

January 28, 2018

## **Chippewa Falls Mission Coalition 2017 Year In Review**

**General CFMC Info** – The Chippewa Falls Mission Coalition started in August 2011 with six local churches. Today our numbers include 17 local churches and more than 20 local non-profit agencies.

We meet once a month, normally on the first Monday of the month at various locations. Our meetings start at 5:00 pm and end promptly at 6:00 pm.

At our meetings we always focus on what we have in common, which is our belief in God and the lives He expects us to live, guided by the Holy Spirit. We never dwell on what separates us.

Our meetings start with a general prayer and end with all of us holding hands and reciting the Our Father/Lord's Prayer.

Our goal is to work together on local and global mission outreach, often helping each other with our individual mission projects. We try to stay proactive in our community, reaching out and asking where help is required for those in need.

Our Mission Statement and Bible Verse are as follows ...

**CFMC Mission Statement:** "Faithful people joining hearts and hands to be God's Love in action for our neighbors near and far."

**CFMC Bible Verse:** Psalm 60:12 -- "With God's help we will do mighty things."

Here is a look of a number of things we have been involved with this past year...

### **-- MISSION PROJECTS OF THE CFMC IN 2017 --**

**-- "Giving Families A Fresh Start in 2017" Mission (January 2017) --**

CFMC members were asked to gather 15 essential household items and place them in boxes or laundry baskets. These baskets were to be distributed during the Chippewa Country “Point In Time” homeless count on January 26, 2017.

A goal of 100 baskets was set at the beginning of this mission. The final tally was 330 containers.

Of those 330 containers, 114 were distributed at Agnes’ Table on January 26th in conjunction with the “Point In Time” homeless count. The remainder of baskets were distributed to local food pantries, as well as leaving several baskets at the Career Development Center in Chippewa Falls.

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**-- Tiny Houses/Hope Village Mission For The Homeless (On Going) –**

Tiny Houses/Hope Village was established in January 2016 as a project of the Chippewa Falls Mission Coalition to help the homeless.

Early in 2017 a Fund was set up toward the goal of raising \$100,000 for the construction of Tiny Houses, as well as purchasing land for Hope Village, which is now a 501c3 organization.

The vision for Hope Village is to be a central location for all the Tiny Houses and it could possibly include such things as a central building with laundry facilities, showers, cooking facilities, gathering area, etc.

Up to this point we have raised about \$40,000 with \$5,000 earmarked for the construction of a 7th Tiny House and another \$500 earmarked for various needs of the Tiny House guests, such as gas cards, health supplies, food, etc.

Currently we have six Tiny Houses available for occupancy. Two are at Landmark Christian Church, two are at Trinity United Methodist Church and two are at Chippewa Valley Bible Church. All Tiny House guests are screened through Career Development Center as well as the local law enforcement agencies. They are also assigned a Life Coach/Navigator to help with their transition back to a self-sustaining life style.

To date Tiny Houses have provided close to 1,000 nights of shelter, which is a savings of approximately \$69,000, which would have been needed to provide motel housing at a cost of approximately \$70/night.

**Here is the story from one of our Tiny House Guests ...**

*Sara – Sara had a string of unfortunate events happen to her that brought her to a Hope Village tiny house. Sara lost a teenage daughter to cancer during the winter of 2015 and in 2016 her significant other had health conditions that kept him from working. On top of those two things her vehicle just wore out from the many trips to medical clinics.*

*Sara was able to find a job while in a Hope Village tiny house, pay off some past bills, and a car was donated to her by a concerned Hope Village volunteer from Our Saviors Lutheran Church. Sara was an experienced Nurses Aide and has moved in with a person that needs a personal aide to help her with her daily living as she recovers from an illness. Sara has also taken on a part time job driving taxi.*

**For more information about Tiny Houses/Hope Village go to the website ... <http://www.hopevillagechippewafalls.com>**

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**-- “Lighten Your Load” Laundry Mission (On Going) –**

This mission is offered the first and third weeks of the month on Tuesday evenings (6-9pm) and Thursday afternoons (1-4pm) at the Express Mart Laundromat located on Bridge St. in downtown Chippewa Falls.

We are now in our second full year of the LYL mission, with numbers continuing to go up. In 2017 we washed and dried more than 860 loads of laundry, compared to 396 loads in 2016.

