

**A Note from Art Williams
Gather the Spirit for Justice
Board Vice President and Program Committee Chair**

This month we actually had to be closed on a Saturday! We usually avoid doing that, but in this case, it was for a great cause.

Our friends at First Church were hosting an all-day conference called the Shalom Summit, where folks from all over the region could gather to discuss race relations and community action strategies. And although we weren't serving our breakfast, we were in fact busy inside and outside the building participating in the Summit and raising awareness of what we do at Gather the Spirit. It is important, every now and then, to pause from your usual activities and 'sharpen your tools.' That's what the Shalom Summit allowed us to do. To listen to experts and gain insight and inspiration to help us with the work of Building Community on Allison Hill. It was a great day. AND I'm looking forward to seeing all of my friends at breakfast NEXT Saturday!



Gather the Spirit Statistics

Below are attendance tallies for recent Saturday breakfasts. In addition to Saturdays, we have been seeing 50-60 guests on Sunday afternoons with a high of 85!



Date	3/7/26	3/14/26	3/21/26	3/28/26	4/4/26	4/11/26	4/18/26
Guests	314	233	208	208	154	200	190

Join the Conversation: Help Shape the Future of Gather the Spirit for Justice

Gather the Spirit for Justice invites community members, partners, and friends to take part in an important upcoming planning session focused on strengthening our impact in Allison Hill. This open session is an opportunity for all who care about our mission to lend their voice and help guide the future of our work. We will gather on **Wednesday, June 3, from 5:30–7:30 PM** in the fellowship hall at First Church of the Brethren (219 Hummel Street).

This session will provide a deeper look into our organization as we work to ensure alignment with our mission: *“Gather the Spirit for Justice seeks to strengthen community in Allison Hill, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.”*

Together, we will engage in thoughtful discussion around three key priority areas that will help shape our direction moving forward. These focus topics will be informed by our Board, and this session will give attendees the opportunity to contribute ideas, share perspectives, and be part of meaningful dialogue that drives real impact.

Whether you are a long-time supporter or new to our work, your participation is welcome and valued. This is a chance to connect with others who are passionate about building a stronger, more unified community.

A meal will be provided (see last year’s spread at right!), so we kindly ask that you RSVP by **Friday, May 24**, to ensure we can plan accordingly. Please confirm your attendance by emailing brian.debease@scouting.org.



Come be part of the conversation—and help us gather the spirit for justice in Allison Hill.

The Free Store

So many clothing donations come into the Free Store weekly that we are able to share with the Latino Hispanic American Community Center on Derry Street and with St. Stephen's Episcopal Church on North Front Street. There is a particular need for household goods like pots and pans, unbreakable dishes, utensils, towels, blankets and sheets. We are also always in need of more help to sort the donations and organize the free store on Wednesday afternoons 1 – 3 pm. Contact Ann (avandyke3@outlook.com) to volunteer or drop off donations.

Profile of a Partner – Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

Members of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated, Harrisburg Alumnae Chapter have been regularly volunteering at Gather the Spirit’s Saturday breakfasts this year. The women of Delta Sigma Theta are committed to public service with a primary focus on the Black community. One of Gather the Spirit’s board members, Kim Jarrett, is also a member of the sorority; she brought our groups together, and it was a wonderful match.



Learn more at: [Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc](https://www.deltasigmatheta.org/)



The Basic Need for Shelter

Many of the folks who come into GTS need help finding housing. It makes me think of Maslow's pyramid of human needs, which tells us that among the most fundamental needs is shelter. We try to ensure there is someone available each Saturday to provide as much information as possible about local low-income housing options. There are not many options. We sometimes can make a phone call to inquire on their behalf, and we can always provide a list of places to call. At minimum, they always leave knowing that someone cares about their well-being. That is something many of our folks do not experience very often.

Volunteers! Check out our new updated Link and QR code to schedule your volunteer time!

