

Faith Weavers of St. Mary

September 2016 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
October 9th	4 pm	Mass with Fr. Joe Schabel
October 29th	8:30 am	Reflection with Joe Frankenfield
November 13th	4 pm	Prayer Service with Karon Latham
December 11th	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.

October 9, 2016, Fr. Joe Schabel will celebrate mass with us. We will have a soup and salad dinner. **All food will be provided.**

November 13, 2016, Karon Latham will lead this remembrance and prayer service. Following the service we will have Thanksgiving dinner with all the trimmings. **Please bring a dish to pass.**

December 11, 2016, 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.

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 comments.

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 someone (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.

Tornado Picnic

by Jeff Angera

It is hard to believe it but this year was the 9th year for the infamous tornado picnic! Todd and I thought that after this many years our event may have “run its course”. Boy, were we wrong!



We were blessed with perfect weather (not a tornado in sight!!). In total we had well over 50 Faith Weavers and their family/friends in attendance. As always, we ate well, enjoyed each other’s company and renewed old friendships and formed new ones.



Todd had plenty of interesting games that kept kids young and old laughing and having a great time. So we don’t have the date set yet ... but we look forward to next year as we celebrate our 10th anniversary of this event.



People Helping People Program

The People Helping People program is designed to assist people, in and outside our community, who are facing unexpected difficulties. We are thinking of ways to help people who may need assistance because of an illness, death in the family, hospitalizations, rehab/recovery from an operation, or similar life events.

We would like to help people by providing these types of assistance:

1. Provide meals when someone is coping with an illness or death in the family.
2. Provide rides for someone, e.g. rides to a therapy session, or to Faith Weavers events.
3. Visit people who are homebound or hospitalized.
4. Provide child care while someone is at an appointment.
5. Accompany people to a doctor or hospital visit to assist in communicating with a medical professional.
6. Direct people to social services available in our community.
7. Direct people to professional assistance, or extensive help beyond what we can offer.

Volunteers may incur out-of-pocket costs, such as gas for transportation or food costs for meal preparation. These costs will be reimbursed by Faith Weavers.

There are limits to the help we can provide. We do not want to duplicate services offered by other agencies and charitable organizations in our community, nor can we provide help that requires specialized training, such as medical, psychological, or social work training. The People Helping People program is not designed to provide ongoing financial assistance for food or housing related expenses, but we will direct people to organizations that do provide this type of assistance.

This program organizes our community to help people cope with stressful life events. It is a tangible way of expressing our love and compassion for others.

Would you like to become involved in this outreach, or do you know of someone who is in need of help? Please contact Martha or Bruce Goncer by email bmgoncer@chartermi.net or call 989-330-3230.

Tenth Anniversary Party

We celebrated our 10th anniversary at Sleepy Hollow Hide-a-Way with 125 people. Everyone enjoyed the beautiful summer day with good food, lots of laughter, and socializing with friends.



Enthusiasm to maintain our community remains high even after 10 years. It is truly a blessing how many volunteers contribute time, talents, and treasure to our activities and charities.

Ten years have brought many changes. Despite hardships and challenges, we band together to “Weave Faith into Life” through prayer, communication, events, and contributions to those in need. These things give us many reasons to celebrate.



Thank you to all who contribute to our community, and thanks to everyone who volunteered their time and talents to make the party a success!

\$385,127 Donated to Charity

Faith Weavers are very generous in supporting local, national, and international communities. Money received for this charitable outreach comes primarily from donations by members of Faith Weavers, income from the Faith Weavers Endowment Fund, and grants to the Friends of El Salvador Committee.

As a volunteer organization, about 13% of the money received is spent on community activities. These activities include our monthly services, retreats, socials, and administrative expenses. This leaves 87% of the money received available for charitable outreach.

The Service and Justice Committee does an excellent job of vetting grant applications and selecting charities to support. The committee members like to support local charities with about 50% of grant money going to local and national organizations.

