

Faith Weavers of St. Mary  
**Winter/Spring 2024 Newsletter**  
[www.faithweavers.org](http://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 10	4 p.m.	Prayer service with Joe Frankenfield
April 14	4 p.m.	Mass with Fr. Joe Griffin
May 19	4 p.m.	Prayer service with Joe Frankenfield
June 9	4 p.m.	Mass with Fr. Bert Gohm

**Upcoming Events**

Services are scheduled to be held at St. Vincent DePaul Parish in Shepherd starting at 4 p.m.

March 10, 2024, Joe Frankenfield will lead us in a prayer service. Then join us for a taco bar with soft tacos and taco salads. **Please bring a dish to pass.**

April 14, 2024, Fr. Joe Griffin will celebrate mass with us. We will have a ham and cheesy potato meal. **Please bring a dish to pass.**

May 19, 2024, Joe Frankenfield will lead our prayer service. We will honor women in our community and graduates at this service. Following the service, we will enjoy a brunch. **Please bring a dish to pass.**

June 9, 2024, Fr. Bert Gohm will preside at mass. We will recognize retirees and honor men in our community at this service. We will have BBQ Spareribs and Cranberry Chicken for 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 your friend.

**Surpassing \$1,000,000 in Giving**

In 2023 Faith Weavers passed the million-dollar mark in charitable giving. In our second year as a small-faith community Faith Weavers began giving charitable grants. After 16 years our total grants given is **\$1,027,715.**

Grants are given to local, national, and international organizations:

<u>Category</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Local	\$ 433,493
National	44,927
International	<u>549,295</u>
Total	\$1,027,715

Our main emphasis has been on local and international outreach. Forty-two percent of the grants have been given locally and 53% internationally. The Service and Justice Committee emphasizes giving to local charities to support organizations that help the needy in our community and may not have many other funding sources for their outreach.

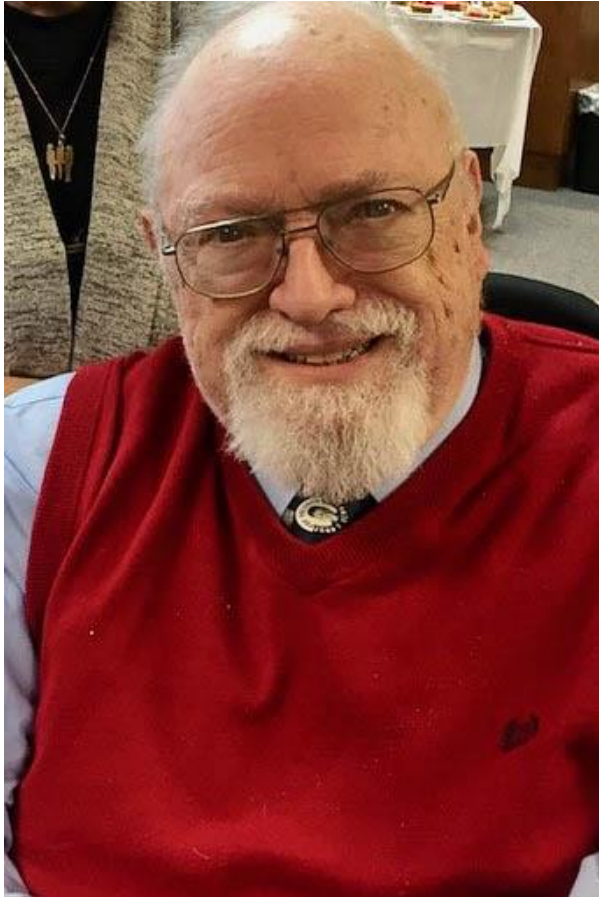
Much of our international support is through the Friends of El Salvador Committee. They have provided \$360,705 to improve the lives of the residences of Miramar and people in the surrounding communities in the San Vicente region of El Salvador.

It is through your generosity and grants from the Cebelak Foundation that we have been able to give this money. Thank you for your continuing support.

# In Memoriam

## **In Memory of David Ling**

Article by Joe and Barb Frankenfield



Dave and Kathy Ling formed a friendship with the Frankenfields shortly after Joe and Barb moved to Mt. Pleasant. Their friendship deepened over the years though many shared experiences. This article is Joe and Barb's reflections on that friendship and what made Dave such a special person.

