



Important Dates:

Saturday, May 1
Spaghetti Dinner &
Silent Auction
6 p.m.

Sunday, May 2
Fellowship Meal,
UMW Dessert sale
after worship

Saturday, May 8
Worship Committee meeting
10 a.m.

Sunday, May 9
Mother's Day
*Collection for Kenya Project

Monday, May 10
Oconee St. serves at ODB

Sunday, May 16
*Collection of socks for
Farmworker's Health Project

Thursday, May 20
UMW meeting
6:30 p.m.

Sunday, May 23
Church Council meeting
after worship

May 23-30
Oconee St. serves at IHN

Sunday, May 30
Mission team leaves for Kenya

**see page 4 for list of items needed*

Spotlight on Missions

Service at the heart of Oconee Street UMC

by Beth Gavrilles
Mission and Outreach Chair

Missions allow us to share God's love and follow the example of Jesus by caring for those who so badly need to experience love and care. I don't think anyone who knows Oconee Street UMC would disagree that missions are at the heart of this church. Oconee Street's decision in 1989 to open Our Daily Bread was an affirmation of that, and it continues to be true today.

With Lisa, Maxine, and Fran's upcoming trip to Kenya, Oconee Street is opening a new chapter in our mission work. But for those of us who can't travel to Kenya

(at least, this year – we hope that this is the first of many trips!) there are plenty of hands-on mission opportunities closer to home.

First, of course, is Our Daily Bread. We not only house ODB, we volunteer to serve meals once every other month. We also participate in Interfaith Hospitality Network of Athens, which provides shelter and services for homeless families. In partnership with our friends at Princeton UMC, we volunteer with IHNA once a quarter, preparing meals; serving as evening, day, and overnight hosts; and providing transportation as needed. We assist Mision Latina, the

UMC ministry to the local Hispanic community, to distribute supplies through their mobile food pantry.

And of course, we mobilize in times of immediate need. When the earthquake in Haiti struck, we not only raised funds for UMCOR's – the United Methodist Committee on Relief – efforts on the ground, we got together as a group and assembled 100 health kits (in about an hour!) for UMCOR to distribute there.

Some will remember that several years ago, when the local Garden

Springs mobile home park was sold to a developer leaving about 100 families with nowhere to go, we got involved. We joined with other churches to help, assist-

ing not only with raising funds and awareness, but working directly with one of the residents to help him find a new place to live and to move his mobile home there.

Another way that we are involved in missions is by providing financial support. Of course, you don't need to be told that we hold many fundraisers to support mission activities! The Ministry Committee hosts the annual Spaghetti Supper and Silent Auction in the spring and the International Dinner in the fall, and organizes the "Parking for God" effort.

OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE

- † Donate socks to the South Georgia Farmworker's Health Project
- † Help a family by volunteering with Interfaith Hospitality Network
- † Serve a meal at Our Daily Bread
- † Sponsor a child or donate items for The Kenya Project

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Pastor's Corner

Dear Church Family,

Oconee Street is a small church with a big heart. It is easy to be overwhelmed with the many different opportunities to give and to serve, especially it seems here in May, a number of worthy events and causes require our attention, and require the full measure of the membership vows we have taken. Remember saying, (or for those of you who are visiting and haven't officially joined the church, contemplate saying): I will support the church with my prayers, my presence, my gifts, my service, and my witness. All of those vows are being called upon this month!

Certainly, we need prayers for all of our ministries and for our church. The three of us who are going to Kenya especially appreciate your prayers for all aspects of our trip. Pray for safe travels, pray for our entire team, pray for the children of Mountain Park Academy, pray that we will be of genuine service to the school, pray that our hearts and minds will be opened to God's work and God's presence in that place.

Your presence and your service are needed in our local ministry outreach – Our Daily Bread, IHNA, Mision Latina, Greater Vision Shelter — all need volunteers to carry out their work with the poor and the homeless here in Athens.

Your gifts are needed: time, talent and money. The South Georgia Farm Workers Health Project, for example, needs new, white, cotton socks to distribute to the more than 1,700 people they will see during their trip in June. Something so simple as a pair of socks can make life better and more comfortable for those persons who are harvesting the food that we so casually pick up at the grocery store. It is good to feel a connection to the people who are doing such hard labor for our convenience by contributing to their comfort and health. Wesley Woods Mother's Day Offering helps to support assisted living and nursing home care for the elderly. Our Spaghetti Supper and silent auction, held May 1, supported the work of AIDS Athens and The Greater Vision Shelter. Our UMW Bake Sale will help to defray the cost of the Kenya trip for our three missionaries.

