



SCHENECTADY INNER CITY MINISTRY

1055 Wendell Avenue, Schenectady, New York 12308

Mission: Relating the resources of the congregations to the needs of the community.

Membership

SICM is a membership organization for and with congregations. The steps involved are:

- 1) Gain approval from the congregation's governing body to join SICM and to endorse the SICM Covenant. Congregational governance varies; approval is by the appropriate governing process in the congregation.
- 2) Submit a letter to SICM to indicate that the church has requested membership and that it adopts SICM's Mission and Covenant.
- 3) Submit one or two names from the congregation to become SICM delegates. A SICM orientation for new delegates is provided periodically. The Pastor is also a delegate and welcome, and the Assembly meetings are open to all.
- 4) SICM will officially welcome you at an upcoming Assembly soon, or as arranged when congregational members are available. We have a brief Covenanting Liturgy.

Information on the current SICM members, and the SICM Covenant is located on the SICM website: <http://www.sicm.us/members.html>.

Responsibilities of Membership: As a SICM Partner or Member, we ask that congregations prayerfully consider:

- 1) Regularly naming SICM delegates and encouraging their reporting back to the congregation;
- 2) Encouraging congregational members to volunteer in SICM ministries;
- 3) Promoting SICM endeavors and events; and
- 4) Supporting SICM financially.

There is no assessed financial membership obligation, e.g. no formula. However, SICM members do financially support SICM either in general or with a specific emphasis. An annual donation is in addition to other funds raised throughout the year that support SICM programs, e.g. the CROP Walk, Harvest for the Pantry, Empty Bowls, and other opportunities. SICM members can also support SICM through other in-kind services such as food or health product drives, spring bag donations, and children's book collections, for example.

SICM Responsibilities to Partners/Members:

- 1) We strive to "do together what we can best do together and do separately what we best do separately." This specifically means that SICM is a non-sectarian organization whose services

are open to all. For example, congregations conduct regular worship, seek members, etc. We encourage all we serve to utilize the resources and services of member congregations.

- 2) We seek to identify concerns for joint mission and service and encourage congregations to take part.
- 3) We seek to identify meaningful opportunities for voluntary service within SICM ministries and in the community and provide linkages to congregational members.
- 4) We seek through the SICM Assembly to provide educational and strategic resources to and with congregations.
- 5) We seek to respond to concerns and issues brought by members and identify ways for action as appropriate.
- 6) We provide an effective and meaningful way to address social justice concerns in our communities.
- 7) We strive to both “follow the ways of God that are known and yet be made known.”

The SICM Covenant

We of Schenectady Inner City Ministry (SICM), in the hope and expectation of serving God’s purposes, covenant to relate the resources of the churches to the human needs of the city and to demonstrate the essential unity of the church. SICM shall challenge individuals and churches consciously to renew or extend their involvement in the larger community and to experience the excitement and joy of service in the spirit of Christ. We encourage and welcome the full participation in our ministry of those individuals and religious organizations whose concern for human needs proceeds from different orientations, and through the ministry, SICM shall strive to develop increasing understanding.

SICM Delegates

New SICM members are to provide the name of one or two individuals to serve in the role of SICM delegate. A SICM delegate is an individual who will represent the congregation at the SICM Assembly and other SICM events, whenever possible. The delegate(s) will receive immediate information on important work being done by SICM in the City and the County through various means, including Assembly meetings, newsletters, and email communications. The delegates are expected to regularly attend the Assembly meetings to learn of and inform their congregation and Pastor of local ministries and services.

The role of the delegates is defined further in the SICM Constitution, available to all delegates. SICM delegates vote on major actions on policy/procedural changes that may come before the Assembly as well as receiving timely updates on SICM ministries.

SICM Assembly

SICM hosts a delegate meeting which is called the SICM Assembly. These meetings are held on the 1st Tuesday evening of the month at 6:45 p.m. at Mt. Olivet Missionary Baptist Church, 1055 Wendell Ave., Schenectady, NY 12308; the same building where SICM's Administrative Office is located. The meetings are held from September through December, and February through May; the Assembly does not meet in January, July or August. The December Holiday meeting is a pot-luck supper, long on fellowship and celebration and short on business. The May meeting is the SICM Annual Meeting at which delegates elect the SICM Officers, the members of SICM's Steering Committee, and approve the SICM's budgets. It is also a good time to recruit or introduce new delegates from congregations. The SICM Steering Committee frames the agenda for the Assembly and acts for the Assembly between meetings.

Membership and support for SICM

1) Attending Assembly meetings regularly

The Assembly meetings provide opportunities for the delegates to meet the delegates from the other 50+ SICM churches, and hear speakers on important social and human service needs, enjoy light refreshments, and support each other.

2) Providing a communication link with your church and Pastor

Utilize whatever means you have in your congregation (newsletter, committees, bulletins, bulletin boards, minutes for mission, e-mail, Facebook, etc.) to share what is happening at SICM. Please tell us the best ways to communicate with your congregation.

3) Locating resources of people, stuff, and money

The Assembly will keep you apprised of current volunteer and program needs. Contact people you know who might be the right person for the job, or have other resources. Help recruit for the CROP Walk, sell tickets for the annual Harvest for the Pantry Dinner, arrange for volunteers to work at the Summer Meals Program, and find new ways to help support all of SICM's programs and services.

4) Providing ideas and feedback on the work of SICM

What we do depends on our churches; speak up about SICM needs, or give feedback on our current ministry. Share "best practices" in which your congregation has helped SICM in a particular way — these can be shared at Assembly meetings and in SICM newsletters so that others may benefit from your success. Your involvement creates a more effective SICM for our community.

5) Sharing the good news about SICM

To the extent possible, engage in SICM's social media outlets: Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. "Like" and "share" our posts, retweet our messages and mention SICM in posts. *We strongly urge members to invite a SICM representative (staff, SICM Speakers' Bureau volunteer) to "talk story" with your congregation at a forum, seminar, parish council meeting, worship service, etc.*

Benefits to Joining SICM

- 1) Be part of the collective. When faith communities work together, we effect change.
- 2) Members receive up-to-date information about the many ministries of SICM from those engaged in direct service and have the opportunity to ask questions and to share in conversations.
- 3) Members learn about a wide variety of social issues (poverty, food insecurity, diversity and racism, etc.) and resources from various service providers and experts.
- 4) Members are encouraged and supported to actively volunteer in a wide variety of SICM services and programs (designed to support high-need populations and/or to become advocates for change within our community) throughout Schenectady County.
- 5) SICM can provide a speaker to come to a church at any time to provide information to your congregation. SICM can provide flyers and the SICM brochure when requested. Information is also available on the SICM website, www.sicm.us.
- 6) Links to the SICM member churches are located on the SICM website, www.sicm.us, under Member Congregations.