

January 18, 2025

Chippewa Falls Mission Coalition 2024 Year In Review

Our CFMC Mission Statement and Bible Verse

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.”*

CFMC Website: www.cfmissioncoalition.org

CFMC Facebook: www.facebook.com/cfmissioncoalition

General CFMC Info –

The Chippewa Falls Mission Coalition started in August 2011 with six local churches. Today our numbers include 20 local churches of various denominations and 38 local non-profit agencies and community contacts. Our CFMC email list has 170+ email addresses, which is why we always “blind copy” everyone when we send out emails.

There are no monetary costs to be part of the CFMC, just a sincere desire to work together to Love God, Love People and Make a Difference in His Name!

The CFMC is comprised mostly of lay members from the Social Ministry Teams of the CFMC churches, as well as some pastors. There are also reps from the various non-profit agencies/community contacts that attend meetings and stay in touch to keep the CFMC informed of their needs and how we could help.

Here is the list of churches and non-profits that have shown an interest in the CFMC and have participated in various degrees ...

Current “Chippewa Falls Mission Coalition” Members –

CFMC Churches (20):

Zion United Methodist -- Trinity United Methodist -- Central Lutheran -- Our Saviour’s Lutheran -- First Presbyterian -- Landmark Christian -- English Lutheran of Bateman – St. Simeon’s & Christ Episcopal -- Crossroads Baptist -- Valley Vineyard -- Notre Dame Catholic -- Faith Lutheran -- Chippewa Valley Bible -- St. Charles Catholic – Jacob’s Well – Holy Ghost Catholic – Lifespring Fellowship – River City Community Church – Christ Lutheran – The Haven

CFMC Non-Profit Agencies/Community Contacts (38):

Chippewa River Ind. -- Carelink -- Salvation Army – Barnabas Ministries -- Thrivent -- Lutheran Social Services – LE Phillips CDC Chippewa Outreach – West Cap – Chippewa Co. Housing Authority – Family Support Center – Workforce Resource & Food Share – CVTC – Feed My

People -- Chippewa Catholic Schools -- Chippewa Co. Public Health -- Chippewa Valley Street Ministry -- Marshfield Community Connect -- Mentor Chippewa -- Agnes' Table -- St. Francesca Resource Center -- Touched Twice Ministries -- The Hub -- C.F. Voyagers -- Community Foundation of Chippewa Co. -- WOGO/WWIB Radio -- Open Door Clinic -- Helping Hands For Our Children -- JONAH -- Hope Village -- Romeis Apts. -- Menomonie Mission Coalition -- Visiting Angels -- Chippewa Valley High School -- Chippewa Co. Aging and Disability Resource Center -- Rescued and Redeemed -- CESA 11 Head Start -- C.F. Rotary Club -- Family Promise/Beacon House

How We Connect

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 or before 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 prayer for our mission, as well as any individual prayer requests and ends with all of us 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 pro-active in our community, reaching out and asking where help is required for those in need.

We're About More Than Just Mission Outreach

The CFMC is about more than helping people in our various outreach missions, we also strive to create relationships with the people we serve. Often, we are able to share our faith stories, as well as listen to theirs. We also offer prayers as requested by the people we meet and share those prayer requests with everyone in the CFMC to include in their daily prayers.

NEW CFMC WEBSITE/FACEBOOK

Our CFMC website and Facebook page officially started in 2023 ... and 2024 marked the first full year for both of them ... **cfmissioncoalition.org** ... **facebook.com/cfmissioncoalition** Check them out for all the news and updates for the CFMC. A Big "Thank You" to Mark Birrittella for setting up our CFMC website and Facebook page. And, also another Big "Thank You" to Tiffany Wogahn for helping Mark to keep them up to date.

-- MISSION OUTREACH OF THE CFMC IN 2024 --

*** Tiny Houses/Hope Village Mission for the Homeless (On Going)**

-- Mike Cohoon

-- About Hope Village -- Website: www.hopevillagechippewafalls.org

Established in January 2016 as a mission of the Chippewa Falls Mission Coalition (CFMC), Tiny Houses/Hope Village provides temporary housing for individuals experiencing homelessness.