Over the past 10 years we have supported 38 local and national charitable organizations. Among these organizations substantial support has been given to the Association of Interfaith Ministries, the Central Michigan Chapter of the Red Cross, Christmas Outreach, the Community Compassion Network, the Goodrow Fund, the Mexican American Council (Fr. Joe Schabel works with this council), and St. Vincent DePaul Parish.

The committee also gives grants to international charities such as the Alicia De La Cruz Fores Orphanage in Mexico, Catholic Relief Services to aid Syrian refugees, Doctors without Borders, Global Compassion, HELPS International for the Guatemalan Stove Project, and Hope for Haiti (Fr. Joe Fix’s favorite charity).

However, the majority of our international outreach is done by the Friends of El Salvador Committee. This committee maintains our friendship with the El Salvadoran people established many years ago at St. Mary’s University Parish. See the Friends of El Salvador article in this newsletter for more about this this committee’s activities.

Over the past 10 years we have given \$385,127 in charitable grants. This is an astounding amount of money! We can all be proud of the good this has accomplished.

Friends of El Salvador

Over the past ten years the Friends of El Salvador Committee has strengthened our friendship and solidarity with the people of El Salvador. Through biannual trips to El Salvador we foster close ties to the people we serve. We are about forming community with the people of El Salvador.

Through the Friends of El Salvador, we have supported our sister community of Miramar by funding the construction of a chapel, soccer field, cooking hut, latrines, and improvements to their water and electrical systems. The committee has also provided scholarships for Miramar children and students from other communities.

The Friends have supported other communities in the San Vicente region of El Salvador as well. We provided money to make housing repairs in the community of Llano Grande II and funded construction of 120 latrines in the San Vicente region. The K-12 school in Guajoyo, near Miramar, has also benefited from the generosity of our donors.

The Friends of El Salvador Committee has stayed quietly active in recent months, working with the Guajoyo School, especially, to document completion of projects funded in the second half of 2015 and prepare for new projects to be funded in October. Much communication has been occurring.

While most 2015 projects involved improvements to school facilities, which badly needed refurbishment, one completed project focused on upgrading equipment and materials for mathematics, as shown in the photo below.



Another provided costumes and supplies for the school's folkloric and modern dance troupe. You can see the talented boys and girls performing recently in their new costumes funded by our generous donors at this link: <https://youtu.be/ER2eTUlwbvE>. You'll enjoy the short video.

The Guajoyo School Kindle project, announced last fall, began in earnest in May with the arrival in El Salvador of ten Amazon Kindle readers with gift cards to purchase Spanish-language reading materials chosen by teachers.

The Kindles are in use by students, and the Committee is looking forward to learning soon about the early educational impacts and benefits. If academic value is clear, more Kindles can be sent. Other school projects under consideration largely target general school needs, the kindergarten, and student recreation facilities.

Efrain Torres, the principal of the Guajoyo School, regularly expresses appreciation on behalf of the students and teachers for the on-going support of the Friends of El Salvador/Faith Weavers.

In Miramar planning for the street and path lighting project has been slow, but good progress has been made recently, particularly on a proposal for a solar-based project. The Committee will decide on allocating dollars to it in the upcoming round of funding considerations. Support for the people of Miramar is always a priority topic for attention.

Participate in the Friends of El Salvador

For more information about the Friends of El Salvador, or to become part of the Committee, please contact Dave Dreyer (989-386-3693, djddreyer@gmail.com) or Tom Moore (773-3250, moore1tj@cmich.edu).

Honduras Outreach

by John Helinski

Last month, a mission team from St. Vincent DePaul Parish in Shepherd, led by Carol Gall, traveled to Honduras. The team consisted of five members from St. Vincent De Paul and two from the Washington D.C. area. It was an amazing experience and a wonderful opportunity to spread the word of God while helping those in need. We worked with a missionary in Honduras named Tim Setliff who started a non-profit organization in Honduras called A New Kind of Dad.

