

Amy's Email Epistle – Thursday, January 25, 2018

Good Morning Friends,

It has been a while since I have written. Please forgive me. The demands of ministry, and school, health and life have made it difficult to write on Thursdays. But things have shifted (as a wise friend once said, "shift happens") and I am ready to resume.

It is my great joy to begin with news of calling. For months now we have been in prayer together about listening to where God is calling us. This morning I can share how God is calling this congregation to once again open its doors to the most needy and vulnerable in our city. Several months ago Ella came to me with a passionate plea. Was it possible for her and fellow staff member of the overnight shelter to use Koinonia Hall to operate a Saturday only warming center. You see, although the Community Care Center had opened and was operating as a day/warming center it is only open 6 days a week. Leaving Saturdays as a day when people are stuck outside with literally nowhere to be. Everything is closed. Saturday is a gap day. I thought this sounded like a really lovely idea, but I knew it would take a great deal of planning and insight. Although we have indeed opened our doors many times before we have always done so in partnership with another organization: Interfaith Works, Family Support Center, Just Housing. This is the first time in my history that we had a request from individuals. What would that look like? I took Ella's proposal to our incredible wise and faithful board for discernment. Over the past many months they have shepherded the process. (A very special thanks to Jenny Heddin and Mindy Chambers) Asking tough questions, praying, listening, meeting and working with Ella and other community members.

There were times when it seemed absolutely impossible....but as so often is the case when God is calling God will persist. Finally, this week we were able to work through many, many questions and concerns to find a way to say yes!

With promised financial support from community sources we have never partnered with before we will be opening a Saturday only Warming center beginning this Saturday, January 27. There are 9 volunteers signed up to work. Ella and Iris who are trained staff from the shelter will be volunteering their time to be present and make sure the volunteers have the training and support they need. Mindy Chambers and Selena Kilmoyer from our congregation will be present as well during the day.

Are you interested in volunteering? donating? Would you like to know more? Please send me an email or give me a call and let's talk!

I am so honored and so proud to be a part of a faith community that truly does that tough work of listening and answering God's call. Take a moment and thank your board. They have worked prayerfully and lovingly to consider your needs as a congregation, and the needs of the greater community, and of course the needs of the most vulnerable among us....God is good all the time....All the time God is good!

still listening,

Amy