
Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these, my brethren...



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Summer 2015

What's new at ACTS?

ACTS
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For one thing—our **new logo!** With ACTS' new mission statement and changes in the way many of the programs are being operated, the board and staff felt it was time for an updated logo. Martin—Wilson Marketing, which "adopted" ACTS last year, designed the new logo.

Coffee with JoJo (the Women's Enrichment Series) held its first session at Smith Hazel Recreation Center in April with 31 women attending.

Attendance has continued to increase as word of the program spreads. The women said they love the program and have been bringing their friends. Coffee with Jo Jo helps women develop a circle of friends and mentors to not only improve their own lives, but to spread the circle and begin to help others. Pastor Joann Saunders leads the program. The program continues the second and fourth Thursday of each month through October. Volunteer **Jan Gilbert** takes reservations for those who would like to join.

ACTS has a **new discretionary fund**, thanks to grants from the St. Paul Lutheran Endowment Fund and the Cedar Creek Ladies Club. The ACTS staff has long been concerned that some client needs just don't fit into a budget category.

For example, a client finds a new job but has no transportation until that first paycheck comes. Bus tickets for the Best Friend Express can help. Or a family needs a place to stay but shelters are full. The discretionary fund can provide a motel room for a night or two. Many ACTS clients have no transportation available to them. But a used bicycle with a new helmet, chain and lock, could solve that problem. This kind of help is given only with management approval.

Some ACTS clients will always require assistance, and a smaller group is able but unwilling to try to become less dependent on private and government agencies. But most are willing to take steps to become more independent and the **Action Plan** program plays a critical role. The Action Plan looks at what a client needs in order to help themselves. It can be a small step, such as "attending next week's job fair" rather than an overwhelming step like "get a job."

The Action Plan program is an ongoing process. ACTS is far more concerned that clients follow through to the success they deserve than how long it takes to get there.

For many, this is a huge and difficult undertaking. Our goal is to lift them up and support them along this exciting journey.



ACTS will be closed
July 1-7 for
Independence Day
September 7 for
Labor Day

ACTS Friend and Fund Raisers!

Summer is time for friends and fun—but anytime is a good time for Fund Raisers for ACTS. ACTS is grateful for events large and small that help provide for our clients needs as well as introducing others to our programs—and just having a good time!



Robin Fonce (r) won 3rd place in the Lexington Race Against Hunger and celebrated with her sister, ACTS Operations manager Karen Perry (l).



The ACTS 1st Car Show and Fun Day was held May 9 at Langley Pond. A grocery cart of food was collected along with cash donations.

Thanks to sponsors Auto Tech, Bob Richards Automotive, Aiken County PRT, Hutson-Etherredge Companies, Midland Valley Chamber, B&W, Inc. and Atlantic Broadband.

Grants and Gifts

Recent grants to ACTS include:



- Lions Club of Aiken—\$500
- Evangelical Lutheran Church of America—\$2,000 for Food Pantry & Senior Food Program
- Icicle Ball—\$14,302
- St. Paul Lutheran Endowment Fund—\$1,000 for Discretionary Fund
- Augusta Warriors Project—\$15,000 to assist in identifying Post 9/11 Warriors
- Lexington Race for Hunger—\$2,103.20
- Steeplechase Crocus Ball— \$5,000
- Aiken Newcomers Club—FATZ Breakfast—\$500
- Cedar Creek Ladies Club—\$1,000 for Discretionary Fund
- Wal-Mart—\$500 for temporary lodging
- Women of Woodside—\$1,000 for clothing

In honor and in memory—

ACTS has received gifts in honor of: Bill Collins; and Vince and Carla Cloud.

Gifts have been received in memory of: Helen Ashley; Bill Batts (Vicki Bukovitz' father); Anika Allemann; Lois Wolf; Jack Butler; Jeanne Rockwell; Jerry H. Brown, Sr.; Cecilia Macomber

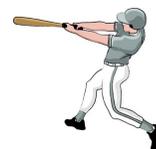
Join your ACTS friends at the
GREEN JACKETS

FAITH and FAMILY NIGHT

July 24 7:05 PM

Fireworks and other surprises!!

