

Faith Weavers of St. Mary
Winter/Spring 2018 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
March 11	4 pm	Mass with Fr. Joe Fix
April 8	4 pm	Mass with Fr. Richard Jozwiak
May 20	4 pm	Mass with Fr. Bert Gohm
June 10	4 pm	Prayer service with Joe Frankenfield
July (day TBA)	6 – 9 pm	Tornado Picnic at South Park of Lake Isabella
August 26	4 – 8 pm	Twelfth Anniversary Party at Sleep-Hollow Hide-a-Way.

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.

March 11, 2018 Fr. Joe Fix will celebrate mass with us. Lasagna will be prepared for our Irish celebration dinner. **Please bring a dish to pass.**

April 8, 2018, Fr. Richard Jozwiak will celebrate mass with us. We will have a ham and cheesy potato meal. **Please bring a dish to pass.**

May 20, 2018, Fr. Bert Gohm will celebrate mass with us. We will honor mothers and graduates with a brunch following the prayer service. **Please bring a dish to pass.**

June 11, 2018, Joe Frankenfield will celebrate a prayer service with us. We will recognize retirees and honor fathers at this service. We will have BBQ Spare Ribs and chicken with rice dinner. **Please bring a dish to pass.**

Please invite a friend to attend one of our services. A simple invitation may be a great gift to a friend.

Twelfth Year Anniversary Celebration

We will be celebrating 12 years on August 26th with a party at Sleepy Hollow Hide-a-Way. Mark your calendars so you don't miss this party. More information will be sent out as the event nears.

Lenten Opportunity from the Emmaus Monastery

Emmaus will hold a lectio prayer and discussion group for the Sundays of Lent (February 18, February 25, March 4, March 11, March 18, and March 25) facilitated by Rev. Sr. Diane Stier. This will be held in Bartimaeus at Emmaus Monastery, from 3:30 - 4:45 on those Sundays. (This is the building at the intersection of Pine Grove and Tamarack Roads in Vestaburg. The address is [10154 N. Pine Grove Road](http://www.EmmausMonastery.org). Bartimaeus is 1/8 mile south.)

We will be using the readings for those Sundays. Each participant will also have a Lenten booklet called Living Well Through Lent, published by Living Compass. It begins on Ash Wednesday and traces a journey to

Holy Saturday. The cost of the 68-page commentary on the daily lectionary readings is \$1.00. We will spend 20 minutes doing lectio prayer together and then talk about the commentary and the Spirit's leadings in anyone who feels called to share briefly their prayer experience. It is not necessary to attend all the sessions, though that would be ideal. We recognize, however, that life happens.

LECTIO or Sacred Reading is a 1500-year-old Benedictine practice of praying with Scripture. It is a daily practice one can devote, at the outset, 15-30 minutes a day to following. A word or a short phrase speaks to the individual in the particularity of his or her life circumstance when the Spirit captures a very small segment of text and invites you to rest with it. Using the word or the very short phrase as a mantra, one repeats it over and over again in the silence of one's heart and imagination. This gives the left brain something to do while one allows the Spirit to pray in us as the Spirit wills (Romans 8). One can have the experience of hearing the Spirit speak personally to us through that word or short phrase. The Spirit can also lead one to meditation or to contemplative prayer.

Centering Prayer Workshop on March 17

Sr. Linda-Susan Beard will be presenting a Centering Prayer workshop at St. John's Episcopal Church from 10:00 am till 2:00pm on March 17, 2018. This workshop complements the Lectio Divina prayer sessions mentioned in the previous article.

Centering Prayer is a simple practice of sitting in love and trust, completely open to the work the Spirit wants to do in each of us. It is a daily, portable practice with the promise of transforming us more and more into the image of Christ.

There is no cost for this workshop and lunch will be provided. If you are interested in attending, please make a reservation by calling St. John's Parish Office, 989-773-7448, by 10 am on Thursday, March 15.

Amazon Smile Donation Program

Faith Weavers of St. Mary is a recipient organization in the Amazon Corporation's charitable donation program.

Last year your shopping at Amazon.com provided a donation of over \$80 to Faith Weavers. Amazon makes a donation equal to half a percent of the cost of your purchases to Faith Weavers. This amount is not added to your bill, but is a donation from Amazon based upon your purchases.

