



“Before my mom took her first loan with Opportunity International, she doubted very seriously that I would ever get a chance to go to school. She feared I, like her, would live in poverty, and that one day, so would my children. Years later, I, the daughter of a cab driver and piggery farmer was enrolled in one of the best secondary schools in the Philippines. My mom’s hard work, with Opportunity behind her, empowered me to recently graduate from college in the United States. My mom’s journey started with Opportunity. They gave her the start she needed. She gave me mine.”

When Amina was five, her mother received an agricultural loan from Opportunity International. With this first small investment she began a piggery, raising hogs and growing food to keep her family fed, and their livelihood growing. **Her proudest achievement is sending her two daughters, including Amina, to school.**

Today, Amina Mendez is a college graduate, having attended University of the Philippines then Ohio Wesleyan University. She now works for the same Opportunity Bank that gave her mother the loan that changed everything.

**Join us on December 8th at 6:30 pm
Celebrating women and embracing our power to change our world**

From:

To:



2,000 years ago, a poor, unwed mother, who found herself in a foreign land with nowhere to stay, gave birth to our savior, Jesus Christ. God among us, Emmanuel.

Today, conditions have not significantly improved for women in poverty. But there is hope. Evidence is mounting that investing in women, through micro-loans, empowers them to lift themselves and their families out of the cycle of poverty.

This year our annual Women’s Advent Tea is focused on changing HERstory for women around the world.

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change our world.**

St. Thomas Community Presbyterian Church
55355 Mound Road
Shelby Township, MI 48316
Tel: (586) 781-3025

Why are we doing this?

The harsh reality for women in our world today:

- ◆ **Economic Discrimination**
Women comprise 70 percent of the world's poorest people
- ◆ **Education Inequity**
1 in 5 girls are unable to go to school
- ◆ **Gender-based Violence**
2 in 5 women are victims of violence
- ◆ **Human Trafficking**
There are more human slaves in the world today than ever before in history; most of these are women and girls

Inspired by faith, we take action to stand against this injustice, and celebrate the hope we can give to our sisters across the globe.



Our goal is to empower women worldwide and create positive changes by sharing a little of the opportunities that we have been given so that we can help change HERstory and she can change HER world.



What happens at the Advent Tea?

In some ways it will be much like our usual Advent tea. We will:

- ◆ Start by getting to know each other over light snacks, desserts and tea/coffee
- ◆ Take time to prepare our hearts and minds for the coming of Christmas

And then, in the true spirit of advent, we will learn about women in extreme poverty and how we can make a difference.

Our speaker, Melodie Marske, is one of the founding leaders of iZosh, a group of women who have been pooling their gifts together to fund micro-loans for women in extreme poverty. Having changed the lives of 182 women since they began, these women have been an inspiration to us as we have developed the vision for our own giving group



Investing in women in extreme poverty

How does it work?

- 1** We all **invite friends** to attend two events a year.
- 2** Each event will allow members and visitors to **connect** and **learn** more about the needs of **women in extreme poverty**.
- 3** Members pledge a **confidential, self-determined contribution** per event.
- 4** **All members vote** on which recipient(s) the money should go to.
- 5** We **celebrate together** as the gift goes out that day.



Organizations we fund through:



Opportunity International
www.Opportunity.org



WorldVision Micro
www.WorldVisionMicro.org



Kiva
www.Kiva.org