Call ACTS at 649-3800 for information



ACTS 14th ANNUAL FAN & UTILITY DRIVE

340 Park Ave SW, Aiken, SC 29801



____ Yes, I can sponsor the purchase of ____ fan(s) @ \$17.00 each for a total of \$____.

____ Yes, I would like to make a donation to ACTS Utility Assistance Fund for \$____.

____ Yes, I would like to make a donation to ACTS General Emergency Fund for \$____.

Thanks to Lowe's on Whiskey Road for hosting the Fan & Utility Drive June 5 & 6.



Volunteers at the new ACTS Senior Food program site at Wagener United Methodist Church.

ACTS opens 3rd Senior Food site-

For the past 20 years ACTS (Area Churches Together Serving) has operated a Senior Food program which provides a week's worth of food to clients 60 and older. In 1995 ACTS opened a satellite program in Jackson, now managed by Lynn Ashburn. Last fall a second satellite program opened at the United Methodist Church in Wagener. The program not only helps the clients who have come to rely on it, but has also revitalized the congregation that hosts the program.

When Rev. Jim Bennett became pastor of the United Methodist Church in Wagener, he soon realized that in some ways, Wagener was the "Siberia of Aiken County." There were few assistance programs for low income people; and for many, finding transportation to Aiken was difficult. Rev. Bennett first became acquainted with ACTS several years ago when he and his wife began operating a non-profit farm in Windsor with a 1.5 acre garden. Bennett had worked for *Southern Living* until 1994 and also had his own syndicated garden show, the *Weekend Gardener*. In 1992 he became an ordained Methodist pastor. The couple moved back to Aiken and started a non-profit farm. With the help of many volunteers, the Bennetts raised a variety of vegetables which were given to ACTS clients and other charities. With that background, Rev. Bennett began to think about an outreach program for the Wagener Methodist Church and immediately thought of the ACTS Senior Food program. He didn't have to look far for volunteers. Caroline Koveleski is the church secretary and also heads the new satellite program. "We started in November 2014 with about 14 clients," she said. "We didn't do any publicity at first, and then put

an article in the *Wagener Monthly*." The program now has about 40 participants with 4-5 new clients signing up each month. Most hear about the program by word of mouth. "They are so happy to get the food without having to travel to Aiken," Ms. Koveleski said. "We get thank you notes from people." Volunteers arrive early to package the food. Clients can pick up their food between 8 and 9:30 AM but many arrive early and socialize with friends. Volunteers carry bags of groceries to clients' cars for them.

While the satellite Senior Food program was a blessing to its clients in Wagener, it changed the church as well. People were excited about the idea of outreach programs and the feeling that even though the church was small, they could do more than they thought. With the success of the Wagener Senior Food Program, Rev. Bennett began to look for other outreach programs, and the church now works with the Epworth Home for Children and the Nomads program, which hosts RVers twice a year to work on projects. He feels the church has been revitalized through these programs. "It's been a lot of fun", he said. "I can't believe how blessed I am."



Grow a Row for ACTS!

Gardening season is here at last! This year, as you plant your garden, consider planting an extra row or two for ACTS. Our

clients love fresh produce as much as we do, and they rarely have access to it.

Rev. Jim Bennett and many volunteers have donated an abundance of vegetables to ACTS. Last year they brought in 2,500 pounds of tomatoes! They begin and end each work session with a prayer for those who will receive the produce.

If you have a garden, consider sharing your produce. A little extra from your garden can mean a lot to a hungry family!



Area Churches Together Serving (ACTS) Inc.
340 Park Avenue SW
Aiken, SC 29801

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ACTS Needs Volunteers!!

ACTS needs volunteers in many areas—which one is right for you?

- *Help customers & cashier in the Resale Store
 - *Pick up food and donations
 - *Help with special events
 - *Provide some refreshments for special events
 - *Sort donations
 - *Help prepare the newsletter for mailing
 - *Be a Senior Food Home Delivery substitute driver
- Call 649-3800 for more information

Save stamps, trees and Rosemary! Get your ACTS newsletter by e-mail! Just send your e-mail address to info@actsofaiken.org.

Would your group like a tour of ACTS? Do you need a speaker? Just call 649-3800!

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