

## **Global Companions Commission**

Our baptismal Covenant calls us to “seek and serve Christ in all persons” as well as to “strive for justice and peace among all people , and respect the dignity of every human being”. The Global Companions Commission celebrates and supports individuals, congregations, and communities within the Diocese of California as they engage in mutual ministry and partnership with other individuals, churches and organizations locally, nationally and internationally to rise up and empower the marginalized and underserved people of God.

The GCC meets by conference call and occasional celebration dinners at St. James, Oakland.

This year we made the decision to award 6 grants of \$400 each from our \$ 2500 budget. Grant recipients at the time of this report: 1. Friends of Ruwenzori Foundation (FORF) a Bay Area Charity that partners with Kitojo Integrated Development Association (KIDA) a non-Governmental organization located in Western Uganda. Founded by Karen and Gil Gleason from St. John’s Oakland. The grant will be used for “Positive Living Conference Facilitators” who work with HIV Positive adults and children living with HIV and their caregivers. 2. Amelie’s Angels Founded in 2013 to build a school in rural Pacasse, Haiti by a St. Mark’s, Palo Alto parishioner in memory of her daughter. The grant will be used to purchase a solar powered generator for the school so the building can be used after dark. This is the last and final phase of the schools construction. 3. St. Barnabas Agriculture School in Cap Haitian Haiti is planning a program with “Friends and Family Connection” (FFCC) to do research into the creation and commercialization of organic pesticides made from locally available sources. The grant would be used to help with program expenses for two Graduates of the Agricultural School to begin an internship with FFCC. 4. Cristosal is an NGO based in El Salvador with strong ties to the Episcopal church and works to advance human rights in Central America. Cristosal’s need for victim assistance services is expected to increase in the year ahead with the possible end of DACA. The deported will be especially vulnerable to the violence and extortion that plagues the region.

The GCC also has a Custodial fund composed of occasional donations and funds remaining from the Companion Diocese Commission. This year, we have made the following grants from this fund. In 2016 The Rev. Davidson Bidwell-Waite made a pilgrimage with a group of young people to Haiti. A video is being made of this project for use in the Diocese. Funds were used for assistance in completing this video, which will be ready soon. Two members of our GCC group made a trip this year to meet with Elie Chery, Director of “ Food for the Poor villages” and women’s groups in the villages to find out projects they are interested in and how we could be of assistance.

The Global Companions Commission is a member of the Global Episcopal Mission Network (GEMN). We make an annual donation to this group and are a “GEMN” diocese. GEMN exists to equip and encourage Episcopalians to participate and be transformed through God’s mission in Cross-cultural and international contexts. GEMN sponsors an annual Global Mission conference for mission activists from around the Globe. The next Conference is: April 11-14, 2018 at Virginia Theological Seminary, Alexandria, VA.

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