

Church of the Cross Missions Team Mission Statement

The mandate of the Missions Team of Church of the Cross is to proclaim the Good News of the Gospel as revealed in John 3:16, and as directed by the Great Commission in Matthew 28:19-20. This mandate is to be carried out by:

A personal commitment to evangelism,

An intentional effort to educate, inspire, and enlist members of the Church of the Cross family to become involved in missions, and

Providing resources and support to individuals, organizations, other groups locally, nationally, and internationally who share this mission.

As we fulfill the Biblical mandate to spread the good news of Jesus Christ, we do so not only with financial support, but through partnering with our Faith Promise recipients locally, nationally and internationally.

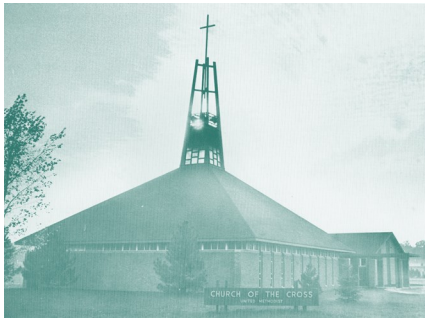
We also invite a personal commitment by everyone at Church of the Cross to participate in mission, be it through financial support of Faith Promise Giving, local community involvement and outreach, and/or short-term trips in the U.S. or abroad. This is an important step in submitting yourself completely to the Lord and seeing where he wants to use you to further His Kingdom.



The History of MISSIONS at



October 2023



Missions at Church of the Cross (COTC) has a rich history. In 1981, Pastor Greg Stover presented the Faith Promise model of Missions' giving to then church secretary Dot Myers. However, that would not have been possible if Broadway

Methodist Church had not decided in the 1950s, to plant a mission church south and west of their location on Broadway. Broadway's future existence was profoundly influenced by a Presbyterian minister who had been sent to Fort Meigs in 1813, to be chaplain of General William Henry Harrison's troops during the War of 1812.

The Presbyterian minister was Joseph Badger, and he was born in 1757 in Wilbraham, Massachusetts. In 1800, The Connecticut Missionary Society commissioned Badger to teach religion to settlers in the Connecticut Western Reserve which today is the area of northeast Ohio from Sandusky Bay east to the Ohio Pennsylvania border. Wishing to share the love of Jesus Christ with the Indians, he moved to northwest Ohio where he served the Wyandot Tribe. He returned east to Ashtabula before coming back permanently when the War of 1812 broke out, and he was commissioned as the army chaplain at Fort Meigs. He would become the first resident pastor in the Maumee Valley.

After the war Circuit Riders arrived, and churches were planted along the Maumee River. In 1836, St Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church was the first church built within the Toledo city limits. From St. Paul's a mission Sunday School was started on Harrison St. in South Toledo by Robert and Sarah Hunter in 1854. This organization grew into Centenary Methodist Episcopal Church Mission and would eventually become Broadway Methodist Episcopal Church in 1868.

The Pregnancy Center (affiliated with Bella Vita Network) has compassionately counseled women on their pregnancy options since 1984.

The Toledo International Hospitality Program Don White directed this friendship partner program at the University of Toledo from 1999-2015. Working with his wife Betsy they continue to lead COTC's involvement which matches international students with host families that meet about once a month, providing the students a touchpoint into American culture and an opportunity to develop friendships.

True Vine Community Garden Larry Moore's perseverance and development of this ministry has provided a cornucopia of vegetables for the Food Pantries of COTC and Epiphany Lutheran.

Ugly Quilts After reading about The Sleeping Bag Project, Dolly Ryan in 2004 started sewing quilt sleeping bags for the homeless and delivering them to the Toledo Gospel Rescue Mission.

Volunteers in Mission Travelling to and based in Mercedes, TX, Marge and Ray Sudheimer crossed the border to Nuevo Progreso on this medical and construction mission. Marge cooked for this group on seven mission trips.