David and Kathy and their family were members of St. Mary's University Parish. David was on Parish Council and became involved in the Pre-Cana, (marriage preparation) Program. David and Kathy always gave one of the major talks at the Pre-Cana. One Pre-Cana they gave the talk on Communications.

About 5 minutes into their talk, they seemed to disagree on one of the points one of them made. They were very gracious in the disagreement – at first. Then they began to get a little more pointed with each other. They weren't

shouting --- yet. Those in the room were feeling a little tense. The married couples were staring at David and Kathy not knowing what to do. Finally, after the tension became very evident, they stopped talking and looked at those in the room and said, "Now you know what not to do with each other in a room full of people." Everyone laughed and you could feel the relief in the room.

In addition to a good sense of humor, Dave was deeply ethical. His ethics weren't based on a theoretical sense of what was right and wrong but on a respect for others as persons. He considered others' needs and perspectives. He was ethical because he was empathetic.

Kindness in Dave ran deep. He never allowed a rejection of a position to devolve into the rejection of a person. He possessed a superbly sharp mind and could quickly critique an idea. He never made ideas more important than people and he never equated a person with his or her ideas. This led people to not only respect Dave but to love him.

Dave also had a respect for the truth that not only kept him technically honest but meant that he didn't exaggerate or minimize a truth to advance an argument he favored. You could count on Dave to give you the truth as accurately as he could.

Dave lived by a deep faith. It wasn't a faith that buttonholed people or tried to sway them to agree with his vision and priorities. It was a faith that he lived. He shared it not by words but by his life.



(Head Chef, Dave, at our anniversary party)

Dave was a valued member of our community. He will be missed by all.

## In Memory of Robert Knapp

Article by Carolyn Knapp



(Robert Knapp)

Robert Knapp, a member of the leadership team of the Faith Weavers' Friends of El Salvador Committee, passed away on September 17, 2023, in Oakland, California, shortly after being diagnosed with pancreatic cancer.

Robert was raised in Mt. Pleasant attending Mt. Pleasant High School and Central Michigan University. He earned his B.A. degree in 1968, majoring in History and Spanish. He earned a Ph.D. in Ancient History and spent most of his academic career in the Classics Department at the University of California, Berkeley.

Robert had an outstanding academic career researching and writing in Roman social history. He was recognized as a Distinguished Alumnus by Central Michigan University in 2012. In his retirement, Robert enjoyed researching the local history of Clare, Michigan, and authored several books about the history of the area, including *Gangsters Up North* and *Mystery Man*.

Through his interest in CMU, he came to know Tom and Gail Moore and the work of the Friends of El Salvador.

From 2008 onwards, Robert was an active and enthusiastic member of the Friends. He made numerous trips to the rural community of Miramar, and thanks to his fluent Spanish and his love of the people there, was particularly instrumental in helping to improve Guajoyo School. Robert knew the school's needs from visits and frequent contact with the director, and he had a knack for quickly recognizing how the Friends' small-dollar grants could do so much educational good.



(Robert and Carolyn on a delegation trip to Miramar)



(Robert speaking at the dedication of the Miramar Chapel)

Robert is survived by his wife of forty-nine years, Carolyn, of Oakland; his daughter, Abigail, son-in-law Chris and granddaughter Ava, of Irvine, California; and daughter Hannah, son-in-law Rob, and grandchildren Gilbert and Henry, of Martinez, California. Robert's parents and older brother predeceased him.

The Friends of El Salvador and the community of Miramar will miss him.

## **In Memory of Mary Alice (Allie) Langlois**

Remembrance by Kevin Langlois, Allie's son



(Allie Langlois)

Surrounded by her loving family, Allie passed away peacefully at her home this past October.

Allie had an infinite amount of love for her family, friends, faith, community and especially her grandchildren, Jaxson Philip, and Lauren Olivia. She waited in anticipation for their arrivals, and her role as "Grammie" was one of the biggest joys of her life.

Allie was a kind, compassionate, generous, caring, loving woman. Her thoughtfulness for others was reflected each and every day and will be a lasting tribute to her spirit.

