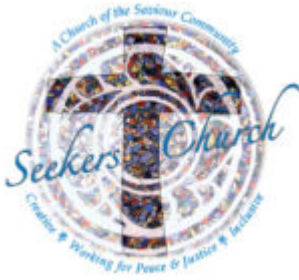


Domestic Giving 2020



Seekers Church donates generously to missions and ministries within the United States, with an amount budgeted that equals a bit over 25% of expected offerings for the year. The community has agreed to several conditions to ensure that our giving is connected to and reinforces our personal efforts and passions. Larger should reinforce Seekers values, involve significant personal support from Seekers members, and foster a change from charity to solidarity. We want to support systemic and lasting change. Smaller grants may be given to incubate new ideas for mission, support emergence of call, bear witness to God's work in the world, or support Seekers members living out their call to mission. Once the Domestic Giving budget is determined by Stewards of Seekers Church each year, all members of the faith community are invited to request support for missions or ministries in which they are personally involved, and all are invited to come to an annual meeting to determine the final giving budget, usually in the first quarter of each year.

For 2020 the community affirmed support for 21 domestic missions and ministries listed here. For easy access to more information on each group, the name of each organization is linked to its website.

HOUSING

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EDUCATION/CULTURE

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Here is a brief description of each organization and the connection to Seekers Church. To visit their web sites, click on the name of the organization.

HOUSING

[Center for Wisdom's Women and Sophia's House](#)

In the middle of Lewiston, Maine lies one of the poorest census districts in the state, one of the poorest in the country. Forty percent of the residents live at or below the poverty line. Within that neighborhood there is a safe and sacred space run by and for women. At the Center for Wisdom's Women, local women from the neighborhood learn social skills and job training to help them in recovery.

Now Sophia's House, an updated convent, has added small apartments for low-income residents and returning citizens post-incarceration. Klara Tammany, the visionary director, visits Seekers when she comes to DC. The Banksons and Cynthia Dahlin have been long-time sponsors.

[L'Arche of Greater Washington](#)

L'Arche is an inter-denominational Christian community that welcomes people of all backgrounds to share life together. In the Washington DC area Community life is centered around four communal homes and the 16 members who have intellectual disabilities, known as "core members." L'Arche is unique among residential service providers in that core members and assistants (people without intellectual disabilities who

support core members) choose to live life together like a family. They come together around the dinner table, for house meetings, and for weekly celebrations. Core members lead the community through their creativity and compassion. As core members' needs change each community responds by adapting their routines and their physical spaces. Each community member is encouraged to discover and deepen his or her spiritual life and live it according to his or her particular faith and tradition. Those who have no religious affiliation are also welcomed and respected in their freedom of conscience.

L'Arche of Greater Washington, D.C. is a faith community; a licensed provider of professional services; an advocate with and for people who have intellectual disabilities; and a member of a worldwide federation of autonomous L'Arche communities. Emmy Lu Daly was instrumental in establishing L'Arche communities in the Washington DC region, and her son Fritz has been a long-time core person.

[Manna, Inc.](#)

Since 1982, MANNA has been serving low and moderate-income families, assisting them to fulfill the dream of homeownership in Washington, DC. In that time, they have created and preserved nearly 1,200 units of affordable housing for low and moderate-income DC residents and their homeowners have accrued over \$160 million in equity. Their financial literacy and homeowner training program has been replicated more than 200 times across the nation.

Manna's work focuses on three principal areas:

- Renovating or building affordable homes for rent and homeownership;
- Educating first-time homebuyers for the process of home purchase and for success as homeowners; and
- Training first-time homeowners and their neighbors

throughout the city to become community leaders through MANNA's Housing Advocacy Team.

Manna supports the commitment of Seekers Church to foster justice and be in solidarity with those in need. Doug Dodge is a founding member of the Manna board of directors.

