

# Faith Weavers of St. Mary

## September 2015 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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Date	Time	Activity
Sept. 13th	4 pm	Prayer Service with Karon Latham
Oct. 11th	4 pm	Mass with Fr. Joe Schabel
Nov 8th	4 pm	Prayer Service with Joe Frankenfield
Dec 13th	4 pm	Mass with Fr. Fred Kawka

### 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.

September 13, 2015, Karon Latham will preside at this prayer service. Following the service we will have a "Welcome Back Potluck." Sloppy Joes, Hot Dogs and BBQ Chicken will be provided. **Bring a dish to pass.**

October 11, 2015, Fr. Joe Schabel will celebrate mass with us. We will have a soup and salad dinner. **All food will be provided.**

November 8, 2015, 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 13, 2015, Fr. Fred Kawka will celebrate mass with us. We will have a roast beef and pork dinner. **Please bring a dish to pass.**

***You Are Always Welcome to Our Services.***

**Feeling guilty** because you haven't been at a Faith Weavers service in a while? **Well Don't!** We appreciate your presence anytime you can make it.

***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.

### Faith Weavers is on Facebook

Faith Weavers has a group on Facebook that currently has 25 members. We share articles and events. Anyone who is in the group can post articles, events, and comment on anything posted.

The group is labeled as a "Closed" group on Facebook which means **anyone can find the group and see who's in it. Only members can see posts.** It also means that a real person (Morgan or Joshua) will verify people before they are allowed to join.

If you wish to join, search for Faith Weavers of St. Mary on Facebook and ask to join.

### Soup Kitchen Pig Roast

The Soup Kitchen is hosting a Pig Roast from 4 to 6 pm on September 19th at Millpond Park. The event is to thank the people of Mt. Pleasant for their generous support over the past 25 years. There is no charge but good will offerings will be accepted. Mr. Gary Taylor, the founder of the soup kitchen, will be the guest speaker. All are welcome to attend.

## Getting Feedback from You

The Communication Committee would like to get more feedback from you. We are planning on putting out a few electronic surveys each year, and we would appreciate your input. We value your opinion, so please respond to the online surveys when you receive them. If you aren't able to take a survey online, we will provide an alternative method to take it.

## Tornado Picnic

Pictures from the July 8<sup>th</sup> Tornado Picnic



(This is the way to eat donuts)



(Good food and good friends)



(Who has the better form?)



(Diving for candy is always a hit)



(Sack race is a challenge)

The 8<sup>th</sup> 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.



## Faith Weavers 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Revival Party

The 9<sup>th</sup> Year before the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Revival Party was a great success. Faith Weavers have been in existence for nine years now and we are into our countdown to our 10 year anniversary as a faith community. Marilyn and Jerry Morey hosted the party at their beautiful Sleepy Hollow Hide-a-Way.



(Guests enjoying the 9<sup>th</sup> year party)

Ninety people enjoyed the party. . Everyone enjoyed the beautiful summer day with good food, lots of laughter, and socializing with friends. The Sunshine String Band provided music for us. Thanks to everyone who volunteered their time and talents to make the party a success.



(Chefs prepare delicious flaming burgers)



(Kitchen crew prepares the burgers and hot dogs)



(Everyone enjoys the feast)



(Sunshine String Band entertains after the meal)

## **Friends of El Salvador**

The Friends of El Salvador continue their work of support and solidarity with the people of El Salvador. The Committee has authorized funding for several projects at the Guajoyo School. Ceiling repairs in one of the school building's halls, remodeling of bathroom facilities, and installing proper ventilation in some classrooms are the infrastructure improvements we are currently funding. On the cultural side, costumes and supplies for a folkloric and modern dance troupe will be purchased for the school. These projects will cost \$4,971.

We are also supporting academic at the school. A grant of \$1,125 from the Faith Weavers Endowment Fund will be used to improve equipment and written resources in the area of mathematics. Also, we are getting ready to begin a pilot project that will use Amazon Kindle devices to support reading activities in the classroom. One Kindle has been sent to El Salvador for testing and examination of Spanish-language reading materials available for children. Our intent is for the teachers and the principal to assess the value of Kindles in the classroom and let us know if the pilot should be expanded to benefit more students.