Your witness is needed. By participating in all of these ways, through prayer, presence, gifts, and service, you are witnessing to the work of God in your own life. Because you have been blessed with so much, now you have the opportunity to be a blessing to others. In case you've forgotten the word from last fall, now is the time to "tangibilitate" our faith. We have the choice to be overwhelmed with demands, or to be overjoyed with opportunities to make that joy tangible in the lives of others. There is something here for everyone – so thank God for all of God's many blessings, and then out of gratitude for all that God has done for you, find a way to witness to that gratitude during the month of May and beyond.

Grace and peace,
Lisa C.

2010 Church Leaders

Jonathan Biron
Council Chair

Sharon Pendley
Council Secretary
Membership Secretary

Mikell Gleason
Treasurer

Gloria Hall
Financial Secretary

Linda Burchfield
Lay Leader

Maxine Easom
PPR Chair

**Rebecca Alpaugh &
Meg Hines**
Children's Education/Ministry

Frankie Wylie & Joe Dennis
Youth Education/Ministry

Edwina Biron
Adult Education/Ministry

Chris Hall
Trustees Chair

Ken Easom
Sun. School Superintendent

Beth Gavrilles
Ministry Chairs

**Steve Williams &
Amanda Scott**
Worship Co-Chairs

Maxine Easom
UMW President

JoBeth & Lew Allen
Nurture Co-Chairs

JoBeth Allen
ODB Liaison

OCONEE ST. UMC

THE BEACON

**Pastor: The Rev. Lisa Caine
Editor: Joe Dennis**

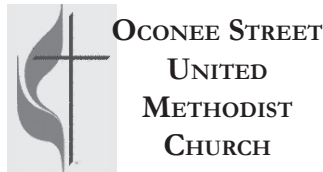
The Beacon is published quarterly as the official newsletter of Oconee Street United Methodist Church. For newsletter submissions, please contact Joe Dennis at 706-548-9359 or joe.dennis@yahoo.com.

Oconee Street United Methodist Church welcomes all people regardless of age, color, race, ethnic background, economic status, marital status, sexual orientation, gender, struggles with addiction, physical and mental challenges, or educational level. We come seeking the healing balm of salvation through Jesus Christ. Please talk to the pastor or lay leader if you wish to join this fellowship through Baptism or transfer membership from another church.

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On a Mission to Serve

South Georgia Farmworker Health Project

Oconee Street is once again supporting the work of the Emory Physician Assistant Program's South Georgia Farmworker Health Project (SGFHP). The SGFHP is now in its 15th year of providing free medical care to migrant and seasonal farmworkers in south Georgia during the peak harvest season of June. Last June during 12 days of mobile, makeshift clinics, more than 1,700 farmworkers and family members received care. The outreach team also provides clothing, sunglasses and other items to their patients. Oconee Street has been a major source of new cotton socks for the farmworkers. Many workers are treated for fungal foot infections, and the new socks are an important adjunct to their treatment. More information about the Project is available at www.EmoryPA.org/community_involvement.htm.

-Tom Himelick, SGFHP Coordinator

Interfaith Hospitality Network

Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN) of Athens is one of the missions that Oconee Street UMC supports with service and gifts. Twelve churches take turns hosting homeless families for a week at a time, with the help of seven support churches. Four weeks each year, Oconee Street is a support congregation for Princeton UMC. IHN's Day Center staff work with families to reach sustainable solutions for employment, housing and childcare. IHN is the only shelter where single fathers, and single mothers with boys over age 9, are able to stay together.

On the Sunday afternoon of our host weeks, Princeton's Sunday school rooms are transformed into bedrooms for each family and the overnight hosts. Throughout the week families receive meals, transportation in the van, and sleep at Princeton. On the weekend, the Day Center staff is off and volunteers assist guests around the clock. It takes a lot of people power to provide all these services! Our next host weeks are May 23 - 30, August 15 - 22, and November 7 - 14.

