

Faith Weavers

of St. Mary

Fall 2022 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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Faith Weavers Begins Its Seventeenth Year

Faith Weavers is starting its seventeenth year as a small-faith community. We have remained faithful to our mission over these years. We continue to support our community with monthly prayer services, social gatherings, and helping one another cope with the challenges of everyday life. We also continue our outreach to organizations that work to alleviate the

sufferings of people throughout the world. Over the past sixteen years we have given \$886,000 in charitable grants.

This year we have been saddened by the deaths of Joshua Lukens, Mary Lou Aylor, and Norm Burmeister. Even though they are not physically with us, our faith tells us that our relationship with them does not end with the grave. They are with us as members of the community of saints.

The pandemic has made it difficult to hold our monthly service. Often in the past two years, we had virtual services over YouTube rather than gathering in person. We are discontinuing these virtual services.

We are resuming monthly services at St. Vincent's on a regular basis. We continue to encourage people to decide for themselves if they are comfortable meeting with the group. See below our schedule of services this fall.

Committees have kept active this year. The Service and Justice Committee continues their work of identifying organizations to support and recommending amounts to give in grants. So far this year, we have given \$23,000 in grants and more grants are being considered by the committee. See the article in this newsletter for more details.

The Friends of El Salvador continue to support projects in El Salvador. The Committee members continue to support the Guajoyo School and student scholarships. The Miramar community has been given a grant to develop a poultry raising project to provide food and income to community members. See more details in the article on the Friends of El Salvador in this newsletter.

Upcoming Services

Date	Time	Activity
Oct 9th	4 p.m.	Prayer service with Karon Latham
Nov 13th	4 p.m.	Prayer service with Joe Frankenfield
Dec 11th	4 p.m.	Mass with Fr. Fred Kawka

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

October 9, 2022, Karon Latham will lead our prayer service. A meal of BBQ pulled pork and chicken will await us following the service. **Please bring a dish to pass.**

November 13, 2022, Joe Frankenfield will preside at this prayer service. At this service we will have our remembrance for passed loved ones. Following this service, we will have our Traditional Thanksgiving dinner. **Please bring a dish to pass.** Also bring your donations for Christmas Outreach to this service.

December 11, 2022, Fr. Fred Kawka will celebrate mass with us. Following mass, we will have a roast beef and roast pork dinner. **Please bring a dish to pass.**

16th Anniversary Party

Faith Weavers 16th Anniversary Party was held at Sleepy Hollow Hide-a-Way on September 11th. This was the first time we had rain on the day of this party. The wet weather didn't dampen the fun with many Faith Weavers coming to celebrate. Friends gathered to enjoy lively conversation, delicious food, and lots of laughter.



(The kitchen crew has way too much fun getting the burgers and dogs ready to eat)



(Everyone participated in the feast of great dishes brought for our potluck meal)



(Rain didn't stop Mark Francek from doing a great job of grilling the hot dogs)



(Good friends and delicious food shared at table)

In Memoriam

In Memory of Joshua Lukens



(Joshua Lukens)

In March this year Joshua passed away after a two-year struggle with cancer. We had all been praying for a medical miracle that would restore Joshua to health, but it did not happen.

Joshua was an enthusiastic supporter and visible representative of Faith Weavers. His role as music minister for Faith Weavers and St. Vincent's allowed him to express his spirituality through music. He added a wonderful musical dimension to our services.

Behind the scenes, Joshua worked for Faith Weavers as a member of the Steering Committee and the Communications Committee.

Here are some thoughts about Joshua sent to our email list when Joshua died:

"I am sorry that Joshua is gone from us, but happy he is finally at peace ... His enthusiasm for life, his love of music and his efforts to bring us to a greater spirituality through that music will be long remembered. Thank you, Joshua, for all the ways you enriched our lives."
(Eileen Jennings)

"When losing a person as special as Joshua was to us all, it can be said, "There are no words." But I've just looked at Facebook and my email to see many beautiful words

about him. They describe Joshua, his music, his smile, his care for everyone around him."

(Nancy Nerbonne)

"Joshua was a friend to everyone he met. He was welcoming and had a passion for life in every direction. ... So very sad for all who miss him."