Hi all, Art here: I know that many of our regular volunteers just show up every week, or tell me when they will not be around, and that is fine! But for folks with more complicated schedules, we do have the ability to sign up online, and the app has been newly upgraded, complete with a new link below!

You can sign up for Saturday for either:

- a regular 8:30-11:30 shift or an
- early 8:30-10 shift; or even a
- later, 10-11:30 clean-up shift.

You can also sign up to volunteer for Sunday afternoon activities at our shelter program, where unhoused folks can relax in a safe, comfortable, environment. You can even sign up to help sort and fold clothing on Wednesday afternoons from 1-3 pm. Use this link: www.ttsu.me/GTSFJ or the volunteer QR code at right.

*Book your next visit to
GTS right here!
GTSFJ Volunteer Sign-Up App:*



I'll bet you never thought working in the kitchen could be so much fun. Look at these happy volunteers!



Our Wishes

As we work on various Gather the Spirit activities, board members and volunteers often wish for items that would help us to better serve our community. If you can make a wish come true, items can be dropped off Saturdays from 9:00 to 11:00 am at the Gather the Spirit Community Center, 219 Hummel Street, Harrisburg or left at any time on the porch at 4384 North 6th Street, Harrisburg. And **thank you** for fulfilling two wishes from our last newsletter – Rondell’s wish for tents for neighbors who sleep outside and Ann’s wish for backpacks for unhoused neighbors who must carry their possessions with them.

Art’s wish: Art would like to surprise our chef and kitchen lead, Rondell, with a spice shopping spree. He needs some commercial sized oregano, parsley, etc. for his creative Sunday “make it taste good with whatever is donated” meals. (approx. \$100 for 9 industrial size containers)



Gail’s wish: Gail wishes for deodorant to stock the Toiletries Closet as we enter the warmer weather.

Ann’s wish: Ann, who leads the Free Store donations sorting on Wednesday afternoons, tells us we need men’s clothing, particularly sweat pants and underwear.



Jordan’s wish: Jordan again wishes for large size men’s shoes (new or gently used) and socks for our Saturday breakfast and Sunday afternoon shelter visitors. Few of our neighbors have cars, and walking everywhere wears out shoes quickly. Neighbors often come to the community center wearing shoes with holes or broken soles.

Pat’s wish: [Avantco A-23F-HC 29" Solid Door Reach-In Freezer](#) from the Restaurant Store would help us store foods for our Saturday breakfasts and Sunday Shelter meals. (cost \$1,399)



Mike’s wish: Mike, who volunteers at the Sunday shelter, hopes for lighter jackets for our Sunday guests as spring approaches.

IDs, Licenses, and Birth Certificates

When I came in to help set up for the April 25th Shalom Summit, a woman named C was waiting for me whom I had not seen since Gather the Spirit was at our original location at 16th and Market Streets. She had not been coming to us on Hummel Street because the walk is just too difficult for her. However, she was desperate for help to get her ID renewed. She had to have a current ID in order to get money out of her banking account to pay her rent and utilities. I explained that Gather the Spirit was not open or able to provide the usual help. As soon as I said that, I realized my turning her away was going to upend her life. I was going to turn her away for feeble excuses that I was too busy and didn't have the right paperwork with me. We made it happen. She was relieved and grateful, and I was humbled realizing again, again, again how easy it is to be middle class and how fragile life is for others. ~ Ann Van Dyke

P.S. In March we wrote 43 checks for IDs, licenses and birth certificates for a total of \$1,817.00. In April we were open just three Saturdays (due to the Shalom Summit) and we wrote 29 checks for a total of \$1,215.50. These checks make it possible for neighbors to get the vital documents they need to drive, apply for employment, apply for housing, cash a check, receive medical care, and apply for other vital services. Thank you, donors!

