

THE OUTREACH MINISTRY

The vestry has asked the Outreach Ministry to make a presentation after coffee hour this coming Sunday, March 15. We are writing this memo in the hopes that you will read it before the meeting so that you will have some idea of what we are doing and have some time to share your suggestions with us.

We meet at 12:30 PM on the second Tuesday of the month on ZOOM because Bunny Reardon and Frances Barbour are not here year-round, and they are members of the committee. Other members include Pastor Elaine, Tom van Buren, Ann van Buren, Jo Jacob, John Arrison, Steve Hayward, Richard Paget, and Skip Greenlaw. If anyone is interested, we would be glad to have you join this ministry.

The Outreach Ministry has a long history at St. Brendan's, going as far back as the late 80s or early 90s. The vestry has included in the budget for many years a figure equal to 10% of the pledges received for the following year for distribution by the Outreach Ministry. The vestry also includes a figure equal to 1% of the pledges for the Episcopal Relief and Development Fund for use by our national church to deal with emergency situations both at home and abroad.

In recent years, we have adopted a plan, in keeping with St. Brendan's mission statement, of distributing 65% of these funds to Hancock County organizations, 10% statewide, 10% national, and 10% internationally with 5% left over to be spent as needed. This plan is not rigid, but is a guideline for us to work with.

We are going to share with you some of the grants we have made to organizations over the past few years to give you an idea of how your money is spent.

Education-

1. Scholarships to Deer Isle-Stonington and George Stevens Academy graduates who are going on to postsecondary or vocational education.
2. Project Launch, which helps students make a successful transition from high school to college or vocational school.
3. Reach Performing Arts Center, which takes students to New York for Broadway plays during April vacation (for many of our students, this is the first time they have travelled out of state).

4. Scholarships for students to attend Camp Bishopswood, which is our diocesan camp for young adults.
5. Island Community Center- scholarships for students to attend Camp Kooky.

Food-

1. Healthy Island Project in support of their weekly meal for seniors.
2. Hancock County Food Pantry, which collects money every April and donates it back to food programs in Hancock County, like Healthy Island Project, Simmering Pot, Tree of Life, Magic Food Bus.

Social Services-

1. Community Compass is an organization that provides information and assistance to families or individuals attempting to rise above “generational poverty.”
2. Opiate Free Island provides clean needles to people who suffer from addiction.
3. Cody’s Closet provides clothing and other needed supplies for foster children in Maine.
4. Island Heating Assistance
5. Healthy Island Project

State Level Social Justice Advocacy- for immigrants and for the indigenous tribes of Maine:

1. Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project provides legal assistance to immigrants
2. Maine Immigrant Rights Coalition
3. Maine Multicultural Center (Bangor)
4. Mano en Mano supports the medical/housing needs and legal rights of farm workers statewide, as well as immigrants in Millbridge, ME, who seasonally pick blueberries.
5. Wabanaki Alliance was founded in 2020 to educate the public about the need to secure sovereignty for the tribes of Maine.
6. Maine Council of Churches, whose mission is to inspire peace, justice and compassion through collaborative action.

International/Outreach

1. Restoration Laos-supporting Michael Ambler's project of removing land mines from the Laos countryside, which the US left there during the Vietnam War.
2. World Central Kitchen- providing food assistance to people of Gaza, Ukraine and elsewhere.
3. Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem who support the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem in their work to care for the needs of the vulnerable in the Middle East through schools, hospitals, and centers for children with disabilities.
4. In keeping with the Diocese's past relationship to the Diocese of Haiti, and John Arrison's work there, Outreach has supported Konbit Sante, a medical outreach organization, based in Portland, that serves Justinian Hospital and nearby clinics in the Cap Haitien area of Haiti.

This is not a complete list of the grants we have made, but it gives you a good idea of the different organizations we have supported. We will have a handout on Sunday of the organizations we have made grants to since 2023.

While allocating grants to deserving organizations is a primary piece of our work, we also want to emphasize **the outreach efforts of our St Brendan's community** along with other community members to make possible the once or twice a month efforts to prepare 150 quarts of soup for Simmering Pot, a delivery of same on a weekly basis to at least 40 households on the island, the seasonal "all hands on deck" work of building and repairing window inserts with the WindowDressers program, 250 windows in 2025, and the April Roadside Clean-up teams that comb the roads for trash, some of which gets recycled. We occasionally sponsor 'guest speakers' and discussions about current issues or problems facing our area, state, nation, or the world.

We look forward to our discussion with you on Sunday and hope you will share with us some of your ideas of organizations which are worthy of your and our support.

Thank you,

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