

MISSION MINDED

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SOUTH SUDAN PTA MEETS WITH THE MISSION TEAM

In South Sudan the teacher's of Ligitolo met under a tree around two, small, crudely- made tables. They were sorting materials and preparing for the 249 students that will be attending school in that community this year. Although classes had not started, children were already gathering in the area excited about beginning a new school year. Children congregated in groups. Some played soccer and other games, and some were sitting under thatched roof structures, that badly needed repair. These structures will be their classrooms for the upcoming school year.

We were told this was the first year that curriculum booklets have been supplied to the Ligitolo school by the government of South Sudan. The subjects of these booklets varied from the basics such as mathematics to Christian education. In looking over the booklets it was obvious that the materials would in no way provide all the educational curriculum needed for a school year and that the teachers



would have to improvise. The booklets were delivered by UMCOR (The United Methodist Committee On Relief) as the government did not have the means by which to do this.

Although grossly underpaid, even by the standards of South Sudanese economy, the teachers seemed optimistic as they went about sorting out their few materials. (They make about \$8.00 per month). They were excited about receiving the curriculum. While we were there, we learned that not only were they underpaid, but they did not have many necessary teaching tools that we take for granted. The teachers indicated that in addition to a salary that would enable them to feed their family,

they needed basic items and listed such items as a dictionary, a pencil, a red pen, a marker, a composition book, a compass and protractor set, a ruler, chalk and a few pieces of poster board in order for them to do their job.

In the next few days our mission team met at various times with the teachers, the PTA and the school management committee under this tree. The community leaders expressed a need for training and they demonstrated a clear understanding that only through education would their families and communities have hope of a future. They also said that without the help of the United Methodist

—story continued next page

NEWS FROM THE NET: DID YOU KNOW?

- people who become homeless do not fit one general description. However, people experiencing homelessness do have certain shared basic needs, including affordable housing, adequate incomes, and health care. Some homeless people may need additional services such as mental health or drug treatment in order to remain securely housed. All of these needs must be met to prevent and to end homelessness.



**The
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Methodist
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**We are United in Faith.
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Jones Memorial Mission Committee

Pastor Larry Dial
Melissa Spiers
Marlene Gamblin
Ryan Sherman
Paula Wright
Barbara Hartman
Kathy Ryan

Church they would have no chance at all. One man reported that in a previous year the government had attempted to start a school. Several of the students that had been attending classes regularly at Ligitolo were made to attend the government run school. He reported that the students soon returned to Ligitolo as the teachers of the government run school had abandoned their jobs and left because of lack of pay and other issues.

Our conversation with leaders moved from immediate needs to a discussion regarding the plan for building a school that could provide the necessary environment for the children to obtain the basic education that they need. The teachers and leaders expressed their commitment to this project and reaffirmed their agreement to take their part by accepting the responsibility of gathering volunteers and providing raw materials such as aggregate stone which will be obtained in the nearby mountains and used for the foundation of the buildings. They also agreed to making the bricks that will be needed in building these structures.



As a part of the overall plan we discussed an exit strategy. As the community in Ligitolo grows and becomes more stable and able to support itself, the financial support by the way of missional type support will gradually be decreased over a five year period. It is believed that the UMCOR honey project, the tilapia farming project in addition to projects such as "Farming God's Way" and the Microfinance empowerment program that is being offered to members of the commu-

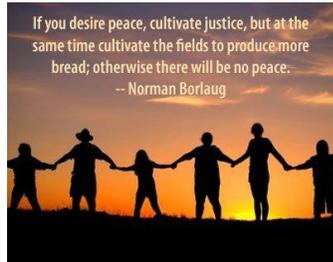
nity will help Ligitolo become an independent and self sufficient community which will continue to produce strong Christian leaders for the United Methodist Church and for the Christian community as a whole.

It became clear that the people of Ligitolo are committed to making life better for their children through education, leadership development and through their faith in God and His church.

As a part of our covenant agreement with Ligitolo the Chattanooga District of the United Methodist Church is committed to "Coordinate efforts to enhance educational opportunities through teacher/staff training, providing educational resources, and financial support for the teachers/staff at the Ligitolo School."



Who is Homeless in the US?
 In 2003, children under the age of 18 accounted for 39% of the homeless population; 42% of these children were under the age of five (National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty, 2004). This same study found that unaccompanied minors comprised 5% of the urban homeless population. However, in other cities and especially in rural areas, the numbers of children experiencing homelessness are much higher. According to the National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty, in 2004, 25% of homeless were ages 25 to 34; the same study found percentages of homeless persons aged 55 to 64 at 6%.



We will be collecting items for the Mustard Tree Ministry and putting together care kits for people on the street.

- The items needed are:**
 Soap
 Deodorant
 Underwear
 Toothbrush
 Toothpaste
 Feminine Products
 Granola Bars
 Crackers
 (individually wrapped)
 Water
 Bug Spray
 Aspirin/ Tylenol
 Band-aids.
 Please place items in a collection basket outside the gymnasium at Jones Memorial UMC

PRAY FOR THE 2013 CHEROKEE MISSION TRIP



Those who are going are looking forward to the 2013 Cherokee Mission trip that will take place November 9—15. This is the third year that Jones Memorial UMC has participated in this mission event. Please be in prayer for this group as we join with the people of Cherokee to help them prepare

for the winter. Please pray that lives and hearts will be touched and transformed as we go about our work and know that we will be praying for you at home. We look forward to sharing our experiences with you when we return and we hope that you will consider participating in the future.