Sharing News from Our Friends

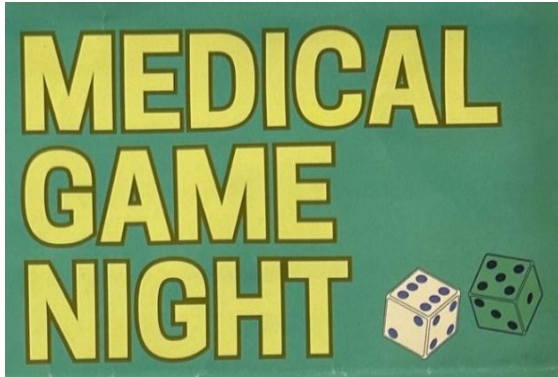
Heeding God's Call to End Gun Violence: Heeding is an interfaith organization that has been in the Harrisburg area since 2009. Since then, we have lost 252 people to gun violence between the ages of 6 and 76. For the last 13 years, Heeding has installed Memorials to the Lost in the yards of congregations throughout the area. The Memorial contains about 50 shirts containing the names, ages, and dates of death of gun violence victims from the last four years. The Memorial is being hosted by Paxton United Methodist Church at 3550 N. Progress from April 20 - May 3. Heeding also provides letters to legislators requesting support for specific gun safety legislation for congregations to sign.



Please contact Ann Van Dyke at avandyke3@outlook.com if your congregation or civic group is interested in hosting the Memorial or signing letters to legislators.

A Time to have Fun and Support one of our Partners

Serving Allison Hill Neighbors



Gather the Spirit regularly refers neighborhood folks to the essential medical and dental services offered at no cost right around the block from us by the health ministries of Christ Lutheran Church. Help our neighbors at Christ Lutheran Church raise money for their health ministries while you enjoy games with a medical theme. The event will occur at:

Tree of Life Lutheran Church
1492 Linglestown Road
Harrisburg, PA 17110

June 13, 2026, from 5 – 8 pm

Choose your game level:

- *Competitive:* Doctor Doctor, War, Operation, Jeopardy
- *Just for Fun:* Life, Pandemic, Hospital Rush, Herd Mentality, What Do You Meme

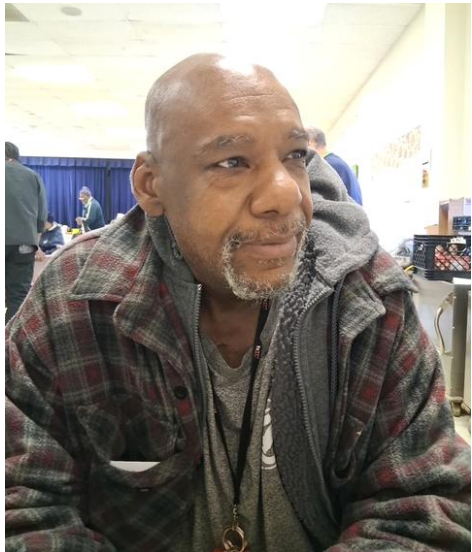
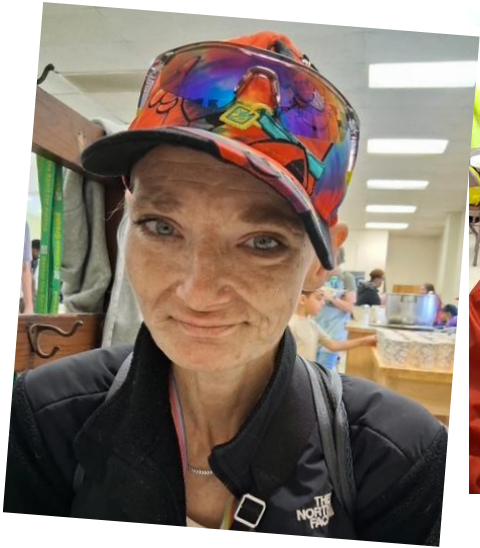


