

YSS names Vineyard Church, pastor as Good Samaritans

COMMUNITY

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Photo provided Youth Services System Inc. CEO John Moses, right, congratulates the 2020 Good Samaritans, Vineyard Church Pastor Chris Figaretti, prior to the 10 a.m. worship service at Wheeling Heritage Port on Sunday.

WHEELING — The Youth Services System Inc. Board of Directors has named Chris Figaretti and the Vineyard Church as its 2020 Good Samaritans.

A Wheeling native, Figaretti was active in YoungLife, attended college and graduate school in New York and Minnesota, respectively, and ran a wilderness adventure ministry in West Virginia before becoming a pastor at the Vineyard in 1999. He became lead pastor in 2010.

YSS officials revealed the honor to the congregation at the beginning of the Sunday worship service at Wheeling Heritage Port. The church typically holds worship services at the Capitol Theatre with an average of 750 congregants. In all, Figaretti said the church has about 1,500 active participants. The church facility on Warden Run Road is still used for meetings, offices and youth activities.

"The Vineyard's commitment to serving people's physical, emotional and spiritual needs, no matter their station in life, is visible in the church's many outreach ministries. For Youth Services System, the Vineyard members have cooked hundreds of meals for our Winter Freeze Shelter guests who are homeless.

In 2019, they cooked over 500 pounds of beef to include in the meals," said Robert Dobkin, YSS board chair.

"Their outreach goes beyond YSS, through mentoring programs at Madison Elementary School, free summer football and cheer camps for youth, the enormous annual Egg Hunt and the Be the Blessing campaign that shows the love of Christ to our neighbors in need throughout the Ohio Valley," Dobkin said.

"Chris Figaretti and the folks at the Vineyard are the hands and feet of Christ in Wheeling and beyond. The Board of Directors and I appreciate all they've done for the 'least of these' and are thrilled to honor them as the 2020 Good Samaritans," YSS CEO John Moses said.

Figaretti and his wife, Kristy, live in Wheeling and have two children, Deuce, 15, and Josie, 12.

The 2020 Virtual Good Samaritan Tribute Dinner will be broadcast at 6 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 17, on West Liberty University's WLUTV-14, on Facebook and on YouTube. Ticketholders will have a choice of three gourmet meals prepared by Charlie Schlegel, available for pickup at West Sports Bar or free home delivery.

"COVID has stalled events or canceled them, but this event is highlighting service, kindness and commitment to bettering lives of others, and I think we need it now more than ever," said Terra Crews, YSS special events coordinator. "YSS isn't just an organization, we are a family and community of people who love without boundaries, and we are honored to have Chris and the Vineyard Church as part of our family."

Tickets for the 2020 Virtual Good Samaritan Tribute Dinner are available by on the YSS website, www.youthservicesystem.org or by calling Crews at 304-218-2834.