This initiative, led by Mike Cohoon of Landmark Christian Church, relies on a dedicated core of volunteers and a Board of Directors.

Mike became the full-time Director of Hope Village on January 1, 2023. In November 2024, Pauline Spiegel joined Hope Village as a part-time Assistant to the Director, and we are thrilled to have her on board.

Originally, Tiny Homes were placed at various churches throughout Chippewa Falls. Since December 2024, Hope Village has had a permanent location at **1825 Kennedy Rd, Chippewa Falls**.

-- HV Current Facilities

Hope Village includes **ten year-round tiny homes** and a **Community Center** featuring:

- 4 bathrooms and 3 showers
- A laundry room
- A full kitchen and community gathering space
- Office and classroom spaces
- A basement serving as a severe weather shelter and storage area for donated items and Tiny House supplies.

An **11th Tiny House** was constructed through a donation from Central Lutheran Church and the estate of Pastor Skoien, with labor provided by Spectrum Industries. This home is currently located at Chippewa Valley Bible Church.

-- HV Plans for Affordable Housing

Hope Village received a **\$2.5 million grant** from the State of Wisconsin (via the American Rescue Plan) to fund Phase 1 of an affordable housing development. This phase includes:

- One three-story six-plex with two- and three-bedroom apartments
- Two duplexes with one-bedroom apartments

Phase 1 is expected to be ready for occupancy by **April 2025**. Additional grants will be pursued in 2025 to complete another six-plex and two duplexes.

Hope Village is also negotiating the purchase of a local motel to convert **27 motel rooms into efficiency apartments**, further expanding affordable housing options.

-- HV Capital Campaign Success

In the summer of 2024, Hope Village concluded the solicitation phase of its Capital Campaign, surpassing its \$2.7 million goal with **\$2.8 million in commitments**. Contributions will be received over the next 2-3 years to fund ongoing and future projects.

-- HV Impact of Tiny Homes

Since 2016, Hope Village has saved the community over **\$1,280,048** by providing **16,006 nights of shelter**, avoiding the use of motel vouchers at \$80 per night. To date, we have served **107 families** (approximately **200 individuals**).

In 2024, the average length of stay dropped from 170 days to **158 days**, thanks to the efforts of our new **Housing Search Team**.

Each tiny home guest is supported by:

- Two mentors that keep in contact with them on a regular basis for support.
- A Navigator to guide them toward an independent lifestyle.
- They meet with the Navigator once a week to go over progress on their lifestyle goals. Progress on their lifestyle goals are required to remain in a Tiny House.

Ann's Story – A Hope Village Guest

Feeling afraid for her safety and that of her two young children, Ann made the courageous decision to leave her husband and their home. Unsure of where to turn, she sought refuge at a domestic abuse shelter in Eau Claire, where she stayed for eight days. Reflecting on the experience, she shared, "A domestic abuse shelter is not the most stable environment for children."

A family friend suggested Hope Village in Chippewa Falls as a better option. Ann reached out to Jenn, from the Hope Village Intake team, who quickly arranged for her and her children to move into a Tiny House at Hope Village.

Determined to maintain some stability for her children, Ann continued working full-time while living at Hope Village. To avoid further disruption, she drove her children to their school daily instead of transferring them. Meanwhile, she obtained a restraining order against her husband, "It was a tough decision," Ann said, "but I knew it was the best option for me and my children."

Living in the tiny house brought Ann a sense of safety and privacy. "Here in the Tiny House, I felt safe and protected," she shared. "Mike, Jenn, and the mentors, Cathy and Carla were incredibly supportive. They went out of their way to make us feel comfortable and ensured we had everyday essentials like shampoo and toothpaste."

Life at Hope Village also gave her children a sense of normalcy. "It was great living here because the kids made close friends they played with daily," Ann said. "It made life feel more normal."

Ann found the weekly meetings with Jenn particularly helpful. "I was able to set financial goals and save money," she explained. After three months at Hope Village, Ann had saved enough for a down payment on an apartment.