Below is a description of the services the clinic offers

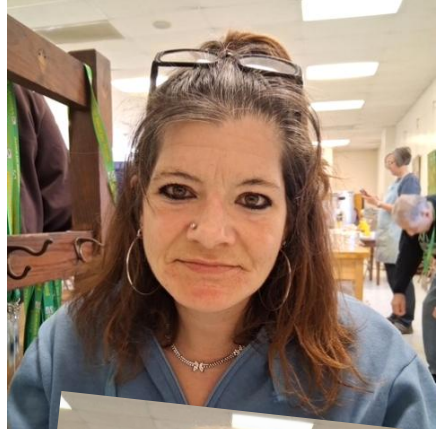
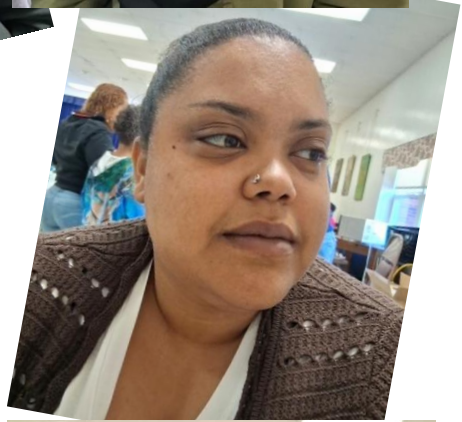
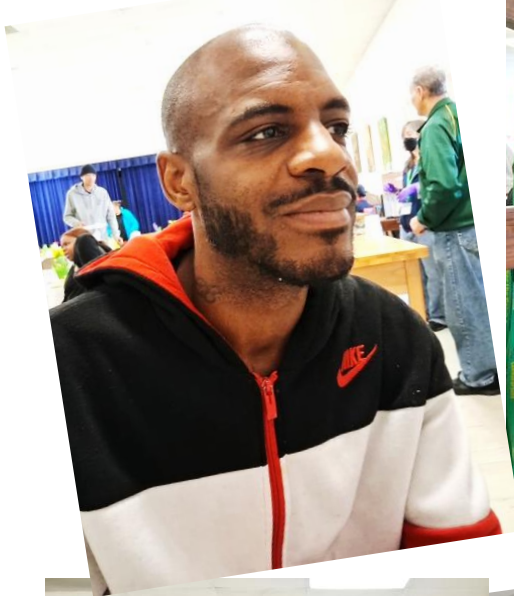
Christ Lutheran Church: 124 South 13th Street, Harrisburg, PA 17104 (717) 236-8382

- **Medical Clinic:** Free, nurse-run, walk-in clinic that provides simple lab tests, basic physical assessments, and health ed. Mon-Fri 10 am-2:30 pm. No appointment needed. (717) 260-9320.
- **Dental Clinic:** Volunteer dentists, support staff, and translators offer care 3 days a month for urgent dental conditions requiring simple extractions and fillings. No appointments, all walk-in, first-come-first-served, free of charge. Call to learn upcoming dates.
- **Fit on the Hill:** Exercise class is held Saturdays at 9:00 am. All ability levels are welcome.
- **Spiritual Care:** Pastor Best offers spiritual care to church members, community residents, and partner organizations. Please let him know if you would like to talk about how he can provide care. He is in the Clinic waiting area Wednesdays 1:00-2:00 pm to chat.