While there, we worked with kids at two different churches in Copan Ruinas, Honduras. We read the story of creation and made bracelets with them, played games and sang songs, taught them about good dental hygiene, and provided a snack. We also took a variety of donated supplies and materials for them such as art supplies, clothes, tools, bibles and crosses, toothbrushes, and first-aid supplies. The kids were very energetic and excited for us to be there.



We also worked at a facility called Casita Copan. Faith Weavers very graciously donated money that helped purchase supplies to build 32 chairs, 6 tables, and 3 bookcases for the program. For two days we worked to build the furniture. This included sanding, staining, and putting the pieces together. Once they saw us working, the children at Casita were very excited and wanted to help too! It was great working side by side with the children who would be using the furniture. Thank you to the members of Faith Weavers who generously donated money to help us provide furniture for Casita! We also had a day to minister to the children at the facility. This included singing, stories, & games.



One of the most rewarding experiences of the trip was very unexpected. At the restaurant at the hotel where we stayed, we met a 14 year old girl named Karla who was helping her mom who worked at the hotel. Over the course of the week, we got to know her and enjoyed talking with her at our meals. Through our talks, she informed us that she had a friend who lived in the mountains whose family was greatly in need. She asked if we could help her friend's family. We took her to the store to buy groceries for the family. We also learned that Karla is part of a program in Honduras that goes around that area passing out supplies to those in need. We packed up two suitcases of supplies and clothes for her to pass out with that program. We also packed up one suitcase and all the food we purchased to go do a home visit to her friend's house. Karla decided along the way that she wanted to split the supplies between two families she knew instead of giving it all to one, so we ended up going to two different houses in the mountains and passing out the items. At only 14 years old, Karla was such a giving, mature individual who amazed us. She is truly being a light of Christ to the people in Honduras and gave all of us on the trip an unbelievable experience.



Thank you to the Faith Weavers community for your support, prayers, & monetary contribution. I will never forget this Mission trip & all that it taught me along the way.

With Sincere Thanks, John Helinski

Applying for Faith Weavers Grants

Do you know of an organization that would benefit from a Faith Weavers grant? We welcome grant applications and especially like to consider funding charities helping our local community. We are limited by our Internal Revenue Service (IRS) tax exempt status to fund charitable organizations that have been granted tax exempt status by the IRS.

The application process is fairly simple. Have the organization submit the following information to the Service and Justice Committee of Faith Weavers:

1. Name of Organization:
2. Address
3. Contact Person
4. Phone Contact Number
5. E-mail address and website
6. Amount Requested
7. Describe how funds will be used
8. Describe your service area and population to be served with grant funds.
9. Are there income eligibility limits, e.g. how much a family can earn and still be eligible for program benefits?
10. Are there any other eligibility requirements for those this organization serves, or specifically will be served by this grant request? Other requirements refer to things like geographic location, age of children, or disabilities of those served by the program. Please explain, if applicable.

Please attach a copy of the organization's 501(c)(3) letter. This is the letter from the Internal Revenue Service granting the organization tax exempt status.

Grant applications can be mailed to:

Faith Weavers of St. Mary
2020 S. Mission Street,
Suite 404
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858-4425

Or emailed to: Karen Lee -
grandmakaren68@gmail.com

Christmas Outreach

Again this year, we are helping the Christmas Outreach Program. Last year stockings were made and filled and given out to over 1500 individuals. This year we are planning on that many, perhaps more. You can help.

You can collect small items for the stockings: 24 count crayons, small pads of paper, glue sticks, small scissors, thin coloring books, travel sized items, i.e. shampoo, toothpaste, soaps, etc.

You can also contribute personal care items, such as full size (12-18 ounces) shampoo and lotion for teenagers and older adults. We can use deodorant, hand sanitizer, liquid hand soap, and bars of soap. Small manicure sets and small flashlights with batteries included were very popular last year. We never pay more than \$1.00 for an item.

