



The Year in Review

In a year in which war, the presidential election and economic turbulence dominated the news, St. John's has been quietly but surely expanding our mission efforts in all areas. Beginning with our first annual Global Impact Celebration in January, the newly formed Global Outreach Leadership Team (GOLT) spent many hours trying to direct the outpouring of prayers, service and monetary gifts to serve God's will for our church.

Perhaps the most important step was the formation of prayer teams for all our mission partners. These teams form the main channel of communication between the missionaries and St. John's. Each team determines the needs of its missionary so members can pray specifically and consistently. More urgent prayer requests are forwarded to larger groups, including the congregation as a whole.

Another goal of the GIC was to provide increased opportunities for service among St. John's members. Some of these, such as the creation of new short-term mission trips, came from the GOLT. Other opportunities, such as Grace Kitchen, came from two youth members and grew to include eleven groups of volunteers. Although hard to quantify, the general feeling is that involvement in missions by St. John's members has definitely increased over years past.

The final task was to develop a financial plan for the generous Faith Promise funds committed during the GIC. This included reviewing existing mission partnerships as well as evaluating opportunities for new partners. The goal was to find mission partners with whom St. John's can develop in depth, personal relationships, not just a recipients of our funding. The following is a summary of how your Faith Promise dollars have helped spread God's love in Aiken, the U.S.A. and around the world. Our 2008 GIC Faith Promise calendar goes through the end of January 2009. As God provides blessings, please continue to support the Faith Promise program.

Around Town

1. Area Churches Together Serving (ACTS): \$6000

ACTS was founded in partnership between sixteen local churches in 1986. Their mission is to provide "temporary and/or emergency aid, in the name of Christ, to persons in need in the Aiken, SC area." In today's tough economic times, their provision of food, clothing and help with utilities is more vital than ever. St. John's was one of ACTS original founding partners and continues to support their ministry on all levels.

2. Aiken Pregnancy Care Center: \$1800

APCC is a non-profit, Christian-based organization that "strives to share the love of Christ by supporting women, especially young adults, teens and adolescents." St. John's support of this ministry is especially critical since they are unable to receive government funding.

3. Aiken Community Outreach Ministry: \$5200

ACOM serves homeless ex-offenders by providing transitional housing and other support services. St. John's partnership with ACOM began in 2006 as an outgrowth of the Kairos Prison Ministry. Since then, fifteen local churches and the City of Aiken have teamed up to purchase the ministry's first home.

4. Christ Central of Aiken: \$5000

Christ Central offers food, shelter, counseling, learning opportunities and worship services to those in need throughout the community. Instead of merely distributing supplies, they seek to spread the love of Christ by building relationships and taking care of one another in His name. St. John's has been a partner of Christ Central since 2003 and continues to support this ministry on all levels.

5. Habitat for Humanity: \$1500

Habitat for Humanity is a non-profit, Christian housing ministry that seeks to "eliminate substandard and poverty housing in Aiken County." St. John's has been a partner with Habitat since the Aiken County affiliate was founded in 1988. This past year, St. John's partnered with Habitat and three other churches to build "The Worship Build" home for the Matthews family on Union Street in Aiken. In addition to the Faith Promise funds listed above, St. John's donated \$8500 as well as food and construction volunteers to the project.



Pastors from four churches join Habitat's Richard Church and the Matthews family for "The Worship Build" groundbreaking ceremony.

6. Grace Kitchen: \$2975

The purpose of Grace Kitchen is to provide breakfast every Saturday morning from 8-9:00 AM for the hungry and less fortunate. Originally conceived by two of St. John's youth, **Thomas Osteen** and **Jimmy Rodgers**, the pair enlisted the help of **Bobby Coker** to help turn their idea into reality. Grace Kitchen opened by serving 18 individuals on August 2nd in Ward Hall. The ministry has since grown to the point where 86 individuals were served on December 13. Diners are given the opportunity to take home a Bible if they choose to do so.

7. Helping Hands: \$1000

Helping Hands is a non-profit organization that houses and takes care of children that have either been abandoned or removed from abusive or neglectful homes. Their mission is to "ensure that all children are afforded every opportunity to grow into healthy adults." Members of St. John's helped found Helping Hands in 1973 because there was no alternative housing solution for these children other than the county jail. Teens from Helping Hands helped landscape Habitat's "Worship Build" home and later joined us for a 9:02 service.

8. Jack Meeks Wheelchair Ramp Ministry: \$1000

Although St. John's members had been building ramps in Aiken County since the 1990's, the ministry was not formalized until 2004 when Jack Meeks became the first chairman of the ramp committee. Twenty six ramps were built in 2004 and the ministry continues to build 15-20 ramps each year for persons with accessibility needs.

