



ST. JOHN'S METHODIST CHURCH OF AIKEN

MISSION IMPACT NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2026

Featuring Activities October – December 2025

**SEEING THE LORD AT WORK THROUGH MISSION PARTNERS – LOCALLY,
REGIONALLY, INTERNATIONALLY**

IT'S COMING MISSION IMPACT CELEBRATION FEBRUARY 4-8, 2026

Mission Impact Celebration is the annual opportunity to show your love for St. John's Mission Partners. These organizations funded by your Faith Promise offerings depend on financial, volunteer, and prayer support from our congregation. Be sure to open your heart when you receive your MIC information by mail and let's continue to BE HIS FEET as we move forward. This year's theme is "SHOWERS OF BLESSINGS". The prayer booklets were mailed December 15, so that we all can begin 40 days of prayer on January 1. A letter with more details will be mailed in early January. Your Faith Promise gift helps spread the love of Christ locally and globally by supporting missionaries and mission initiatives. Together, we can share our hope in Jesus, meet needs, and make an eternal impact.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION TO MAUREEN BERNARD



It is wonderful when a person volunteers again and again for a special mission project. We have all seen the requests for Epworth donations at Christmas – the ones asking our congregation to make the life of a child special by giving that child the gift they want for Christmas. This does not happen on its own – it takes leadership, dedication, and organization to ensure that all the children's needs are met. Maureen Bernard was that special person. She worked for over two decades by herself, choosing the children, advertising the needs, collecting the gifts, and delivering them to Epworth in Columbia. Last month all of the children's requests were granted within a short period of time. As soon as that was done, Maureen left Aiken to live closer to her daughter. After much prayer, several volunteers have stepped up to take on the job that Mauren so seamlessly accomplished. Maureen, we will miss you and wish you the best in your new home. We thank those who have stepped up to continue your legacy!

MISSIONS ON THE FIFTH SUNDAY



The Mission Leadership Team sponsors its Missions on the Fifth Sunday program, bringing to the congregation representatives from our mission partners. In November, the congregation was treated to a discussion of Epiphany – a Juvenile Prison Ministry. Our own Jackie Hyche led the morning program and helped those in attendance better understand the work of this organization. Epiphany was founded in 1991 in Alabama and the program spread to North Carolina, to California, to South Carolina, and to 11 other states. The focus is bringing love and the word of God to incarcerated youth – letting them know that someone loves and cares about them. Volunteers for this program spend a 3-day

weekend in the prison facility interacting with youth. The symbol for the program is a Star – representing the reflection of light. The star and its light can bring youth into relationships with God so they can share that love with others. There are many volunteer opportunities, which begin with a Walk to Emmaus. For more information visit www.epiphanyministry.org. Mark your calendars for our next Missions on The Fifth, March 29, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. in the Faith Center.

APPLEFEST SUPPORTS MISSIONS



Two of our mission partners were recently recipients of this year's Applefest Funds. Applefest is a project of the Methodist Women of St. John's. Each year three recipients, voted for by the women of the congregation, receive proceeds of this event. Life Choices Pregnancy Center and Epworth, along with the Jake Miniard Recovery Fund, received \$20,000 each to enhance their missions. Congratulations on a very successful Applefest event.

CAROLINA HONDURAS HEALTH FOUNDATION (CHHF)



Several years ago the Yeh family from St. John's grew to know a young doctor, Eduardo Dubon, during a mission trip through CHHF. When he and his brother died from Covid, CHHF started a scholarship fund in his memory. Recently three students graduated with funding from the scholarship. One has completely finished with his public service commitment and is looking for a permanent position. The other two are completing their last component similar to a thesis. They have all traveled and volunteered with CHHF teams. With these three students finished, new candidates for the Eduardo Dubon Memorial Scholarship were interviewed. A female student was awarded the scholarship this year and will receive guidance through her program. The Yeh family is thankful for the generous donations from St. John's. Eduardo's memory is living on in these students (physicians).

LIFE FOR CHILDREN MINISTRY



A recent update on the work of Life for Children Ministry in Kenya shared the following ongoing projects at their school, St. Antony's Christian School in Wachara. It is the top performing school in the district and enrollment has increased to over 400 students. They have completed 10 greenhouses and use the produce to feed the children, build sustainability, and sell excess items to the local community. They have expanded the chicken farm on campus and "gift" goats, sheep and chickens to guardians in the community. The campus has the only water well in the community, the first library in the region, and a 400-seat community center for student dining and area sustainability.