To participate in this program 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

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.

Focus on the Faith Weavers Social Committee



*Top row - left to right: Joan Hogan, Libby Clark
Bottom row - left to right: Sue Karmon, Martha Jose
Not pictured: Karen Lee, Fran Kondek, Polly Pritchard*

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This committee prepares the main dishes for our social gatherings after the monthly prayer services, and organizes the setup and cleanup for these meals. They also prepare the meals for other Faith Weavers functions like the annual party and retreats.



Donna Parr, Laura Angera, and Martha Jose helping at our August Party.

Participants at our events are always welcome to help with the meals. Volunteers have a lot of fun working in the kitchen. Laughter often surrounds the business surrounding the cooking and cleanup.



Sue Karmon, Paulette Schieber and Joan Hagan working in the kitchen at our monthly gathering

Faith Weavers Website

The Faith Weavers website is a great source of information on the Faith Weavers community. Just go to www.faithweavers.org and click the “enter site.”

Need to know the dates of our monthly services or a committee meeting date? These dates are on our calendar of events. Just click the upper right “picture tab” to find the events calendar. Other event dates such as our annual August Party and mini-retreats are listed here. We also post events of other organizations such as, the Lenten program at Emmaus Monastery.

Explore the other “picture tabs” to see the information on the site. How to apply for a grant; pictures of past events, and more are accessed through these picture links.

Want to make a donation to Faith Weavers? You can do this through the website. Just click the Donate Tab above the pictures on the Home Page. The Donate Tab will give you the Faith Weavers address, if you want to send us a check. Alternatively you can use your credit card to donate through PayPal .



Want to apply for a Faith Weavers grant? The Community Outreach section gives you information on how to apply for a grant, and organizations that have received grants in the past

Want information on the Faith Weavers Community? Under the About Us section you can find information about the mission of our community, our formation, organizational and legal structure. There is also a summary of our financial activity in this section.

Would you like to read past scripture reflections from Joe Frankenfield? Past Gospel Thoughts are located under the Reflections picture-tab (lower-left picture) on the website’s home page.

We continue to add content to the website. Visit the site often to see what is new.

The Community Compassion Network (CCN) Food Pantry and Infant Pantry *Feeding the Hungry with Dignity and Equity* by Pat Sherlock, CCN Board Member

In June of 2014, the Community Compassion Network (CCN) lost a major funding source and had to close their “red barn” stationary food pantry. Over the next four years, we continued to serve food Isabella County families through mobile food pantries. Last summer, we were offered a chance to come together with other local organizations to lease a joint-nonprofit center to better serve this community. “The Center” is located at 1114 West High St. in the former Victory Church/Ashcraft building. Clothing, Inc., the Care Store, and ICRH also have leases in this service center managed by United Way.



The Center housing the Food Pantry is located in the former Victory Church/ Ashcraft building

The space leased in this new facility has allowed CCN to open “The Pantry,” a new stationary food bank. The Nutrition Club is now located in The Pantry warehouse. Mobile Pantries will no longer be offered.

The Pantry allows food to be distributed with more dignity and equity. Guest appointments have helped eliminate the long lines. Wait time has been dramatically reduced. Guests and volunteers no longer need to deal with rain, snow, or summer heat during distribution. These changes have made

it much easier for those with disabilities or little children to visit the Pantry.

The Pantry is open to Isabella County families with financial need. Each family may come every 2 weeks. The size of the family now determines how many items they may select. Items include canned goods and other staples, produce, meat, dairy, frozen products, and baked goods. Varied hours make it more convenient to attend. The Pantry store is open Wednesdays, 3pm-7pm, Thursdays, 10am-12pm, Fridays 7:30am-11:30 am, and Saturdays, 9am-12pm.



Volunteer stocking the food pantry shelves.

Having their own warehouse allows CCN to accept food donations from individuals, schools, organizations, churches and businesses all year round. However, most food distributed is purchased from the Greater Lansing Food Bank (GLFB), a branch of Feeding America. GLFB trucks come weekly on Wednesday mornings instead of twice a month-as they did for the mobile pantries. (The Nutrition Club truck comes every other Monday.)

