

Faith Weavers of St. Mary

September 2014 Newsletter
www.faithweavers.org

Mission Statement

We are a faith community formed to support one another in working to build the kingdom of God through service to others in all aspects of our lives. We are committed to creating an environment open to new expressions of growth and maturity by expanding our vision of ourselves, our church, and our world, and through our commitment to social justice.

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Upcoming Services

Mark your calendars for the following services. All of these services will be at St. Vincent DePaul Parish in Shepherd starting at 4 pm.

October 12, 2014, Fr. Joe Schabel will celebrate mass with us. We will have a soup and salad dinner. **All food will be provided.**

November 9, 2014, Joe Frankenfield will lead this remembrance and prayer service. Following mass we will have Thanksgiving dinner with all the trimmings. **Please bring a dish to pass.**

December 14, 2014, Fr. Fred Kawka will celebrate mass with us. We will have a roast beef and pork dinner. **Please bring a dish to pass.**

Invite a Friend to a Faith Weavers Service.

Please invite a friend to attend one of our services. A simple invitation can be a wonderful gift to someone looking for a faith community, and ours is a great community to join.

Tornado Picnic



(Good food and good friends)

The 8th Annual Tornado Picnic was a huge success with about 40 people enjoying a beautiful summer evening with good food, good friends, and lots of fun and games. The Angera and Galgoci families organized another successful picnic. Jeff did his culinary magic with great brats and dogs, and everyone brought salads and desserts to fill out our picnic feast. Todd mesmerized the kids with a wonderful set of games. The kids enjoyed diving into bowls of whipped cream and wet sponge fights.

| Date | Time | Activity |
|-----------|------|--------------------------------------|
| Oct. 12th | 4 pm | Mass with Fr. Joe Schabel |
| Nov 9nd | 4 pm | Prayer Service with Joe Frankenfield |
| Nov 15th | 9 am | Day of Reflection: Forgiveness |
| Dec 14th | 4 pm | Mass with Fr. Fred Kawka |



(On the attack with wet sponges)

Faith Weavers 8th Annual Revival Party

The 8th Year before the 10th Anniversary Annual Revival Party was a great success. Faith Weavers have been in existence for eight years now and we are into our countdown to our 10 year anniversary as a faith community. This was our second annual party in our countdown to our 10th anniversary. Marilyn and Jerry Morey hosted the party at their beautiful Sleepy Hollow Hide-a-way.



(Guests enjoying the 8th year party)

The chefs, Dave Ling, Jeff Angera, Mark Francek, and Rich Parr prepared the burgers and dogs and guests brought salads and desserts to complete the feast.



(Chefs prepare delicious flaming burgers)

The Sunshine String Band entertained us with great music and everyone enjoyed the beautiful summer day with lot of laughter and socializing with friends.



(Sunshine String Band entertains at 8th Year Party)

Friends of El Salvador

Our sister community in Miramar continues to improve the chapel primarily funded through grants from the Friends of El Salvador. This year we provided a grant for the installation of pews in the chapel. The pews were made by a local carpenter from wood harvested in Miramar. Although the chapel has been in use for several years, the pews put the final touch on it.



(Carolyn Knapp in the new pews for Miramar's chapel)

Friends of El Salvador prepares to visit El Salvador

The Friends of El Salvador is planning a delegation trip to El Salvador the week of November 8 through 15, 2014. Delegates will visit several rural communities we have helped with grants to improve their living conditions, including our sister community of Miramar. Our visitors can expect to receive the warm friendship and hospitality of the host communities. We believe it is important to maintain our friendship with the Salvadoran people, and past trips have been very effective in doing this.

Guajoyo School Projects

Our commitment to improving the educational opportunities for the youth of El Salvador now includes the Guajoyo School in the San Vicente region. The school serves approximately 300 students from kindergarten to ninth grade. It is the school the children from Miramar attend. This past winter Paul Rocheleau and Carolyn and Robert Knapp joined SHARE's presidential election observation delegation in El Salvador. While there they visited Miramar and Guajoyo. They met with the principal and teachers at the Guajoyo School to discuss improvements for the school. They learned that repair of the physical facilities and purchases of educational equipment have been priority areas of need.

