

January 4, 2017

Chippewa Falls Mission Coalition 2016 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.

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 pro-active in our community, reaching out and asking where help is required for those in need.

We are guided by the Holy Spirit. 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 2016 --

-- "Lather With Love" Soap Gathering Mission (February) –

We collected 290 containers of laundry soap, 120 bottles of shampoo, 200 bottles of hand soap, 400 bars of soap, 120 bottles of shampoo, 25 bottles of

conditioner and about 50# of misc. toiletries. These items were distributed to the local food pantries.

-- “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 on Bridge St.

We had 194 guests take part in this mission and we did 396 loads of wash this past year. A total of 43 volunteers stepped forward from CFMC to help those guests with their laundry as they built relationships and often shared Faith stories.

Our total cost for this mission for 2016 was \$5,760. We are currently writing grants and accepting donations to keep this ministry going into 2017.

We are making a difference through our faith and our commitment to help others. Here’s a quote from one of the guests that kind of sums it up ...

“You are doing more than helping with laundry. You are lifting spirits.” – Lonnie

-- Barnabas Warming Shelter (Winter Months) –

Barnabas Ministries offered their building to shelter the homeless during the cold winter months. CFMC supplied several volunteers (servants) to spend the evening at Barnabas to help supervise those in need of shelter.

-- “Tiny Houses” Shelter For The Homeless (On Going) –

From the Barnabas Warming Shelter the CFMC decided to sponsor building “Tiny Houses.” Landmark Church and Mike Cohoon spearheaded this mission. Also known as “Hope Village” complete with website ... www.hopevillagechippewafalls.com

It costs approximately \$5,000 to build a “Tiny House.” As materials are donated and volunteers step forward, the cost goes down significantly.

Two “Tiny Houses” are complete and currently being occupied. Another “Tiny House” is being worked on, with funds to complete three more for a total of six units.

Bloomer and Chippewa High Schools have volunteered to work on constructing two “Tiny Houses” this coming spring.

A Board of Directors was formed to oversee the “Tiny House” project setting up guidelines and working with CDC Chippewa Outreach to screen candidates.

-- “Food For Kidz” Meal Packing Mission (April) –

On April 23rd we packed 48,600 meals for this mission. In the past these meals have gone to those in need in Haiti, as well as other areas around the world. We also have the option to keep the meals to help the hungry locally.

-- “Soles4Souls” Shoe Mission (June) –

CFMC helped the local Methodist churches with this mission. Final tally was approximately 5,500 pounds of shoes. Our Best Year Ever! These shoes will go to those in need throughout the world, as well as right here in the United States.

-- Valley Vineyard “Party In The Park” and “School Supply Giveaway” Missions (June and August) --

In the fall of 2015 Valley Vineyard had a devastating fire and lost their church building and much of the contents. However, that didn’t stop their mission.

The CFMC stepped up to help by supplying carnival games and supplies for their “Party In The Park,” as well as backpacks and school supplies for their “School Supply Giveaway.” Prayers and donations were also sent to Valley Vineyard on an individual basis.

-- GUEST SPEAKERS IN 2016 –

*** Tim Bauer – Marshfield Community Connection Team**

The Community Connection Team is focused on keeping patients well, beyond the medical office according to their needs, which were identified as #1-Utilities, #2-Food, #3-Clothing, #4-Transportation.

It began last May with a UW-Eau Claire Honor's Class and has grown; staffed with volunteers who are trained to interact with patients. This Team is a service of Marshfield Clinic, Family Health Center Inc. and UW-Eau Claire.

Presently, their office is open Monday thru Thursday 8:00 a.m. to 5 p.m. They are located at the Chippewa Falls Dental Center to serve the Chippewa area. Volunteers are paired with seasoned volunteers. They are coordinating their efforts with Becky Piper at CDC Chippewa Outreach.

*** Valerie Brooks -- Faith Lutheran Church – “Celebrate Calm” Parenting Seminar**

Valerie presented information about a free parenting seminar this past April at Faith Lutheran ... “Celebrate Calm.” This seminar demonstrated 10 ways to get your kids to listen the first time ... stop defiance, disrespect and yelling ... stop whining, tantrums, sibling fights ... get kids off video games without a fight ... create stress-free mornings, homework time, bedtime.

