

# **The Church of Our Saviour, Lakeside**

*Practicing God's Graciousness*

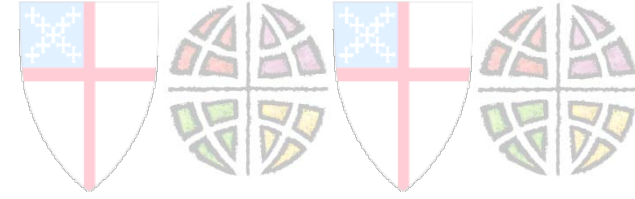
*in fellowship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*

*Outreach Ministry & the MDGs*

*Team Report for the 2009 Diocesan Convention*

**October, 2009**

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**Presented on behalf of COS by: Barbara Stone**



## Support of MDG programs at the Church of Our Saviour

### 2007-2008

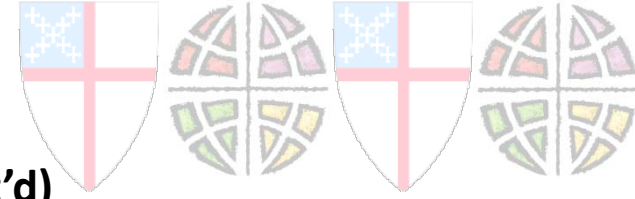
Under the interim ministry of Pastor Carol Hosler, with committed support from Barbara Stone, many members of COS donated money towards the purchase of a truck, medical supplies, and other goods in support of a mission to Cameroon for the benefit of WEH through the U.S. based Friends of WEH. Carol<sup>+</sup> also provided information and teaching on the MDGs before her interim ministry at COS concluded. Barbara will share the details of her personal support and ministry of WEH and Friends of WEH.

### 2008 onwards

Pastor Susan Wilmot was called as the rector of COS in June, 2008. At this point there was a consensus that we needed to enter into a period of discernment to hear where the Holy Spirit was leading us to serve in our outreach ministries. It was agreed that such discernment would provide an essential groundswell of community support (financial and practical) over the long-term that was currently lacking from a broad community perspective.

As the COS outreach ministry team leader, Susan<sup>+</sup> initiated the process of discernment with the outreach team by focusing on prayer, Bible study, meditation, and sharing. The result is illustrated on page 6 .

After this discernment process was completed, an improved process for application and disbursement of outreach funds was also developed including an application form and associated scoring rubric. In effect, each tool helped us to remove personal subjectivity and bias for specific ministries. The application form and scoring rubric are based on the community's stated and agreed upon annual goal (for example, to support the MDG goal of eliminating extreme hunger). The tools were also developed to directly connect our community's discerned vision for outreach ministries, a preference for supporting MDG projects reflected in the scoring rubric, and our core values to the ministries we support. Being good stewards of all our resources is a key criterion.



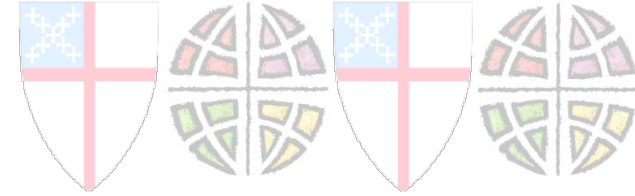
## Support of MDG programs at the Church of Our Saviour (cont'd)

Shortly after the development of a vision for outreach ministries, the COS community elected to become members of the Flagstaff-based organization Faith Works. The advantages and appeal for COS include the fact that Faith Works is an organization with the desired mission-focused infrastructure already present and well-funded through multiple Christian organizations. It has well-defined and organized mission trips that already support the MDGs in countries like Africa, Mexico, and Haiti, as well as numerous local mission opportunities. It is particularly appealing that Faith Works have an established orphanage mission program in our sister Diocese of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania. Faith Works are also in the process of establishing another Tanzanian program that supports the MDGs. COS has elected to support this program financially at this time. It is hoped that our support of this developing program will increase to include member mission on site, as well as other potential needs like 'adopt a family' if that opportunity becomes available for example. The initial program details are below:

The Manyara mission aims to fund the construction of a medical clinic and feeding station, and support the ongoing availability of regular clinics with medical staff (doctors and a nurse) to significantly improve the health and well-being of all served in this high poverty region. The proposed kitchen and feeding area, with regular funding for food will significantly alleviate extreme hunger for the poorest of the poor. The project will provide continuing contributions to poverty relief and medical care for many people in this region of Tanzania. Along with others, COS funding will support and provide medical staff and medical supplies; support construction of a medical clinic, kitchen and covered feeding area; and provide food and medical services on a viable ongoing basis.

One other main focus of our MDG support is the work of St. Andrew's Clinic in Nogales providing medical, surgical and restorative care for impoverished Mexican children living along the AZ/Mexico border. COS continues to support the work of the St. Andrew's Clinic financially, and also has members who offer regular hands-on support at the clinic.

