

The Missions Marketplace: Giving for Change @Plymouth

2022 Participating Projects

Church World Service. In the aftermath of World War II, 17 U.S. denominations came together to form an agency to “do in partnership what none of us could hope to do as well alone.” They called it Church World Service. The focus then was on rebuilding war-torn Europe and Asia and addressing a staggering refugee crisis. It began as a program of the National Council of Churches, but 70 years later it is now an independent faith-based organization focused on “transforming communities around the globe through just and sustainable responses to hunger, poverty, displacement and disaster.” In addition to direct aid in affected communities, CWS also seeks out ways to address the root causes of hunger and poverty.

Equal Exchange. This Fair Trade Worker Cooperative partners with more than 40 farmer co-ops and organizations around the world to provide customers (like us!) with access to exceptional products such as coffee, tea, organic chocolate bars and cocoa, and several items from Palestinian growers. Plymouth’s share of the proceeds from the sale of Equal Exchange products support Plymouth’s Youth Programs.

Habitat for Humanity Fort Collins. Habitat seeks to put God’s love into action by bringing people together to build homes, communities and hope. Their vision is a world where everyone has a decent place to live. This includes Fort Collins, where finding affordable family housing is a daunting challenge. In partnership with Stephen and Ashlen, the buyers, Plymouth is part of the 2022 Faith Build collaborative. Once again, all donations in support of this house will be matched, thus doubling your donation!

Heifer International. Have you ever considered how a flock of chickens can change a family’s life? Or a wool-producing sheep or alpaca? Or, indeed, a heifer that can grow into a source of both food and income for now – and the future? Heifer International grew out of that kind of thinking. It now works alongside local farmers and business owners in 21 countries – supporting farmers and their communities, providing training so they can improve the quantity and quality of the goods they produce, and facilitating connections to markets to increase sales and income.

ISAAC of Northern Colorado. ISAAC’s *Emergency Immigration Fund* directly supports immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers in two ways. The *Crisis Fund* provides assistance for individuals blocked from other forms of financial help due to their lack of or liminal migration status. In recent years, over and above its critical response to COVID-related emergencies, this support has helped mothers leaving contexts of domestic violence, paid funeral expenses, assisted housing-insecure migrant families, and supported undocumented individuals undergoing chemotherapy. The *Legal Fund* provides scholarships to help provide legal representation for Dreamers, abused and neglected unaccompanied minors, victims of violence, elderly migrants, and single parents with children seeking refuge or asylum. With ISAAC’s help, the lives of many immigrant neighbors have been transformed – and several have gained or are en route to achieving citizenship.

La Familia /The Family Center. For 27 years, The Family Center has worked alongside diverse families to provide high quality childcare and bilingual and culturally-attuned family-centered supportive services, guided by six core values: compassion, trust, equity, diversity, inclusion, and love. Designed to support the whole family, these Family Support Programs are created with an explicit vision of creating a community in which all families are safe, supported, and thriving. Their mantra: Strengthening families strengthens the community as a whole.

La Fondita Latina Cooperative of Fuerza Latina. Fuerza Latina is an organization of immigrants and allies dedicated to educating, informing, organizing, and promoting change to facilitate an improved quality of life for immigrants in our community. Fuerza’s La Fondita Latina Co-op will once again be making and selling pork and cheese & green chili tamales (made without lard, available frozen by pre-order). *New this year:* Sweet empanadas and horchata will be available at The Marketplace Café or to take home.

Lango School. During their Peace Corps Service in Ethiopia, Plymouth members Bob and Nancy Sturtevant encountered Mekane Yesus Church, which was providing classes for 150 children in three rooms of its building. The school had benches for the children, a small blackboard, and two persistent teachers, who asked for their help to build and furnish a more adequate space. They agreed. The rest of the story is a series of small miracles – fundraisers in several countries, project-support funds from Peace Corps, friends who arrived with teaching supplies or sports equipment in hand, other friends who sent books and money, a CSU service group that made possible a pipeline to bring running water to the school, a bake sale that paid for the building of playground equipment. Lango is now educating 200 children. Plymouth’s World Missions Ministry Team “adopted” the school in 2013 and now covers about a third of the school’s annual budget of \$15,000.

Masazane Soup Kitchen & Child Protection Project was founded in 2012 by six Xhosa-speaking Gogos (grandmothers) in the Mbekweni township of South Africa, Judy Cooke from Rondebosch United Church in Cape Town, and Plymouth member Marilyn Votaw. The Gogos know that education is the way out of poverty and that you can’t educate a hungry child so they provide up to 500 children a day with a nutritious meal. The Gogos, who range in age from 65 to 85, also offer psycho-social support, assistance with accessing medical care and social grants and other life-saving support to 150 of the most vulnerable of these children and provide foster care in their home to 30 of these children.