*** Jan Engelsgerd -- Our Saviour’s Lutheran Church – Sarah and Abraham Project**

Jan explained the purpose of the “Sarah and Abraham” community service project is to single out a person/family and walk along side them and support them. To build a relationship by spending time with them, listening to them and providing loving support. The ultimate goal is to foster independence and self-sufficiency.

*** Rev. Dr. Listowel Ayensu-Mensah – Zion United Methodist Church -- Mission Trip to Ghana, Africa**

A team from Zion United Methodist Church recently returned from a mission trip to Ghana, Africa. Some of their accomplishments included providing hot meals for more than 800 children in VBS ... worked on building/renovating the chapel/parsonage ... provided school uniforms for the children ... dug a water well ... provided school and health supplies ... and strengthened their own faith in the process.

Their next mission trip is 2018; all are welcome to join them. Pastor Mensah also mentioned fund-raisers for this mission trip, as well as the need for items such as children’s books. He will keep us informed of these events and needs so we can help, as we are able.

*** Kristina Bechtel -- West Cap – “Point In Time” Homeless Count and Community Connect Events**

Kristina explained about the “Point-In-Time” twice-yearly (Jan. & July) homeless count for Chippewa County. This is a HUD requirement for future

funding.

Kristina was looking for volunteers to help with the count on July 27th starting at midnight. You would probably be finished around 3:00 or 3:30 a.m. You would be assigned an area to check where there is a history of homeless people staying in that area.

NOTE: It was suggested that individuals and/or churches could sponsor one or more motel vouchers for the homeless that night at a cost of approx. \$75/voucher.

Kristina was also looking for churches or organizations to sponsor a **“Community Connect”** event. That’s where the people being served by West Cap are invited to a special event.

In the past, organizations have sponsored things like a Free Garage Sale and Gourmet Italian Dinner at Agnes Table.

Other suggestions included a Chili Cook-Off Contest Meal ... Picnic with such things as kids games, free haircuts, free body massages, resource tables ... Coat Drive ... Free Outdoor/Indoor Movie with popcorn and beverages ... etc.

*** Meranda Eggebrecht & Sara Steffen -- Marshfield Clinic
“Community Connection” Team**

The Marshfield Clinic Community Connection Team is seeking volunteers specifically to fill out applications and make phone calls to supplement their local university volunteers. Clinic hours are Mon. thru Thurs from 8:00 a.m.- 5:00 p.m. Volunteers are asked to work 2-2-1/2 hour shifts and are trained to connect clients with local services. They are currently serving 500 patients.

Service/Needs Examples: Childcare, utilities, housing, food, clothing, dental & medication costs. Their offices are located on the 2nd floor of the Marshfield Clinic in Eau Claire and the Chippewa Falls Dental Center. Contact # is (715) 858-4443.

*** Melissa Larson – West Cap Food Access and Resource Coordinator**

The subject matter was the new Commodity Supplemental Program designed for seniors age 60 or older. Stricter guidelines than Food Share.

Handouts from Ms. Larson had three locations and phone numbers for contacting someone about the program. Those who sign up and are accepted are required to pick up a FREE box of commodity foods each month. Each box will contain a 2 lb. block of cheese, as well as peanut butter, juice, pasta, protein, canned vegetables, canned fruit, shelf stable milk, dry milk and cereal.

If you have two people in your household that qualify, then you will get two boxes. You are asked to bring your own box or return the box that held the food items. Accepted participants are required to pick up food on the day they come to the sites, as refrigeration is a problem.

Two people can be proxies to pick items up if the client is unable to do so. If you don't come/or send a proxy, your name will be deleted and another person on the waiting list will have the opportunity. The program begins in September 2016 and is based on a USDA program.

Distribution sites in Chippewa Falls are the First Presbyterian Food Pantry and soon to be available at Romeis Apartments.