Water for Ishmael Matt Yeager's sister Janelle Metzger is Executive Director. Their mission is to "help EVERY international connect, belong and become", and in concert with local churches share the hope and love of Jesus Christ.

Contact Warren Leow with updates: 419-265-2404 or warren.leow@utoledo.edu



MISSIONS



...at home and around the world

Feed Your Neighbor The goal is “To ensure that all people in Toledo have adequate food to eat by providing a three-day supply of food to those in need, and advocating for policies that would eradicate food insecurity in the community, the nation and the world.”

Friendly Center is a United Methodist outreach located on North Superior St. that has been serving North Toledo families in need since 1923.

Good Samaritan Outreach Center Laurie Endricks led COTC’s participation for many years providing a home cooked breakfast on Saturday mornings to those without in the neighborhood near Western and Broadway.

Hands of Tabitha This outreach started at COTC by Agneta Seeley and Nancy Krody is all about crafting beneficial items to love those in need.

Migrant Camp Ministries Director Chuck Corpe and his volunteers each summer offered Spanish Bibles, Spanish gospel literature, food, clothing and dental care to meet the needs of migrant workers in NW Ohio. This ministry began in 2001.

Mission Aviation Fellowship was started by three World War II pilots after the war. This organization provides aviation, communication and learning technology services all over the world to missionaries as well as indigenous peoples in remote locations.

Operation Christmas Child For many years COTC members have travelled to North Carolina to fill and organize Christmas shoe boxes that are delivered to needy children around the world. Samaritan’s Purse has delivered 200,000,000 shoe boxes to over 170 countries and territories since 1993.

In the 1950s, the Rev Glenn Copeland at Broadway conceived the idea of planting a church, and after thorough consideration and thoughtful prayer the congregation agreed. As a result in April 1959 a caravan of over 100 people left Broadway and drove to Glendale School at the corner of Glendale and Eastgate for our first worship service. In June 1962 Church of the Cross became an independent church. On Feb 4, 1968, the first worship service was conducted by the Rev. Jack Chalk in our present building.

In the sixties, the main group that helped Church of the Cross missions was the Women’s’ Mission Fellowship. In the seventies COTC contributed to the Toledo District Missions Outreach Program. Pledges in 1975, towards missions totaled \$39,702.61, district wide. The United Methodist Women (UMW) who have a global missions mandate in their by-laws also helped to develop missions at COTC in the seventies.

In 1973, COTC held a Lay Witness Mission weekend. In the words of Dot Myers “a large percentage of the active members accepted the Lord or made a deeper personal commitment to the One they already knew.” Myers credits this spiritual preparation as foundational in COTC getting through some difficult times.

In 1981, an event took place that would shape missions at COTC for years to come. Pastor Stover introduced the idea of Faith Promise giving because of his excitement of seeing it work elsewhere. Faith Promise giving originated in the 1800s, and is credited to A. B. Simpson, founder of the Christian and Missionary Alliance Church. It is based on the apostle Paul’s writing in 2 Corinthians 10:15-16:

“... as your faith continues to grow, our sphere of activity among you will greatly expand, so that we can preach the gospel in the regions beyond you.” (NIV)

Faith Promise allows us the opportunity to faithfully participate in the Great Commission (Matt 28:19-20) by prayerfully trusting God to impress upon each of us an amount of money we would give as an offering above our tithe to be used for Missions that year.