Bring your items to the Faith Weaver's service on November 13th. At that time we will also be bagging candy for the stockings. As always, many hands make light work.

If you cannot bring your items on November 13th, you can drop them off at Eileen's house, 1323 S. Watson, and place them inside the bin on her porch.

If you have questions, or want to help, contact Eileen Jennings: 773-5185 or eileen.jennings811@gmail.com.

With your help, Christmas Outreach will be as successful this year, as it has been in the past. Thanks for all you do.

Faith Weavers is a true blessing to our community.

Coats for Christmas

Christmas Outreach is planning on distributing 1,700 coats this year. They need your help in this project. Please bring any clean, gently-used coats to the November 13 Faith Weavers' prayer service. All sizes are needed with a special emphasis on 2X, 3X, 4X and 6X sizes. Coats are needed for adults as well as children.

Please contact Jim Hornak at 989-772-5851 or horna1je@cmich.edu, if you have any questions about this project

William Ellis Brockman Infant Pantry

by Pat Sherlock, Infant Pantry Coordinator

The Infant Pantry is a Community Compassion Network (CCN) program hosted by the First Presbyterian Church at 1250 Watson in Mt. Pleasant. It was founded over ten years ago by the Brockman family and managed for several years by the Red Cross. About 45 babies were being served each month when CCN took over management in the fall of 2014. Since that time the numbers have grown steadily. This summer we served 115-130 babies each month with almost 300 on the active roster!



Volunteers and staff prepare packages for distribution.

The Infant Pantry is open each Wednesday and eligible Isabella County families may come once a month.

Families with children 0-3 years old receive formula, baby food, diapers, and baby care products.

In a recent survey given to our parents, they almost unanimously listed disposable diapers as their biggest need. There are no governmental helps for purchasing diapers. Not even a WIC or Bridge card may be used for this purpose.



Supplies available for needy families.

The Infant Pantry is honored to help these young families and proud of our welcoming atmosphere. The growing numbers make it challenging to keep our shelves fully stocked, so we are grateful for our network of community partners. We give special thanks to Faith Weavers for previous donations to the program.

Question regarding the Infant Pantry may be directed to Pat Sherlock, Coordinator at ptsherlock@aol.com.

“Mercy: The Path to God’s Future”
A Day of Reflection with Joe Frankenfield

With all that is going on in our lives, we seldom get a chance to think about and renew the connection between our faith and our lives. Seldom do we have a chance to sit down and talk with others about their experience of living Jesus’ way.

Last Fall Pope Francis suggested that we all look deeply at the role of mercy in our lives. Frequently, mercy comes off as little more than being nice to someone in trouble: its practice a “sweet” option, when it’s practical. Somehow, in the Western world, much of which still dreams of Jesus’ promise, we don’t hear his teaching that mercy is essential for human survival, let alone progress.

At a time when threats masquerade as strength, rigid ideology substitutes for practical wisdom, when self-sufficiency is portrayed as the path to security we need to keep our eyes on the vision Jesus gave us and the path he pointed out to us. We need to do it for ourselves, for our children and grand-children, for our world.

Come, take time to think, pray and talk together.

This retreat will be held on Saturday, October 29th at St. John’s Episcopal Church, 206 West Maple Street, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858. The day will begin with coffee and refreshments at 8:30 am and end about 1:00 pm. We will also have snacks available for a mid-morning break. No lunch will be provided because we are ending so early in the afternoon.

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Registration for *Mercy: The Path to God’s Future*

\$10.00 registration fee payable to Faith Weavers of St. Mary
Continental breakfast and snacks included.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone number: (_____) _____ - _____

Email address: _____

Please return this form to: Faith Weavers of St. Mary
2020 S. Mission St.
Suite 404
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858-4425