

Volunteers of the Month – AHCC Thrift Shop

By Bernie Michel

The last time we wrote about the Asylum Hill Congregational Church's Thrift Shop was in 2015. A lot has happened since then for all of us and them as well. I caught up with Sue Powell recently, who has accepted responsibility for the project and theirs is an interesting story.



COVID affected them as it did all of us. The cozy quarters in the church basement that were so convenient before became an obstacle to inviting neighborhood shoppers in each Friday. But then in July of 2020 when the Church began the weekly community meal on Sunday afternoon it became an opportunity to bring at least some of the many donations out to the community while they were there for their meal. The meals continued and while the thrift shop wasn't as good as before it was better than nothing.

All that changed in August of last year when the rains from hurricane Ida caused flooding in much of Asylum Hill. AHCC did not escape nor did everything that was stored in the basement, which was nearly everything that the thrift store had to sell.

Not to be deterred, they moved what they could up into classrooms that weren't being used and continued the process of sorting through the many donations that come in regularly. Sue and her helpers, continue the effort on the first Sunday of each month. They open a half hour before the community meal is brought out, and this time of year warm clothes are the main need. The prices are set low enough to not be a barrier to anyone in need, but to insure that what is purchased is kept and valued.

This past Sunday, even with the challenging weather and Omicron keeping the Sunday Service virtual only, the volunteers were their both those who provide the meal and Sue and here team with warm clothes.

No matter the obstacles, compassion finds a way. more photos are available at <https://bit.ly/ahccclothes>