

SICM NEWS

Year 45, Number 1, Winter 2013

Steering Committee 2012-2013

Rev. Stacey Midge
President

Pat Obrecht
Secretary

Dr. Frank Thomas,
Treasurer

Peter Notch,
Past President

Cheryl Gerstler
Jim Raymond
Helga Schroeter
Rev. Megan Stowe
Don Wheeler

Emeritus/a Members:
Rev. Diana Fletcher

Rev. Phillip N. Grigsby,
Executive Director



Schenectady Inner
City Ministry
1055 Wendell Avenue
Sch'dy, NY 12308
Tel: 518 374-2683
Fax: 518 382-1871
information@sicm.us
www.sicm.us

SICM Day of Service to Have a New Look in 2013!

SICM's Day of Service has been a great success the past two years, but we want to make the event even better! To maintain its success but to expand the options for participation, this year we are going to try SICM Days of Service, to be held on 2 Saturdays. Groups are welcome at one or both. Here is the plan:

Saturday, March 9, 9am to 12 noon: Assembling Spring/Easter Baskets for Pantry
Saturday, April 13, 9am to 12noon: Outdoor cleanup at Schenectady parks which serve as Summer Lunch Sites

We will be collecting items for the Spring Baskets at the SICM Office from now until March 6. Items may include (but are not limited to): bubbles, sidewalk chalk, jump ropes, jax, coloring books and crayons, and small games or puzzles. More information will be posted on our website as we get closer to the dates: www.sicm.us

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

SICM Community Service Award Recognizes Key Volunteers



In December, SICM held its annual Holiday Potluck Dinner in conjunction with the December Assembly Meeting. Held at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church's new fellowship hall, it was a festive evening, complete with a wide variety of home-cooked food, award presentations, and a visit from St. Nicholas. SICM recognized three people for their service to SICM and the community: John Held, Chris Jones, and Rev. Stacey Midge. The Community Service Award is intended to honor a volunteer or volunteer group within the SICM ministries network that go "above and beyond."



L to R: Crys Hamelink,
Rev. Stacey Midge and
Rev. Phil Grigsby



Friends, fun and fellowship
add to the festivities!

Congratulations!

(see "Award Winners on p. 3)

Summer Internship Program

SICM seeks sponsoring congregations and summer interns. College students and older high school students intern for 10 weeks working either part-time or full-time in the various SICM ministries, e.g. Summer Lunch, Emergency Food Pantry, Edible Playgrounds and in the SICM office. Additionally, interns sometimes lend assistance at partner organizations, such as the Home Furnishings Program. Interns meet as a group on a regular basis with the Internship Coordinator to discuss and reflect upon their experiences. Position descriptions and application materials are available on the SICM website (www.sicm.us): click on SICM Programs, then select Summer Programs, and scroll down to the Summer Internship Program. Priority is given to interns supported by area congregations. Other spaces are available as resources permit. Questions? Contact Janet Mattis at 374-2683, or jmattis@sicm.us.

Schenectady Inner City Ministry (SICM) celebrates the partnership of 55 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



I have been fortunate to be in two events I want to share with you: first, Project SAFE and Delores Edmonds-McIntosh. In late November, I was glad to say a few words at the celebration of Delores' retirement from SAFE Inc. of Schenectady. As I said that night, I 'inherited' Delores when I came in 1986. SICM had the foresight and courage to undertake a new ministry/program to address the sexual exploitation of youth (therefore the first title of Project SAFE was SEYP) the year before. It was one of the things that encouraged me to come. Delores was a very able Project Director and then Executive Director, and the only one for the agency. Together we developed SAFE House, a shelter for runaway and homeless youth, while under the SICM umbrella. She and the SAFE board after spinning off to independence further developed the program, adding Life Skills training, expanding temporary housing for youth, and other aspects.

It was a time to celebrate her and the program. It was also a time to celebrate and remember all those who paved the way. My role was historian. The State Police officer so instrumental to the program, Ed Girtler, could not attend for health reasons. Rev. Albert Holman, formerly pastor of Mt. Olivet Missionary Baptist, has retired and moved out of the area. We recalled those who have gone before us and

no longer with us who were so instrumental in leading the way: the Rev. Carl B. Taylor, Sr. Georgetta Dix, Bertha Comanzo, and Bob Sauerhell. We truly stand on the shoulders of giants who have gone before us.

