



The Quarterly Truth NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2020

SOJOURNER TRUTH MINISTRIES, INC. 501 High Street Williamsport, PA 570-323-1797

HOURS OF OPERATION: Monday – Saturday 9:00 am – 1:00 pm Sunday - Closed

Rev. C. Angelique Labadie-Cihanowyz, Director

Website: stmwilliamsport.org

Want me to come and share about Sojourners to your church or group? Invite me! I'd love to!

Vision Statement Sojourner Truth Ministries shall be a loving, spiritual, and inclusive Christian mission.

Mission Statement Sojourner Truth Ministries loves all people, creates community, builds character, and equips us to be faithful disciples of Jesus Christ.

We are supported by these foundations:



Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ *Happy spring!*

At the end of February, we celebrated our Open House, featuring some special artwork from West Branch school, our ministries, and Sojourner Truth Ministry's House of Hope- a project in the making to offer 6-month housing in a Christ-based healing atmosphere. The House of Hope will have mentors for each woman who resides there, with spiritual care as well as addressing the many barriers women in homelessness face. The end goal is for each resident to find her value in Christ, to replace the lies she has believed over time about her worth, and claim the healing only Jesus can offer. She will also have acquired life skills- communication, job, interviewing, anger management, managing money, and much more. Our desire is that those who complete their time in House of Hope will be well on their way to being productive members of our community, and willing to pour life into others. Reports were that we had nearly 200 people come through, and we got to meet many of you, for which we are grateful. It felt kind of like a reunion of sorts, seeing community and old friends all together, from different walks of faith and life was a highlight of my time as Director. Several people had offered their time, prayers, and talents to help make it all happen. The House transformation took place with literally hundreds of volunteer hours and many generous gifts. Thank you to PA Skills, to Greenview Alliance Church, Mansfield University, Lezzer Lumber, Harry F. Plankenhorn Foundation, St. Luke fund, St. Boniface, Pine St UMC, and many, many people who have chosen to give anonymously. To date, from the open house, more than \$12,600 has been raised for the House. As the Apostle Paul writes, "I thank my God for every remembrance of you".

~ Pastor Angelique

Changes, Transformation, Opportunities, Partnering...

Changes: we have had to make them due to circumstances outside our control. We have continued to provide lunches to those who come, passing them through the door. In April, we served 1930 lunches to a lot of hungry people! As often as possible, we include Scripture nuggets with a meal, and frequently offer a take home devotion, written by a retired pastor, along with an activity on the back, such as a related word-find. New people are coming and look forward to a word of encouragement, a prayer, a devotion to bring home. One lady told us that she has kept her scriptures from day 1.

Transformation: As we prepare to reopen, we are revamping the way things have been done. A social service station will be present in the main dining area for assistance in filling out forms, referring people to area agencies, and other things they may need. We are preparing a new Bible Study "Who God is", run by a local retired clergy. A youth worker is committed to coming once per week to spend time in faith conversations. **Opportunities:** There are opportunities to partner with us in ministry! This may be volunteering certain days in the kitchen, hosting during mealtimes, or manning a table in the social services area to help others. Would you like to come and sing or offer music? Facilitate a Bible study? How about getting involved with some racial reconciliation discussions and a movie? or, it could be partnering financially, or in prayer! They say it takes a village to raise a child - we need the whole community to support and nurture those who come our way. You will be blessed by it. Trainings and poverty simulation workshops will be offered. Join us, partner! You will be blessed.

ASK *After School Kids* PROGRAM CONTINUES



We have had the pleasure to continue to assist in delivering meals to some of our ASK (AFTER SCHOOL KIDS) kids and their families even though there is no school. The kids and families are so appreciative of the few moments we spend with them 3 days/week. Along with the food at least once a week we include some Sunday School booklets, coloring pages and scripture. In addition some of us have been providing age appropriate books for the children as possible. We had a special surprise the week after Easter when one young man (a sixth grader) ran out to ask us if it was OK if he gave us something (safe distancing) and quickly stepped back after he handed us the items, an Easter craft he had made as well as a beautifully colored Easter Cross picture with a hand written "Thank You" for reading with him at the ASK program. He is a wonderful kid who tends to tell tall tales, has an occasional problem with anger management, is reading way below grade level and has told me "you know I'm not a Christian." To which I answered, "maybe not yet, but I can't wait to tell you more about how to become one!!" Unfortunately that exchange took place the last ASK day before the schools closed. These are wonderful kids, we can't hug or spend much time with them for now but we can continue to let them know how much they and their families are loved by God the Father, God the Son and the God Holy Spirit. We can pray for them and look forward to the time when we can again meet as a group and one on one.

STM WELCOMES NEW STAFF & VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

Introducing **Dave Yost**, our new cook!

Dave began serving (literally and figuratively) in March, and comes to us with 17 years of experience cooking at American Rescue Workers. He still works there, but in a different capacity during the nights. He is passionate about helping others, "giving back the help that was given to me- there are times I have needed a place to stay and stood in line for a meal". Dave makes the best meal possible with what we have, in order to provide a healthy, well balanced, and good tasting meal. "Just because someone is poor doesn't mean they should be eating scraps". An example of his heart that we have observed is, knowing some of our patrons do not have teeth, he even cuts grapes and cherry tomatoes in half for meals to be more appealing

Welcome to **Lyn Baker**, our new Volunteer Coordinator!

