

The Messenger

SOUP-ER SUNDAY

Our Sunday School classes completed their lessons on the life of Moses, including the Ten Commandments. We followed up with comparisons between Moses and Jesus and focused on John 3:16 to discuss why God sent Jesus to the world. As we continue through Lent, John 3: 17 will help us understand Jesus' amazing sacrifice for us all.



The classes sponsored the “Souper Bowl” Noise Offering on February 11th. The students chose the Osceola Food Pantry to receive the loose change offering and cans of soup (and other food items) were also collected. Thanks to the mission efforts of our children and youth, \$132.81 and 222 food items were donated to the Food Pantry!

Throughout Lent, the students will also be donating specific food items to the Food Pantry to assist with the Easter food distribution. Looking ahead, the kids will be making Easter crafts for the Easter boxes. They will also be participating in special Lenten Children’s Chats and participating in our palm procession on Palm Sunday!



ONLINE WORSHIP

Worshippers may attend services in person or on Zoom.

For the Zoom app use Meeting ID: 835 0070 8532 (Password: OPC)

or watch later via Osceola's Facebook page: www.facebook.com/OsceolaNJ



LENTEN CALENDAR

February 14 – Ash Wednesday Service – 7:00 p.m.

Service led by Rev. Roberta Arrowsmith, with special music by the Chancel Choir

February 21 – Lenten Soup Supper – 6:15 p.m.

Wednesday Evening Lenten Program - 7:00 p.m.

“The Witnesses of Holy Week: Pontius Pilate and his Wife”

February 28 – Lenten Soup Supper – 6:15 p.m.

Wednesday Evening Lenten Program - 7:00 p.m.

“The Witnesses of Holy Week: Peter”

March 6 – Lenten Soup Supper – 6:15 p.m.

Wednesday Evening Lenten Program - 7:00 p.m.

“The Witnesses of Holy Week: Judas Iscariot”

March 13 – Lenten Soup Supper – 6:15 p.m.

Wednesday Evening Lenten Program – 7:00 p.m.

“The Witnesses of Holy Week: Simon of Cyrene”

March 20 - Lenten Soup Supper – 6:15 p.m.

Wednesday Evening Lenten Program – 7:00 p.m.

“The Witnesses of Holy Week: Joseph of Arimathea”

March 28 - Maundy Thursday Service - 7:00 p.m.

Service led by the Rev. Roberta Arrowsmith, including Communion

March 29 – Good Friday - 2-6:30 p.m.

The Spirituality Center is self-guided and self-paced. It is offered to everyone as a place to come and contemplate the meaning of Christ’s sacrifice on one’s life.

The sanctuary will be open for private prayer.

March 31 - Easter Sunday









Sunrise Service - 6:30 a.m.

Service led by Osceola’s youth and young adults, followed by breakfast

Easter Worship Service - 10:00 a.m.

Service includes special music by the Chancel Choir, holy Communion, and an uplifting Easter message by the Rev. Roberta Arrowsmith

Lenten Countdown Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			Ash Wednesday 	Talk with your children about giving something up for Lent and why sacrifice is important.	Decide with your family what to give up for Lent - social media, eating out, etc.	Sacrifice your time by helping someone even if you are busy. A neighbor, friend, grandparent, etc.
First Sunday of Lent 	Start your day with family Bible time and prayer.	Pray for your siblings and ask God to help you show kindness to them when it's hard.	If you have young children, read the book " <u>Don't Forget to Remember</u> " by Ellie Holcomb	Decorate a small box for "almsgiving" and put in money to donate to a deserving person.	Bake some treats for someone special.	Deliver the treats you made the day before!
Second Sunday of Lent 	Start your day with family Bible time and prayer.	"Honor God with your body" by doing something healthy with your family!	Make a coin-covered cross (link in post or HERE)	Make a list of what you are grateful for today and have each family member do it too!	Pray for your pastor and other ministry team members at your church.	Watch a Christian movie together as a family.
Third Sunday of Lent 	Start your day with family Bible time and prayer.	Pray for a friend who is going through a hard time and send them a note of encouragement.	Do a random act of kindness for someone who wouldn't expect it.	Share one thing you love or appreciate about each of your family members.	Make Prayer Pretzels (recipe link in post or HERE)	Print out, color and sign <u>Easter cards</u> to send in the mail to family and friends!
Fourth Sunday of Lent 	Start your day with family Bible time and prayer.	Ask the Holy Spirit to change you and help you to follow Christ. Read John 14:23-31 together.	Clean up a mess without being asked.	Donate some gently loved items that you no longer need	Listen to Christian music together or sing a song about Jesus with your kids!	Take prayer requests from and pray for each member of your family.
Fifth Sunday of Lent 	Start your day with family Bible time and prayer.	Call or FaceTime a loved one who you won't be able to see at Easter.	Sacrifice by giving up screen time for the entire day and do something fun as a family instead.	Make a Lamb of God craft (instructions in the post or HERE)	Write a note to someone who has helped you grow in your faith to say thank you for their example!	Help with a chore that you don't like to do as an act of service to your family.
Palm Sunday Wave palm branches or similar and shout "Hosanna!" 	Compliment someone who isn't expecting it, following the example of Christ in Phil. 2:3-4	Make a crown of thorns craft (link in blog post or HERE).	Send or deliver the money in your almsgiving box to its recipient.	Maundy Thursday Go to a communion service at a church.	Good Friday Read about Jesus' death in Luke 23:26-42 as a family.	Holy Saturday Dye eggs together and talk about how Jesus brings us new life!

Resurrection Sunday! He is Risen! He is Risen Indeed!



SPIRITUALITY CENTER – GOOD FRIDAY

“Come away ...all by yourselves and rest a while.” (Mark 6:31)

Jesus knew the importance to make time to rest and meditate and have an intimate relationship with God.