During 2017 there were a total of 482 guests that we helped with their laundry, compared to 194 guests in 2016.

We had a total of 36 servants from the various CFMC churches and non-profit agencies that donated 267 volunteer hours for this mission.

Total cost for 2017 was \$3,990, an average of \$86.74 per session. Also in 2017 we received \$5,561.50 in grants and donations to help fund this mission.

**Here is a testimonial from one of our “Lighten Your Load” Guests ...**

*“This service is very helpful. With our family of 4 we get overwhelmed with a lot of laundry and our washing machine is broken. We are unable to afford to buy a new one. This service was unexpected, but very nice since we have a lot of clothes to wash. We thank you for your help for families in need in the community. Thank You!” – Teresa & Chris*

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**-- “Sole4Souls” Shoe Mission (June 2017)**

The Chippewa Falls Mission Coalition once again joined the local Methodist Churches in their shoe gathering mission ... Soles4Souls.

Unofficial estimates indicated we collected close to 5,000 pounds (2-1/2 tons) of shoes for this mission. The shoes will be distributed to those in need both in the United States and various countries around the World.

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**-- Cloverton Fund Raiser Concert and Spaghetti Feed/Bake Sale for Tiny Houses/Hope Village (September 2017) –**

Thrivent sponsored a fundraiser concert for Tiny Houses/Hope Village by the musical group, Cloverton. A team from English Lutheran Church spearheaded this event with help from several members of the CFMC.

At the same time, First Presbyterian Church sponsored a spaghetti feed/bake sale for Tiny Houses/Hope Village with help from several CFMC members.

A total of approximately \$1,600 was raised by this concert along with an additional \$1,700 raised by the spaghetti feed/bake sale.

**-- CFMC GUEST SPEAKERS IN 2017 –**

**\* Kathleen Wanke, Community Health and Education Coordinator.  
SUBJECT: Dementia Awareness (February 2017)**

Kathleen works with “Safe At Home Senior Care” and has educated more than 475 people through a dementia-training program. They have more than

60 businesses involved in the “Purple Angel” program showing they are a dementia-friendly facility. They also have also started “Memory Cafes” in Chippewa Falls, Eau Claire and Bloomer.

**For more information you can contact Kathleen ... Cell: 715-271-1824  
... Email: [kathleen.wanke@sahsc.org](mailto:kathleen.wanke@sahsc.org)**

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**\* Heidi Olson, Health Assistant/Halmstad Health Office.  
SUBJECT: Chippewa Area Students In Need (March 2017 &  
September 2017)**

Heidi addressed some of the needs of our Chippewa Area Students in general and also specific to Halmstad School.

FOOD – 40.3% of the Chippewa Falls Students participate in the National School Lunch Program for Free or Reduced Lunches. Based on 5,000 students than means more than 2,000 qualify for this program. Also, 265 students receive Weekend Kids Meals from Feed My People.

CLOTHING – Clean clothing is also need if a student has an accident and soils their clothes.

HEALTH – Heidi identified 11 common health care items that were needed for the students, including on rare occasions head lice kits. There is nothing in the school budget for these items. The Halmstad PTO currently provides \$500 for those items, but those funds have been depleted.

**NOTE: Because Heidi’s first presentation was in March and close to the end of the school year, we invited her back to make another presentation in September when school started again.**

**After the September presentation, several members of CFMC as well as some CFMC churches stepped up and provided 130 containers of the needed health care items. Thrivent and a local dentist also donated health items to Heidi to be distributed throughout the school system.**

**For more information you can contact Heidi ...  
Email: [olsonhj@chipfalls.org](mailto:olsonhj@chipfalls.org) ... Phone: 715-726-2415, ext. 3503.**

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**\* J.D. Bickle, Molly Lee & Brady Zweifelhofer, Thrivent Financial Associates.**

**SUBJECT: Opportunities For Thrivent To Team Up With Your Mission Work. (April 2017)**

Thrivent is a 501(c)8 not for profit organization that is legally required to disperse profits back to the community. They do this through various grants and donations from Thrivent members.

CFMC was invited to consider teaming up with Thrivent with our respective mission projects. If you have a community mission project in mind, Thrivent is ready to work with you to make it happen.