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The Infant Pantry, the third branch of CCN, will continue to be housed in First Presbyterian Church.



Sorting diapers at the Infant Pantry

Community Compassion Network would like to sincerely thank the Faith Weavers for their continued support. In addition to grants, several individual members have regularly volunteered or donated to the Mobile Pantries, the Infant Pantry, and the Nutrition Club. We would like to encourage your membership to consider also volunteering at the new Pantry. Volunteer applications are available on site or on our website- www.ccnfeeds.org . Volunteer jobs include unloading the truck, sorting and shelving food, greeting, and registration, escorting guests, loading groceries into cars, and cleaning /maintenance.

Truck sponsorships or partial sponsorships are needed. Every dollar donated has the power to buy \$10 worth of food from the Greater Lansing Food Bank. Thank you for the generosity you have already demonstrated for this community. Prayers would be welcomed for the success of CCN's mission to feed the hungry with dignity and equity.

Would you like to support these programs? Checks can be made out to Community Compassion Network or CCN and mailed to CCN, P.O. Box 237, Mount Pleasant, MI 48804. The name of the preferred ministry can be written on the memo line. Money may also be donated though PayPal on our website. www.ccnfeeds.org - and a note may be written indicating preferred ministry.

Friends of El Salvador

by Tom Moore

The Committee has maintained a steady pace of activities supporting projects helpful to people and communities in the rural San Vicente region of El Salvador. The fall fundraising campaign raised \$8,920 from 34 giving individuals and families. Once again, you showed your commitment to this unique international outreach program. Your generosity is very much appreciated.

In the fall, the Committee made grants of \$9,030. A little over \$4,000 was designated for construction of 16 composting latrines in Miramar, our sister community. These latrines will replace existing ones (not funded by us) built without steel reinforcing rods years ago; they're crumbling now because of seismic activity. The new latrines will upgrade hygiene and personal privacy for residents.



A grant of \$2,500 to the community of Llano Grande Segundo will allow adding partial walls and a concrete floor to a meeting pavilion funded in 2015. Sadly, as 2017 ended, high winds damaged the pavilion. Soon the Friends of El Salvador Committee will consider additional funding so the dollars sent for the upgrade won't be reallocated to repairs.



Visitation team at the Guajoyo School

A third grant, also of \$2,500, was made to Fe y Alegría (“Faith and Joy”), a Catholic- nonprofit organization our visitation team met with last May. Fe y Alegría offers free vocational educational courses ranging from computing to automotive repair. With our grant they’re planning to offer occupational preparation classes in baking, and hair and salon services. These classes will be given in, or nearby Miramar.



Visitation team with residence of Llano Grande

Ruth Nohemy, whose educational costs were paid by the generous support of a member of Faith Weavers, graduated last November. Ruth’s success is very encouraging to all of us, and the Friends of El Salvador Committee recently decided to offer another college scholarship.

This scholarship is specifically intended for a student from Miramar or an adjacent community. We hope it will not only transform career and life opportunities for one student, but also present a visible, local role model to youth in Miramar. Unfortunately, many of these young people currently don’t recognize higher education as an option.

The Committee is working in collaboration with the Salvadoran Lutheran University in this effort. While funding possibilities remain open, the Committee is moving forward to identify a highly qualified scholarship recipient.

In coming weeks the Committee will meet to consider making additional grants. Projects we are considering include the purchase of microscopes, and musical instruments for the Guajoyo School, and expanding the lighting project for Miramar with the purchase of several enhanced illumination solar lamps. We are also considering purchasing carpentry tools for a training program for people in Miramar. No doubt quite a few other proposals will be reviewed as well.

The Committee also will review developments in the communities with which we partner, and the outlook for social and political changes to improve living standards in El Salvador.

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).

Charitable Contributions in 2017

In 2017 your generosity has supported grants of \$49,982 to local and international charitable organizations. This money has come from your monthly donations, income from the Faith Weavers Endowment Fund, and grants from the Cebelak Foundation of Grand Rapids for Friends of El Salvador outreach.