The Friends of El Salvador are also supporting a project in the village of Llano Grande II. We've sent \$2,800 to pay for the construction of a pavilion (8 by 10 meters) to provide shelter for community gatherings and activities. We're looking forward to receiving pictures of the completed project.

Unfortunately, our sister community of Miramar was directly affected by the gang violence increasing throughout El Salvador. Francisco Lopez, President of Miramar's Directiva, and his daughter, Rosa, were killed in June. It's assumed that their murders were perpetrated by gangsters. Understandably, their deaths have shocked the community and some people are leaving Miramar out of fear for their own safety.

Francisco was a founder of Miramar in the aftermath of the long, destructive civil war of the 80s and early 90s. He, more than any other, provided the leadership and resourcefulness that enabled the community to survive

its elemental beginnings and become a model for many other communities in the San Vicente region.

The Friends of El Salvador have expressed our condolences and solidarity with the people of Miramar through CRIPDES, and directly to Elizabeth Hernandez, our close companion in El Salvador. We have sent \$250 to a memorial fund for Francisco's family.

New leaders have been elected to the Miramar Directiva and they are reviewing projects they would like funded. Among these are water system piping and lighting for the village paths. The Friends of El Salvador Committee has approved the water project and will consider the lighting project when it receives a formal request from the Directiva. We are very interested in maintaining our support for the Miramar community.

### **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](mailto:djddreyer@gmail.com)) or Tom Moore (773-3250, [moore1tj@cmich.edu](mailto:moore1tj@cmich.edu)).

### **Charitable Contributions in 2015**

Faith Weavers of St. Mary has given \$10,320 in grants so far this year. Local recipients were the Christian Counseling Services, Community Compassion Network, the Mexican American Counsel, Women's Aid Services, and the Association of Interfaith Ministries (AIM).

These organizations provide support for the needy in our community. They provide counseling for those who cannot afford this service; food for school age children, loan guaranties, and a helping community for developmentally disabled.

At the national and international level, funds were given to the Wings of Mercy, Global Compassion, and the Oaxaca Orphanage in Mexico.

The contribution to Wings of Mercy was in memory of Ruth Donner O'Hara's son, Mark, who passed away this past spring. The grant to Global Compassion funded a water well in Khaskheda India, and the grant to the Oaxaca Orphanage bought new mattresses for the children.





(Villager in Khaskheda India)

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](mailto:dkleemi@charter.net) or call (989) 772-6349 and give her your suggestion.

### **Families in the Faith Weavers Community**

#### ***Meet the Clark Family***



(Libby and Mike)

The Clark family consists of parents Mike and Libby. They have three children with families of their own. Aaron and his wife Casey live in South Lyon, MI and have two children, Jillian and Jack. Aaron works at the General Motors Technical Center in the logistics department. Trisha and her husband Patrick live in Rockford, MI and have two children Marissa and Eric. Trisha is an art teacher in the Grand Rapids Public school system. Nathan and his wife Erin live in Big Rapids, MI and have one son, Max and are expecting another baby in November. Nathan works for Ferris State University as a graphic designer/copy writer.

Mike is a graduate of CMU and taught in the Shepherd Public Schools for 28 years. He then taught another 10 years for Mid- Michigan Community College. Libby also attended CMU. She had the privilege of staying home to raise children before entering the workforce. She worked many years as a shopkeeper at Loafers Glory, then spent 15 years as a house director and cook for Delta Zeta sorority. Presently she is branching out into her own business as a personal chef.

Mike and Libby lived in Mt. Pleasant for 30 years before moving to Lake Isabella where all the Clark family loves to gather together as often as possible for swimming, boating, fishing, yard games, campfires, board games and just relaxing. We truly love being together. We also like to gather annually for a family camping trip. We are so blessed to live close to all of our children and grandchildren.

#### **Weaving Faith into our lives.**

In the Clark household we have always done our best to be good examples for our children. Our children attended St. Mary's from the time they were infants, making our church community a true extension of family. True weavings of lifetime friendships began there. We've always tried to

show how important it is to reach out to anyone we can help. Both Mike and Libby have actively volunteered their time through activities such as little league coaching, girl scouts, boy scouts, hospital volunteering and catering events. The benefits of watching and sharing in doing for others has rubbed off on our children. They have learned that by helping others we are also helping ourselves.