Ann wanted to share her story to inspire others, saying: "Homelessness has different faces, shapes, and colors. Sometimes it's everyday people who just need a little extra help."

*** "Lighten Your Load" Laundry Mission (On Going)**

-- Gayle Klitzke

Our "Lighten Your Load" laundry mission was started in October 2015. We learned people were throwing away dirty clothes and going to various local agencies to get fresh used clothes because they couldn't afford to wash their old clothes.

This CFMC mission is spearheaded by Gayle Klitzke from Our Saviour's Lutheran Church along with a core group of volunteers. Also, a special "Thank You" to Pam Moran from Central Lutheran Church for providing her services as our fiscal agent keeping track of all the quarters used for this mission.

"Lighten Your Load" is offered four times a month ... Tuesday evenings and Thursday afternoons during the first and third weeks of the month at Express Mart Laundromat located on Bridge St. in downtown Chippewa Falls.

17 LYL Volunteers Helped 433 Guests with 1,057 Loads of Wash in 2024

- Total number of laundry sessions – 46 (no sessions on July 4 or Thanksgiving)
- Total number of participants – 433 (99 unduplicated)
- Washing more than 1,057 loads and drying those loads
- Cost of washing machines \$2, \$3, \$4 and \$6 Cost of drying \$.25 for 10 minutes
- Average 9 participants per session
- Average 36 participants each month
- Average 22 loads each session
- Most participants at a session: 14 (Which occurred 5 times.)
- Most loads by 1 participant: 8
- 213 participants attended on Tuesday evenings ... 220 attended on Thursday afternoons.
- 17 volunteers: 1 person volunteered 14 times, 3 people volunteered more than 10 times
- INCOME from donors: 6 churches, various charitable organizations, a grant from Central Lutheran's Burke Fund, and 4 individuals

TOTAL INCOME: \$3,783.30

EXPENSES: Quarters for Lighten Your Load -- \$4,500.00

Debit cards for Suds Hub -- \$801.25

TOTAL EXPENSES: \$5,301.25

Comments From Our “Lighten Your Load” Guests
(Comments are printed as written by participants in our notebook)

- *“Lighten Your Load continues to help me balance my finances, so I can wash my clothing and linens to maintain a healthy home and health. The regular cost of washing clothing is very expensive, so in the past, I was washing clothing every couple of months and washing bed sheets and other cloths – maybe once a year. That was not healthy nor was I happy. Thank you for this program.” -- Anonymous*
 - *“This program helps me out a lot with keeping my clothes clean and smelling great. When you are living paycheck to paycheck and can barely pay bills this helps so much and eases the stress of paying for laundry every week. When you don’t have a washer or dryer this is amazing. It just makes life easier. Thank you so much for this program.” -- Terry*
 - *“Recently I had a heart attack and I am not working. I appreciated this service very much.” – E.*
 - *“Lighten Your Load helps me out a lot because I have 3 young children and they get clothes pretty dirty! And currently playing catch up. I had 2 major surgeries this year and was off work for 6 months. I am very thankful for the help! Thank you!” -- Anonymous*
 - *“I am very grateful for this program it helps me have clean clothing for school. The staff are amazing and have Big hearts to give there free time to make it happen to get clothing done.” – Damion*
 - *“I am very thankful for this program. I have 5 children and no washer and dryer. Thank you so much!” -- Anonymous*
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*** “Lather With Love” Soap Mission (April 2024)**

-- Tom Drehmel

This was the first outreach mission we did when the CFMC first started in 2011. It has become an annual mission for the CFMC.

Back in 2011 we decided to be pro-active and ask the food pantries what they needed. They told us there was a need for laundry detergent and diapers. We continue to gather the soap items, but have since dropped the diapers portion, as they became available from other sources.

This year we collected 1,265 soap/health care items that were evenly distributed to the following local food pantries ... First Presbyterian ... English Lutheran of Bateman ... Valley Vineyard ... St. Francesca Resource Center ... Agnes’ Table/Legacy Center ... and Chippewa Valley High School.