*** Emily Moore & Barb Dukerschein -- Feed My People -- School Sponsorship for "Weekend Kids Meals."**

Barb Dukerschein spoke on behalf of the Chippewa Falls Weekend Kids' Meal Program and the Sponsorship Opportunities. She had a handout for attending members and accompanying her was Emily Moore who is the director of the program.

Emily had a bag of items typical of what the children receive for weekend meals. The food items were nutritious and the need is evident.

Eleven schools and organizations were listed along with the number of children participating. Feed My People is hoping to get sponsors along with donations for this worthwhile project. It was suggested that some churches might use this as a Lenten or Advent project.

It was also suggested that churches/non-profit agencies might join together to sponsor a school near their location.

Sponsorships for schools ranged from \$300/year at St. Charles/Holy Ghost up to \$9,525/year for Parkview. Individuals can also sponsor one child at a

cost of \$75/year.

*** Alissa Kohli -- Work Force Resource; Becky Piper -- CDC Chippewa Outreach; Trevor Begin --Marshfield Clinic ... Community Connect Event**

On January 26, 2017 during the “Point In Time” homeless count; Work Force Resource, CDC Chippewa Outreach, Marshfield Clinic and other non-profit agencies sponsored a Community Connect Event that includes giving boxes of household items to those in attendance.

This Community Connect event is entitled ... “Giving Families A Fresh Start in 2017.”

While food stamps take care of part of their needs, many items like paper products, toiletries and household cleaners etc. are not. These items are greatly needed and appreciated.

They asked if any CFMC churches/non-profit agencies would be willing to join in to support this cause. A form with the desired list of 15 items was handed out to those attending.

Donated boxes are also available for those items. Their goal is to fill 100 boxes with those items. It was suggested you could also use plastic laundry tubs to gather the items, if we run out of boxes.

Money donations are also welcome. It costs about \$30 to sponsor one box. But, any donation amount is welcome.

*** Maddy Parker—Central Lutheran Church -- “Bread of Life” Ministry**

Maddy shared a video where we learned about her hands-on project at Central Lutheran of making homemade breads with all profits going to Feed My People.

Four kinds of bread were initially made by 29 volunteers. They baked and sold 100-120 loaves. Total cost was \$250. The loaves sold from \$4 to \$8.

Volunteers were made up of both young and old members at Central. They helped buy materials ... set up the kitchen ... shared stories ... enjoyed multi-generational fellowship ... baked the breads ... cleaned up afterwards

... oftentimes spending their own money to accomplish this worthy task.

All in all, it was an impressive success and they hope to expand and continue this project in the future. At first they did all the work with one oven, but now have four ovens with which to work. Bravo to Maddy and her crew!

“I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.” – John 6:35

-- MISSION OUTREACH REQUESTS --

During the course of the year members are free to share any ministry they have upcoming and invite any or all members to share in helping with that ministry.

Examples include ...

- * Free Clinic in February offering free video screenings, eyeglasses, chiropractic care, medical care, meal and prayer.
- * St. Francesca Food Pantry at Notre Dame is now accepting clothing. Donations welcome.
- * Salvation Army needed help in May to sort food from the Postal Carrier Food Drive.
- * GoFundMe for Pastor Jim Opgenorth to help cover expenses for his recent heart surgery.
- * CareLink Information Flyer for providing emergency assistance for gasoline for those in need in the Chippewa area. Looking for volunteers.
- * Prayer request for Landmark Christian Church’s mission trip to Thailand this past August.
- * “Mission of Mercy” Free Dental Clinic this past June. Looking for volunteers.
- * Free Clinic in October with free clothing, meal, family photos, haircuts, medical care, eye care and oil changes.

* Diapers needed at local food pantries.

* Winter Coat & Blanket Giveaway at St. Francesca Food Pantry in October.

The Holy Spirit has blessed us with an amazing year of living out our faith together.

Even though our faith backgrounds differ on various points, we are all united in the belief we are children of God reaching out into the world and making a difference “one starfish at a time.”

Respectfully Submitted by Tom Drehmel, 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