

Outreach SLG Report

Written by: Clark Dingman

Please list the members currently serving on your ministry or leadership team.

- ❖ Active Members: Greta Stewart, Beth Walker, Fay Reiter, Mike Waas, Stephen Cossman, Yajeh Ndimbie, Clark Dingman, Staff: Alesha Thomas, Michael Caine

Please list what the goals of your group or ministry were for 2018.

- ❖ Our goals were to provide structure, support and problem solving for five Old First Outreach Programs: Alcoholics Anonymous, Saturday Breakfast and Clothing Cupboard, Urban Service Camps, Winter Homeless Shelter, and POWER (Philadelphians/now Pennsylvanians Organized to Witness, Empower and Rebuild).

Were you able to achieve your goals for 2018? Please be as specific as possible of your successes and failures.

- ❖ We have been successful in the Saturday Breakfast and Clothing Cupboard which provides up to 80 homeless and poor people in our area with a hot meal, donated clothing and toiletries each week of the year. All active members of the SLG participate in some way along with volunteers from the OF congregation, community, and church groups outside the city. We struggle to get our volunteers to use the sign up genius, so we don't often know who is coming to help. There is an easy to use app for your phone, or it can be accessed through the church website. We are analyzing how to use our clothing shed more efficiently. Each week is a big effort to sort clothing by size, and our efforts to maintain organization have not been successful. Several ideas have been proposed, and our goal is to achieve a better system in 2019. We are extremely grateful for the many donations from the members and friends of Old First, their families and colleagues.

Where is your group or ministry area stuck? What is your group or ministry area pondering?

- ❖ We had several successful Urban Service Camps that provided suburban and rural groups from across the country opportunities to participate in urban service organizations and to be exposed to the harsh realities of urban inequality and homelessness. We had less groups than in past years, so a goal for 2019 is to look at increased marketing of the program.

What do you hope to accomplish in the coming 2019 year?

- ❖ The Winter Homeless Shelter provided in partnership with Bethesda Project gave shelter, some evening meals, social services, and community to up to 30 homeless men each night, November 1- April 30. We provided holiday celebrations, gifts, and an Eagles Party hosted by Steve C. Fewer volunteers served evening meals than in the past. Our goals for 2019 include discovering the reasons for this decline and to strike the right balance with the shelter residents wanting a meal but not wanting to "entertain" outside groups more than two or three nights per week. Again we are grateful for the generous support and donations from members of the congregation.

What are the ways that the church can support your team?

- ❖ POWER (Pennsylvanians Organized to Witness, Empower & Rebuild) Beth W. organized our phone banking sessions to get out the vote for the November election. The Economic Dignity Team successfully achieved a \$15 minimum wage for City contract and subcontract workers and a Fair Work Rule, which provides employees with more advance notice if their hours or conditions of employment are going to change. Much more work needs to be done on Education, Mass Incarceration, and Climate Change. The members and friends of Old First could help us by volunteering to represent OF in these areas at POWER meetings and actions.