



# Outreach & Justice News

St. Mark's Church

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**March 2017**

## **Our Outreach/Christian Justice Ministry**

**Our approach to outreach and justice is not to “do” something “for” others to change them. Instead, we seek to transform ourselves by working together with our neighbors to bring about justice from a Christian perspective.**

- We support local groups and organizations working to bring about justice in our community.
- We educate our congregation about the reality and root causes of poverty, homelessness, racism, and other social sins to promote deeper understanding, compassion and action.
- We advocate for those whose voices have been diminished in society; to be their voice and to speak truth to power.
- We take action by creating and sponsoring programs that serve to promote justice.

Participation on the Outreach/Christian Justice Ministry steering committee is intentionally flexible with no specific membership terms. Chairs of pertinent ministries are automatically members. Meetings have been on the second Sunday of each month at 9:15 A.M.

### **Current Members of the OCJ Ministry Steering Committee**

Beverly Bosserman  
John Bosserman (Chair)  
Christian Brocato (Clergy)  
Angie Brown  
Kyle Irwin  
Jennifer Julius (Breakfast Cafe)

Marissa Lee  
Jane Stidolph (Christian Formation)  
Jackie Taylor (Vestry)  
Wendy Wenner (Healing of Racism Ministry)  
Kenny Williams-Buck (Vestry)  
Sue York (Clergy)  
Dale Vankley

## **Budget & Programs**

Our 2017 budget has been finalized. It allocates \$13,750 to organizations and programs that support our downtown neighbors and other areas that our congregation has indicated are priorities for them. These include ACCESS, Dwelling Place, Safe Haven Ministries, Westminster Food Pantry, God's Kitchen, Transitional Housing, Heartside Ministries, Arbor Circle, Explore & Soar Reading Program, Kids Food Basket, East Leonard Elementary School and CASA. The entire budget is based on allocations from interest earned on a portion of the church's endowment funds.

## **East Leonard Elementary School**

St. Mark's has “adopted” this core city public school a mile from our church. About a dozen volunteers serve from one hour a month to almost daily to listen to the kids read, drill on flash cards, assist at achievement celebrations or work at the monthly food truck event. Thanks to a \$5000 grant from the St. Michael Mission Fund at our diocese, we are in the process of upgrading the school's playground equipment, buying basketballs and other athletic equipment, purchasing food and supplies for achievement celebrations and family nights, and purchasing curriculum supplements that the school district cannot afford.

*Marissa Lee is the project leader and may be reached at [leemarissa@icloud.com](mailto:leemarissa@icloud.com). Volunteers and financial donations can always be put to good use!*



### **Healing of Racism Ministry**

St. Mark's long-standing Healing of Racism Ministry has a mission to:

- Increase parishioner awareness of the sin of racism;
- Promote racial healing for ourselves and others; and
- Develop and present an annual plan of activities that encourages our whole parish to continue our Christian journey for better understanding and healing.

*Wendy Wenner heads up this program. She may be contacted at [wennerw@gvsu.edu](mailto:wennerw@gvsu.edu)*

### **Breakfast Cafe**

Every Sunday morning, a designated team of volunteers prepares and shares a breakfast meal with our downtown neighbors. St. Mark's is generally the only organization serving breakfast on Sundays. We served about 125-150 each Sunday last year. This year the numbers are closer to 150-175, and occasionally higher. We anticipate that the number will grow through the year. Breakfast Cafe is funded by \$13,000 from the general fund budget, which is in turn, offset by generous donations by parishioners.

*Jennifer Julius is the head of the Breakfast Cafe. She may be reached at [julius.jennifer@gmail.com](mailto:julius.jennifer@gmail.com).*

### **Upcoming events**

**March 28, April 25 and May 30:** East Leonard Elementary School Food Truck 4 P.M. help set up and distribute groceries for neighborhood. Contact Marissa Lee at [leemmarissa@icloud.com](mailto:leemmarissa@icloud.com).

**April 6,** 1 P.M. and 6:30 P.M. Screenings of *Save the Last Dance*. Sponsored by HRM

### **Other Stuff**

Bulletin Board—Responsive web sites and video monitors are great but there seems to be no high tech replacement for a good, old-fashioned bulletin board! Ours is stationed at the welcome desk where visitors and seasoned members alike may catch up on what's happening with Outreach & Justice.

### **Volunteer Opportunities**

**East Leonard Elementary School.** Various opportunities from 1 hour to weekly. Contact Marissa Lee at [leemmarissa@icloud.com](mailto:leemmarissa@icloud.com).

### **Service Spotlight**

One of our regular Breakfast Cafe guests shared with Marissa Lee that he now has two jobs and his *own* key to his *own* door and his *own* bed. Marissa says he was just "over the moon" happy. He says that he still needs help and support and we would still see him at breakfast for a while but his goal is to be 100% financially independent. THIS is what justice looks like!