

Since 1986, Rev. Grigsby has served full-time as the Urban Agent/Executive Director of SiCM (formerly Schenectady Inner City Ministry, now Schenectady Community Ministries). An ecumenical partnership of faith communities (15 denominations), working together for social service and social justice, through Rev. Grigsby's leadership SiCM grew from 36 members to 50 as faith communities merged. The budget increased four-fold.

SiCM's Emergency Food Program has operated continuously for 45 years; last year it provided food for 636,525 meals, assisting 40,000+ individuals ranging in age from infants to Seniors. In addition, this program now occupies an 8,000 SF former food store, plus a garage and is seen as a model program by the NYS Department of Health for its use of healthier food, wrap around services, and public-private partnerships. Rev. Phil led the Capital Campaign to fund the purchase of this building in 2007.

Free Summer Meals Program, providing lunches for children and youth (19 and under) has operated continuously for 25. This is the only USDA sponsor-approved by the NYS Education Department in Schenectady County, providing nutritious food when school is out for the Summer (serving 1,000 to 1,500 daily for 10 weeks) at 30+ sites serving those most in need.

In addition to growing SiCM's core programs, Rev. Grigsby developed innovative model programs to address the needs of vulnerable citizens in response to community/church concerns, and several collaborations that are unique in upstate NY, including: Community Crises Network providing assessment, referrals and emergency assistance. Rev. also developed a committee for Social Justice addressing police-community, criminal justice and related issues in Schenectady City and County. Through their efforts, a Policy Community Review Board was established, a Police Commissioner was hired, and Schenectady Police have increased outreach to hire African Americans. Schenectady County Embraces Diversity was developed organizing structured study circles to strengthen communities through dialogue on racism and related issues with a focus on youth. Spiritually Sound-Physically Fit was developed to provide a multi-faceted approach to improving the physical health of individuals at higher than average risk of chronic illnesses by providing a culturally-supportive environments for individuals to be educated, encouraged and supported for beginning and continuing healthier life-style choice. Healthy Homes-Healthy People was created to address multiple environmental harms and risks to low-income inner city residents of Schenectady County through a community education program regarding household hazardous wastes and by actually collecting household hazardous wastes free of charge in the parking lot of SiCM's Emergency Food Program. Rev. developed Safe Parks and Edible Playgrounds, an initiative that formed a Safe Parks Coalition to improve the city's parks for physical activity for all ages, and Edible Playgrounds, gardens by and for small children that provide teaching and learning opportunities. He developed Housing Task Force providing no-interest loans for security deposits to assist people needing to move; and promoting changes in public policy such as rental certificates, greater emphasis on homeownership, advocacy on the City's Consolidated Plan, and the Emmett Street Initiative.

Rev. Grigsby also focuses on the other aspects of social ministry, especially advocating for the poor by raising awareness through public education and through meetings with local, state and federal policy makers. Rev. Grigsby's leadership has enhanced the quality of life for tens of thousands of people all ages in Schenectady County. He continues to serve SiCM as the Honorary Chair of the Capital Campaign to build the SiCM Resource Center and Campus.

On behalf of SiCM, we thank you, Reverend Phil Grigsby for over thirty-three years of service to Schenectady.

PROGRAM

for

Reverend Phil Grigsby's Retirement Celebration

January 26th, 2020

Cocktail Hour

3PM

Welcome

4PM

Invocation by Rev. Peter Carman,
President, SiCM Steering Committee

Special Words

Schenectady Mayor Gary McCarthy

Rev. Bonita Grubbs

Executive Director, Christian Community Action, Inc.

Patricia Obrecht

Shirley Readdean

Deb Riitano

Florence Reed

Adam Smedberg, Church World Service

Dinner

Open mic is available to members of the community. All are welcome to share their thoughts, memories and wishes.

Closing Remarks and Prayer

Guest of Honor Rev Phil Grigsby



A NEW CHAPTER

Welcome to the Celebration!

We thank Reverend Phil Grigsby
for his thirty-three years of service
to Schenectady with Schenectady
Community Ministries

In lieu of gifts, donations can be made to SiCM

“Change is inevitable. Transformation is optional.”

Reverend Phil Grigsby