

CENTRAL AMERICA MISSION WORK

UPAVIM COOPERATIVE, GUATEMALA CITY

Empowering Guatemalan Women & Communities



We cherish our friendship with the remarkable women of UPAVIM. Their life, their spirit and their faith

are powerful witnesses to God's love and a beacon against injustice in their beautiful, but impoverished country.

As visitors to each other's countries, we travel as peacemakers, living in each other's homes and sharing each other's realities. In Guatemala, we identify with the poor, being one with Christ and thus reflecting the quality gifts of a shared spirit: a deeper faith, a broader vision, a greater understanding of important issues, and new relationships. These relationships play a key role for continued optimism by the women of UPAVIM.

In October 2013, we hosted our second south-to-north delegation of five women from UPAVIM. They stayed in our homes, enjoyed our culture, particularly the high school football game, they worshipped with us and shared Guatemalan treats and a traditional dance during an all-church barbecue. In July 2015, a DGFUMC delegation will travel to Guatemala to share our friendship and faith.

DGFUMC regularly exchanges written communications with the women of UPAVIM. Additionally, staff from Sister Parish (the non-profit organization linking churches in the U.S. and faith communities in Central America) visits the cooperative to meet with the women – serving as a bridge between UPAVIM and DGFUMC.

Through the UPAVIM cooperative, the women strive to become self-sufficient for their families as they struggle against gang violence, discrimination against women, domestic violence, child abuse, a lack of sufficient schools for the children, child and adult malnutrition, the lack of health services, alcoholism, drug addiction, illiteracy, and unemployment.

Indirectly, we contribute to UPAVIM financially through the purchase of their crafts, which we resell to our congregation during Advent and in the spring.

ALTERNATIVE GIFT FAIRS

We offer the opportunity to buy gifts – that “give twice” – for your friends and family.

Advent and Spring UPAVIM Crafts

upavim.org

We support UPAVIM, a non-profit women's cooperative, which provides services to people in nearby marginalized communities within Guatemala City, by purchasing and reselling their beautiful and colorful handmade crafts to our congregation.



Heifer Project International

heifer.org

Heifer International spearheads initiatives to end world hunger and poverty and care for the earth, which includes teaching sustainable farming methods and offering families a way to become self-sufficient. Your donations help purchase income-producing animals like goats, bees, chicks and heifers. Recipients agree to share the offspring of gift animals with others in need, making them equal partners with Heifer in the fight to end world hunger. As people share the offspring – along with their knowledge, resources, and skills – they expand a network of hope, dignity and self-reliance that reaches around the globe.



DOWNERS GROVE FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



MISSIONS, JUSTICE & COMMUNITY WORK AREA 2015

“He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness.”

~ 2 Corinthians 9:6

YOUR GIFTS AT WORK

At Downers Grove First United Methodist Church (DGFUMC), we strive to be faithful to our Christian commitment by making God's love known in the lives of our neighbors: locally, nationally and globally. In the process, we are blessed and privileged by the friends we make and the new lessons of life and faith from which we learn. The Missions, Justice & Community Work Area takes seriously and faithfully its role as stewards of your generosity and compassion. This year we are asking that you consider enhancing your giving so that we can increase our outreach and have a greater impact.

2015 CHRISTIAN OUTREACH

Easter Offering gifts are shared with others to express God's love by helping to meet physical, mental and spiritual needs wherever they exist. Here are some, but not all, of the missions your gifts will support in 2015.

- Fight poverty/hunger in DuPage County:
 - o Donations to at least four Downers Grove elementary schools for healthy snacks for hungry children;
 - o Donations to the Northern Illinois Food Bank where a \$1.00 donation equals \$8.00 in food for PRC and other local pantries;
 - o Provide a scholarship to our Preschool to assist with fees for families in need.
- Provide spiritual counseling, addiction recovery, education and social services to inmates of DuPage County jails via donations to JUST of DuPage – Justice, Understanding, Service and Teaching.



- Provide high-quality immigration legal services, in a local Methodist church, at no cost to clients via Justice For Our Neighbors (JFON). Financial donations and volunteers from area United Methodist Churches make this possible.

- Support our sister church in a Chicago neighborhood struggling with violence and poverty. We promote congregation-to-congregation connections through cooperative missions and ministries with the United Church of Rogers Park.



- Support of ChildServ, a multidisciplinary child and family services network that reaches at-risk children and families facing adversity by helping them achieve and sustain better lives; DuPage, Kane, Lake and Cook Counties.

- Support the United Methodist Committee on Relief – UMCOR – with donations:
 - o Disaster relief and rebuilding at home and abroad;
 - o Global refugee response, including South Sudan where we built a school in 2008;
 - o Bread for the World, a collective Christian voice urging our nation's leaders to change policies, programs and conditions that allow hunger and poverty to persist.

- Provide Adult Mission Scholarship funds to enable Christian mission work by a member(s) of our congregation.



- Help save thousands of lives – mostly pregnant women and small children – by supporting the *Imagine No Malaria* campaign to eradicate mosquito-borne malaria on the continent of Africa by 2016. Strategies include providing insecticide-treated bed nets and help for United Methodist hospitals, clinics and health boards across Africa that work to prevent and treat the disease. Each member of the church is encouraged to give \$100 - over a three year period - to save a life.



- Support the Peru/Bolivia Lake Titicaca Border Mission of the UMC Global Board of Ministries, which provides pastoral training, church planting and construction, self-sustaining agriculture and small-animal production and health improvement of indigenous Aymara people through education and supplies.



- Support the UMC Missionary in Zambia, Africa - Nurse/missionary, Betty Tshala, who provides nutrition and child care education for people with limited income and knowledge.

- Support DGFUMC Youth Mission for senior and junior high kids.