Finally, one other simple way that COS supports the MDGs is through the purchase of Lutheran World Relief's fair trade Tanzanian coffee, enjoyed at our fellowship hour. This is truly a hand-up rather than a hand out, as the LWR coffee project website puts it, "Farmers earn a fair price for their crops, have access to affordable credit, and can invest in education, health care and sustainable agriculture, building a better future for their families."



### Some responses to the discussion questions

#### a) What has worked?

Leadership, discernment, focus, a tangible connection for supporting the regions of the world that we pray for each week (Tanzania and Mexico), regular fundraising in support of outreach ministries that encourages wide community participation, applications for funding and the scoring rubric, highlighting MDG issues in sermons and at other teaching opportunities, and educational materials through a series of articles about the MDGs in our monthly newsletter, *Our Saviour's Voice*.

#### b) What has not worked?

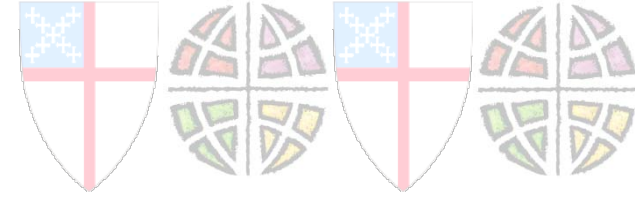
This is hard to answer at this time. It is very gratifying to see so many people involved in events that support our outreach ministries, including the MDGs. I think we can do better in our communication efforts, but I would not necessarily say that what has currently been done "has not worked". Our discernment process has, however, helped us to be more focused and intentional, and I would suggest that this process is foundational for any outreach efforts.

#### c) Barriers

This congregation is largely comprised of an older population, whose financial and physical resources are limited, hence, the focus of action opportunities in the MDG article series has been an invitation to prayer and advocacy. There has also been some resistance to supporting the MDGs when the needs of our local community are significant and much more obvious/in our faces. It is noted that any local needs, are far less desperate than those of the poorest of the poor across the world. A great deal of education around this issue was needed to make the plight of the two-thirds world much more real.

#### d) How did you get started/decide on a project/what has been the most meaningful for your congregation?

Most successfully through the discernment process described above. Along with communication, one of the most meaningful aspects is the increased participation in our faith community, especially in our fundraising efforts.



## **Some responses to the discussion questions (cont'd)**

### **e) How are you involving others in your congregation/community in your project(s)?**

Mostly through outreach fundraising at this time, with some more direct 'hands on' mission experience. In terms of regular fundraising, for example, our spring 'Food Around the World' luncheon where many in the congregation not only provided food, but also paid to eat! Also, our 'Annual Rummage Sale', which actively engages the support of our own and the extended community, and from which funds support a wide variety of ministries connected to our vision and values. Plus, our fall 'Gift Fair' where we sell alternative gifts that support MDG goals like fair trade coffee and chocolate, and gifts from African Team Ministries.

At the Gift Fair and other events we also provide information about a wide variety of charities that already support MDG programs like Episcopal Relief & Development, Lutheran World Relief, the Christian Children's Fund (now called Child Fund International), and the Heifer Project, amongst others.

We have recently successfully concluded a significant project to create and sell "The Best COS Cookbook Ever". All profits (beyond publishing costs) are designated for outreach ministries. There was a significant and very positive response to the cookbook, with many members of the parish contributing recipes and buying multiple copies of the cookbook for sharing with family and friends as gifts.

### **f) What next?**

Our prayer is that we can continue to expand and grow interest and involvement in MDG programs, more specifically for participation beyond financial support. Several members of the parish not previously involved in the work of the St. Andrew's Clinic will be visiting the clinic soon, which may well lead to new volunteers. There is already interest and medical expertise available for the next Faith Works mission to the orphanage in Tanzania. I hope the same interest will extend to the new Manyara program, when the opportunity becomes available. We will also continue our discernment process to discover where God might lead us next.

**Spirituality**

- Outreach must meet needs, including spiritual, emotional & physical.
- God's Will > beyond self & COS.
- God's Work > community participation.
- Showing God's love & the face of Christ – amazing grace – that leads to health.
- Love in action: movement, response and growth.
- Evangelism.
- Celebrates community gifts.
- Listening & discerning.

**Resources**

- Funds raised are funds shared.
- Practice God's graciousness & good stewardship

**Geographic**

- Ministries both near and far.
- Ministries within and without the COS community.

**Community**

- Necessary to do outreach both personally and corporately.
- Hospitality – invites others in and is non-judgmental.
- Diversity.
- Builds community through broad support and participation.
- Evangelism.
- Visibility – including the face of Christ to others.
- Actively doing God's work, many involved & working together.
- Building the Body of Christ: relationships and companionships.

