



Jacob's Ladder



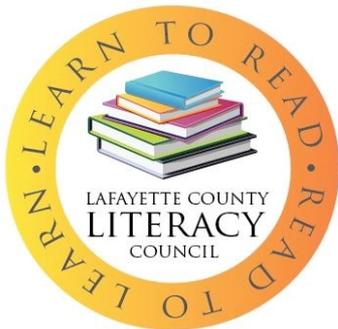
A NEWSLETTER OF OXFORD FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Rev. Roger Wilson, Pastor

Volume 22, Number 10, October 2022

Adult Basic Literacy Education

by Barbara Wortham



As the Adult Basic Literacy Education program (ABLE) quietly celebrates its 8th year of operation, we would like to reflect back on a few accomplishments.

We recently enrolled our eightieth (80) learner into the program. We have helped parents increase their literacy skills in order to bond with their children and help them with their homework. We have assisted learners with college entrance exams and college classwork. Many of them have gone on to better career opportunities. We have helped welcome new citizens to the U.S. and attended the graduations of our high school equivalency earners. The following testimonial was written by one of our former learners:

“The route of the traditional high school didn’t work for me. I had a brain injury in ninth grade that made school very difficult to actively participate in. Having a strong headache with a sensitivity to sound and difficulty focusing, the best decision at the time was home/online schooling. While this process wasn’t social it enabled me to further my learning, however, I wasn’t able to graduate with the credit I had earned. My senior year I returned to public school and started getting help from Ms. Wortham to prepare for the GED. Working with her throughout the schoolyear helped greatly as I was able to get my GED and a twenty-eight on the ACT. Not only did she help me get my high school education, but she also prepared me for college as I am currently a successful college student.”

Many thanks to all of the board members, directors, program administrators, coaches, community partners, and, most importantly,

our learners who have made the ABLE program a success. Lives have been changed for the better in our little community.



On August 27th, the Oxford First United Women in Faith hosted a showing of the film “Just Mercy.” The film center around lawyer Bryan Stevenson and his fight to free death row inmate Walter McMillian. The movie has an important message for today’s Christian community. In an interview with author Dominique Gilliard, Stevenson advises us about what the film tells us is our duty to the incarcerated.

“I hope it causes us to talk more about this need for redemption and grace to everyone. We can’t be believers and be so hopeless about people who fall down. Life without parole is a hopeless sentence, and we impose that sentence upon people who are drug-addicted and drug-dependent; people who have made poor choices around money. There has to be more hopefulness in the way we think about any person’s ability to recover, to be redeemed.”

Stevenson concluded his response regarding what he hopes the film leaves the church

wrestling with by saying, “We need to see people of faith in spaces where there’s a lot of despair and anguish, where there’s a lot of trauma and abuse. I can’t think of any place where that is more evident than in our jails and prisons. I want to see people of faith get re-engaged. The Gospels talk about not only feeding the hungry and clothing the naked and providing shelter to the homeless, but also about going into the jails and prisons and standing with the accused. And we haven’t done that in a way that I think we should. And I hope it still inspires a conversation that leads us into that place.”

Mass incarceration will be halted only by a moral awakening. Citizens nationwide must refuse to remain silent while entire communities are stigmatized, targeted, and destroyed by a system preying on the “least of these”. As followers of Christ, we must ask what our faith calls us to in this unprecedented era of mass incarceration. Collectively and individually, we must contemplate what bearing witness to the gospel in this critical moment entails. We are not all called to the same thing, but we are all called to something. Every congregation and follower of Christ has a role to play!

Every Christian and congregation can be involved in one of four ways: 1) Prevention, 2) Ministry to the incarcerated, 3) Walking alongside families with incarcerated loved ones, and 4) Reentry.

—Barbara Wortham



Bible Class in the Park: God wants us to go outside the church, and fellowship with other people. Recently OFUMC took its weekly Bible Study to Avents Park.



Birthday Celebration: After service on September 11th, the congregation held a surprise birthday party for First Lady, Yolanda Wilson, pictured above with Pastor Wilson at her side.



Love Gift: Members of the Oxford First UMC choirs presented Rodney Buford with an honorarium on September 18th for his service as unofficial Choir Director.

Manna From Heaven
 Serving free hot meal for
 seniors 60 plus, sick and
 shut-in
October 20, 2022
11:00am-1:00pm
Oxford First UMC
102 Dylan Ave
Oxford, Ms 38655
662-234-2943
Limited Seating
Pastor Roger Wilson ..
Pastor



Legal Presentation

North Mississippi Rural Legal Services (NMRLS) Elder Law Director, Al Cutturini will do a presentation on services available at NMRLS, particular for the elderly, on Saturday, October 8th at 11:30AM at Oxford First UMC.

Event legal topics: wills, powers of attorney, advance healthcare directives, taxpayer assistance, foreclosure, government benefits, debt collection, and more!

Jacob's Ladder is a monthly publication of Oxford First United Methodist Church. EDITOR/PUBLISHER: Clarence H. Franklin. ASSOCIATE EDITOR: Niler P. Franklin. All rights reserved. Announcements or articles should be submitted to Rev. Roger Wilson or submitted by e-mail directly to Franklin at chfrank@panola.com. Visit our website at www.OxfordFirst.org and click on the *Jacob's Ladder* link to view previous month's issues.

Combined Committees and Administrative Council Meeting

Beginning on **Saturday, October 8, 2022**, Oxford First will hold all Committee meetings on the same day followed by the Administrative Council meeting. The schedule is as follows:

9:00AM

- Board of Trustees
- SPPRC
- Finance

10:00AM

Administrative Council (with breakfast IF Finance approves funding)

Jacob's Ladder
P.O. Box 277
Oxford, MS 38655

PLACE
STAMP
HERE