

Our Teresa of Calcutta Hall

A place of fellowship, service, and community

IVIVIDLY remember the receptions held when The Basilica's lower level undercroft first opened about 18 years ago. Guests toured each of the new rooms with excited and grateful eyes, amazed at the thoughtfully designed spaces to enhance worship and community life. Many raved about the beautiful simplicity of the Saint Joseph Chapel which was inspired by Joseph's trade as a carpenter. We marvelled at the abundant restrooms, the first ever in the church building itself. And we all rejoiced at the large and airy Teresa of Calcutta Hall, a beautiful space where large groups could gather comfortably and provide hospitality for a wide array of activities and events.



PHOTOS/ELYSE RETHLAKE

The Teresa of Calcutta Hall holds many personal memories. I remember my son as a preschooler, gleefully clearing plates and bowls after a Lenten soup supper served by the Faith Formation program families. (I am not sure if all the diners were finished eating before their dishware was energetically cleared.) We have served homemade meals for Families Moving Forward while my son played with the children of our guest families, hopefully offering some sense of "home" and continuity during their difficult period of homelessness. We've also helped at receptions large and small,



volunteer service events, receptions for large groups, and many more activities means that the space is in robust use year-round.

Our maintenance team has diligently cared for the space. Despite their hard work and attentive care, the wear and tear is beginning to show on the floors and walls. At The Basilica Landmark Spark on May 18, the special Fund-a-Need appeal will be for new carpet and fresh paint in Teresa of Calcutta Hall. These much-needed rejuvenations ensure the vital space, used daily to advance The Basilica's mission and ministry, remains a dignified and welcoming space for all who, in a wide variety of ways, experience the loving embrace of God and our community within our walls.

To make a gift to help support The Basilica Landmark Spark Fund-a-Need visit thebasilicalandmark.org. ✚

Melissa Streit has been an active volunteer and parish member since 1996.

where people gather with their Basilica family in celebration or solace. My son and I even spent the night in Teresa of Calcutta Hall, wheeling in a flatbed of pillows and blankets to host the youth singers and adult chaperones of the African Children's Choir.

For almost two decades, Teresa of Calcutta Hall has been in integral part of The Basilica campus. Five days a week, our neighbors in need come for compassionate support and assistance through our St. Vincent de Paul outreach ministry. Guests stream down after weekend Masses for a doughnut and community fellowship. Workshops, prayer services, art exhibitions,

BY MELISSA STREIT