In response, the Friends of El Salvador made a grant of \$4,660 to repair a roof on the central building, renovate

lavatories, and purchase equipment for a technology and science center. The roof has been repaired; the lavatories renovated, and the technology and science center has just been finished.

The school personnel have used our grants wisely and have provided good feedback on completed projects. We hope to provide funding for additional projects proposed for the school.



(Before and after photos of part of the Guajoyo School Lavatory Renovation)

Latrine Project Continues

Proper disposal of human waste is a problem facing many rural villages in El Salvador. This year the Friends of El Salvador have funded construction of seven more latrines in the San Vicente community of Llano Grande II. Since this project began in 2008, we have funded construction of 120 latrines. These latrines are designed to treat human waste so it can

be recycled as fertilizer for local crops.



(Latrine construction in Llano Grande II)



(Erika Murcia, from CRIPDES, instructing families on care for the latrines)

Scholarships Program Phased Out:

Over the years Faith Weavers members and our other donors have been very generous in funding scholarships for rural Salvadoran high school students as part of SHARE's Youth Program. This funding has helped dozens of young people to graduate. However, because increased government funding has eliminated school tuition and fees, and because the program itself has changed, the Friends of El Salvador has decided to phase out funding of future scholarships. For 2015 limited support will be offered, as possible, from non-donor grant funding.

Once more, great thanks to our many thoughtful donors whose financial gifts made possible this long-running, successful project!

Fall Fundraising Campaign

While the high school scholarship program is ending, the Friends of El Salvador is still getting ready for fundraising through a solicitation campaign this fall that will focus on support for other worthwhile projects, including youth education. Look for details early in October. We hope your amazing financial support will continue to allow us to benefit rural Salvadorans and their communities.

Join the Friends of El Salvador

Are you interested in participating in the Friends of El Salvador Committee? If so, contact Dave Dreyer (989-386-3693, djddreyer@gmail.com) or Tom Moore (773-3250, moore1tj@cmich.edu).

Amazon Smile Donation Program

Faith Weavers of St. Mary is now a recipient organization in the Amazon Corporation's charitable donation program. Your shopping at Amazon.com can now provide a donation to Faith Weavers. All you have to do is go to:

<http://smile.amazon.com/ch/14-1997339>

and select Faith Weavers as the nonprofit organization you want to support. Then do your shopping at

smile.amazon.com

to have Amazon make a donation equal to half a percent of the cost of your purchases to Faith Weavers. Smile.Amazon.com is the same Amazon you know: same products, same prices, and same service. If you have an Amazon.com account, it will also be on SmileAmazon.com. Your wish list, wedding or baby registry, and other account settings are also the same.

You can get more information about this program on the smile.amazon.com website including certain products that are excluded from this program.

So, SmileAmazon when you do online shopping and support Faith Weavers.

Families in the Faith Weavers Community

Meet the Hoppe Family



(Gabriel, Xavier, Amelia, Dannielle, and Matt)

The Hoppe family consists of parents Matt and Danielle, and three children. Matt is a team leader (manager) in the general merchandise area at the Meijer in Mt. Pleasant. He has two bachelor's degrees from CMU, including one in secondary education. He is state certified to teach Physical Education in grades K-12 and School Health Education in grades 6-12. Danielle has a business administration degree from CMU. She is a domestic engineer, a.k.a. a stay-at-home wife and mother.

Xavier will soon have the big job of being a 2nd grade student, and Gabriel will have the excitement of starting preschool, as well as soccer, this fall. The boys will be playing at the Midland Soccer Club, where Xavier will be in his 4th season. He really enjoys playing baseball in the spring; he's played t-ball for three seasons in Shepherd. Amelia, who is one year old, is busy making all kinds of discoveries about people, and the world, and how they relate.

