

The Center-Philadelphia

by Len Wilson

The response was amazing when Joyce and I asked for used winter clothing and sundries to be donated for the unhoused clients who rely on services provided by our church in Center City Philadelphia. Pictures in the previous edition of ***Clippings*** demonstrate the outpouring from our chapter members.

The Center-Philadelphia at Arch Street United Methodist Church (ASUMC), in the shadow of city hall, has gone through a major transformation in the past two decades under the capable leadership of its dedicated and resourceful minister.

At a recent seminar focused on choices to make in later stages of retirement, it was emphasized that life after retirement needs to have purpose as well as adjustable living arrangements.

ASUMC provides purpose, and we have been blessed to be a small part of its transformation over twenty years into a fully recognized social services provider funded by the City of Philadelphia as well as foundation grants and individual donations.

The Center occupies the well-equipped basement area of ASUMC with laundry and shower facilities available for clients every weekday. The drop-in center includes a clothing closet, hygiene station, wellness services run by nurses, and a case management office. Guests can relax, use computers, watch television and enjoy a mid-day meal. Dinner is provided every Sunday evening with volunteers helping to serve meals to up to 100 guests.

The Center has increased the number of younger members in our congregation. They volunteer at The Center and support an active array of church-initiated services and activities focusing on issues and concerns impacting the city of Philadelphia.

ASUMC is not like some churches with Sunday services, some member focused activities, and a declining membership. Joyce and I plan to continue our involvement

and support of the church and its vibrant drop-in center for the unhoused and all those in need of the critical support it provides.

As affordability continues to develop as a critical issue in Philadelphia and around the country, more individuals are facing housing and food insecurity, and the need for these services grows. Donations to The Center help support the lives of our most vulnerable neighbors.

Readers interested in learning more about Arch Street United Methodist Church and The Center-Philadelphia are invited to visit its Website:

TheCenterPhiladelphia.org>About