

## **Chippewa Falls Mission Coalition – Oct. 2, 2012**

**Mission Statement – “Faithful People joining hearts and hands to be God’s Love in action for our neighbors near and far.”**

**Bible Verse – “With God’s help we will do mighty things.” – Psalm 60:12**

### **A little background about Chippewa Falls Mission Coalition**

This group initially started out as the “Community Mission Coalition” in 2011. The idea being we would work together on local mission projects as well as helping each other with our respective global mission projects.

In January 2012 we changed it to “Chippewa Falls Mission Coalition” to better reflect it was Chippewa Falls churches working together on local and global mission projects.

There are 33 churches listed with a Chippewa Falls address. Currently 14 are members of the Chippewa Falls Mission Coalition. We wanted to keep the number manageable, so that was part of the reasoning behind keeping it a Chippewa Falls mission project. Right now, word is spreading by word of mouth.

It was also decided we would be encouraging and possibly working with other communities to help them establish their own “Community Mission Coalition” to focus on their own community needs, as well as working together on their respective global mission projects.

### **Current “Chippewa Falls Mission Coalition” Members:**

Zion United Methodist, Trinity United Methodist, Grace Community Church, Central Lutheran, Our Saviour’s Lutheran, Faith Lutheran, First Presbyterian, Landmark Christian, English Lutheran of Bateman, Crossroads Baptist, Christ Episcopal, Notre Dame Catholic, Valley Vineyard, Fellowship. The Chippewa Falls Mission Coalition is comprised of lay members from the Social Ministry Teams of those churches.

### **Why these churches? What do we hope to accomplish?**

It started with six Chippewa Falls churches that met at a Chippewa Health Improvement Partnership (C.H.I.P.) meeting the summer of 2011 at St. Joe’s Hospital. The meeting was lead by Rhonda Brown.

It was a meeting concerning food issues in the Chippewa Valley. There were food pantries there, as well as some of the churches and organizations that helped sponsor them with donations or volunteers. After the meeting the churches that were represented there got together and talked about their social ministry projects.

At the time of this meeting, several of us were working on a project to help Landmark Christian Church collect peanut butter for their mission project to Haiti. It was a mission we read about in the newspaper and decided to help.

**We thought of how much more of a positive impact we could make if we all worked together on projects or helped each other with our individual mission projects, as we were helping Landmark.**

We held our first meeting in September 2011 at Our Saviour's Lutheran Church in Chippewa Falls. We had our next meeting in October at Central Lutheran. At that second meeting we decided to work on our first joint project ... Diapers and Laundry Detergent for the three Chippewa Falls food pantries. It was a need those pantries had identified.

### **Why now?**

**At Central Lutheran we've used the phrase ... "Don't Just Go To Church, Be The Church." We've noticed an increasing number of people that want to carry their Faith beyond the doors of the church.**

**Being a Christian and living out your mission isn't just about attending church on Sunday morning. It's actually about what you do with your gifts from God after you walk out that church door. Whether it's taking part in a local mission project, a global mission project or just saying a kind word to someone in need of God's loving touch.**

The other churches in the Chippewa Falls Mission Coalition have also seen similar examples of people wanting to live out their Faith to be the Hands and Feet of Jesus. It seems the time is right to get out of the "comfort zones" of the four walls of our churches and make a positive difference, together.

For instance, in our case at Central Lutheran, we've noticed it with the number of people that are volunteering for one of our local mission projects, Agnes' Table. This is a Starting Points program that provides free meals for the community on Tuesday and Thursday at Trinity United Methodist church.

It requires about 12 to 14 volunteers to do an Agnes' Table. In the past, you would probably have seen the same 12 to 14 people from church volunteering. That hasn't been the case. Since we started volunteering for Agnes' Table a few years back we have had more than 200 people step forward to help. Some that weren't even members, they had just been attending our church and wanted to get involved in something positive.

### **What's Next?**

We're trying to get the word around to other Chippewa Falls churches to see if they are interested in joining the Chippewa Falls Mission Coalition. It's word-of-mouth right now.

We're also encouraging other community churches to start their own "Mission Coalition" in their respective towns to work together on local and global mission projects.

**We're also looking at helping each other with individual church mission projects that reach beyond our community. For instance, Central needed eyeglasses for a mission trip to Malawi and the Methodist churches needed shoes for their**

**“Soles4Souls” mission project. All churches in the Community Mission Coalition work together to help make these mission projects even more successful.**

**How can your church be part of the Chippewa Falls Mission Coalition?**

Right now we are coordinating this project through Kelly Jensen at Our Saviour’s Lutheran in Chippewa Falls. Kelly is the Minister of Christian Education and Mission at Our Saviour’s. You can reach her by calling her office at 715-723-6048, or email her at [Kelly@oslccf.net](mailto:Kelly@oslccf.net)

You can also contact me, Tom Drehmel (phone: 715-723-5626, email: [tdrehmel@me.com](mailto:tdrehmel@me.com)) or any of the churches that are currently part of the Chippewa Falls Mission Coalition. All are welcome!

**Bible Verse:**

**“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**