*** “Soles4Souls” Shoe Mission (Sept./Oct. 2024)**

-- Ken & Shirley Froelich

The CFMC once again joined the Soles4Souls outreach mission of the local Methodist churches. This mission is spearheaded by Ken & Shirley Froelich. Final Tally for Soles4Souls this year was more than 2,119 pairs of shoes weighing in at around 3,700 pounds (ALMOST TWO TONS!)

Your generosity and prayers have made a difference in a lot of lives around the world, including the recent victims of the hurricanes in southeastern USA.

*** “Love Chippewa” Touched-Twice Mission (September 2024)**

-- Whitney Falkenberg

Touched-Twice events have been in the Chippewa area since 2004.

Services provided at the “Love Chippewa” Touched-Twice event on Sept. 29, 2024 included oil changes, medical care, chiropractic care, eye care, dental care, haircuts, family portraits, groceries, clothing, and a warm meal.

We also had a number of information tables set up to provide information about the various community services available to our guests.

Several CFMC churches provided 56 volunteers, which served 65 families and approximately 175 individuals at this day-long event. An amazing event that truly showed God’s Love In Action!

*** CFMC Community Meals (Thanksgiving and Christmas 2024)**

-- Tiffany Wogahn

-- Thanksgiving meal hosted by Central Lutheran, Nov. 28, 2024.

Served 117 meals ... 77 Dine-In ... 40 Take-Outs.

-- Christmas meal hosted by First Presbyterian Church, Dec. 25, 2024.

Served 137 meals ... 84 Dine-In ... 53 Take-Outs.

-- All food donated by Rutledge Charities.

-- We are planning on again serving meals on Thanksgiving and Christmas in 2025 ... and possibly adding an Easter meal for 2025. (Currently looking for an Easter Host.)

*** Supporting Missions of our CFMC Churches/Non-Profit Agencies**

Your CFMC also supported various missions of the CFMC member churches/non-profit agencies. Which included ...

**-- Valley Vineyard Backpack/School Supply Giveaway – Aug. 11, 2024
(1,000+ backpacks given away)**

-- CFMC meal service at Agnes’ Table – April 2, 2024

-- CFMC meal service at Agnes’ Table – July 16, 2024

- CFMC meal service at Barnabas Table – July 22, 2024
- Hope Village “Quarter Auction” Fund Raiser – Feb. 3, 2024 (Raised \$28,000)
- Hope Village Golf Outing Fund Raiser – July 29th (Raised \$14,000)
- St. Francesca Winter Clothing Drive – Oct. 2024 (Served 126 families, which included 485 family members. Gave away 315 coats, 38 pairs of boots and 648 misc. clothing items.)
- Notre Dame “Socktober” Warm Sock Drive – Oct. 2024 (Collected 800+ brand new pairs of socks and 110 gently used pairs of socks. They were donated to St. Francesca Resource Center and Valley Vineyard Pantry.)
- Hope Village Clothing Fun Drive – Aug. 2024 (Raised \$2,765)

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS 2024

Over the course of 2024 we had various community speakers make presentations at our monthly meetings to tell about their mission and ways we could help through volunteering, donations or prayers.

The info below reflects those various contacts with our community...

*** JANUARY 2024 – NO MEETING**

*** FEBRUARY 2024** – Jodi Jewell, Community Engagement Specialist for World Relief Wisconsin, Chippewa Valley. Discussed Refugee Resettlement in the Chippewa Valley. Website ... worldrelief.org/wisconsin/about-us-chippewa-valley/

*** MARCH 2024** – Pastor Eddie Crise & Michelle Flint. Discussed Carelink gas card program for those in need of gas for emergencies and a call for volunteers to help distribute the gas cards.

*** APRIL 2024** – John Dawson, Executive Director Chippewa Valley Habitat for Humanity. Discussed need for volunteers for a Chippewa Area Home Build. Website: www.cvh4h.org

*** APRIL 2024** – Jennifer Schaffer, Community Education Coordinator for the Cardinal Community Learning Center. Discussed Community Education Learning Opportunities. Website: cfsd.chippewafalls.k12.wi.us/cardinal/community/

*** MAY 2024** – Chris Maslonkowski, Hope Village Volunteer Coordination Team. Discussed Hope Village Volunteer Opportunities. Website: www.hopevillagechippewafalls.org

* **JUNE 2024** – Julie Mitchel, Congregational Health Ministries Coordinator. Discussed establishing a Parish Nurse Program for the Chippewa Faith Community.