She was a deeply faithful person who possessed a quiet strength and gentle spirit, especially following the loss of her sons Bryan Philip, 1986 and Mark Andre, 2021.

Allie worked in real estate by trade. She loved the architectural process of development and had an incredible eye for design and materials. In her role as a landlord, she thoroughly enjoyed working and interacting with the students of CMU.

She was a dedicated member of St. Mary's Parish for many years. She found a loving supportive community within Faith Weavers. Allie embodied their motto "Weaving Faith into Life" and was always mindful of God's presence in her daily life.

Allie was the epitome of graciousness and quiet generosity. She immersed herself as a volunteer and supporter of organizations that reflected her beliefs and passions. Her love and dedication to her family, friends and community leave a beautiful legacy, not of material possessions, but of great compassion, love, and faith.

You will be greatly missed, but your ripple will always be felt.

### **Isabella County Restoration House**

Again this winter, Faith Weavers were called upon to partner with Immanuel Lutheran Church in providing a dinner meal for the homeless who are using the Restoration House Services. Members of Faith Weavers provided food on three evenings, served our guests and then cleaned up.

Restoration House serves up to thirty guests, individuals and families. It gives them a safe and warm place to stay with food provided.

Faith Weavers have been a part of this service since its inception. This year, Pat Welgs, Libby Clark, Carolyn and Ron Lutz, Pat Sherlock, Bill and Barb Courtright, and Dave and Sue Karmon provided the meals.

Another way we "Weave Faith into Life."



(Pat Welgs and Sue Karmon bringing food to serve)

# Faith Weavers Services



(Joe leads us in a prayer service)



(Remembering Departed Loved Ones)



(Karon gives inspiring homily)



(Sharing the Saginaw Blessing)



(Fr. Fred presides at mass)



(Evan is altar server at mass)

# Faith Weavers Memories



(Preparing to serve the meal after a service)



(Enjoying great food and socializing)



(The men's breakfast group)



(Setting up coats at Christmas Outreach)



(Filling stocking at Christmas Outreach)



(Preparing dinner at the Restoration House)

## Christmas Outreach

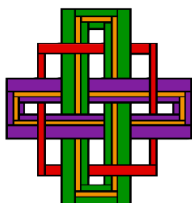
Again this year, Faith Weavers volunteers turned out to make Christmas Outreach a success. Peggy Burke, President of the Board of Directors of Christmas Outreach, sent a letter of thanks to us and other participating organizations. In her letter she says:

“Christmas Outreach of Isabella County demonstrates the remarkable spirit that defines our community. The generosity and compassion that radiates through our neighbors is a magic that weaves through the fabric of Isabella County. This event, born over four decades ago by a single church, now engages the whole community. It is a tradition that embodies the true essence of togetherness.”

“What sets Christmas Outreach apart is the diversity of individuals who come together, transcending age, religion, race, employment, and retirement, and political affiliations. All work hand-in-hand, embodying the true meaning of community. Former guests, now volunteers, share their gratitude by giving back, and even Santa Claus, a former guest himself, spreads joy with every stuffed animal he distributes.”

Morey Courts hosted Christmas Outreach in 2023. It is an excellent venue for this event providing a good space to distribute items to recipients. It also provides more exposure to the greater community to see the spirit of giving done through Christmas Outreach. Morey Courts will be the site for Christmas Outreach in 2024.

Christmas Outreach had over 300 volunteers register to help. Many of whom are members of Faith Weavers. Volunteers help setup distribution stations within Morey Courts, moved boxes of goods to these stations and setup displays of goods for distribution. Volunteers filled almost 1,000 stockings and gift bags. They served as escorts to ensure each family received items they wanted. Volunteers also helped cleanup after the event and move items back to storage at Immanuel Lutheran Church.



*Weaving Faith Into Life*



(Volunteers worked to setup Morey Courts)



(All Stations Ready for Distribution)

Five hundred and sixty-one families registered with Christmas Outreach this year. Collectively these families received over 1,700 coats, 500 snow pants, and 525 bins filled with paper products and cleaning supplies. Every child received a book and a wooden toy. Every child and teen received a Christmas stocking filled with gifts, and adults with no children also received a stocking. Christmas Outreach gave away a large number of donated Christmas decorations including many, many artificial trees.

