

MISSION NEWS! Spring 2018

A periodic update from the Mission Committee of Oconee St. UMC

Traveling Mercies

Please pray for Hope Cook and Carter Vest who will travel to Limon, Honduras for a week in mid-March on a Medical Mission Trip. Our "missionaries" are both Physician Assistants and will serve a community clinic administered by the Carolina Honduras Foundation. The clinic provides medical and dental care for people in several surrounding villages.

Not to be outdone...Allison Floyd is helping to lead a June trip to Leon, Nicaragua. She will be joined by Tom Drewry, Danny Malec and son Nico, Matt and Thadd Pruitt, Katie and Violet Calkin, Eden Dvorak, Melanie Frick and a several members of Young Harris Memorial UMC as well. Together they will help construct a church kitchen and participate in a leadership workshop for youth.

Mission Trip Fundraiser---First Sunday in May

May 6th--Here's your chance to support our travelers. Donate a handmade art or craft item to the Silent Auction and purchase a few too. While your enjoying a simple meal of beans, rice and taquitos; peruse a plethora of hand-crafted items that may be just right for Mother's Day, or a special way to honor someone you love. Stay tuned for details. All Auction proceeds will help pay mission trip expenses.

Interfaith Hospitality Network a Great Way to get Involved

Hosting homeless families while they strive to pull their lives back together is what IHN is all about. OSUMC volunteers will help provide meals, overnight presence, transportation and company for IHN families the week of March 11-17. Robin Whetstone coordinates our team. Ask her how you can get involved!

robintraining@yahoo.com

RACIAL JUSTICE AND IMMIGRANT RIGHTS

Oconee Street's Racial Justice Task Force is 2 years old and has been learning about and responding to systemic injustice on several fronts. Coming up this spring: A "World Café" bringing UGA administrators together with students of Clarke Co Schools to discuss racial disparities at our local university. Efforts are also underway for a panel discussion focused on aspects of our criminal justice system. Contact Steve Williams to get involved: stevewilma@aol.com

Our Church provides direct aide and support to families in crisis due to detention or deportation. Our monthly monetary contributions help families who have lost a wage-earning family member pay for rent, food, legal expenses and more. Several Oconee Streeter's are also available to meet with families in crisis and offer transportation, diversion and moral support in their time of need. The stories of detention without due process are heart-wrenching; family separation and fear of deportation for families that have lived for years in this community is devastating. Jobeth Allen leads our Rapid Response Team: jobethal@gmail.com

Oconee St. Church led the formation of an Interfaith Sanctuary Coalition in 2017. The ISC meets monthly and includes participants from Jewish, Muslim and several Christian congregations as well as Unitarian Universalists and independent persons of faith. Finding common ground across faith traditions, this coalition promotes dignity, safety and the human rights of all people regardless of immigration status. Contact Joel: jsiebentritt@gmail.com

MISSIONS BUDGET AND DISBURSEMENTS

The committee has received over 230,000.00 in donations since December 2016. We have committed 135,000.00 so far to local entities: 20K for specialized consulting and promotion of minority entrepreneurs; 80K for no-interest micro-loans for minority owned businesses; 35K for immigration legal services for indigent clients.

Finally, we provided over 2,000.00 in emergency financial assistance to church members and friends last year.