Like some other SAFE events, the evening was an occasion to hear about current realities and what can be done. The guest speaker was Corban Addison, who is the author of A Walk Across the Sun and becoming on the forefront of the movement to end human trafficking. I encourage you to check him out at www.corbanaddison.com. The concerns are different from when SAFE started but still very much with us, and people are mobilizing locally and internationally.

When SAFE got going, too many young people were on the street and became victims of sexual exploitation. With SICM and SAFE and the community, now there is less. There are alternatives. SAFE House continues as one of the relatively few shelters in the area. We are here and too often take it for granted. We can celebrate Delores, SAFE, and the community for providing an effective response and alternative for many young people.

Second, I was invited to pray at the swearing in ceremony for Councilwoman Marion Porterfield. For those who have been to these things, many of them are brief or straightforward. Marion's was a celebration. For those here in this area you will know that the path was not straightforward. Nevertheless she persevered to become the first elected African American woman to the Council. She and others commented that she would not be the last. Marion honored her mother, Rev. Diana Fletcher, who also served on the SICM Steering Committee and as her church's delegate. It was a historic moment with the Council chamber full.

She asked me to deliver the prayer of commitment. I won't repeat it here (part of it was carried correctly in the Gazette). Briefly, I reflected on the contrast in many faith traditions between the culture of success (with many loud voices calling for success and fame) and the call to be fruitful by focusing instead on compassion, service, seeking the common good,

(cont'd on page 3)

SCHENECTADY INNER CITY MINISTRY

1055 Wendell Avenue, Schenectady, New York 12308

Ph: (518) 374-2683, Fax: (518) 382-1871

e-mail: information@sicm.us Website: www.sicm.us

Executive Director: Rev. Phillip N. Grigsby

Editor: Janet Mattis

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, Sch'dy, Immanuel Lutheran, Lynnwood Reformed, Messiah Lutheran, Mount Olivet Missionary Baptist, Niskayuna Reformed, Our Lady of Fatima, Our Lady of Grace, Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Our Redeemer Lutheran, Refreshing Spring Church of God in Christ, 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.

Award Winners *(cont'd from p. 1)*



John Held

John Held was nominated for the SICM Community Service Award for his dedicated service to and with SICM as Treasurer, Finance Committee Chair, SICM President, and delegate from St. John the Evangelist. John became involved first as Treasurer for Bethesda House after SICM began the program, and he was very instrumental in the transition of Bethesda House to independence. John and his wife were away on vacation at the time of the Awards, so we hope to present it at a convenient time.

Chris Jones was nominated for his dedicated service as “webmaster” of the SICM webpage. Chris has given many hours to develop and keep the site updated. He most recently has worked with a committee to re-develop the site to encourage use. Chris is a member of St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church.



L-R: Chris Jones, Janet Mattis, Rev. Phil Grigsby

Rev. Stacey Midge was nominated for the SICM Community Service Award for her outstanding efforts at coordinating and mobilizing church and community responses to



St. Nicholas paid a visit to the December Assembly!

disasters caused by Hurricanes Irene and Sandy. She became and is heavily involved in mobilizing the Reformed Church in America’s responses to them. She led teams in the Stockade and Schoharie for recovery efforts and this year has made many trips to Staten Island to aid recovery efforts. Stacey is recognized locally and now nationally in the RCA for her expertise in disaster recovery efforts.



Pat and Nicky enjoying dinner!

Ministry Notes *(cont'd from page 1)*

and the welfare of the city and all of its/our neighbors.

It is a challenging time for government leaders at all levels, and we need to remember the history that was made here, that is prologue to the future. We continue to lift up and pray for her and all our leaders.

Further in this newsletter you will read about many of SICM’s direct ministries. I wanted to share with you some of the other ways we are involved in ministry.

Rev. Phil Grigsby

Can You Help the Emergency Food Pantry?

The Pantry currently has needs for the items below:

*Diapers



*Baby Wipes

*Dry mixes (soup, rice, etc.)