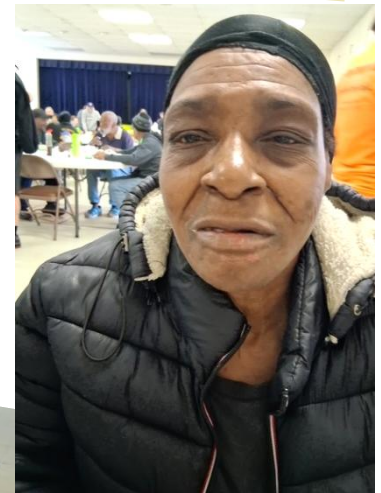
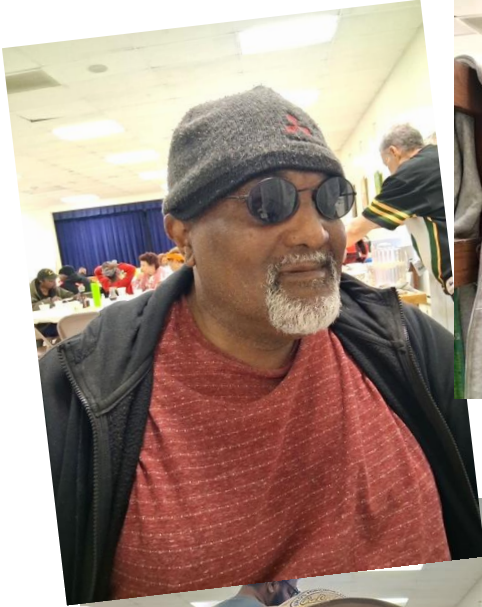
Meet Some Neighbors and Volunteers



More Neighbors & Volunteers



And More



Tell Us How to Use Your Donation!

If one of our activities especially touches your heart, direct your donation to that.

- Sponsor an ID, driver's license, or birth certificate. Donate \$42.50 for an ID or license or \$20 for a birth certificate. (Indicate "vital documents" on your check or with your donation.)
- Sponsor a Saturday breakfast for \$250 AND, if you'd like, bring your own crew to do the serving. Contact Art at artwilliams7@gmail.com to arrange a date of your choice.
- Sponsor an English textbook for \$10. (Indicate "ESL" on your check or with your donation.)
- Help sponsor a toiletries distribution. (Indicate "toiletries" on your check or with your donation.) You can also drop off toiletries at the community center any Saturday morning or leave them anytime on the porch at 4384 North 6th Street in Harrisburg.



Checks for donations can be mailed to: **Austin Cheers, CPA, Miller Dixon Drake, PC, 701 N 2nd Street, Harrisburg, PA 17102**

You may also use Paypal with the address gtsfjinfohbg@gmail.com
[paypal.me/Gather the Spirit?country.x=US&locale.x=en_US](https://www.paypal.me/Gather%20the%20Spirit?country.x=US&locale.x=en_US)
venmo us @Gather the Spirit or donate online: gatherthespiritforjustice.org



You can also help by volunteering: VOLUNTEER any Saturday morning, 9 to 11 am for coffee and conversation! Volunteers prepare and serve snacks, welcome and interact with guests, and assist with setup and/or cleanup. To volunteer, contact Art at artwilliams7@gmail.com or drop by any Saturday. This link will take you to our volunteer signup page: www.ttsu.me/GTSEJ Or contact Glen at gdunbar47@gmail.com to volunteer in English as a Second Language classes.

Contact Information

Located in First Church of the Brethren, 219 Hummel Street, Harrisburg, PA 17104
gatherthespiritforjustice.org

Patricia Allen	patricialeeschanoallen@gmail.com	Art Williams	artwilliams7@gmail.com
Brian DeBease	brian.debease@scouting.org	Glen Dunbar	gdunbar47@gmail.com
Ann Van Dyke	avandyke3@outlook.com	Linda DeBease	ldebease@icloud.com
Mary Kelly	kellyfamily17011@gmail.com	Kim Jarrett	kimjarrett6640@gmail.com
Sol Vazquez-Otero	confidential	Anita Stabile	anita.stabile@verizon.net
Shannon Miller	amarantha0313@gmail.com	Jennifer Cortes	cortes.gin87@gmail.com

Mailing address for checks: Austin Cheers, CPA, Miller Dixon Drake, PC, 701 N 2nd Street, Harrisburg, PA 17102

OUR MISSION: Gather the Spirit for Justice seeks to strengthen community in Allison Hill, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