We enjoy spending quality time together as a family, especially outdoors with nature and animals, playing sports, gardening, playing board and card games, singing and dancing, reading, traveling, creating arts and crafts, woodworking, watching TV/movies, and fellowship with extended family and friends.

Weaving Faith into their Lives: The values that our faith helps to instill are carried (weaved) into our everyday lives. In all of our interactions with others, we strive to be genuine, respectful, caring, compassionate, and honest. We pray together as a family before our meals; this is when we also thank God for specific blessings in

our lives, as well as make intercessions. We talk with God like the friend that he is. We often listen to Family Life Radio, which has such powerful messages. We volunteer in our local communities on a regular basis. Matt particularly enjoys coaching, and Danielle is the secretary of the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) at Shepherd Elementary. We've found such a great church home at St. Vincent's, as well as with the wonderful Christian community of Faith Weavers.

Meet the Angera Family



(Rena, Jeff, Laura and Isaac)

The Angera family includes Jeff and Laura, and their two children Isaac and Rena. Isaac is a 15 year old sophomore at Mt. Pleasant High School, and Rena is an 11 year old 6th grader at Fancher Elementary. Isaac recently completed drivers training (stay off the sidewalks!!) and is anxiously awaiting the next milestone birthday when he gets his license. He is a strong student and is very active in sports. This year he is participating in JV football and will try out for MPHS hockey this fall. Rena enjoys school and often becomes the default "teacher's aide" because she seems to get along with everyone and has a practical common sense about her that is atypical in many 11 year olds. She loves soccer and is developing an interest in volleyball which she will try this year. Her best buddy is the family dog Coco whom she cares for and cuddles much to her difficult father's dismay!

Laura is a school social worker for Gratiot Isabella RESD. She has spent her professional life working with and advocating for children and families whom often have very challenging circumstances. This began right out of college when she worked at a preschool for homeless children in Des Moines, IA and continued as she worked

in-home with families either at risk of losing custody of their children or who recently regained custody of their children. She finished her Masters in Social Work and has been employed in various schools in Mid-Michigan. Outside of work, she loves outdoor activities, particularly planting and landscaping. Her dream is to retire and open a landscaping consulting company and “dig in the dirt” to her hearts content! She enjoys time with family and traveling to explore new places.

Jeff is a professor at CMU teaching courses in Human Development and Family Studies. He has a background in Marriage and Family Therapy, previously working in hospital inpatient/outpatient mental health, in-home family therapy, residential treatment, university counseling centers and doing premarital counseling for various churches. He recently completed a 2 year term as Chair of the MI State Licensure Board for Marriage and Family therapy. Jeff enjoys sports (particularly hockey!!) and outside activities like skiing, biking and kayaking (and reluctantly all of the landscape ideas that Laura has brainstormed!).

Weaving Faith into their Lives: The Angera family works to weave faith into life in simple ways, through awareness, appreciation and action. They have been blessed with wonderful extended family and friends (who are like family). As a family, the Angera’s regularly give thanks for these blessings through prayers before meals and recognizing God’s presence in the simple beauty of nature, a sunrise or sunset, and significant people in their lives. Further, they recognize the importance of respecting all people, regardless of life circumstances, seeing God working in others. The Angera’s also take opportunities to help others whether through formal activities (packing food supplies for at-risk youth) or seeing someone in need and lending a hand. The Angera’s attend St. Vincent and Faith Weavers and have found these communities to be a major support as they strive to weave faith into life.

Charitable Contributions in 2014

The Service and Justice Committee, and the Faith Weavers Foundation have given \$14,500 in grants so far this year. Local recipients were the Christmas Outreach, Mt. Pleasant Free Clinic, the Mexican American Counsel, Girls on the Run Program, Community Food Pantry, Isabella County Soup

Kitchen, and the Association of Interfaith Ministries (AIM). These organizations serve the people of our community by providing food for the hungry, supplies for newborn infants, medications to the needy, loans assistance and service to the developmentally disabled.