Plymouth’s Climate Action Ministry (CAM) strives to alleviate the effect of Climate Change in two ways: by acting to address climate-related issues as residents of Colorado’s Front Range and the planet, and by initiating or supporting changes in our internal operations as a church. Funds raised will support two significant community efforts: *The Larimer Alliance for Health, Safety and the Environment* (larimeralliance.org), which advocates for improved air quality and effective

enforcement of regulations governing oil and gas emissions, and *The Coalition for the Poudre River Watershed* (poudrewatershed.org), which works to improve and maintain the ecological health of the watershed in the aftermath of recent wildfires through both restoration and mitigation to prevent future damage.

Plymouth Student Housing Security Initiative.

Over 40% of CSU students experience housing insecurity at some point during their undergraduate years. As part of its Student Support outreach to the CSU community, Plymouth, in partnership with other area congregations, has collaborated with LuMin (Lutheran Campus Ministry at CSU) in support of its Student Housing Security Initiative. Donations will support rent subsidies in CSU apartments for students participating in the 2022-23 program. In addition, Plymouth hosts an annual Welcome Event to help the SHSI students, as well as incoming international students, equip their apartments with donated household goods in order to make them both conducive to study and HOME for the duration of their years at CSU.

Rawdat El-Zuhur School. Following the creation of the State of Israel in 1948, hundreds of Palestinian families were dislocated and destitute. In 1952, Elizabeth (Lizzy) Nazir, then director of the social welfare department for Jerusalem, brought abused and impoverished girls into her home. With help from the Anglican bishop of Jerusalem and her friends, she was able to provide both shelter and training in skills by which they could help support their families. She began with 25 girls and called the program Rawdat El-Zuhur ("Garden of Flowers"). After the 1967 War, there was an urgent need for schools for Palestinian children. In response, Rawdat evolved into a formal elementary school with a kindergarten. The school now serves 221 Palestinian students, both Christian and Muslim. Plymouth has supported two students from the school each year for 20 years.

Syrian Displaced Families Support. Now in its 12th year, the Syrian refugee crisis remains the world's largest refugee and displacement crisis of our time. About 6.8 million Syrians are refugees and asylum-seekers, and another 6.7 million people are displaced within Syria. This means 13.5 million Syrians in total are forcibly displaced, more than half of the country's population. Nearly 11.1 million people in Syria need humanitarian assistance. And about half of the people affected by the Syrian refugee crisis are children. Ft. Collins resident Radwan Kalaaji and his physician niece in Aleppo are providing housing and food support to the most vulnerable families in Aleppo, a city that has been devastated as part of this conflict. Radwan makes delicious baklava, the event-only sales of which also support Syrian displaced families.

Ten Thousand Villages, a Fair Trade, non-profit network of retail stores, has spent more than 70 years cultivating long-term trading relationships in which artisans receive a fair price for their work. One of their retail sites, located in Old Town Square, Fort Collins, began as an outreach effort of the Fort Collins Mennonite Fellowship Church in 2000. This non-profit, volunteer-operated store features distinctive, handmade gifts and home décor created by artisans in developing countries.

UPAVIM Crafts. Founded in 1989, UPAVIM creates and sells colorful, handcrafted products – kitchen items, jewelry, ethically-made gifts for babies and children, liturgical stoles, ornaments and other holiday items and, of course, masks in many sizes, shapes and colors. Sales of UPAVIM's Fair Trade goods directly support the cooperative, a full-day K-6 school, daycare, and a Montessori-based preschool. UPAVIM's success has also fueled the development of a health clinic, a tutoring program, a bakery and more.

Women's Small Business Loan Program. The Murulle Foundation (TMF), a non-profit organization based in Fort Collins, is committed to building an enduring coexistence of people and threatened ecosystems in sub-Saharan Africa, largely in Ethiopia. Their projects build partnerships that promote conservation, education, and social equality. One such program is a micro-finance loan program for women around the village of Dinsho. Through this program, more than 300 women have received loans. Their businesses include buying grains and spices in large quantities and selling in smaller quantities, buying a goat to fatten and sell for a profit several months later, opening coffee cafés, and rebuilding a thatched-roofed home to rent. Recently, at the suggestion of the women, small groups were given herds of goats to fatten in the hope that larger herds, which could be sold at intervals, would give them a more steady income.

The Marketplace Café

The Marketplace Café will feature delicious food and beverages, the sales of which will support three projects:

Afghan Refugee Family Support

More than 75,000 Afghan refugees fled their country in the late summer of 2021 when the U. S. military withdrew their forces after a presence of two decades. One family relocated to Fort Collins where a team of members from Plymouth and Heart of the Rockies (DOC) are accompanying them in rebuilding their lives. Volunteers have supported them in registering for school, obtaining employment and medical services, learning English, and developing relationships in the community. Drop by The Marketplace Café for a touch of the family's warm hospitality, delicious Afghan sweet bread and cardamom tea. Donations received will support the purchase of a used vehicle for the family.

La Fondita Latina Co-op will once again be making and selling pork and cheese & green chili tamales. In addition, sweet empanadas (*dulce de leche*) and horchata will be available at The Marketplace Café or to take home.

Plymouth's Coffee Cart – Plymouth Youth baristas will be brewing up specialty coffee drinks to raise funds for the Youth Missions Fund.