9. Salkehatchie (Sand River): \$4500

St. John's hosts the Sand River camp each year. This summer, sixty three campers spent long hours helping to fix up six homes in Aiken County. A residents living in one of these homes has since decided to become a member of St. John's.

10. Missions Discretionary Fund: \$1000

Jerusalem (Local) Totals: \$29,975

Around the State

1. Epiphany Ministry of SC: \$1000

Epiphany Ministry is a non-profit organization that seeks to "show Christ's love to incarcerated juveniles". It accomplishes this mission by conducting three-day short courses in Christianity along with an ongoing followup process for incarcerated youth. St. John's became a partner with Epiphany in 2008.

2. Kairos Prison Ministry: \$1000

The mission of the Kairos Prison Ministry is to bring Christ's love and forgiveness to all incarcerated individuals, their families and those who work with them, and to assist in the transition to becoming productive citizens. Volunteers go into prisons to share the love and forgiveness of Jesus Christ, share meals, and fellowship with the incarcerated on a one-to-one basis. A favorite aspect of this ministry is the distribution of up to 6,000 home made cookies during a weekend event. St. John's has a dedicated group of volunteers working within the Kairos ministry. The September 17 weekend in McCormick, SC had at least ten St. John's members participating, including Team Leader **Dave Kelly**.

GIC Reminder

The 2009 GIC will be January 21-25 (just around the corner!). This year's theme is "**Whom Shall I Send?**" A GIC brochure will be mailed to all St. John's members in early January. Be sure to review the schedule of events and make plans to participate.

3. Salkehatchie (PeeDee and Santee): \$6000

Salkehatchie is a mission of the South Carolina conference of the United Methodist Church. It is a program where a group of adults and youth go and repair homes somewhere in South Carolina, North Carolina, or Georgia for a week. They repair floors, roofs, electrical, plumbing, walls, porches and a lot of painting. The volunteers also go to repair lives. They are there to let the homeowners know that they are loved and cared for. The volunteers spend five days pouring everything they have into repairing the house and the homeowner. The volunteers repair over a hundred homes each summer. This is where many young people learn how to use tools, and how to mend hearts.

4. Salkehatchie (transportation): \$4000

5. Shirley Townsend-Jones: \$6000

Ms. Jones is assigned by the GBGM as a Church and Community Worker to the Bennettsville- Cheraw Area Cooperative Ministry (BCACM), comprised of ten member churches. Her mission is to reach out to these communities in Christian love, communicating through education, witness, spiritual growth, encouragement and service. St. John's has been a mission partner with Ms. Jones for many years.

6. Tigers Go (Youth New Orleans trip): \$3000

In April 2008, over thirty volunteers from St. John's traveled to New Orleans to help rebuild three houses damaged by Hurricane Katrina. The group was comprised mainly of youth with an adult support team. Homeowner **Barbara Mack** wrote in a thank you note, "I have never seen such a sincere, loving and dedicated group of individuals."



Jordan Kelley is covered in spackling during the Tigers Go trip to New Orleans.

7. Tigers Go: \$2000

Tigers Go is a non-profit organization based in Clemson, SC. They seek to help those in need through short-term relief trips and local missions. Tigers Go currently focuses on the upstate area of SC as well as the New Orleans' parishes devastated by Hurricane Katrina. St. John's became a mission partner with Tigers Go following the 2008 GIC.

Judea (Regional) Totals: \$23,000

Around the World



Honduran school children perform songs for the missionaries during the June trip to Quimistan

1. Honduras Agape Foundation: \$1100

Founded in Aiken, SC following Hurricane Mitch in 1998, the Honduras Agape Foundation aims to "manifest the love of Jesus Christ to the people of Honduras by providing medical and health care and education, resources to construct homes and care for the children and other support for the community of believers". At least six St. John's members traveled to Quimistan this year on short-term mission trips. **Dr. Randy Shelley** led an annual trip providing dental care in March and **Jeff Ray** was Team Leader of a home building trip in June.

2. Michael Agwanda (Kenya): \$9000

Michael Agwanda and *Life for Children Ministry* are committed to providing food, shelter, clothing, education, healthcare and spiritual nourishment to HIV/AIDS orphans and vulnerable children in Kenya. Two St. John's members have already made an impact on this ministry. Following the 2008 GIC, **Taylor Mabry**, 10, created "*Kicks for Kids*", a ministry that collected over 60 pounds of shoes to donate to Kenyan children. **Frances Osteen** made an exploratory trip to Kenya in April 2008 and returned with husband **John** in early December to help facilitate VBS activities with the children.

