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**Schenectady
Community
Ministries**

SEFA #50-00396

Web: www.sicm.us



Summer Meals - SILVER ANNIVERSARY SiCM Plans Expansion—Opens June 26th

For 25+ years, the SiCM Summer Meals Program has fed thousands of children. This important program offers children a breakfast and lunch meal throughout the summer. Meals are served at locations specifically targeted to reach the largest number. The City of Schenectady and locations in Scotia qualify for free lunches due to geographic data regarding poverty rankings. The NYS Education Department and the US Department of Agriculture fund SiCM's summer meals program by reimbursing SiCM for each meal served. Additional funding from United Way, No Kid Hungry, CDBG and private donations support the program. Breakfast and lunch are available to youth 18 and under, and we expect to feed 1,000 children each day. The program opens on Wednesday, June 26th, will be closed on July 4th, and finishes on Friday, August 30th.

SiCM serves at several of the city's parks, including Quackenbush Park, Jerry Burrell Park, Central Park, Elmer Ave Park, Vale Park, Hillhurst Park, Wallingford Park, Steinmetz Park, and Front Street Pool. City's municipal housing locations are also served at Yates Village, Southgate Apartments, and MacGathan Townhouses. Our church sites include Faith United Methodist Church (Eastern & Brandywine), Friendship House (955 State Street), Mt. Olivet (Park Ave.), State Street Presbyterian Church (Catherine and State Streets). Our remaining sites are: The Schenectady Public Library (Clinton St.), Collins Park, Scotia, and our very own SiCM Food Pantry.



As in the past, the program runs five days a week, rain, shine or extreme heat. Last summer, 51,165 meals were prepared and distributed. The menu offers a variety of foods, including juice, milk, fresh vegetables and fruit. The menu closely mirrors that of the meals children receive in school.

SiCM is working in conjunction with other programs running at sites during the summer that provide activities for children. For example, the Boys and Girls Club of Schenectady has programs at Quackenbush, Hillhurst, and Steinmetz Parks, and the YMCA runs a day program at Jerry Burrell Park. CREATE provides creative art activities for the children at two designated parks each season.

The Summer Meals Program employs about 20 people from our community. The program also uses approximately 1,400 volunteers to distribute, serve and read to the children at the sites. If you know of anyone needing a summer job or would like to volunteer for a few hours, please contact Laura Pinckney at the SiCM office (518) 374-2683 Ext. 104.

See SiCM's Website for specific site locations & hours of operation:
www.sicm.us/about-us/foodprogram/summermeals.



Ministry Notes

Schenectady Community Ministries (SiCM) celebrates the partnership of **50** member congregations "relating the resources of the congregations to the needs of the community," supporting ministries of social service, education, witness and social action.

The 2018 SiCM newsletters and 2018 Annual Report and more detailed financial and program information is available from SiCM at 1055 Wendell Ave., Schenectady, NY 12308 or 518.374.2683.

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

SCHENECTADY COMMUNITY MINISTRIES

1055 Wendell Avenue,
Schenectady, NY 12308
Phone: 518.374.2683

E-mail: infomation@sicm.us

Website: www.sicm.us

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 Community Reformed, Christ Church Episcopal, Church of St. Adalbert, Duryee Memorial AME Zion, Eastern Parkway UMC, Emmanuel Baptist—Friedens UCC, Faith UMC, First Reformed, Sch'dy, First Reformed, Scotia, First UMC, Friendship Baptist, Good Shepherd Lutheran, Holy Name of Jesus PNC, Immaculate Conception, Immanuel Lutheran, Lishakill Reformed, Lynnwood Reformed, Parsons Memorial-COGIC, Messiah Lutheran, Mt. Olivet Missionary Baptist, Niskayuna Reformed, Our Lady of Grace, Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Our Lady Queen of Peace, Our Redeemer 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. 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, Trinity Reformed, Unitarian Universalist Society of Schenectady, Zion Lutheran

Crisis: Peril and Opportunity

As you likely know, the Chinese character for "crisis" contains within it both the sense of peril (as you would think) and opportunity (unexpected). With SiCM we see both this spring in several areas. First with our food pantry. You may already have received a special appeal about this. (If we missed you please let us know.) The crisis is one of our own making: we are serving more than ever. We set a record number, about 20% more and climbing. Hunger is real in our community. We responded to requests by senior groups and others for deliveries. We have opened on every third Saturday. The opportunity: we developed a "Fill the Van" approach to broaden support. Some congregations, e.g. First Reformed (Schenectady), held a special offering. Thank you! Some others, e.g. Emmanuel Friedens, are having new monthly collections. Thank you! Another opportunity: we now provide more healthy and nutritional choices. Any help you can provide in response to this crisis is much appreciated! We also welcome opportunities for "Fill the Van!"