**Workshops can also be scheduled and more information can be obtained on the Internet at ... [Thrivent.com/actionteam](http://Thrivent.com/actionteam)**

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**\* Mary Armstrong, Local Coordinator CCI Greenheart.  
SUBJECT: Hosting A High School Exchange Student. (May 2017)**

CCI Greenheart is a state-sponsored agency. Mary's focus is to arrange host families for high school students from other countries to give them an opportunity to learn more about our country, its customs and language.

Hosts can opt to have students for a 10-month academic year ... or a 5-month semester ... or a summer hosting, which can be for one to four weeks over a holiday break.

Host families are required to provide a separate bed, three meals a day and transportation as needed ... and include them in family activities.

**For more information contact Mary ..  
Email: [armstrong.mary@mac.com](mailto:armstrong.mary@mac.com)  
Phone: 715-726-7778 ... Cell: 952-657-3406**

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**\* Mary Rudd, Elder Benefits Specialist, Aging and Disability Resource Center in Chippewa County.  
SUBJECT: Elder Services Available and Requests for Unmet Needs.  
(June 2017)**

Mary deals mostly with clients 60 years of age and older. She also offers services to all adults with disabilities, regardless of income and provides a seminar called Medicare 101 for those reaching Medicare age.

Some of the services offered include an “Ensure Plus” program with Ensure available at a reduced cost ... “Farmer’s Market” program that provides coupons for locally grown fresh fruits and vegetables.

They also sponsor Meals On Wheels, Adult Protective Services, Guardianship, Home Maintenance, Social Security Benefits, Senior Care, Health, Employment and Job Training. Flyers were made available for all these services.

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**\* Cara, Domestic Violence Advocate, Family Support Center**  
**SUBJECT: Elder Abuse (August 2017)**

While many of us think of abuse we associate it with physical or sexual abuse. But it also involves verbal and non-verbal abuse. Often times it is family members that inflict various forms of abuse. The list is extensive and Cara’s presentation was a real education.

Skilled professionals working with older individuals have the ability to notice indications of abuse. Not only physical indicators, but also other behavioral changes are signals that abusive behavior is occurring.

One important message presented was ... “always believe the victim and maintain trust with them.” Flyers were handed out explaining Elder Abuse and how to prevent it.

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**\* Michelle Pride, Field Services Specialist for Feed My People.**  
**SUBJECT: What Effect Has The Closing Of Community Pantry, Along With The Closing Of Gordy’s Markets Had On Those In Need Of Food In The Chippewa Area? (October 2017)**

Michelle stated, with the growing numbers of people needing supplemental food, these closings are a serious matter. Gordy’s downtown store donated approximately 33,000 pounds of food in 2017, which may no longer be available.

Michelle handed out a list of area food pantries and when they were open. She noted there are no food distributions on the weekend (Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays), except for the Week End Kids Meals.

It was noticed the heaviest distribution was on Tuesdays. It was also noted that the Valley Vineyard Pantry has experienced the largest increases of guests on that day, up by at least 1/3.

Michelle said that Ruby's Pantry at Chippewa Valley Bible Church is now open on the third Tuesday of the month. There is a minimal charge to shop there. No exact numbers were available.

Michelle also noted that Feed My People is starting a "Choose Healthy" program with heart healthy food options. Colorful cards will be placed on food shelves at the pantries indicating heart-healthy options.

Another function of FMP is to help people apply for Food Share in a 14 county area. However, they are understaffed to handle all the applicants. So they are looking for volunteers to help clients apply for Food Share.

**For more info contact Michelle ... Email: [mapride@fmpfoodbank.org](mailto:mapride@fmpfoodbank.org)  
Phone: 715-835-9415**

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**\* Roger Elliot, Coordinator, HSHS St. Joseph's Community Garden  
SUBJECT: How Can We Join In The Community Garden Mission To  
Provide Produce For The Local Food Pantries. (November 2017)**

There are twenty 12x14' garden plots near St. Joseph's Hospital that are available for growing produce for the local food pantries. The cost is \$20/plot. But, there is also a scholarship program that will cover the cost for individuals/families that can't afford the \$20.

Tractor Central comes each spring to plow and prepare the garden plots. There is milkweed planted to attract Monarch butterflies, as well as beehives to produce honey and pollinate the crops.