Christmas Outreach will use our grant to purchase items needed for families in Isabella County. Eligible families “shop” for clothes, toys, toiletries, and stockings with candy and goodies. This program gave Christmas joy to 685 families (988 children) last year and organizers expect the same number of families will benefit this coming Christmas

The Mt. Pleasant Free Clinic uses Faith Weavers funds for prescriptions and pharmacy items that clients need. Volunteer medical personnel also provide free medical care for those without adequate health insurance.

The Mexican American Counsel is an organization which provides loans to Mexican American entrepreneurs in the Saginaw area to help establish or maintain small business ventures. The program has an 80% repayment rate and these funds are loaned to other applicants. This program is overseen by Father Joe Schabel.

The Girls on the Run Program provides middle school aged girls with a program that helps raise self-esteem by providing meetings and preparation for running events. The Faith Weavers grant provided for program expenses, including running shoes for those in need.

The Community Compassion Network has provided the Food Pantry and the school-age nutrition backpack program. Funds are used to purchase goods for both programs. The Food Pantry has closed, but goods are distributed twice monthly at a mobile pantry.

At the national and international level, funds were given to the American Red Cross, and the Oaxaca Orphanage in Mexico.

Our grant to the American Red Cross provided help for families experiencing emergency situations, such

as, after a fire and for emergency needs of military family.

The Josefino Orphanage is located in Oaxaca, Mexico. Jeff Angera worked at the orphanage while conducting a summer class with CMU students. Jeff requested funds from Faith Weavers to repair buildings there. This year Faith Weavers paid to repair the roofs over the chapel and cafeteria areas.

All organizations receiving funds from Faith Weavers are researched by the Service and Justice Committee. This review includes confirming 501(c)(3) status of the organization and reviewing its standings with Charity Navigator.

The committee welcomes suggestions from members of organizations in which they have personal interest and are worthy and eligible for a donation.

Would you like to join the Service and Justice Committee or do you know of a charitable organization worthy of a grant? Please contact Karen Lee at dkleemi@charter.net or call (989) 772-6349 and give her your suggestion.

Christmas Outreach

We know that you have been buying items for Christmas stockings during the back-to-school sales. I have heard from many of you and some have already dropped off items at my home. Thank you so much for all you do for Christmas Outreach, especially the children's stockings.

Between now and Christmas please watch for small toys on sale, such as yo-yos, jump ropes, packages of small plastic animals, etc. McDonald's and Burger King kids' toys are good too. If you travel, save the hotel size shampoo and lotion. We have run out of small stuffed animals to put on the top of the children's stockings. We can use infant items like teething rings and rattles, bibs, and small bath toys. We will fill about 400 stockings for kids ages 2 – 12, and 100 infant stockings.

Walgreen's will have a special sale on thin coloring books around Thanksgiving. When this sale is announced, I will send an email. I ask that everyone try to buy some of these coloring/activity books because we need one for every child's stocking.

Distribution for Christmas Outreach will be on December 15 and 16 this year. We will fill stockings on Thursday, December 11. We will ask for help with filling the stockings and distributing them as the time gets closer.

If you have questions, want to help, or want to deliver items you have purchased, contact Eileen Jennings, 773-5185, eileen.jennings811@gmail.com. Thanks again for all your support.

Faith Weavers Volunteer at Homeless Shelter



As many of you know, recently a group has formed in Isabella County to try to address the growing problem of homelessness in our community. This group has now officially become a non-profit organization and has adopted the name "Isabella County Restoration House."

This past winter the group established a "rotating shelter" in conjunction with local churches and civic groups. The shelter operated from the beginning of January until the end of March. During the week of March 16-March 23 the rotating shelter was located at the First Nazarene Church and the Faith Weavers served as the secondary sponsor. Among those who helped during this week were: Morgan Monte, Buffy Halfman, Jo Maxim, Carolyn and Ron Lutz and Kathy Ling. In April the Isabella County Restoration House presented the Faith Weavers with a plaque recognizing our work with the group.