*Jelly



*Baby food



*Soups



SICM always welcomes cash donations, which is used to purchase food in bulk at a reduced rate from the Regional Food Bank. While your \$3.79 will buy a box of cereal, our \$3.79 will buy a case of cereal! Many thanks for ALL your donations!

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



Recently NPR has been running a series on the increasing numbers of young adults who have turned away from organized religion. This phenomenon is no news to most of us in this area; we see it every week in the aging demographics of our congregations. More than ever, churches are struggling to find connection points with young people. This is one of the reasons I find SICM's intern program to be so crucial. The youth of my church have more opportunities to remain grounded in a faith community, not just because of the programs we offer in this congregation, but because the many congregations of SICM come together to offer our youth opportunities to serve their community. Because of their experiences as interns, many of the youth I work with are now preparing for careers in human service and for lives of volunteerism, rooted in their faith.

Together as SICM, we have the ability to offer programs and services that none of us could manage on our own, and we know that we impact the community with our food programs and advocacy. But we should not underestimate the impact we can have on our own youth and young adults. Together we can help them experience God's compassion and justice, lived out in our united mission.

5th Annual Harvest for the Pantry Continues Tradition of Raising Funds for the Emergency Food Pantry!



Thanks to many, the Sunday, November 5, 2012, Harvest for the Pantry was a success! Friends, families and community members enjoyed an evening of fun and fellowship at the 5th Annual fundraising event. 200+ people took part in the dinner, the silent auction and the pick-a-prize, and enjoyed a marvelous chicken marsala meal created, once again, by Chef Nicky. Clara Laselle provided her famous (and delicious!), harvest-themed cakes for dessert. Many local businesses and individuals donated goods and services for the auctions. The silent auction and pick-a-prize both boasted offerings of over 50 items—each! We anticipate the grand total of \$15,000, including the Honorary Committee. For next time we want to secure some “big ticket items”, so please keep that in mind over the coming months. Watch for the 6th Annual Harvest for the Pantry Fundraising Dinner to take place in November 2013!



Eunice Cioffi (center) enjoys dinner with friends.



Sharon Carter (right) and others look over silent auction items.

2012 Harvest for the Pantry Honorary Committee Members

Bob & Stacey Fenton	Joan & George Gould	Sch'dy Federation of Teachers	Carla Hernas, VMD
Jacqueline & Michael Foster	Rev. Phil & Janet Grigsby	Helga Schroeter	Hon. Karen B. Johnson
Friends of SICM	Drew & Crys Hamelink	Scott & Barbieri Family Funeral	Shirley Joosten
Marvin & Company	Paul & Susan Houpt	Homes	Rev. James J. Kane
Al & Carolyn Canova	Ralph & Clara Laselle	Austin & Marti Spang	Hon. Margaret King
Sharon Carter and George Warner	Victor & Liz Mazzotti	Jack & Susan Sweeney	Sam Lefkowitz
Rev. & Mrs. William Clasen	Peter & Barbara Notch	William & Rita Vullo	Merle Longwood
Edward & Mary Cummings	Bob & Pat Obrecht	Pat & Don Wheeler	Roy & Marianne Scott
Evelyn Currie	Ellie & Gene Rowland	Catholic Charities AIDS Services	Cynthia Shultz
William Eberle	Chris & Pat Rush	Virginia & Richard DePaula	Assemblyman James Tedisco
William & Cheryl Gerstler			

Thanks to the volunteers who helped make the 2012 Harvest for the Pantry a success:

Chef Nicky, Kim Benson, Kara Williams, Anna Mattis, Colin Foster, Peter Krauss, Lizzy Gallagher, Eileen Ploetz, Olivia Jaquith, Cheryl Gerstler, Terry VanValkenburgh, Pat & Don Wheeler, Jim & Nancy Bedard, Chris Rush, Nancy and Ron Virkler, Ruth Quinn, Joan LaMonica, Ruth Quinn, delegates selling tickets, SICM Steering and staff.

Many thanks for food donations from:

Chef Nicky	Blue Ribbon Family Rest.	Niskayuna Wine & Liquors	Stewart's Shops
Clara Laselle	Center Stage Deli	Starbuck's of Niskayuna	Villa Italia Bakery