(Teresa Stewart)

"Oh, we are so grieved to hear of Joshua's passing. We are so glad to have known him in this life. Surely heaven glows brighter as he is accepted. Our prayers for all who loved and cared for him."

(Lynn Sweeney and Robert Goesten)

"We are sorry to hear of Joshua's passing. He was such a good man both in our Faith Weavers setting and, in his work, helping others with their home computers. Rest in peace Josh and enjoy the heavenly choir you are singing in now."

(Barb Courtright)

"Joshua was very dedicated to enriching our SM/FW community through music and his other committee involvements. It is hard not to think of him when thinking of SM/FW."

(Bob Mooradian)

"I am so saddened to hear of Joshua's passing. He fought so hard during his difficult battle with cancer. ... He will be truly missed, but I am sure he will always be "present" with us as community whenever we are singing. ..."

(David and Kathy Ling)

"... He will certainly stay in my heart, especially when I sing, and play keyboard He certainly added much to Faith Weavers. ..."

(Sister Marie Kopin)

Everyone says my name a little differently. Josh said it in such a melodic, lovely way. ... His joy in singing gave me the courage to join a choir up north. So many ripples in the butterfly effect from him for so many! I am sad for his loved ones. What a blessing he was and still is!

(Lucia Elden)

In Memory of Mary Lou Aylor



(Mary Lou Aylor)

Faith Weavers mourned the passing of Mary Lou Aylor this past March. She worked at CMU as a professor of childhood education until she retired in 2014.

Mary Lou and her husband, John, were members of St. Mary's University Parish for many years. They both were members of Faith Weavers until John's death in 2010. Mary Lou remained a faithful member and supporter of Faith Weavers. She was also a member of St. Vincent DePaul Parish.

Mary Lou had a quick wit and sharp sense of humor. You always knew where she stood on controversial issues. She was gracious, loving, and friendly.

She had a passion for music and was a member of the St. Vincent's choir and the Faith Weavers' choir. She learned to play the guitar, piano, and organ. Our own Josh Zimmerman was her music teacher.

She will be missed by all of us.

In Memory of Norm Burmeister



(Norm Burmeister)

Remembrance by Pat Welgs

Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Norm embodied all these gifts of the Holy Spirit. Norm accomplished many things in his life, but his greatest accomplishments were not in business or flying or sailing or teaching. They were in these gifts that he shared so freely – his love of his fellow man and of nature in his surroundings and joy in the peace it brings.

When his son, Kurt, was diagnosed with fourth stage Hodgins, doctors at U of M told Norm nothing could be done. Instead, Norm took him to Munson for targeted radiation and then to a doctor in Chicago who was doing experimental treatments called chemotherapy. Through Norm, God gave Kurt more than 30 more years of life.

Over the years Norm mentored many young people in business, taking some of them into his home when they were down on their luck. When Norm's Godchild was in

trouble, he took him into his home and got him through high school and into the Navy. When Norm's son, Ned, was no longer able to care for his son, Norm raised his grandson. Norm made a home for his sister-in-law, Franny, who had Down's and dementia and was bed ridden. He took tender, loving care of her right to the end.

Norm did all these things and more with love in his heart. Norm's was a life well lived.

Charitable Contributions in 2022

The Service and Justice Committee continues their work of identifying organizations to receive Faith Weaver grants. Four charities are first-time recipients and four have received grants in the past. A total of \$23,000 has been given in grants.

First-time recipients were:

The Ruth Ellis Center received a \$5,000 grant. The Ruth Ellis Center provides trauma-informed services for lesbian, gay, bi-attractional, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ+) youth, and young adults. The Center focuses on young people of color experiencing homelessness; involved in the child welfare system, and/or experiencing barriers to health and wellbeing.

The World Central Kitchen (WCK) received a \$5,000 grant to assist in Ukrainian relief. You may have seen news programs featuring the work of WCK founded by Jose Andres. When Russia invaded Ukraine last February millions of Ukrainians fled their homes. WCK began feeding these refugees at the border crossing in southern Poland. They quickly expanded their feeding sites to Romania, Moldova, Hungary, Slovakia, Spain, and Germany. They continue to provide thousands of fresh meals and tens of thousands of food kits each day.