### ***Meet the Lerch/Prichard Family***



(Sully, Polly, Terry, and Jillian)

The Lerch family consists of parents Terry and Polly and two energetic children. Jillian is a fourth-grader at Vowles elementary school and Sullivan is in pre-school. Terry works as a faculty member (and interim school director) in the School of Engineering & Technology at CMU. Polly will be teaching full-time in the area of Human Development and Family Studies at CMU.

Our family loves to spend time at Chippewa Lake with Polly's family where we enjoy boating, kayaking, fishing and campfires. At home, Terry and Polly like to spend time with the kids playing games, reading, and riding

bikes in the neighborhood. Jillian completed her first year of Girls-on-the-Run in May and enjoys gymnastics and swim lessons. Sullivan likes rough-housing with his dad, collecting sticks for campfires, and fishing with his Papa. Polly's favorite hobby is doing mixed-media artwork while Terry enjoys running and swimming in his limited spare time.

### **Weaving Faith into our lives.**

We use our faith in God and His word to guide us in decision-making in our relationship and in our parenting. We focus on our faith through daily prayers with our kids and we emphasize that we have faith that God will provide for all of our needs (not necessarily wants!).

We also weave faith into our lives through our beliefs. We believe God intentionally made us into a very diverse group of people. Polly teaches about family diversity and we try to incorporate diverse ways of thinking into our lives. With Jillian's biological father being from Zimbabwe, we are aware that there are very different ways of approaching our world. In addition to cultural diversity, we try to consider the idea of social equity and how people make daily decisions in different ways based on their own strengths and experiences. Our hope is that our children will be able and willing to continue the Faith Weaver's tradition of recognizing social inequity and sharing our resources.

The Faith Weavers community continues to be a great source of spiritual strength for the four of us, and was especially important to Terry as he coped with the loss of his first wife. When Polly and Jillian first joined Terry at Faith Weavers events we were overwhelmed by the welcome we received! We feel so blessed to be a part of this amazing community of diverse individuals and we appreciate all of the hard work that goes into organizing and implementing events for the group as we share our faith with one another.

## **Christmas Outreach**

By Eileen Jennings

There are some big changes in store for Christmas Outreach this year. The biggest changes are that we will no longer make available used clothes (except gently used winter coats) and we will not give out new or used toys. On the other hand, I have been asked to expand our Christmas stocking project to provide not only infant stockings, but one stocking *per child* (instead of one per family), and a gift bag for teens and adults with no children. We have more and more clients who are older adults with no children and we want to serve them better.

As you can see, this means we need a HUGE increase in the number of donations to fill these stockings. We are asking additional churches and some student groups and community organizations to help us out, but I know that Faith Weavers will continue to be the backbone for this effort.

Please start collecting any small items for the stockings whenever you see a bargain. We need crayons (24 pack), play dough, matchbox sized cars or trucks, glue sticks, small pencil sharpeners, erasers, hair accessories for the girls, and toys: card games, jump ropes, bags of fish, animals, small balls, etc. The free toys from McDonalds are also still popular, if the bag has not been opened. In addition, we want the small soap, shampoo and lotion from your hotel travels.

Aside from the stocking stuffers, please give us any calendars you receive in the mail that you will not use. You would not believe how popular these calendars are! Do not buy calendars. Do not take a bunch of calendars from Isabella Bank. Just give us those calendars you would otherwise throw away that you get from the various charities you support. If you are like me, you even get calendars from charities you have never supported! Both wall calendars and pocket calendars are needed. Last year we had over 600 calendars and we still ran out.

Again this year, Faith Weavers will be filling bags of candy to give out. **We will also need volunteers to fill the stockings on December 8 and 9 in Finch Fieldhouse at CMU. Distribution this year will be on Friday and Saturday, December 11 and 12.** I'll send out more information about this when the time is closer.

For now, please start collecting items to help us fill the stockings. Contact me, if you know of an organization that might like to help us out. I will be happy to speak to their group and work with them.

If you have questions, want to help, or want to deliver items you have purchased, contact Eileen Jennings, 773-5185, [eileen.jennings811@gmail.com](mailto:eileen.jennings811@gmail.com). Thanks for all you do. Faith Weavers is a true blessing to our community.