Second, with (formerly) the Schenectady Damien Center. Thanks to a legacy of Jordon Hess we obtained a property on Nott Street to operate the Damien Center. We began this many years ago, an outreach and community center for those struggling with HIV/AIDS. Under Laurie Bachelder's leadership, at the former Sacred Heart/St. Columba's rectory, the program provided valuable support during the pandemic. Thanks to medications, this is now a chronic disease for most; the kind of initiatives once supported reduced. We transitioned our program to the Albany Damien Center. They had meals and programs here and members could participate in all the programs at the Albany Damien Center (which was restored and much more added after a fire).

Our crisis this past year was that the Albany Damien Center decided on short notice to stop operating the Schenectady Damien Center. For an explanation, I suggest you contact Perry Junjulas directly at the Albany Damien Center. This crisis left us with a building but no program. After some exploration, the opportunity this provided us is to partner with Mohawk Opportunities to provide supported living space for those they serve. This is very much in the spirit of Jordon Hess; and he would be pleased with this legacy.

Third, I want to share that Laurie Bachelor, who came back to us, will be retiring this June as Development Director. This was a special 2-year initiative. All of us greatly appreciate Laurie's dedication and initiatives which included the 50th anniversary event, other special events, an updated web site, greater social media presence, and a new donor software system. She is leaving us in excellent condition. While it is a peril; it gives us the opportunity to see how we continue and develop these initiatives. Thank you, Laurie and best wishes, in retirement! Rev. Phil Grigsby

CROP Walk—50 Anniversary May 5, 2019

The 50th Anniversary of Church World Service/SiCM's CROP Walk was held on Sunday, May 5, 2019 and kicked off at 2:00 p.m. Results: Raised **\$30,331**; 308 walkers and volunteers participated, and 15 teams raised over \$900.

CROP Walk is a fundraiser that raises awareness of hunger not only globally and support the Schenectady community. It is a community celebration where people join in a common cause to fight hunger. "We walk because they walk," said, Rev. Phillip Grigsby, Executive Director of SiCM. Walkers set aside one day a year because people around the globe often walk for the basics of life, including water, food and shelter.

This year we **Filled the Food Van** at Schenectady's CROP Hunger Walk! Walkers brought a number of canned or boxed food items to fill our food van, which was parked at the event.

SiCM is excited to share that we featured a new band: The Donna Tritico Band performed fantastic blues/gospel music. All are welcome to join us next year! **Thank you to all our Schenectady CROP Hunger Walkers, Recruiters and Volunteers!**



Thank you to all who helped to make **Empty Bowls** such a successful celebration!

The **Empty Bowls Project**, held on March 3, 2019, at the DoubleTree Hilton Hotel was a fund-raising event that used the symbol of a soup bowl to generate support to feed the hungry. Guests chose a bowl to take home to serve as a reminder of all the empty bowls in the world. Paul Tonko dropped by for a sampling of fine soups and stews. Our guest judges were City Councilwoman Leesa Perazzo and City Councilwoman Marion Porterfield.

For a full list of Empty Bowls honorary committee and sponsors visit www.sicm.us



Thank you to our Honorary Committee Members & Sponsors.

Aaron Striker
(age 6)
Tomato & Cuke
Soup



Chase Arruda
(age 4)
Tomato &
Meatball
Soup



Empty Bowls had 90 participants, 15 chefs and soups, and **raised over \$5,562!**

Special thanks to our event's chairperson, Carman Gero & Friends!

Soup Winners: 1st Place Marissa Phelps—Italian Orzo Spinach Soup
2nd Place: DoubleTree Chef— Dianna Smith - Butternut Bisque
3rd Place: Carman Gero—Turkey Vegetable

Thank you to all our Chefs!