[N Street Village](#)

N Street Village began as a women's shelter on 14th and N Streets in Washington DC in 1972. It has grown to encompass five sites, with several different programs to help move over 2000 women from homelessness to home, and from having no health services to being supported with medical and mental health services. N Street Village's goal is to empower homeless and low-income women in Washington, D.C. to claim their highest quality of life by offering a broad spectrum of services, housing, and advocacy in an atmosphere of dignity and respect. Last year, N Street Village served nearly 2,000 homeless and low-income women, offered over 189,000 meals, over 5,500 showers, along with health, dental, mental health and wellness services. Twenty percent of the women entering were living outdoors before arriving, 67% are over 50 years old, 78% are African American and 50% have experienced domestic violence.

N Street's goal is to meet each individual woman exactly where she is on her unique journey to healing and recovery. They recognize that those they serve face a variety of challenges, and some individuals may face numerous obstacles simultaneously. Some of the most common challenges for the women of N Street Village include: health or mental health problems, substance abuse or addiction, a history of trauma, a lack of educational and vocational opportunities, job loss or eviction, domestic violence, a criminal background or other barriers to employment, or functional illiteracy. And sometimes the biggest challenge for a woman arriving at their front door is the loss of her own sense of dignity, self-

worth, and hope. Cynthia Dahlin, a Seekers steward, has led poetry and autobiography classes at N Street Village for 20 years. During this pandemic year, she has collected homemade masks to bring to the shelter, where 400 women and 51 families are provided supportive housing each night.

The need for advocacy for inequality in income, education, healthcare access and housing has brought N Street to the table with Mayor Bowser's coalition to make homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring. The residents of N Street have formed principles of racial justice, appearing on N Street Village's Advocacy Page, which line up very closely to Seeker's values to stand with the poor and marginalized in our society.

[Silver Spring Village](#)

Silver Spring Village is a nonprofit membership organization that works to sustain and enhance the wellbeing of older adults in the community. They offer their members opportunities for enrichment and social engagement as well as access to "neighborly" assistance that supports their independence. Members make new friends, learn new things, and have easy access to needed help. Silver Spring Village provides examples and opportunities that support the "Down the Road" ministry of Seekers Church. Jacqie Wallen is currently serving on the board of directors.

EDUCATION/CULTURE

[For Love of Children \(FLOC\)](#)

For Love of Children (FLOC) provides educational services beyond the classroom to help students succeed from first grade through college and career. They bring together students, volunteers, families, and community partners in proven programs that teach, empower, and transform.

In operation for more than 50 years, For Love of Children (FLOC) has served more than 10,000 children and youth and has

been one of the most respected nonprofits in the community. FLOC was founded in 1965 by a consortium of churches and concerned citizens to assist 900 abandoned and abused children, who were then being warehoused in the District of Columbia's overcrowded and understaffed "Junior Village." FLOC and its partners arranged viable schooling and living alternatives for these kids, and secured the closing of Junior Village in 1973. FLOC's early leaders also founded DC's first Child Advocacy Center and co-founded the Consortium for Child Welfare, a city-wide collaborative of 16 foster care and adoption agencies. Fred Taylor, one of the co-founders of Seekers Church was instrumental in the birth of FLOC.

From the mid-1970s through the 1990s, FLOC continued to embrace a variety of child and family services and served as an incubator for developing programs. One of these was Hope and a Home, a transitional housing program that helped parents create nurturing and stable homes within the caring and loving support of a community. In 2005, Hope and a Home incorporated as an independent 501(c)(3) agency. FLOC also was one of the founding members of the Healthy Families Initiative, and its program remains a strong part of Mary's Center for Maternal and Child Care. In 1999, FLOC designed the Family Intervention Program (FIP) in collaboration with the Casey Family Programs of Seattle and the DC Child and Family Services Agency.

As other nonprofit collaborations and public agencies emerged to address the community's needs, FLOC reevaluated its mission and decided, in 2005-2006, to focus on educational programming as the most effective way to help young people achieve a positive future. Seekers Church has been supporting FLOC since we were called into being as a faith community. Currently the Eyes to See, Ears to Hear peace Prayer Mission Group provides ongoing support.

[Free Minds Book Club](#)

The Free Minds Book Club and Writing Workshop is a non-profit

organization in Washington, D.C. that brings the tools of books and writing to incarcerated youth and formerly incarcerated youth and adults.