A \$3,000 grant was given to Everytown For Safety Support. This is an educational, research and litigation arm of Moms Demand Action, a gun violence prevention organization. This group seeks to improve our understanding of the causes of gun violence and help to reduce it. The Fund does this by conducting original research, developing evidence-based policies, communicating this knowledge to the

American public. It also advances gun safety and gun violence prevention in communities and the courts.

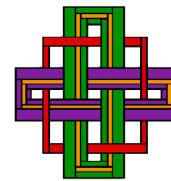
Youth On Their Own (YOTO) received a \$2,000 grant. YOTO is a dropout prevention program for students in grades 6-12. The program works to keep homeless students in school and working towards graduation. It serves homeless students in Pima County Arizona.

Students who qualify for help from YOTO receive a stipend during the school year that can be used for food and other necessities. Students may also get emergency financial assistance and medical care. YOTO also works with other organization to find temporary housing for these students.

Grant to organizations supported in the past:

- A grant of \$3,000 was given to Global Compassion to help families with leprosy.
- A \$2,000 grant was given to the Mustard Seed Shelter for the women's shelter in Saginaw,
- The Josefino Orphanage in Mexico was given a \$2,500 grant. This grant was used to feed 40 children at the orphanage.
- Stitch and Prayer received a \$500 grant for supplies needed in their outreach in the Midland Michigan area. They provide people in need with handmade items they knit, crochet, quilt, and sew.

Do you know of an organization that would benefit from a grant? Please contact Jeff Angera at anger1jj@cmich.edu for information on how the charity can request funds. You can also 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.



Weaving Faith Into Life

Spotlight on Global Compassion

(article by Indira Oskvarek)

Global Compassion Inc, is a Midland based 501(C)(3) Nonprofit public charity founded by Indira and Ed Oskvarek and has been in operation since 2006. Indira and Ed run this charity as volunteers, and from their home, to save overhead expenses.

Indira and Ed are also valued members of Faith Weavers and support our charitable outreach. They have attended many of our functions in the past and presented their work with our members. Faith Weavers have been supporting Global Compassion Inc since 2015 and has given about **\$21,000** for their outreach programs, for which they are very grateful to all Faith Weaver members.

Global Compassion Inc's story goes back to 1996 when a small seed of compassion was sown in a life of an orphan lady in India. Ed and Indira did not realize that this act of kindness would grow into the Global Compassion, founded in 2006.

Now, its outreach has expanded to a worldwide family and over the years, Global Compassion Inc, has raised and distributed over **\$1,500,000** through programs designed to provide basic needs like clean drinking water, to alleviate suffering empower self-sufficiency and promote education.



(Faith Weavers supported well drilling in 2018)

Since 2014, Global Compassion Inc has drilled over **500** bore wells and thousands of families now have access to clean drinking water. During the COVID-19 pandemic, most of the funds were used to provide food packages to thousands of families. Thanks to Faith Weavers for **"Feeding the Hungry"** and giving **"Drink to the Thirsty"** through your support of these programs.



(Food Distribution during the COVID-19 in 2020-2021)

Faith Weavers grant of \$3,000 in 2022 was given to Global Compassion Inc, to support 50 leprosy families in the state of Andhra Pradesh in India. Their existing mud huts with thatched roofs were damaged in the storm in late 2021 but now are repaired as shown in the photo. They were also provided with warm clothing, bed sheets, woolen socks, food packages and some basic medicines.

HUTS BEFORE/ DAMAGED



HUTS AFTER REPAIRS/ NEW ROOF



(Supporting 50 leprosy families in 2022)

The families were so delighted with much gratitude that Faith Weavers took pity on their conditions and supported them with love, kindness, and compassion just as Jesus did in His earthly ministry. Thank you.

Friends of El Salvador

The Friends of El Salvador Committee has continued to support the Guajoyo School and college student scholarships. We have also given money to Miramar for a poultry project.

Guajoyo School Projects

Guajoyo School Principal, Iris Cañas, requested funds to improve facilities at the school. Iris asked for money to paint the interior and exterior of two classroom building; air condition the kindergarten classroom and install an electric water pump to provide running water to one of the buildings. These projects are finished or nearly completed at a cost of about \$7,900.