The garden area is also fenced to keep out deer and other freeloaders. All plots are irrigated and tools are even provided, if needed.

**For more information, contact Roger ... Email: [rwelae@charter.net](mailto:rwelae@charter.net)**



**Phone: 715-563-2069.**

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**\* Michelle Flint, CareLink Coordinator**

**SUBJECT: What Is CareLink? Need For Volunteers And/Or Funding  
(December 2017)**

CareLink is an ecumenical collaboration of the Chippewa Falls Area Churches with a goal of joining together at one location (First Presbyterian Church) to help those in need with immediate emergency assistance.

CareLink provides \$25 gas cards to guests in need so they can get to the next job interview, the next doctor's appointment, or even just the next paycheck. Guests are eligible for one \$25 gas card every six months.

CareLink also provides referrals to other agencies that can help the guests in other ways. Whether it is food, clothing, energy assistance, job/hiring information, rent or laundry help, etc.

CareLink assisted 454 Chippewa County residents in 2016. Of those, 231 were also given referrals to other agencies.

So far, in 2017, CareLink has assisted 505 Chippewa County residents and given 191 referrals to other agencies. This does not include December 2017 numbers.

CareLink has a limited number of volunteers and could use a little more help. They are open from 10am – Noon every Tuesday and Thursday. Training takes about 15 minutes for the reception position. Training for the person giving out the gas card takes a little longer because you have to become familiar with the list of agencies for other services.

**If you want to volunteer for CareLink you can contact Michelle ...**

**Email: michelle.flint@charter.net**

**If you want to donate to CareLink write the check out to "Trinity United Methodist Church" and put "CareLink" in the memo line. Mail it to Trinity United Methodist Church, 201 W. Central St., Chippewa Fall, WI 54729.**

**- OTHER MISSIONS THE CFMC WAS INVOLVED WITH IN 2017 -**

Often we are made aware of missions going on in our community and we join in, as we are able. Here are a few such missions we were able to help ...

**-- Career Development Center-Community Care Cabinet (On Going) --**

An outdoor cabinet was established at the Career Development Center at 508 N. Bridge St. in Chippewa Falls. They needed non-perishable food items, as well as health care items and winter items for the cold weather. Various CFMC members helped keep the cabinet stocked.

**For more info on the Community Care Cabinet contact Becky Piper ...**

**Email: [becky@lecdc.org](mailto:becky@lecdc.org) ... Phone: 715-861-5002.**

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**-- Back To School Giveaway, Valley Vineyard Church (August 2017) --**

Backpacks and school supplies were given to children in need. In 2017 they distributed more than 450 backpacks with supplies. An additional 200 backpacks with supplies were given out after the event. The 4:30AM Coffee house also donated socks and sneakers to this mission event. CFMC were invited to help with donations or by volunteering to help at the mission event.

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**-- Chippewa Falls Legacy Center (On Going) --**

We have kept in contact with Dave Gordon with the Legacy Center to coordinate some of the things we're involved with (Tiny Houses, Hope Village, Lighten Your Load, etc.) with some of the services they will be providing.

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**-- Coat and Blanket Drive (Oct. 2017) --**

This is a mission started by St. Joseph's Hospital and coordinated through Notre Dame's St. Francesca Food Pantry. CFMC members were encouraged to drop off coats, mittens, snowsuits, etc at St. Joe's for final distribution at Notre Dame Catholic Church.

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**-- Touched Twice Free Clinic (October 2017) --**

Touched Twice was again hosted by Landmark Christian Church. They provide various services that included eye exams, chiropractic services, haircuts, clothing, hot lunch, family photos, etc. CFMC were invited to join with Landmark in this mission event.

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**-- Helping Individuals In Need (On Going)**

Throughout the year we receive requests for individuals in need of help from the various non-profit agencies involved with CFMC. We have sent out email calls for items such as washing machines, stoves, beds, baby furniture, emergency assistance, etc. Within a matter of days, sometimes a matter of hours, we are usually able to help those individuals.

**It all fits with our mission statement and our various faith journeys of doing our best, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to live the life Christ patterned for us more than 2000 years ago. We look forward to continuing this journey in 2018.**

**Loving God, Loving People!**

Respectfully Submitted,  
Tom Drehmel  
Chippewa Falls Mission Coalition