That first year Dot Myers accepted the challenge of presenting the Faith Promise giving model to the Missions Committee. They were to rely on God to set the amount the church would meet. The goal for the first year was set at \$5000. Dot's energy and charisma were contagious, and the congregation was thrilled and inspired when that goal was met. According to Dot, "Missions support grew because of the excitement of people either having God miraculously provide them with funds to give or some found that they were able to handle giving more than they ever did before." As these testimonies were shared news of a personal experience with God spread. By 1989, the year Pastor Stover left COTC, the church had met or exceeded the goal each year, and Faith Promise giving had grown to \$22,000. In those early days our Faith Promise dollars were locally supporting Toledo Urban Ministries, Broadway United Methodist Church and the Friendly Center. Nationally we supported the Red Bird Missionary Conference in Beverly, Kentucky. Internationally, we aided Wings of the Morning in The Congo, the Methodist print shop in Poland, Bangladesh flood relief efforts, and rehab and recovery in Jamaica from Hurricane Gilbert. In over 40 years of Faith Promise giving at Church of the Cross over \$1,500,000 has been given and distributed to a host of missionary minded organizations.

Scott Garrity worked for Bridges International (part of Cru) since 1987 serving international students at the University of Michigan and around the country. He was part of the Leadership Development Team which continues to minister to Bridges' staff. Scott retired in 2021.



Jimmy Garrity, Scott's brother was also on staff with Cru. For ten years beginning in 1989 he had a music ministry. In California he put together the band named The Convertibles and played 50s and 60s covers on college campuses and at Daytona Beach over Easter break. In Indiana he had a band called Flashback that played Classic Rock. In both cases teammates would use the music as a bridge to share the gospel with college students.

The following is a list of mission minded organizations not mentioned above that COTC has had significant involvement on various levels both past and ongoing:

Bill Glass, Behind the Walls (formerly Weekend of Champions) Alongside former NFL and NASCAR personalities, COTC teammates have shared the gospel with inmates in various prisons in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana and Illinois since 1998.

Children's Outreach Ministry Dennis and Liz Tracy have been reaching the children of local elementary schools through Kids Club with the message of Christ since 1995.

Clean Water4Life is a mission created by Rick and Grace Rupp which provides safe drinking water, medical care and the Gospel in the Solomon Islands. They have facilitated the drilling of enough wells to provide over 250,000 islanders potable water.

COTC Food Pantry Partnering with the Seagate Food Bank twice a month COTC opens its doors to offer a smile, words of encouragement and of course food to those in need.



Jake Coon has been serving in Kandern, Germany with Greater Europe Mission (GEM) since 2013. In 2023 he is working with GEM EuroTeam Training and Development to encourage, empower and equip employees to do their best work for God.

Since 2009 **Kyle and Rachel Metz** have been with H2O Church as students, volunteers and missionaries in Columbus and in Bloomington, IN. In 2023, Kyle will continue to serve God through Reliant as the Director of Operations at Garden City Church in the Hilltop area of Columbus.



In August 2020 **Halie Metz** started interning as a campus missionary at Indiana University with H2O Church. She completed her internship in the spring of 2021.



Matt and Wendy (Norris) Yeager currently reside in Toledo. Wendy is Founder and Director of Keep Watch Prayer. She felt God's call to take action and decided to conduct prayer walks in the school her children were attending. In conjunction with the principal and teachers they found noticeable improvements in behavior. This ministry now has volunteers in four states. Matt is Executive Director of Acts 2 Toledo which through Rocket Rise ministers to coaches and athletes at the University of Toledo.



Mary Michel's Journey of the Heart, Center of Hope gives women an opportunity to be set free from fear and shame in order for them to know they are worthy to be loved. 2023 marks the fourteenth anniversary of this extraordinary ministry. Many from COTC have served and continue to serve at Journey of the Heart.