This winter the group is hoping to run the shelter from November through the end of March. Hopefully, Faith Weavers will be able to partner with a primary

church again this year to help cover at least one week. Anyone interested in learning more about the organization or volunteering for next winter can get information in several ways. The group has a website (www.icrhouse.org); you can “like” Isabella County Restoration House on Facebook; or you can contact Kathy Ling at kling914@gmail.com or 773-7823.

Faith Weavers Supports the Association for Interfaith Ministries (A.I.M.)

A.I.M. ministers to our Friends in this area who are developmentally disabled. It provides spiritual, educational and social support through various types of activities. Faith Weavers has supported this outreach for many years and this year we provided \$1,000 to support its summer activities.

A.I.M. summer activities included the visit to the Bryant Farm where our Friends were able to see, up close and personal, thirty-seven newborn calves with their mothers. Thanks to the Shepherd Rotary Club, our Friends were transported to the field via their people-mover and tractor. Members of the Shepherd Rotary Club also assisted with cooking hot dogs for the Friends, families, and care providers. The farm project allowed AIM to serve about 150 of our Friends, and although our Friends in wheelchairs weren't able to ride the people-mover, farm owner Joe Bryant has already rigged up a low- to-the-ground flatbed trailer that will accommodate at least twelve wheelchairs that can be pulled behind a tractor! Can't wait until our next visit!

Camp Miniwanca in Shelby, MI is a wonderful place for our Friends to experience a retreat, and the Faith Weavers of St. Mary have helped make it possible! However, with our aging population, negotiating the trails is becoming somewhat difficult, and only about 60 of our Friends have been able to be accommodated. Although many folks, including Faith Weavers, have helped defer the costs, our Friends won't be returning to Camp Miniwanca this year. The farm activity allowed AIM to accommodate many more of our Friends, and the Bryant family has expressed they'd like to make a visit to the farm an annual, or even semi-annual event for our Friends.

The funds that Faith Weavers gifted also helped defray expenses of our Friendship Class curriculum materials (\$2,000.00+) that are purchased annually from Faith Alive Ministries. Your generosity provides teacher materials and our Friends with weekly papers to take home.

Thank you for your continued support of AIM's ministry! I am blessed to serve on the AIM Board of Directors with Tom Shepard as our Ministry Coordinator and be part of the Faith Weavers ministry of Weaving Faith into Life.

If you would like more information on A.I.M. ministries or would like to become involved with A.I.M. please contact Jane Leroux-Evants at lerouxspotts@msn.com.

Faith Weavers Facebook Group

Are you on Facebook? Check out our group, Faith Weavers of St. Mary.

“Forgiving and Being Forgiven: The Heart of Our Hope A Day of Reflection and Discussion with Joe Frankenfield

This will be a day set aside to reflect on and pray about God’s constant attitude of forgiveness towards all of creation and human beings in particular.

In a world that everyday threatens to find us inadequate for falling short of its demands, our Creator, completely aware of all our sins and inadequacies, judges us worthy of love and fidelity.

Jesus gave our Creator’s forgiveness a body and a voice:

All your sins, weakness and inadequacies notwithstanding your Father stands by you and will bring your lives to fulfillment. Take the joy and courage of the Father’s forgiveness and show it to all you meet. You will form not only a community of support and security for yourselves but breathe The Spirit of Life into the Future for which you long.

Come apart for a few hours and relish what we’ve been told and what we have to share.

Faith Weavers is sponsoring this event on November 15, 2014 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. It will be held at St. John’s Episcopal Church Hall. A continental breakfast and lunch will be served at this event.

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Registration for Day of Reflection with Joe Frankenfield

(\$10.00 registration fee payable to Faith Weavers of St. Mary
continental breakfast and lunch included)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone number: (_____) _____ - _____

Email address: _____

Food Restriction: _____

Please return this form to: Faith Weavers of St. Mary
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Suite 404
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858-4425