On Good Friday, March 29, Osceola church will be set up as a Spirituality Center. A Spirituality Center is a place set apart to experience and experiment with ancient spiritual practices and contemporary resources for spiritual exploration and encounter with God. Like worship, it is a place for the head and the heart. It is a sacred space, holy ground and a time set apart. Those who come to the Center are invited to be comfortable, to rest and renew, to pray, to experiment with different spiritual disciplines such as writing prayers, listening to music while reading prayers and Biblical passages or praying the labyrinth.

The Spirituality Center is self-guided and self-paced. It is offered to everyone as a place to come and contemplate the meaning of Christ sacrifice on one’s life. The Center will be available Good Friday, March 29, 2:00 pm to 6:30 pm.

“Jesus knew the importance to make time to rest and meditate and have an intimate relationship with God.”

LINKS FOR COUNTDOWN CALENDAR ON PREVIOUS PAGE

- Find the instructions for the [Crown of Thorns craft mentioned in the calendar over at Catholic Icing](#)
- Find the instructions for the Lamb of God Cotton Ball craft mentioned in the calendar [at The Purposeful Mom \(#3 on the post\)](#)
- [Coin crosses craft](#) mentioned in the calendar
- Recipe for [Prayer Pretzels](#) from the calendar
- [Printable Easter cards](#) mentioned in the calendar

TENEBRAE SERVICE, MARCH 28, 2024

The word “Tenebrae” is Latin for “shadows” or “darkness.” It is a service of extinguishing candles, one after the other, as the events of Holy Week unfold. The final candle is the Christ candle, which is not extinguished but instead is removed from the church until Easter Sunday.

The term “Maundy” comes from the Latin phrase “mandatum novum” which means “new commandment,” and thus Maundy Thursday celebrates the new commandment that Jesus gave at the Last Supper, “Do this in remembrance of me.”

Our Tenebrae service will be held in the narthex gathered together at tables as Jesus and the disciples were that night so long ago. join us, Maundy Thursday, March 28, 2024 at 7:00 pm. in the narthex.





CHOOSING FAITH

The Youth Group's Lock-in was held from Friday, February 2 through Saturday, February 3. It was an exciting (and exhausting) night of games, snacks, and devotions. Our theme was "Choosing Faith" and the youth created canvas representations of their lives that are now displayed in the Youth Room. The Lock-In is a wonderful bonding opportunity for everyone as we spend an extended period of time together playing, laughing, creating, learning and eating together. It always ends with a VERY quiet (and sleepy) breakfast! Check out more photos of the Lock-in on Osceola's Facebook page.

Youth Group's "Fat Tuesday" meeting was snowed out, so we met on "Fat Thursday" instead. In addition to some pancake races and making doughnuts, we discussed the transition from Shrove Tuesday to Ash Wednesday and look forward to learning more about Lent. Our next meetings are scheduled for February 27, March 12, and March 19.



A NOTE FROM THE CLERK OF SESSION

A meeting of the congregation and corporation of Osceola Presbyterian Church was held on Sunday, February 18 following worship. The Annual Report for 2023 was received. Copies of the report are available on the table in the Narthex; the report is also available electronically.

The Session had its second meeting with Pastor Bobbie serving as Moderator. The February meeting was a brainstorming session, where ideas were elicited to consider how God will work through us to increase the ministry at Osceola.

As explained at the congregational meeting, the church needs both financial and human resources to continue its ministries. Session is exploring ways for both, including possibly joining with another congregation. The members and friends of Osceola are asked to join the Session in praying for wisdom in making these decisions.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating Committee will begin its work with a meeting on Sunday, March 3rd, following worship. There are openings for Elders and Deacons, if you are interested in serving as a leader.

There are also 3 openings for the Budget Committee, 2 for the Auditing Committee, and 3 for members of the congregation-at-large for next year's Nominating Committee. In addition, we are in need of someone to serve as the Assistant Financial Secretary (to take the place of Don Dodson, as he has moved out of state).

If you are interested in serving in any of these positions, please speak to Carol Riddlestorffer, Beth Parks, Fredy Reyes, or Rosa Tamayo.

BIBLE STUDY

The Adult Bible Study class will finish its study of Proverbs on Sunday, March 3rd, and will begin a study on the letter to James on Sunday, March 17th. Anyone wishing to join us is welcome. The class meets during the Sunday School hour, from 9:00-9:50 am.

**Please note that for the month of March, the class will only meet on March 3rd and 17th. The regular weekly study will resume on April 7th.*

GETTING TO KNOW YOU



At the end of January, Osceola enjoyed our “Brunch with Pastor Bobbie.” Following worship, we all enjoyed a bountiful potluck brunch and a warm time of fellowship to welcome our new part-time pastor into our church family. Check out more photos on Osceola’s Facebook page (February 15).

FOOD PANTRY UPDATE

The ever-rising food prices at the grocery stores have impacted our Food Pantry families as well as the amount of donations we have been receiving. Several of our members have included postings on their social media accounts and we have recently seen a great influx of food! It is such a blessing and the answer to prayer!

Our congregation came through with a generous response to the Sunday School’s “Souper Bowl” Noise Offering. Community members have been dropping off more donations at the homes of our Facebook posters. We were contacted by Brunner Elementary School in Scotch Plains and received their Super Bowl food drive donations. Several community members sent checks to assist our program and Clark’s ALJ High School will be sending us significant donations from their March food drive. It is a wonderful reminder – “ask and it shall be given unto you.”



Items needed:

- Canned fruit
- Canned pasta
- Cereal
- Pasta Sauce
- Canned beans
- Jelly
- Cleaning products
- Laundry detergent
- Paper products