* **JULY 2024 – NO MEETING (Served Meals at Agnes’ Table/Barnabas Table)**

* **AUGUST 2024** – Karen Herbison, Director of Visiting Angels. Discussed Home Care/Living Assistance Services of Visiting Angels.

Website: visitingangels.com

* **SEPTEMBER 2024** – Carla Berscheit, Dementia Care Specialist with the Aging and Disability Center serving Chippewa and Dunn Counties. Discussed support available for people with Dementia and their Caregivers.

Website: www.eauclairecounty.gov/our-government/departments-and-facilities/departments-directory/aging-disability-resource-center

* **OCTOBER 2024** – Tim Easker, Chippewa County Human Services Director. Discussed upcoming “Day In The Life Of A Consumer” Event held at Chippewa Co. Court House to become familiar with various services available to those in need of help.

* **OCTOBER 2024** – Sherry Jasper, Our Nawakwa Board President. Discussed Revamping of Camp Nawakwa to Support Our Youth and Community by Fostering Continuing Appreciation for the Outdoors.

Website: ournawakwa.org

* **NOVEMBER 2024** – Lisa Husom & Erin Whitfield, Mentor Chippewa Staff. Discussed being a Mentor to a child in the Chippewa School System and how you can make a difference in that child’s life.

Website: mentorchippewa.org

* **DECEMBER 2024** – Tina Simmons, Program Director of St. Francesca Resource Center. Discussed St. Francesca’s Pregnancy and Family Support “Earn While You Learn” Program.

Website: stfrancesca.org

* **DECEMBER 2024** – Lauren Bearson, Rescued and Redeemed. Discussed their Christ-Centered, anti-sex trafficking organization and how they help those affected by this crime.

Website: www.rescuedandredeemed.org

CFMC ODDS AND ENDS

Because of our contacts with the CFMC local churches and local non-profit agencies, we receive numerous requests for individuals that need help, as well as passing along information about serving opportunities, community events, etc. We were able to help with the majority of these requests through generous donations from various groups/individuals, volunteers stepping up, numerous prayers, etc.

Here are a few of those “Odds and Ends” requests ...

* Family needed Queen Size Bed (Done)

- * Promote Numerous Feed My People Events and Call for Volunteers
 - * Fridge/Freezer Needed at LE Phillips CDC Chippewa Outreach Office (Done)
 - * Hope Village Mom Needed an Umbrella Stroller (Done)
 - * Promote Amundson Appliance's Free Washer/Dryer program
 - * Socks and Underwear Needed at Helping Hands For Our Children
 - * Family Support Center Needed Washer/Dryer (Done)
 - * Family Needed Refrigerator (Done)
 - * Several Individuals Needed Help Moving
- NOTE:** Help needed for moving is a common request. Would your church/non-profit agency be interested in starting a "Moving Ministry?"
- * Family in Need of a Couch/Sectional (Done)
 - * Hope Village Resident - Handicap Scooter Repair (Done)
 - * Hotel Northern Resident - Handicap Scooter Needed (Done)
 - * Household Items Needed at LE Phillips CDC Chippewa Outreach Office

-- THANK YOU AND "YAY GOD!" --

I'm continually amazed at what can be accomplished by working together and letting the Holy Spirit lead us on this amazing faith adventure for the past 13 years.

"Thank You" and God's Blessing to All of You for helping us live out the words ... "Loving God, Loving People, Making a Difference in His Name!"

"Yay God!"

Respectfully Submitted,
Tom Drechsel
Chippewa Falls Mission Coalition

"Whenever you possibly can, do good to those who need it. Never tell your neighbor to wait until tomorrow if you can help them now." – Proverbs 3:27

"By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." – John 13:35