HONDURAS AGAPE FOUNDATION - MISSION TRIP – OCTOBER 2025



During October, a team from St. John's Methodist Church had the opportunity to travel to Honduras to "Be His Feet". Those on the trip from Aiken were Doug Davisson, Mary Davisson, Jeff Ray, Abby Ray, David Ray, Renee Reid, and Barb

Mahannah. They were joined by four ladies from McDonough Presbyterian Church outside of Atlanta. When asked about the trip, these were some of the responses:

1. *What was the most memorable part of the trip?*

Overall, the joy and laughter. We had a great time! Specifically, the first morning there we went to the Tejeras Sunday school and feeding program. Honduras Agape Foundation (HAF) feeds these children three times each week as they live in a very poor community. When we got off the bus, we could hear the children's voices. Very soon after we were all inside the building and standing in front of the room, a small boy, maybe 3-4 years old, came running from the back of the room straight up to me. Instinctively I bent forward to scoop him up into a big hug! The love I felt in that moment was like Jesus saying "welcome, I'm so glad you are here to love my children!"

2. *Did you feel the presence of the Lord while working with the families?*

We mostly worked with children, and yes Jesus was there in each child and adult we met. We felt so welcomed and the best thing is you can share Jesus openly in any school in Honduras.

3. *Tell us about the special connection between HAF and St. John's.*

The government welcomed partnerships with HAF and others. We went to a school of about 120 children in Texoxingales where HAF had built this beautiful and colorful kindergarten building in memory of **Leroy Farr, a former member of St. John's. Leroy's family helped fund it from memorials after his death.** This school had John 3:16 written on the side of the building! Our team shared either the story of Jonah and the whale, Noah and the ark or the Good Samaritan at each of the schools we went to. God took such good care of us every moment of the trip.

4. *What lessons were learned during the time spent in Honduras?*

It's important to look people in the eyes. When in a different culture it is important to be flexible and do as the locals do. And laughter is truly the best medicine. I have not laughed that much or felt that good in a long time.

5. *What is the biggest impact made during the trip?*

I hope and believe that each child, teacher and other adults we came in contact with could feel and know that God sees them.

ACTS – AREA CHURCHES TOGETHER SERVING



ACTS has been a major component of the Aiken area for decades. St. John's is partially responsible for guiding the initiation of this agency many years ago. They provide a multitude of services including food, clothing, medical assistance, utility assistance and other programs for those in need of a hand-up during difficult times. The program operates in three locations and has Resale stores in Aiken and Graniteville. Clothing vouchers are available for clients to shop in the Resale stores. ACTS even has a Car Program which provides used cars to qualified adults who are employed but need reliable transportation. For those who cannot afford transportation but need help getting to work or school, there is even a Bicycle Program. ACTS is always in need of volunteers. Call them at 803 649-3800 to learn more.

BRIDGE 2 HOME



After several years of planning and fundraising, Bridge 2 Home has officially opened its doors. The mission of The Bridge 2 Home (The Bridge) is to provide a safe and loving home for girls who have experienced child sex trafficking, where they can find healing and growth and can experience the love of a perfect Heavenly Father who pursues them. This means that they will experience love and acceptance at The Bridge regardless of their faith and beliefs. The girls will have opportunities to participate in youth focused activities to support their spiritual growth and experience community. The girls will never experience discrimination due to different beliefs or lack of belief. If they choose not to participate in faith driven activities, alternative activities will be offered based upon the individual interests of each girl. Currently the Bridge is a temporary home for up to six (6) girls. Pray for these girls to come to know Jesus loves them and for each of them to find hope and courage for healing and a better life.

KAIROS OF SOUTH CAROLINA



The mission of the Kairos Prison Ministry is to share the transforming love and forgiveness of Jesus Christ to impact the hearts and lives of incarcerated men, women and youth, as well as their families, to become loving and productive citizens of their communities. St. John's members have been regular participants on inside teams, who meet with the residents, as well as on outside teams, who help prepare meals for the visitors and inmates. We also provide funding through Faith Promise, bake 200 dozen cookies per event, provide church resources and serve on prayer teams.

DATES TO REMEMBER

- Missions on the 5th - Watch Bulletin for Information – The Fifth Sunday each quarter
- February 4-8, 2026 - Mission Impact Celebration

MISSION LEADERSHIP TEAM MEMBERS

Stockton Altman
Logan Murray
Deane Wyllys

Diane Brace
Renee Reid
Nancy Wyllys

Doug Davisson
Judy Phillips
Julie Roe

Don Hayes
Debi Rood
Jason Muckinhaupt

David Long
Julie Shade

Rev. Will Altman, Staff Liaison

*St. John's Methodist Church of Aiken prints this Newsletter quarterly
and its Mission Leadership Team*