Faith Weavers also gave \$10,000 to Christmas Outreach last year. This money was used to purchase more of the items that were given out, personal care items, coats, snowpants and bins containing household goods such as paper products, laundry detergent and soap, etc.

Through volunteering your time, talents, and treasure you are truly “Weaving Faith into Life.”

## Friends of El Salvador

Article by Tom Moore

The fall 2023 Friends of El Salvador fundraising campaign achieved the best results ever with \$15,805 in gifts from Faith Weavers and friends. Another \$3,275 in general donations was received during the year for a total of \$19,080 in gifts supporting the Faith Weavers' El Salvador program. Thank you for your continued support!

For 2024 the Committee has allocated \$29,017 in grants for Miramar, Guajoyo school, and scholarships.

With a recent earmarked gift of \$10,125 from the Cebalak Foundation of Grand Rapids, the Committee is assisting the community of Miramar to upgrade sanitary conditions and protect its potable water supply by constructing twenty-five concrete-block, composting latrines. Currently fifteen families have no latrines and ten have older, badly damaged ones.



(Poor condition of some latrines in Miramar)

This current latrine project will bring the total latrines constructed through Committee support over the years to about 170 distributed across eight communities in the rural San Vicente region.

This year an essential priority for the Guajoyo School is being addressed by a grant of \$2,623 to renovate the electrical system in one of the classroom buildings. This will allow more reliable use of learning technology, and

more importantly, reduce the chance of electrical hazard to children, staff, and the facility.

The next project for the school is the construction and furnishing of a dedicated pre-school play area. This project will cost \$7,831 and serve about thirty-eight kindergarteners per year.



(Kindergarten class at Guajoyo School)

Following up on the kitchen renovation project of last year, the Committee has allocated \$2,588 for the acquisition of badly needed, durable equipment for large-quantity food preparation and storage: commercial-quality pots and pans, knives, an industrial blender, freezer, etc. It is another step to enable provision of a daily nutritious meal for every school child.

The Friends plan to provide \$4,000 in scholarship funds to the Becas Nonualco program in San Pedro Nonualco. This program has a 25-year record of success in encouraging and supporting students to graduate from college.

Recently the coordinator of the Becas Nonualco program, Rolando Barillas, shared a "case study" about Rosy. In 2019 Rosy was a pregnant, unmarried 17-year-old. With the help of a scholarship, she has gone on to attend the University of El Salvador. Rosy is now in her final year of college while her daughter, Montserrat, is attending kindergarten. Their future is bright!

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



## Charitable Giving in 2023

Faith Weavers gave \$87,230 in grants to charitable organizations in 2023. \$67,230 came from your generous donations to Faith Weavers and \$20,000 from the Faith Weavers Endowment Fund.

\$38,080 (44%) was given to local charities, \$7,000 (8%) to national charities, and \$42,150 (48%) to international charities. Friends of El Salvador grants to the community of Miramar, the Guajoyo School, and student scholarships accounted for \$20,650 of the international grants.

Grants approved in the second round of distributions this Fall went to:

- \$8,000 to Clothing Inc. for men's clothing items and boots.
- \$10,000 was given to Christmas Outreach (see related Christmas Outreach article on this grant).
- \$2,400 to Christian Counseling Services to help pay for elderly clients.
- \$2,000 was given to the Central Michigan Health Department to provide cribs (pack-n-plays), sheets, and sleep sacks, a one-piece garment, for a safe sleep environment for newborns.
- \$2,000 was given to the Midland County Former Offenders Advocate for programming to support people released from incarceration.
- Youth on Their Own received \$4,000 to support their programs helping young people who are homeless.
- \$4,000 to the Lamia Afghan Foundation for refugee relief in Afghanistan.
- \$2,475 in total was given to various other charities including St. Vincent DePaul Parish, the Capuchin Franciscan Province of St. Joseph, and the Stitch and Prayer Group.

## Storytelling Project

In 2022 the Service and Justice Committee funded a proposal titled, *Wisdom Stories from Around the World*. The proposal was submitted by Brian Schafer, a teacher at Fancher Elementary School, and it enlisted Eileen DeLorenzo, a professional storyteller and member of Faith Weavers, to present stories to students at Fancher Elementary School. A second grant was given for the same program to be presented at Pullen Elementary School.