\$28,530 (66%) of Faith Weavers grants went to local charities. They are: the Association of Interfaith Ministries (AIM), Christian Counseling Services, Christmas Outreach, Connections that Count, the Goodrow Fund, Girls on the Run, the Isabella County Restoration House (homeless shelter), the KISS program (infant care), the Mexican American Council, Saginaw Survivors of Suicide, and the St. Vincent DePaul Parish.

\$14,500 (34%) went to international charities such as the Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands for hurricane disaster relief, Hope for Haiti, Rise Against Hunger for famine relief, Global Compassion for a water well. Also included in these grants was \$6,952 to the people of El Salvador through the Friends of El Salvador Committee.



Fr. Val thanks you for your support for Hope for Haiti

Hope for Haiti is an outreach of Fr. Joe Fix's Parish to Our Lady of Carmel, their sister parish in Haiti. As you know, Fr. Joe has been with us over the past several years at our March service. We have supported Hope for Haiti with annual gifts that now total about \$13,000.

Our donations have supported four Chapel School run by the parish. These schools serve about 500 preschool and elementary students.

We have provided money to upgrade the buildings and the infrastructure of the schools. The money has been used to help build a pre-school classroom, a kitchen and supply room for the cooks, and a perimeter wall to protect the students.



Playground equipment we helped purchase.

Funds have also been used to purchase tables and chairs for classrooms, and swings and slides for the playground.



Workman making chairs for the Chapel School.

Continued on next page.

Monies have also gone towards teacher salaries and teaching supplies.

Father Val, pastor of Our Lady of Carmel is very grateful to the generosity of Faith Weavers. Your support has done so much to improve the lives of these children.

No administration fees are taken from our donations. All of the money we give to Hope for Haiti goes to help these people.

Do you know of an organization that would benefit from a grant? Please contact Karen Lee at grandmakaren68@gmail.com or call (989) 772-6349 on how the charity can request funds. Alternatively, visit our website at www.faithweavers.org and click on the Community Outreach tab for a description of the charities we have supported and information on how to submit a grant request.

Financial Review

Your donations to Faith Weavers supported grants of \$49,982 to charitable organizations. We received donations of \$54,655 and dividend income of \$8,891 from our Endowment Fund. Twelve percent of our

costs were for our monthly services and programs. Administration expenses were 5% of our costs.

The Endowment Fund benefited from a rising stock market in 2017. The Endowment's portfolio return was 16.26%. We made grants from the Endowment Fund of \$17,000 this year. These grants exceeded our dividend income, but the \$29,634 increase in the market value of our portfolio more than offset this deficit, so our fund balance increased by \$21,429 for the year.

The Endowment Fund has a permanent fund balance of \$180,184 that represents donations that will remain in the fund to generate income. The non-permanent portion of \$66,888 is available to give out in grants.

Faith Weavers have a cash balance of \$45,272. This consists of \$28,331 reserved for the Friends of El Salvador and \$16,941 available for Faith Weavers activities. Your generosity last year exceeded our expectations, so we ended the year with a cash balance about \$5,000 above what we like to maintain for operating purposes. This money will be available for additional charitable grants in 2018.

Faith Weavers of St Mary Statement of Financial Activity For the Year Ending December 31, 2016	Faith Weavers of St. Mary	Endowment Fund	Combined
Donations	\$54,655		\$54,655
Program Revenue	0		0
Dividends and Interest	9	8,891	8,900
Other Income	81		81
Total	54,745	8,891	63,636
Expenditures			
Charitable Giving	32,982	17,000	49,982
Monthly Services	5,692		5,692
Programs	1,730		1,730
Administration	3,244	96	3,340
Total Expenses	43,648	17,096	60,744
Revenues over (under) expenditures	11,097	(8,205)	2,892
Increase (decrease) in Market Value		29,634	29,634
Increase (decrease) in fund balances	11,097	21,429	32,526
Beginning Fund Balance	34,175	225,643	259,818
Ending Fund Balance	45,272	247,072	292,344
Restricted and Unrestricted Fund Balance			
Reserve for Friends of El Salvador	28,331		28,331
Permanent Funds		180,184	180,184
Unrestricted Funds	16,941	66,888	83,829
Ending Fund Balance	\$45,272	\$247,072	\$292,344