-Katie Calkin, IHN Coordinator

The Kenya Project

Last Spring, Fran Cawthon introduced our UMW to the Rev. Gideon Robi, Director of The Kenya Project. Fran's experiences in Kenya, volunteering at Mountain Park School in Githirionii, Kenya, were life-changing and she wanted to share her passion for the children and for the work of KP with the Oconee Street congregation. Gideon's presentation caught the imagination of the UMW and some of us began to think about actually going to Kenya ourselves and experiencing what it might mean to be in ministry in another country. The Kenya Project operates Mountain Park Academy, providing for the educational needs of more than 600 students. Fran, Maxine, and Lisa, along with Annette Jackson from Princeton UMC will be taking pictures of each student, updating their biographical information, and assisting them to write letters to sponsors. A health team will do annual exams, the only medical attention the children receive. And the construction team will begin building a chicken house so that the children will be able to have more than one egg a week in their diet. Several of our church members already sponsor a child. The cost is \$25/month. If you are interested in becoming a sponsor, applications are available on the literature table in the education building.

Our Daily Bread

Our Daily Bread, the largest soup kitchen in the Athens area and serving more than 60,000 meals annually, is housed in Oconee Street. Open Monday-Friday to provide both breakfast and lunch, and on Saturdays and Sundays to provide a sack meal, Our Daily Bread offers not only a warm meal but a warm welcome to the hungry and homeless in Athens. There are now 50 volunteer groups, mostly churches, that purchase, prepare, and serve the meals every day. Oconee Street serves on the second Monday of every other month. If you would like to help in this work, contact JoBeth Allen, who organizes our ODB volunteers.

Oconee Street UMC'S outreach serves people in Athens, abroad

Continued from page 1

Parking For God raises thousands of dollars every year that we distribute to local charitable organizations including A Bigger Vision Emergency Shelter, AIDS Athens, The Ark, Athens Area Homeless Shelter, Athens Nurses Clinic, the Homeless Day Service Center, IHNA, ODB, People of Hope, and Project Safe.

Our United Methodist Women's Circle makes regular donations to the UMC for mission work, and hosts the annual Basket Auction to benefit Our Daily Bread.

As a congregation of the North Georgia Conference of the United Methodist Church, we pay 100 percent of our annual apportionments to the work of the larger church, and we go beyond that to make regular financial contributions to a number of UMC ministries, among them: Restorative Justice Ministries, Housing and Homeless Council of N. GA., United Methodist Volunteers in Mission, World Hunger, Disaster Response International, Camp Glisson, Hope for the Children of Africa, and Disaster Response USA.

We also participate in periodic special collections for

mission initiatives, ranging from the global, such as the interdenominational "One Great Hour of Sharing," to the local, such as conference-wide collections for initiatives like the Housing and Homeless Council, the UM Children's Home, and Wesley Woods. We hold an annual sock drive for the South Georgia Farmworker Health Project. And finally, Oconee Street has a Covenant Relationship, meaning we provide regular financial sponsorship through the UM Board of Global Missions with the Rev. Priscilla Legay Jaiah, a missionary who serves as principal of the United Methodist School in Ganta, Liberia, a position she began in February 2009 after many years of serving Liberian refugees in Ghana.

Reading back over what I've written, I realize that it sounds like a glorified laundry list – but reading between the lines, there are literally hundreds of people whose lives have been touched, whose hearts have been warmed, who have seen the face of Jesus through these mission works. And those lives and hearts include ours. After all, what greater privilege could there be than to participate in bringing God's love to God's people?



List of items needed for service projects

South Georgia Farmworker Health Project

- White, cotton, athletic socks

Kenya Project Medical Team

- Anti fungal cream-clotrimazole cream
- Children's liquid acetaminophen, Tylenol, or ibuprofen
- Amoxicillin powder 250 mg/5ml, 150 ml bottles
- Chewable Tums
- Chewable children's vitamins
- Visine eye drops
- Allergy eye drops or lubricants
- Saline nasal spray
- Ibuprofen 200 mg tablets
- Claritin (loratadine) tablets 10 mg
- Guafenesin 100 mg/5 ml liquid

- Robitussin DM
- Vaseline (small size)
- Singulair
- Dandruff medicated shampoo
- Antibacterial facial soap - small bars
- Tongue blades or wood popsicle sticks
- Cotton balls
- Hand sanitizer
- Hydrocortisone cream
- Small toothpaste
- Toothbrushes
- Sudafed

Geneva's Wonderful Women

- (women who make jewelry and bags to sell)
- Beads for jewelry
 - Necklace and bracelet clasps

- Earrings
- Anything you use to make jewelry
- Crochet yarn
- Embroidery thread
- Needles for crochet and embroidery

Kenya Project Administrative Team

- #2 pencils
- Ball point pens
- Boxes of crayons
- Boxes of colored washable markers
- Boxes of colored pencils
- Safety scissors
- Bottles of glue (4 oz size)
- newsprint



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