CELEBRATING 45 YEARS! - SiCM has provided groceries for 5 Million Meals since moving to 839 Albany Street

2018 at a Glance: almost 700,000 meals – almost 50,000 Individuals

Staffed by Shelly Ford; Ariel White; Iva Gay; James Frazier; Greg Davenport and almost 150 volunteers, each month, the pantry provides nutritious food for almost 38,000 meals to feed 4,000 individuals. SiCM hosts a monthly "Mass Distribution," distributing foods donated by the Regional Food Bank and addressing food insecurity for another 300 families.

When SiCM began the Emergency Food Program (EFP) in 1974, it was seen as a temporary solution to a crisis. We were wrong: this year "The Pantry" celebrates 45 years of continuous service! Originally located in a downtown church (First United Methodist), the EFP moved to its present location at 839 Albany Street (a former A&P grocery store) – in the highest-need neighborhood in our City in June 2007. Open year-round, we provide four-days-worth of food, based on household size, sufficient for three nutritious meals a day.

Foods from all five major food groups are provided in the form of non-perishables, as well as fresh produce, eggs, juice, baked goods and frozen meat. We provide baby food, formula and milk certificates; and non-food items (diapers, soap) as available through the Regional Food Bank. Individuals can return up to once a month. SiCM also provides "wrap around services," including prescreening food stamp and health insurance applications; referrals to other services; nutrition education/demonstrations; and voter registration.

Since 2016, SiCM has been empowering and educating community residents by providing plots and support services for a Community Garden located just a few blocks from the EFP. We are also outreaching through Senior Services: Sit & Knit; Senior Connect and Grandparent/Grandchild Supports to empower elders in our community.

CAN YOU HELP THE PANTY? This spring time of new life and change, we give thanks for our blessings. This year with your help, we have assisted so many in need in the community. Unfortunately far too many families are challenged to make ends meet. At SiCM we help individuals and families in crisis and don't ask why they need help, but rather ask, how can we help them today. The need for our help this past year was overwhelming. Through the Food Pantry, we served the equivalent of 678,228 meals this year. We saw a 17% increase in the number of families coming to the Pantry, and SiCM served over 53,000 summer meals in 2018, over a 1000 more than the previous year. We are asking for you to **give an additional donation** to the pantry to help us re-align our priorities both in need and in costs!

Schenectady Community Ministries

1055 Wendell Avenue
Schenectady, NY 12308-2807

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The Last Word

Rev. Peter JB Carman President



Dear friends,

As we enter a new season, the work of SiCM continues strong. Your Steering Committee gets to hear the latest achievements, as well as ongoing challenges that face a faith-based organization trying to make the world better. It's a wonderful team!

To many, the face of SiCM is a good institution, working to alleviate hunger and food insecurity.

Accustomed to supporting "charities", we see professionals and volunteers doing good work. Yet, while accurate, that's an incomplete snapshot of who we are.

SiCM is first of all not "them" doing stuff, but **us living our faith together.**

SiCM is **unusual**. Most cities do not have an ecumenical or interfaith body that is so engaged or so grassroots based.

SiCM offers us ways to give **witness to the kind of city God longs for.**

SiCM is a **community of faith communities** coming together across our differences to advocate for change, embody holy hospitality, and advocate for a more just Schenectady County—and world.

SiCM is a **challenge**. In a time of shrinking resources and growing needs.

SiCM is an **opportunity** for each of us to step up to the plate personally and cooperatively, and put our beliefs into action.

Consider the Spirit's personal challenge to you and your congregation.

How might this organization provide you the opportunity to respond? Call our office to explore possibilities!

We **who are SiCM** live in a changing season for our congregations, for our city. Let's embrace it.

Warmly,

Peter J.B. Carman

Save the Dates

Music Company Orchestra - 1st

Reformed: Sunday, 10.20.19

Harvest for the Pantry- Scotia

Reformed: Sunday 10.27.19

SPECIAL THANKS!

Thanks for Supporting Souper Bowl Sunday!

Results are still coming in but YTD we are over \$10,000! and counting ...



Thank you for *Giving from the Heart* and
Supporting SiCM's

FILL THE VAN FOOD DRIVE

February 14, 2019!

908 lbs. of donated

Groceries, an in-kind value of
\$681 ... and \$128.25 in cash

Thank you Niskayuna Co-Op for
hosting the event!



Next Opportunity: Mohawk Honda, Scotia
June 9, 2019, 11am – 3 pm