Often times the incarcerated poets are in solitary confinement for as much as 23 hours a day and are also placed far from family and friends who might otherwise visit them. This reportedly leads to extreme loneliness and the sense that they have been forgotten by the world. So this small act of communicating with them by reading and commenting on their poetry has a hugely positive effect on the attitudes of those incarcerated when they receive back their poems with hundreds of comments from people they don't know. Write Night is also a time when the Poet Ambassadors (formerly incarcerated youth and adults) speak sharing their poems, their experiences, and their current prospects and placements for further schooling or work.

During a Write Night gathering Free Minds members, known as Poet Ambassadors, formerly incarcerated youth and adults who are now at home, read and discuss their work and those of members still incarcerated through "On the Same Page: Free Minds Poetry in the Community and Classroom." These events offer a new way to engage with issues of youth violence and incarceration and to find healing through the powerful medium of creative writing. "On the Same Page" events, such as Write Night, are held with diverse audiences across the city.

Before the coronavirus pandemic made it necessary to stop holding indoor gatherings, Free Minds reached well beyond a hundred volunteers each month at Write Nights, alternating between two sites: Western Presbyterian Church in downtown DC, and Seekers Church. In responding to poetry written by youth who are still incarcerated, volunteers have an opportunity to be literally "on the same page" with the young prison poets. On Write Night the Seekers sanctuary would be filled with tables of people of all ages and ethnicities, who were given the opportunity to sit down together with pen in hand and read

and comment on the powerful poems written by incarcerated youth. The Ambassadors circulated throughout the tables for the hour and a half session informally creating a bond between community members and the group of the formerly incarcerated youth and adults. It is a very powerful experience that has been well attended. It has been especially good to see that so many of the volunteer attendees are students from the DC area wanting to help the cause. Poet Ambassadors also frequently meet with middle school and college students as well as community groups (offices, civic organizations, book clubs, and more.) Recently, Poet Ambassadors met with students and faculty at both Harvard Law School and Columbia Law School.

Since 2017 there has been an increase in the number of volunteers who attend the Write Night at Seekers (typically from 50 to 75 attendees). There has also been an increase in the number of Poet Ambassadors who attend. In the early days at Seekers there might have been 4 or 5 Ambassadors attend. More recently, there have been between 10 and 20. During the time that Write Night has been happening at Seekers, the organization has grown tremendously, adding more re-entry services for members once they leave jail. Last year, Free Minds served over 500 members through its Jail, Prison and Reentry Book Clubs. They also won the prestigious Aspen Ideas Award, enabling them to plant seeds for similar programs in several other cities across the country.

During the quarantine, Free Minds is hosting Write Nights online. In August 2020, Free Minds called on their volunteers to share members' poems far and wide by participating in personal Write Nights with friends, family, colleagues, or other members of the community.

Marcia Sprague volunteers regularly at Write Night and often helps with setting up the space and coordinating evenings at Seekers.

Maryland Choral Society

The Maryland Choral Society (MCS), founded in 1971, is a community choral group dedicated to quality performance of a wide repertoire of musical styles and periods. A mixed chorus of approximately 40 members, MCS is based in Prince George's County, Maryland, and has members from throughout Maryland, Washington, D.C., and Northern Virginia.

MCS strives to be a leading force in the advocacy and enhancement of the choral arts industry, to cultivate educational opportunities, to nurture intergenerational experiences, and to create musical excellence throughout the DC/Metro region.

MCS aims to achieve its mission by:

- Fostering and developing an appreciation of choral music, enhancing the cultural life of the community, and providing camaraderie among people of all ages who appreciate the choral arts.
- Providing a fulfilling musical experience for its members, patrons, and audience.
- Bridging the gap of understanding and tolerance among diverse communities through music.
- Providing education for the mastery of music through regular rehearsals and performances.

The work of MCS is as much about community as it is about the chorus. Music is a shared language, transcending politics and economics, overcoming warfare and personal tragedy. Throughout history, human beings have looked to music to soothe pain and to announce great joys. Choral singing is one of the most powerful unifying forces known to humankind. In lifting our voices together in song, we cross boundaries that exist between groups of people, we learn more about each other, and we celebrate our very existence.

