

Window on Main Street

News from the Church and Community Program

September 2015

The Church and Community Program is supported by the people of: First Presbyterian Church on the Park, Grace Episcopal Church, St. Mary's Catholic Church, Seventh Day Adventist Church, Unitarian Universalist Church, and United Methodist Church. For over 40 years, these churches have come together around a mission: to provide food and clothing to those in need, to offer referrals for additional assistance, and to do so with respect for those we serve.

How Does a Thrift Shop Help Feed our Community?

Located at 7 Main Street, The Church and Community Program operates a Food Pantry and a Thrift Shop. Over the last year, the Food Pantry has provided an average of 10,740 meals each month to an average of 716 individuals. Through our Emergency Fund we have assisted families and individuals with such items as rent, temporary housing, electricity disconnects, and transportation needs. We provide all of these services with one paid staff member, Director Ray Crosby, and many volunteers. And we have always had a Thrift Shop where our clientele can get clothing at a very good price.

But how important is the Thrift Shop in helping our neighbors? This past year our shop, with new management, is coming very close to covering our rent of \$16,200 a year. This is enormously important budget relief for our small program. Without the Thrift Shop, we would be hard-pressed to do any of this other work!

Our New Manager, Carol Linn

This turn-around is largely the work of Carol Linn (United Methodist Church of Canton). On her winter "vacation" in Florida, Carol has volunteered at a large and thriving thrift shop run by the Coronado United Methodist Church. Bringing her experience back to Canton, Carol has re-organized our shop to be an attractive space for all who come. What's on the racks is regularly refreshed with new items; older and worn items are recycled in association with St. Vincent de Paul's, our next door friends. Bag sales abound as do special sales on key weekends such as the Dairy Princess Parade and The Stomp. Please visit us to appreciate this renovation, and remember our Thrift Shop for your good used clothing, shoes, purses, and jewelry!



Photo: Volunteers at the Thrift Shop: Carol Linn, center. First row: Mary Ann Axtell, Carol Pcolar, Linda Woodrow, Pat Mace, Janet Stitt, Marie Cotellessa, Bob Greenberg. Second row: Jeff Cotellessa, Ray Crosby, Wanda Corbett, Judy DeGraaff, Pat Sibbitts.

A Shop Volunteer Describes Her Experience

I look forward to my Tuesday afternoon shift. When I signed on, Carol Linn who manages the Thrift Shop, made it clear that volunteers can choose to simply sit at the cash register and take it easy, or they can work on whatever needs doing. Usually that entails sorting through the donated bags of clothes, pricing them and getting them out on the racks as soon as possible. We get excellent stuff, often name-brand items, that are generally freshly laundered and folded. Along with everyday wear, we get maternity clothes, nightwear, intimate wear and sportswear. We get shoes, purses, scarves, belts and ties. We get dress clothes including the occasional prom dress and wedding gown. This year, Carol has introduced jewelry.

The Thrift Shop was newly carpeted this year thanks to a makeover grant from Walmart, and additional space was carved out to make a specialized wall from which we can highlight our goods. We get to exercise our fashion sense by choosing which clothes to display, and dressing up the manikins for display in the windows. You do NOT need to know how to operate a cash register (although basic arithmetic is helpful!)

Perhaps most important, the people are a pleasure to work with. Ray and Carol are supportive, easy-going and fun; there is always someone there to answer your questions. The customers are friendly and good-humored; I have yet to run into an unpleasant individual.

So what's not to like?

~ Judy DeGraaff

WHAT WE NEED? YOU!!

Running the Thrift Shop is easy work when it can be shared. Our regular volunteers would love you to join this group, either for a weekly assignment (9:30-12:30 or 12:30-3:30, Monday through Friday) or a shared assignment (once every two weeks, once a month) or as a substitute to be called on as needed. Be in touch with Carol at 386-3819 (tlinn@twcny.rr.com).

Other News from C&CP

On Sunday, August 30, our "Back-to-School Supplies" program served 193 students, providing backpacks and school supplies, dental supplies and, for those interested, a back-to-school haircut. All of our churches and several local businesses contributed to this important program.

At its Annual Meeting on Sept. 8, the C&CP announced two awards. John and Judy Turcotte (from St. Mary's) received the Richard Morrow Humanitarian Award, established to celebrate Richard's spirit of generosity and commitment to the needs of people with economic challenges. The Cerebral Palsy Association of the North Country received our first Community Partner Award, given to recognize their invaluable role in transporting food to our pantry.

Members of the Board of Representatives of the Church and Community Program:

From St. Mary's -- Sharon White (president); Maureen Howard; David Geleta (treasurer);

From First Presbyterian Church -- Janet Stitt; Jane Fernandes (secretary); Andrew Loeffler;

From Grace Episcopal Church -- Connie Elen; From Seventh Day Adventist -- Joan Fischer;

From Unitarian Universalist -- Patricia Alden (vice-president); From United Methodist -- Elaine Noble (assistant treasurer), Patricia Sibbitts, Cheryl Glidden.

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