Here are comments from school educators on these presentations.

Brian Schafer, MPPS Educator writes, "Students were spellbound in Eileen's telling of 'The Boy Who Drew Cats.' After the story, Eileen did a wonderful job explaining the story's origin as a legend that reflected an artist priest, Sesshū, whose paintings were so realistic it was as though the subjects would jump from the paper."

The second story was 'Tatterhood' from Norway. A coming-of-age story of a girl. From the day she is born she is her own person, and solid in the knowledge of her abundant ability to explore the world boundlessly.

We are grateful to Faith Weavers for exposing our youth to the impactful and inspirational artform of storytelling."



(Eileen DeLorenzo telling stories to elementary students)

Laura Gourlay, MPPS Counselor writes, "Ms. DeLorenzo shared stories of Peace, Communication, Healing, Generosity and Wisdom. Storytelling is the perfect vehicle to capture young people's attention and imagination, especially as it relates to topics with big ideas."

Ms. DeLorenzo incorporates song and movement into her stories, so the sharing is experiential, and body focused. Children remember the stories, songs, and movements months and even years after hearing a story one time. The stories become a foundation for thinking about big ideas in new ways.

We so appreciate Faith Weavers commitment to Peace and Justice and our shared community."

## Financial Review

In 2023 you donated \$92,763 to Faith Weavers. \$18,780 of this amount was designated for use by the Friends of El Salvador Committee. This year's annual Fall Fundraising Campaign for the Friends brought in \$15,805. This was the most ever received through the fall fundraiser.

Your continued high level of giving is a tangible sign of your commitment to support the mission of Faith Weavers. It is also a vote of confidence in the efforts of so many volunteers in Faith Weavers to actualize our mission.

The Endowment Fund had a \$19,300 increase in the market value of its investment portfolio. This was an 11.5% return on its investments. We had dividend income of \$5,242 and paid grants of \$20,000.

Faith Weavers gave \$87,230 in grants to charitable organizations. \$67,230 of the grants came from your donations and \$20,000 from the Faith Weavers Endowment Fund.

The Service and Justice Committee oversaw the distribution of \$66,580 in grants and the Friends of El Salvador gave \$20,650.

Charitable outreach was the main use of our money with 89% of what we spent going to charitable grants. Five percent went to conducting our worship services, and 6% for administrative costs.

The Endowment Fund has a permanent fund balance of \$187,500 that represents donations that will remain in the fund to generate income. The non-permanent portion of \$44,731 is available to give out in grants.

Faith Weavers have a cash balance of \$108,290. This consists of \$25,108 reserved for the Friends of El Salvador and \$83,182 available for Faith Weavers' activities. We plan to use most of this cash balance for charitable grants in 2024.

<b>Faith Weavers of St. Mary Statement of Financial Activity For the Year Ending December 31, 2023</b>	<b>Faith Weavers of St. Mary</b>	<b>Endowment Fund</b>	<b>Combined</b>
<b>Donations</b>	\$92,763		\$92,763
<b>Program Revenue</b>	0		0
<b>Dividends and Interest</b>	7	5,242	5,249
<b>Other Income</b>	95		95
<b>Total</b>	92,865	5,242	98,107
<b>Expenditures</b>			
<b>Charitable Giving</b>	67,230	20,000	87,230
<b>Monthly Services</b>	4,758		4,758
<b>Administration</b>	6,121	32	6,153
<b>Total Expenses</b>	78,109	20,032	98,141
<b>Revenues over (under) expenditures</b>	14,756	(14,790)	(34)
<b>Increase (decrease) in Market Value</b>		19,300	19,300
<b>Increase (decrease) in fund balances</b>	14,756	4,510	19,266
<b>Beginning Fund Balance</b>	93,534	227,721	321,255
<b>Ending Fund Balance</b>	108,290	232,231	340,521
<b>Restricted and Unrestricted Fund Balance</b>			
<b>Reserve for Friends of El Salvador</b>	25,108		25,108
<b>Permanent Funds</b>		187,500	187,500
<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>	83,182	44,731	127,913
<b>Ending Fund Balance</b>	\$108,290	\$232,231	\$340,521