutwine  
Sean Valero  
Esther Van Hoesen  
Ruth Varley  
Richard & Gladys Weisheit  
Harold J. Wusterbarth



**Donations  
are greatly  
Appreciated!**



Not sure of a gift for someone? What about the person "who has everything?"  
Give a gift to SICM at a holiday or in honor of that special person!



We continue to be honored by those who choose to give in  
memory of a loved one.

Please contact Barbara Bieniek, SICM's Business Manager,  
if you would like further information.



## Schenectady Inner City Ministry

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### ***UPCOMING DATES:***

March 1: SICM Assembly @ Mt. Olivet  
March 15: CROP Walk Recruiters Mtg,  
5:30 @ Emmanuel Friedens  
April 5: SICM Assembly @ Mt. Olivet  
May 1: CROP Walk @ Emmanuel Friedens  
May 3: SICM Assembly @ Mt. Olivet



## **The Last Word**

by Shirley Readdean, **President**, *SICM Steering Committee*

Greetings,

I find it hard to believe we are two months into 2016. This year will be a year of change and planning: changes in Assembly format, changes in community involvement with the development of the position of Chief Diversity Officer.

We have also added Schenectady County Embraces Diversity (SCED) to our list of programs. SCED provides opportunities for County high and middle school students to come together in dialogue around diversity issues. Stay tuned to hear more about the proposed expansion of SCED services.

The Steering Committee after much thought has determined that Assembly will meet at a set location (Mount Olivet Missionary Baptist Church). After a short business session, there will be a thematic program with speakers and /or activities addressing the selected theme. We encourage Assembly members to invite others to attend these educational and informative meetings.

SICM is preparing to celebrate 50 years of community service. More information will be shared in the coming weeks. I look forward to working with everyone as we move through the celebration activities.

Blessings to all,  
Shirley Readdean  
President