(Students helping paint classroom buildings at Guajoyo School)

The Friends of El Salvador Committee authorized a \$1,000 grant for their student expense fund. This fund is intended to help students whose families have limited means to meet out-of-pocket educational costs and to address needs that threaten student school attendance. Also, \$1000 was given to the school for teaching supplies. The government does not provide enough to cover these costs and this grant is intended to supplement the school's supplies budget.

Scholarships

The Friends of El Salvador Committee continues to support Heri Cruz as he pursues a major in Social Work at the Lutheran University of El Salvador. Heri is a resident of Miramar, and a member of Miramar's Directiva. We have been supporting Heri since he started his university program. This year we provided him with \$2000 to cover educational expenses.



(Monthly Meeting of San Pedro Nonualco Scholarship Students.)

We are also supporting four students with a \$2,800 grant through the San Pedro Nonualco program. Tony

Gasbarro, a former Peace Corps Volunteer, initiated this scholarship program. The San Pedro Nonualco program is currently being run by Rolando Barillas, a Salvadoran and former U.S. Peace Corps staff member. Rolando establishes a mentoring relationship with the young scholars to encourage and help them complete their degrees.

Miramar Poultry Projects

The Friends of El Salvador Committee provided \$2,700 for a pilot project on raising poultry as a food source and income for families in Miramar. Fifteen families are participating in this pilot project, and, if successful, the remaining 29 families will participate.



(Poultry Project Training Session in Miramar)

The project began with a training session conducted by representatives from the National Center for Agricultural and Forestry Technology. Families were instructed about the overall management of poultry; the construction and installation of pens; diseases and common problems caring for the birds, and lastly, about food for the birds. The next steps are actual construction of the pens and purchase and distribution of chicks to the families.

For more information about the Friends of El Salvador, or to become part of the Committee, please contact Tom Moore (773-3250, moore1tj@cmich.edu).

Christmas Outreach

Article by Eileen Jennings and Jim Hornak

Christmas Outreach will be upon us before we know it. Our success relies heavily on Faith Weavers for volunteers and donations of needed items for clients. Again, this year, we will be holding Christmas Outreach at the Campus Life Building at 1200 W. High Street.

We will be **filling stockings** on that Friday and Saturday, December 9-10. **Distribution** will be Monday through Wednesday, December 12, 13 and 14. We will be working intensely to get things set up and ready to go in only 2 ½ days. **If you can help**, please mark your calendars now. You will be given more specific invitations to volunteer as the time gets closer.

As in prior years, we need winter coats and snow pants for men, women, girls, and boys with a special need for plus, big, and tall sizes. New coats can be purchased on-line or at local stores such as Walmart, Sam's, Kohl's, Target, Meijer, and, this year, Burlington. Gently used clean coats and snow pants are always appreciated.

We also need towels, sheets, and blankets (queen size are the most in demand). We need boots in adult sizes. And, of course, we need stocking stuffers. St. Vincent's did an amazing job of donating back-to-school supplies, but we still need crayons (24 to a box), matchbox cars, other small toys, small stuffed animals. We do not need playdoh and bubbles, as we got a large donation of these. We need full size toothpaste for families, shampoo, deodorant, lotion, hand sanitizer, for teens and adults. We always need good items for teen boys.

Bring your donations to the Faith Weavers' November 13 service. Also, all items can be brought to the Campus Life Building on December 9-10,

Jim Hornak will pick up coats, if you are unable to drop off your donation at either Faith Weavers or Campus Life. Please contact Jim, at 989-560-2443 to arrange for pick up. Also, if you cannot get your items for stockings and gift bags to either place, Eileen Jennings will accept them at her house, 1323 S. Watson, Mt. Pleasant.

Thank you for all the ways you step up for Christmas Outreach. You truly do Weave Faith into Life.

Fond Memories of Joshua



(Cantoring at Faith Weavers Services)



(Playing his trumpet while leading the choir)



(Giving the Saginaw Blessing with a new choir member)



(Joining the bass section of the choir)



(Valued member of the Communication Committee)



(Always supporting Faith Weavers events)