Katie Fisher sings in the chorus and a number of Seekers

attend and appear to be uplifted by the concerts!

[Museum of the Palestinian People](#)

Started by Bshara Nassar as a *Project for Change* when he was a participant in New Story Leadership for the Middle East (<http://newstoryleadership.org>), which Seekers Church has supported since its inception. This museum is the first of its kind in the United States, whose mission is to share Palestinian stories from its rich culture and heritage of 4000 years of history. The museum creates a space where people are not marginalized because of the artificial distinctions we use to create borders between us. In fact, we dissolve those distinctions so that people feel safe and open their hearts to truly see the Palestinian people and discover what unites all of us. This is what we want to share with the world: the possibilities that emerge when, together, we create a world without borders.

The mission and vision of MPP is in alignment with Seekers' call to Koinonia with one another and genuine self-giving to the world so that we can be in Christ today. Bshara is in an accountability relationship with Seekers' Eyes to See, Ears to Hear Peace Prayer Mission Group, and with one of the groups' members in a support role.

[Pyramid Atlantic Art Center](#)

Pyramid Atlantic is a 501c3 nonprofit center for contemporary art, fostering the creative disciplines of papermaking, printmaking, and book arts within a collaborative community. They equip, educate, and exhibit in their historic Hyattsville, MD home. Pyramid also takes its educational show on the road, offering all ages of youth the opportunity to learn more about creating art, offering guided tours to children and adults of exhibits in area museums and galleries, participating in national conferences about the arts, and offering opportunities to study with internationally

recognized experts in various artistic disciplines. Borrowing from alumni members who wrote:

*Graceful soaring spirit,
source of creation
sweeping across the bounds of time and space,
holy breath of love,
divine imagination...*

Seekers is committed to fostering the many facets of connection to the Grateful Soaring Spirit through the arts. Additionally, Seekers is committed to education. Both of these guiding principles are in direct relationship to the work of Pyramid Atlantic Arts. One of our members is a member of Pyramid in order to feed the creative spirit shared with Seekers Church, as well as volunteering with the organization.

CHURCH OF THE SAVIOUR

[Christ House](#)

Christ House opened in December 1985 as the first 24-hour residential medical facility for homeless persons in the United States. Today, Christ House is still the only facility of its kind in the Washington, DC. metropolitan area, where over 6,000 people experience homelessness every day. To the best of our knowledge, there are only 22 stand-alone residential medical facilities for the homeless like Christ House in all of the U.S. Since our inception, we have had over 9,100 admissions.

Patients are admitted to Christ House from area hospitals, shelters, clinics, and medical outreach projects. They suffer from a variety of illnesses and injuries including cancer, hypertension and stroke, liver disease, kidney failure, diabetes and related amputations, HIV/AIDS, respiratory disease, major lacerations, fractures, and ulcerations of the skin. Many are malnourished, anemic, depressed, and

desperately disconnected from healthy sources of support.

In 2019, Christ House provided health care for 223 patient admissions and 9,228 patient-days of care. There were 150 participants in the 9-week New Day addictions recovery program. 67% of patients were discharged to more stable housing than before coming to Christ House. Jean Adams, a longtime member of Seekers Church taught in the art program for many years.

[Dayspring Overlook Retreat House](#)

Overlook Retreat House (at Dayspring) is available for individual and small group self-guided retreats, and open year-round. Retreatants share a 3-bedroom living space (sleeps up to six people) with a kitchen and dining area as well as a small library of books and art materials for soulful and playful exploration. The house is near the farmhouse on Dayspring Farm, overlooking Lake of the Saints, in the midst of 210 acres of natural beauty. The Banksons are supporting Trish Stefanik and Catalina Conneally-Salazaras as they respond to this new call.

[Festival Center](#)

The Festival Center is an organization rooted in a faith that compels them to be a meeting place and a participant in the struggle for the common good. Their call is to be in solidarity with God, each other, and all of creation. Through hospitality, education, spiritual development, and practice, the Festival Center serves as a hub for all people to work against all forms of oppression and to strive for a just city and a just world. The Festival Center building is home to and helps support multiple mission-driven organizations that include Jubilee Housing, City Kids, Faith and Money Network, Little Bird Community Acupuncture, Adams Morgan Partnership as well as numerous faith communities, regular events, and AA and NA groups.