Lyn will be using her many years of volunteer experience to help us organize and improve our volunteer program. Although she hasn't been in the area long, Lyn has quickly become a valued member of the Williamsport community through her personal ministry, and we are very excited to see where she takes her new role. Stay tuned for new and exciting volunteer opportunities!



**BLEACH - DISH DETERGENT - COFFEE - POWDERED CREAMER
10 OZ. PAPER CUPS/PLATES (NO STYROFOAM PLEASE) - POWDERED DRINK MIX
FOOD SERVICE GLOVES - PLASTIC FORK - HAND SANITIZER - DISINFECTANT WIPES
POSTAGE STAMPS - THANKYOU CARDS /NOTES**

STM WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Maigrette K. Polanco-Albino is so excited and blessed to be part of Sojourner Truth Ministries 2020 Board. She was born and raised in Puerto Rico, and has served the church most of her life, often with singing.

Married for 28 years to Dr. Eddie O Rodriguez-Lopez, she has been the engine that helps run her busy family of 4 sons and a grandson. She is thrilled to be able to help STM show God's love to "the least of these", for His glory. Serving God is in her blood, and STM is the avenue that He has put in her heart since summer of 2019.

She has been actively sharing the gospel by serving as a translator to recently arrived immigrant couples from the Caribbean, voluntarily assumed a social worker role for them, and connecting people in need to local services. Maigrette has helped prepare STM's newest project, House of Hope- coordinated volunteer services, cleaning, painting and, most importantly, kept motivating others to serve.

Linda Jackson has been serving on Sojourner Truth Ministries 2020 Board since February after being asked to consider coming on as secretary. Already volunteering her services with putting together our quarterly Newsletters and volunteering with the After School program, serving on the STM board only seemed like one more way to be of service to this great Ministry.

Born and raised in Williamsport, she is the mother of a son and a daughter and the grandmother of five grandchildren and one great grandchild.

Retired after 40 years of service from PPL Electric Utilities, she is a member of Shiloh Baptist church, where she serves as Trustee and Financial Secretary. She also serves on the board of the United Churches of Lycoming County and is president of Church Women United in Lycoming County. Linda also serves on the P. D. Mitchell Memorial Scholarship Committee that awards scholarships annually to Williamsport High School graduates.

WANTED: House Manager - Mentors - Volunteers

as of this writing, we are looking to hire a **House manager**. The ideal candidate will have a degree in social/human services or equivalent, she will have worked with this population in the past, experience supervising staff and working with the mental health community. For more information, please check our website for more details www.stmwilliamsport.org. We are also looking for **female mentors**- mature christians able to commit to a minimum of 2 hours per week for 9-12 months. This would be great for women who can spiritually nurture and disciple a resident, and lives out her faith. In addition, we are seeking 2 part time overnight staff positions (3, 4 nights per week), and **LOTS of volunteers** for life skills, office tasks, special in-house events (painting, crafts, manicures, devotions, programs, interview practice, cooking, and on and on.) Volunteer mental health professionals needed, drivers, and the list continues. **How might YOU consider getting involved?**

Volunteer Orientations are 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of every month at 9:00am

Still some openings for 2020 Dinner church sign ups (Dinner Church tab on website)

Website: stmwilliamsport.org



Like us on **facebook** and see what we're up to, read relevant short articles, and get to know us and our mission better!

Remember you can always make donations through **PayPal** or mail to:
Sojourner Truth Ministries, 501 High Street, Williamsport, P.A. 17701

SOJOURNER TRUTH MINISTRIES

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STM newsletter Winter, 2019

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Inside This Issue

- Changes transformation, Opportunities, Partnering
- After School Program continues
- New members on Board
- Am I an Encourager?

Address here

Am I an Encourager?

“Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy — think on these things.” (Philippians 4.8)

What is an encourager? It is any of us that inspire with courage, with spirit, or with confidence. As we consider that, are we encouragers in a world desperate for encouragement? The thoughts of others declare the answer. As we encounter friend, strangers, or sojourners, we can celebrate them in our minds and ask God to use us to lift them up, encourage them.

Helen Keller once said, “When one door of happiness closes, another opens, but often we look so long at the closed door that we do not see the one that has been opened for us.” The words we speak declare the answer, as well. This allows us to move toward others with words that embolden and reassure them of their value to us and everyone. We have the power the love of Christ with whomever we encounter along the Way. With the new day comes new strength and new thoughts. We help others take the next step when we encourage them.

The deeds we do declare the answer, also. Acts of kindness and mercy ripple across not just our own little ponds, but throughout the community and beyond. There is no limit. Today, we shall plant seeds in the Name of Jesus. Tomorrow, we’ll water and nurture those plants. We’ll prune and make sure they have the Light. We’ll invest in the hope for today, and all the promises of tomorrow. Each of our steps presents an opportunity to help and to glorify God.

As we encourage all in thought, word, and deed, we, too, are encouraged. We shall be awash in the joy found in these small moments. Jesus Christ, the greatest encourager ever, said in Matthew 11:28-30, “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” We are called to build one another up – be an encourager!!!

- Len Richards, Board President