JOURNEY OF THE HEART
MINISTRIES

Since 1981, there has been a Mission's weekend each October. Over the years missionaries that we support through prayer and Faith Promise giving have had a variety of platforms available to present their experiences. It grew from initially being a Sunday morning event to include Friday or Saturday evenings. Missionaries were hosted in homes on Saturday mornings where small groups got to meet them "up close and personal". Some years, missionary displays were set up in the multi-purpose room. Saturday evening a potluck or catered meal was served. Typically a speaker or speakers made a presentation after the meal. The speakers may have been a missionary suggested by the UMC board, local missionaries or COTC members. Speakers included J.T. Seamens. He was Professor of Missiology at Asbury Theological Seminary and served in India for twenty years. Don Shell and Virginia Law-Shell spoke one year. Virginia's first husband had been martyred in The Congo. During one weekend there was even a presentation of *An Evening with the Muppets and Missionaries*. It was at one of these weekend events in the mid-nineties Grant and Gail Blair first heard God's call to go into full-time service.

Church of the Cross has participated in the Great Commission in many ways. In the spirit of Acts 1:8:

"... and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Many in our congregation have taken part in short term mission trips, and some have committed to full-time service.



Our youth have served on short term mission trips in urban Toledo, Huoma, Louisiana, Pine Ridge, South Dakota, Monessen, Pennsylvania, Kokomo, Indiana, War, West Virginia, Logan, West Virginia, Chicago, Illinois, Santiago, Chile, La Romana, Dominican Republic, Paris, France and Nashville, Tennessee. Adult short term trips have twice travelled to Orissa, India and four times to La Romana. In La Romana we have partnered with Iglesia Bautista Bethel supporting their church building expansion and organizing a medical mission. Deep friendships have been established with many of the people of that church including visits to our church by Pastor Miguel Bonnet and his wife Belkis.

What follows is a listing of sorts of those who were at one time or still are in full-time ministry from our congregation.

Grant and Gail Blair served with Operation Mobilization (OM) in South Africa where Grant was an Associate Area Leader for Sub-Saharan Africa. Gail led the Team Life initiative bringing together the South Africa OM teams. At the beginning of 2020 the Blairs transitioned back to Atlanta, GA, where Grant accepted the role of Associate International Finance Director with OM International.



Mike Stein was the Senior Director of Partner Relations at Operation Mobilization where he directed fund raising efforts. Mike traveled literally around the world carrying out multiple duties that included volunteer management, leadership development, program development, strategic planning and of course fund raising.

Jessica Stein served two years with OM in Santiago, Chile. She was Communication Director for OM Chile and also worked regularly with the homeless. Jess met Angelo Salazar while in Chile, and they married in the summer of 2018 here in Toledo. Pastor Miguel Bonnet, who had a foundational impact in Jess' life direction as a missionary, officiated at their wedding.



Toby and Vely Hetman also served as full-time missionaries for Operation Mobilization in Costa Rica for two years. Toby worked as the Personnel Director, and Vely was the Finance Director in the San Juan office. They also ministered to the indigenous peoples in the Talamanca area. They said their time in Costa Rica was definitely a calling from God that changed their lives forever. They have a deep passion for missionaries, and they continually uplift them in prayer.

Three of our former youth pastors have gone on to plant churches. Lee Powell was youth pastor at Church of the Cross from 1986-1987. In 1994 he attended a conference at Bill Hybels' Willow Creek Church in Chicago. Upon returning to Toledo, Lee planted Cedar Creek Church in Perrysburg. John Thompson a youth pastor here in the nineties moved to Oklahoma with his wife Sandy and two sons and founded the multi-national church All Nations Fellowship in Tulsa. In 2007 he received his Doctorate of Strategic Leadership from Regent University and is currently Assistant Professor of Missiology and Leadership at Oral Roberts University. While at COTC he led a memorable short-term youth mission trip to Paris, France where they shared the gospel message in the streets through mime. Shawn Carpenter succeeded John Thompson as youth pastor. After serving at CotC Shawn and his wife Laura moved to Bakersfield, CA, where they planted Redeemer Church.

Bob Hudgins left the insurance business for full time ministry attending seminary school in 1974.

Julie (Hudgins) Carmean is currently pastor at William Street UMC in Delaware, OH.

After attending Cedarville University, **Trevor Bryant** worked as a regional director for YouthWorks in Nashville, TN.