The Festival Center shares with Seekers a deep commitment to shared leadership empowering others within the normal structures of our daily lives (work; family and primary relationships; and citizenship) as well as through special structures for service and witness. They desire and welcome participation in all aspects of Festival Center life of people of every “race”, gender identity, and sexual orientation, in pursuit of deliverance from bondage to freedom in every personal and corporate expression. Sandra Miller has served as Board Chair and currently serves as Board Secretary, has brought new members from other worship communities into board membership. Additionally, members of Seekers have taught in its School for Liberation (formerly known as Servant Leadership School), and participated in many Festival Center events.

[Potter's House](#)

The Potter's House is a nonprofit café, bookstore, and event space in the Adams Morgan neighborhood of Washington, DC. Since opening their doors in 1960 they have been a key place for deeper conversation, creative expression, and community transformation. After closing in 2013 for major renovations, The Potter's House re-opened in spring 2015 with a renewed space and revitalized offerings.

In our rapidly changing city – one in which development so often means displacement – The Potter's House is a deeply rooted space where we can build relationships across our differences, envision just alternatives, and grow the movements that will make them possible.

The Potter's House was begun as a ministry of Church of the Saviour and bears a strong family resemblance to Seekers Church as another place of support for creative, inclusive people working for peace and justice. Marjory Bankson and the Eyes to See, Ears to Hear Peace Prayer Mission Group provide active, ongoing support.

OTHER

[Arlington THRIVE](#)

Arlington Thrive is the only organization in Arlington County, Virginia that provides same-day, emergency financial assistance to County residents who experience sudden financial crisis such as temporary unemployment or illness. Most clients are the working poor, elderly and disabled people on a fixed income, and the homeless and formerly homeless who need funds as a “safety net” until they are able to get back on firmer financial footing. Arlington Thrive’s clients are among Arlington County’s most vulnerable residents. Families with children are given the highest priority, and one-third of the individuals served by Arlington Thrive are children. During the coronavirus pandemic this emergency support is more important than ever. The commitment of Seekers Church to be in solidarity with those in need supports the mission of Arlington Thrive

Cynthia Dahlin is a longtime volunteer and supporter of Arlington Thrive.

[Caron Foundation LGBT/AIDS Retreats](#)

The Caron LGBTQ/AIDS retreat began in the 1980s as a safe, supportive place for those with HIV/AIDS and in recovery to come together. Over the years, the retreats have expanded to be inclusive of all in the LGBTQ community, regardless if they are impacted by HIV/AIDS. Their core group of faithful participants has grown into a special extended family and welcomes others to join the family. Although the in-person retreats have been postponed due to the current pandemic, the Foundation is having mini socials periodically on Zoom. Larry Rawlings is a long-time supporter of the Caron Foundation.

[Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church](#)

Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church in Bethesda became

the first church in the DMV (District, Maryland and Virginia) region to welcome an individual into physical sanctuary when, In December 2018, they invited Rosa Gutierrez Lopez, the mother of three US citizen children, to stay with them while she fought her deportation order and pursued her request for asylum, first made when she arrived in the US in 2005. As of July 2020, Rosa has been granted a 60-day stay of removal, which allows her to move freely in the community. She has applied to have this extended to one year while her application for asylum is considered. She is currently looking for housing and employment but continues to need financial support from the Sanctuary community.”

Cedar Lane has trained hundreds of members of local congregations that are part of the DMV Sanctuary Congregations Network, recently renamed Congregation Action Network.

Seekers is one such congregation and has had several members attend the trainings and participate in various activities to support Dona Rosa’s presence on the Cedar Lane Campus.

Because part of our commitment to the Network is to support congregations offering physical sanctuary even if we are not ourselves able to offer such hospitality, Seekers is giving both financially and of the time of our several volunteers, including Trish Nimore. Sandra Miller, Ken Burton and Donna Franklin support this ministry.

