



Firstfruits

2019 Annual Report

Flicker to Flame

Executive Director's Report *by Joan Carey*

I struggle every year to summarize all that is happening at Firstfruits. It's so hard to put into words what is truly a work of the Holy Spirit. So, let me use the words of one of our attendees that echoes the sentiment of a number of women who are part of the Firstfruits family:

"I woke up this morning and I knew I needed prayer and to be in community with women I knew would understand and help. I knew I needed to get to Firstfruits."

As we are completing the first two years in the new space in Elm Grove, we recognize even more powerfully the community that has been established, the deepening of the faith lives of the women who attend, and God's healing touch in the lives of many. Firstfruits has established itself as a place for women to come together to learn, to question, to support each other and to receive God's unconditional love.

We are looking forward to the new year and continue to be in awe of God's faithfulness. Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, we have renewed our lease and are increasing our focus on helping those in need. Our study of the book of James that just concluded emphasized the importance of caring for the poor and putting our faith into action. As a result, there is a growing sense of responsibility and a deepening desire among the women at Firstfruits to answer the call to Christian stewardship and solidarity with those less fortunate. Their faith was flamed into action.

I think that last sentence is the summary I was looking for. Faith flamed into action, that is Firstfruits.

Joan



Who Does Firstfruits Serve?

Firstfruits welcomes and encourages women of all ages and faiths to attend. We are Catholic in tradition and ecumenical in outreach.

Firstfruits' Mission

Our mission is to assist women in their spiritual growth by deepening their personal relationship with God and by helping them awaken to their giftedness and purpose – all done in community with other women.

Board of Directors

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FIRSTFRUITS

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Second Anniversary FUNraiser!

God's warmth was certainly felt as we celebrated the second year in our permanent space. The impending weather held off, allowing us to enjoy a beautiful September evening in the courtyard, surrounded by nearly 100 friends and guests!

Thanks to many generous contributors, we had a fabulous display of raffle and auction items for bid. A successful 50/50 raffle and wine pull added to the fun and excitement of the evening. Food, drink and our favorite parish dad cover band, "No Expectations," made for a lively night. The event raised approximately \$4,000 for continued support of our programming mission. Many thanks to all who participated!



2018-19 OFFERINGS

In addition to our continued successful programs like Love & Logic parenting classes, Weekly Word reading reflection, and our Called & Gifted charism workshop, we were ignited in faith by new opportunities during this past fiscal year that brought more women to experience the wonderful benefits of Firstfruits:

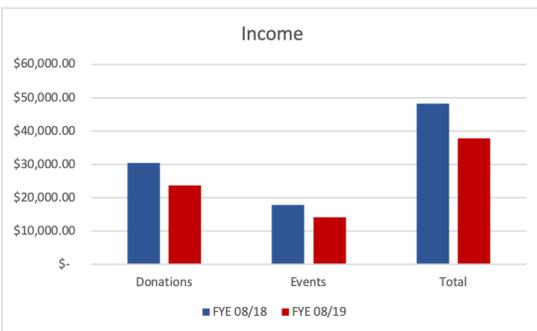
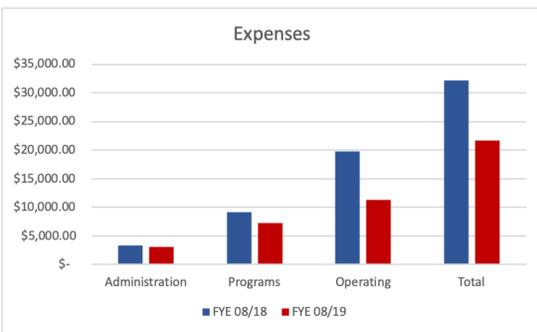
- **Esther Bible Study** - Pam Olsen facilitated this ten-week study on the book of Esther, exploring the qualities of trust and belief, even in the worst of circumstances. The study of Esther provided an example of hope and faith to women searching for encouragement in often difficult times. When societal pressures urge us to be the perfect woman in all of our many roles, it can be easy to convince ourselves that we are inadequate intellectually, emotionally, and physically. Esther's life path threw her into a tough world - one that was often mean, scary, and full of demands. The Book of Esther tells of a woman we can turn to as a role model in our own lives yet today.
- **Well Time** - This widely popular session offers women searching for support, fellowship and friendship a chance to gather together as they did at the well in Biblical times. A new host presents on a different topic each week ranging from Stress, Anxiety & Worry to Personal Growth, Self Acceptance, Everyday Spiritually, and more. All in attendance are offered an opportunity to share in reflection and discussion relating to the weekly topic. This program is offered on a drop-in basis.

Firstfruits also ran an Advent and a Lenten series, Spiritual Scholars book study group, a Mother-Daughter social function, speaker presentations, and a day retreat for girls from St. Joan Antida High School, serving approximately 700 participants over the 2018-19 fiscal calendar.

Visit our website for a schedule of events and more information on our various programs.



FINANCIALS



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 Billie Yaeger

THANK YOU
 to our
2018-19 Donors!



Firstfruits is an independent, 501(c)(3), nonprofit organization sustained by support from participants, parishes, organizations and numerous volunteers. Thank you to those who have so generously shared your gifts. Firstfruits would not be possible without YOU!