3. Dan and Judy Armstrong (Southeast Asia): \$0

Danny and Judy are Southeast Regional Directors with *Advancing Churches in Missions Commitment*. ACMC helps churches mobilize their resources for effective involvement in world evangelism. One focus of their ministry is to plant churches among Unreached People Groups of Southeast Asia.

4. Charlie and Miki Chastain (Russia): \$6000

In partnership with *The Mission Society*, Charlie and Miki Chastain work to meet the physical and spiritual needs of disabled orphans and street children in St. Petersburg, Russia.

5. International Leadership Institute (ILI): \$2000

The International Leadership Institute (ILI) helps spread the Gospel around the world by training and mobilizing leaders to reach their respective nations. Since 1998, ILI has equipped more than 7500 men and women in more than 30 nations.

6. Ben and Jenny Reyes (Paraguay): \$9000

The Reyes family works as a team with *The Mission Society*. Jenny teaches at the Methodist Bible Institute in Ascuncion, Paraguay, and works locally in discipleship. Ben is the Regional Coordinator for Latin America, planting churches and teaching leadership development conferences and seminars.

7. David and Nancy Williams (Ethiopia): \$8000

David and Nancy Williams work in partnership with *The U.S. Center for World Mission (USCWM)* as well as *Frontiers*. They are involved in church planting among an Unengaged Unreached Muslim People Group in Ethiopia.

8. Whitney Simons (Mexico): \$6500

Former St. John's member Whitney Simons began a nine month internship in September with *Athletes in Action* in Puebla, Mexico. AIA is a division of *Campus Crusade for Christ* and seeks to reach out to student-athletes in order to introduce them to Jesus Christ. Whitney's collegiate golf experience and International Business degree are key assets in this ministry.

9. Ron and Amy Smith (Italy): \$4000

The Smiths work with *World Team* to "glorify God by working together to establish reproducing churches focusing on the unreached peoples of the world." Their focus is on Milan, Italy, where only 1% of the population attends mass on a regular basis. Their goal is to plant evangelical churches in areas where most people still associate the Gospel with the older traditions of the Roman Catholic Church.

10. Karen Ujereh (Senegal): \$5000

Karen Ujereh is a missionary with the GBGM of the United Methodist Church assigned to Dakar, Senegal, where she serves as GBGM's Area Financial Executive (AFE). She also supervises three areas of the Prison Ministry--two women's prisons and one youth boy's prison. In addition, Ms. Ujereh directs the Agriculture Program, both rural (digging wells) and urban (Rooftop Garden technology).

11. Mark and Jeannie Wittig (Colombia): \$2500

Mark and Jeannie Wittig are missionaries with *OMS International*. Mark prepares leaders for ministry at the Biblical Seminary of Colombia in Medellin. He also supervises a city-wide sports program, which evangelizes and disciples over 1,000 children and Medellin youth through soccer every week. Jeannie directs a Christian sexual education program called CPR (Creating Positive Relationships) for local high schools.

12. Habitat for Humanity (International): \$2850

Habitat International is a new mission partner for St. John's. These funds were used to help build a home in Kenya.

13. The Mission Society: \$9000

Since 1984, The Mission Society has been training and sending missionaries to areas where the Gospel has been least heard.

14. Jerry Samuels: \$2000

Ends of the Earth Totals: \$67,200

Grand Totals: \$120,175



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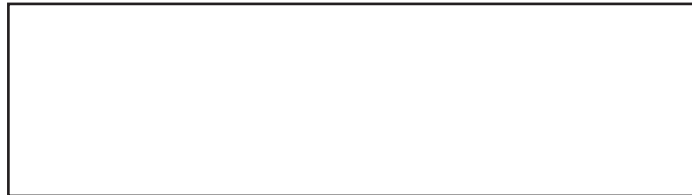
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PRAYER REQUEST BOARD

Praise be to God for the great things He has done through the members of St. John's:

- ▶ Grace Kitchen
- ▶ Mission Trips to New Orleans, Honduras, Kenya, & Salkehatchie Camps
- ▶ Providing over \$121,000 in Faith Promise offerings for missions
- ▶ Relationships formed with missionaries during the first Global Impact Celebration
- ▶ Sending shoes to Kenya
- ▶ Providing suitcases for the children of Helping Hands

"May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." (Romans 15:5-6)

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For an online version of this newsletter and links to our mission partners' web sites, visit: **www.stjohns-umc.org** and click on "Missions" then select "Global Outreach".