[CKC Urban Farming](#)

The Charles Koiner Conservancy for Urban Farming (CKC Farming) is a non-profit land trust created to protect and manage urban farms in Montgomery County in order to cultivate and inspire the next generation of sustainable food innovators. Through education and community engagement, they aim to increase understanding and appreciation for where our food comes from and how it is grown. In addition, they help property owners protect their land indefinitely for agriculture and education.

The organization is operating now on the CKC Farm, located at

737 Easley Street in the heart of Silver Spring, just a few blocks from the Silver Spring library. CKC Farm was established in 1983 by Charles Koiner and is still managed by his daughter, Lynn. This one-acre property grows a wide variety of produce, including greens, herbs, root vegetables, beans, berries, tree fruits and more.

Koiner Farm has partnered with CKC Farming to conduct education programs and help maintain their farm. CKC Farm has conservation easement to the property, in order to preserve the farm in perpetuity.

CKC Farm hosts a growing number of school field trips, manages a dedicated group of interns and volunteers, and organizes community picnics, speakers and outreach programs at the farm. Koiner Farm is an ideal learning environment – it is easy to get to, it provides plenty of opportunities for students to embrace the experience, it has more plant diversity than you will often find on 100-acre farms.

CKC Farm plans to work with neighborhood associations, utilities, local governments and private property owners to identify parcels of land that can be used and/or protected for agriculture and education. Michele Frome supports the CKC Urban Farming initiative.

ADVOCACY

[Center for Medicare Advocacy](#)

The Center for Medicare Advocacy, Inc., established in 1986, is a national nonprofit, nonpartisan law organization that provides education, advocacy and legal assistance to help older people and people with disabilities obtain fair access to Medicare and quality health care. The Center is headquartered in Connecticut and Washington, DC with offices throughout the country. The Center's work to ensure fair access to Medicare, a social insurance program, is in line

with Seekers' commitment to foster justice and be in solidarity with those in need. Trish Nemore maintains close connections and, with other Seekers, attends the Center's annual Medicare Summit.

Congregation Action Network

The Congregation Action Network is a network of faith communities in Washington, DC, and the Maryland and Virginia suburbs acting in solidarity to end detention, deportation, profiling, and criminalization of immigrants, and demanding and upholding justice, dignity, safety, and family unity. Since 2019, this collective of more than 70 Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Humanist, Hindu, Buddhist, and other congregations, has brought its faithful resistance to bear in the DC/MD/VA region to provide support and solidarity to neighbors, friends, and family who fear being detained, deported or profiled.

A primary focus for the Network is Deportation Defense: pulling out all the stops to keep a neighbor facing deportation from being deported. This includes policy advocacy, community organizing, fundraising, family support, media outreach, and communications.

One CAN congregation – Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church in Bethesda, MD – has hosted Rosa Gutierrez Lopez in physical sanctuary since December 2018. Other congregations are ready to become physical sanctuaries if the need arises. Still others support Cedar Lane and Rosa. Here are other activities CAN members engage in to resist detentions and deportations and keep families united and free in our communities.

Seekers has been a member of CAN since its inception and members of the community are active in the Montgomery County Cluster of congregations. In addition, several members of Seekers Church volunteer their time to support the Gutierrez

family.

[Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake](#)

Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake (IPC) educates, supports and inspires people and communities of faith to advocate for the waters of the Chesapeake through policies and practices that promote a healthier environment and healthier people.

IPC envisions a time when people of faith throughout the Chesapeake Bay Watershed understand their sacred duty to love and respect the Earth and all the life within it. We envision a time when people of faith will act individually and collectively to cherish and protect the land and the water, so that the Earth, its breath, its essence, its creatures, and its people will thrive and be joyful. Kolya Braun-Greiner serves on the IPC staff as religious educator.

IPC's work, supported by Seekers, bears witness to God's work in the world by engaging diverse faith communities in environmental stewardship and offers ways for Seekers community to "put our faith into action" by participating in actions and advocacy that support the healing and flourishing of God's Creation, rooted in our own watershed of the Chesapeake Bay. Through our support of this work we are fulfilling our Commitment/Call to care for every part of God's creation.