



The Messenger

Osceola Presbyterian Church

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January 2025

Dear Friends,

Happy New Year! It's that time of the year to "ring out the old and ring in the new." Some of you will be glad to bid 2024 "good-bye." For others, this year has been one of joy and happiness. With the coming year, many will make New Year's Resolutions, in other words, promises to change.

Change is not always welcomed. It threatens us and challenges us, but it also brings new possibilities. Change is inevitable. The scriptures tell us of newness and change throughout the Bible. The prophet Isaiah tells us that the Lord declares, "See, the former things have come to pass, and new things I now declare (42:9). The spirit of God is always acting within the world. God acts in new ways to create new opportunities.

As Christians we have new life in Christ. "Whoever is in Christ is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold the new has come!" (2 Cor. 5:17). Let us rejoice! The gift of God's grace is always with us. Each day begins anew, offering us new possibilities to grow, to learn, to serve Christ. We have freedom to choose how we respond to the new opportunities that God sends our way. We are free to be kind, gracious, forgiving, accepting of others. In other words, we have opportunities to show the love of Christ to the world.

In book of Ezekiel God says, "A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you...(36:26). God's spirit is within us all. We need to be open to God's Word for us at this time and respond to God's calling. We all, you and me, need to be ready to let former things pass and new beginnings arise. For we who are in Christ have new life; we are a new creation.

Ring out the old! Ring in the new! The breath of God blows forward and onward. God bless you all.

Christ's Peace,

Bobbie

Pancakes, bacon and sausage, oh my!



Get ready! And be sure to save the date for our upcoming Pancake Breakfast to be held on Saturday, March 1 from 9 AM to 11 AM. The event will be held in Fellowship Hall and be open to the public. Tickets will be needed.

With the theme of Mardi Gras, French for Fat Tuesday, where rich foods are eaten in preparation for the fasting season of Lent, we'll be serving up a hearty breakfast with all the fixin's.

We'll not only be serving up hot pancakes, but we'll be serving up a lot of fun! Diners will have an opportunity to win one of five door prizes, buy Basket Raffle tickets and try their luck at a 50/50 drawing.

Kathy Terzo, has amazingly organized and completed over 50 baskets for the Basket Raffle and the baskets are chock-full of wonderful, themed items.

Our grill masters are lined up, but volunteers will be needed, so keep an eye out for sign-up sheets in the usual place - on the bookshelf outside the church office.

Tickets go on sale Sunday, February 2 in the church lobby and will continue each week until the event. Advanced ticket prices are: Adults: \$10; Children under 10: \$5 and Children under 3: free. Tickets purchased at the door will be: Adults: \$12; Children under 10: \$7 and Children under 3: free.

We hope to sell tickets via our website and are investigating the possibility of that, so we'll keep you posted.

So, mark your calendars, spread the word to family and friends! And plan to attend our Pancake Breakfast & Basket Raffle Mardi Gras Party! See you there!

Deacons need your help

Osceola's Deacons are looking for ways to fulfill their role in nurturing and tending to the needs of our congregation. We hope our church members will consider ways to help. Three sign-up sheets will soon be posted on the bulletin board near the Narthex.

- **Meal Providers** – sign-up if you would be willing to be contacted to provide a meal for someone in our congregation. We would let you know the specifics when you are called. Remember, meals may be homemade or purchased! If needed, we can arrange the delivery of the meal.
- **Drivers** – sign-up if you would be willing to provide transportation for someone who may need a ride to church, a doctor's visit, etc. We would contact you when a request is made known to us.
- **Needs** – this sheet would allow church members to make us aware of specific needs you or someone in our church family has. We cannot guarantee results but would make an effort to help meet these needs.

Please prayerfully consider ways that you may help us "tend to the flock"!

January Food Pantry Collection

During the month of January we are having a food drive to benefit our Food Pantry. Below is a list of what our needs are this month. We will post weekly store specials that are available in the weekly email blast. Please put your donations in outside container or bring your items to church on a Sunday and put them in the Food Pantry cart.

The food donations will be blessed Sunday, February 2, 2025, at our 10 a.m. worship service.

Items always needed: canned fruit, jelly, canned pasta (i.e. Chef Boyardee), tomato products (diced, pureed, sauce, etc.), pasta sauce, paper products (paper towels, toilet tissues, tissues, napkins, etc.), and cleaning products.

Notes from Session:

- Commission Chairs are asked to begin compiling their 2024 ANNUAL REPORT. Deadlines for submission will be sent in an email blast.
- The Congregation and Corporation of Osceola Presbyterian Church are called to meet on Sunday, February 23, 2025, at 11:15 a.m. in the Sanctuary for the purpose of accepting the Annual Report, and to receive the 2025 operating budget.

By Order of the Session

Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee (Carol Riddlestorffer, Chair; Liz Coffey-Dawe, Amy Green, Kathy Terzo, Shirley Augenstein, Samantha Leff and Francesca Germano) will begin their work next month, to fill open positions for officers for the 2025-2026 term. We ask each member of the congregation to prayerfully consider how they will serve the Lord at Osceola in the coming year.

Christmas Greetings

Osceola members were invited to share Christmas greetings with our church families by displaying cards on the Narthex bulletin board. Here's a list of those sending their good wishes.

Pastor Bobbie Arrowsmith

Jim & Alice Dietze

Jimmy Dietze, Jr.

Linda Dodson

Fragner Family (Gina, Peyton, Brianna and Aria)

Nancy Iaria

Lewis Family (Kathy, Patrick, Christina & Shannon)

Beth Parks

Tim & Lee Pretz

Carol, Jim & Ursula Riddlestorffer

Kathy Terzo

Sunday School Update

Osceola's Sunday School classes learned more about Advent and the birth of our Savior throughout December. The classes prepared Christmas ornaments to be included in the December Food Pantry's boxes and held a "birthday party" for Jesus as we finished out our year's activities. Our Sunday School students also led the lighting of the Advent wreath each week during worship and enjoyed special No classes were held on December 29th but resumed on January 5th. Lessons will span from Epiphany, complete our study of Old Testament figures who were saved, and then focus on the beginning of Jesus's ministry.



Noise Offering



The Sunday School classes will be sponsoring a "Noise Offering" during worship on Sunday, February 9th. This "Souper Bowl" event will include a collection of canned soup (or other canned goods) in addition to the loose change offering. The recipient of the monetary offering will be chosen by the students soon and announced to the congregation.

Youth Group Celebrates Christmas



As we prepared for Christmas, our youth made special treat bowls and homemade Christmas cards to be included in the December food boxes for Osceola Food Pantry. Of course, all the candy was checked out for quality purposes!



The Youth Group’s annual Christmas Mystery Event was back on the road this year as the youth were divided into teams, solved clues to determine destinations, and visited various sites in and around Clark. Their stops allowed them to sing Christmas carols to church members and others to obtain “nutritional fortification.”

We also caroled over the phone to some members who live a little farther away. The evening always ends with a stop to a Nativity scene where a prayer is offered along with singing “O Come All Ye Faithful.” It’s a wonderful chance to remind us all of the “reason for the season” as we have fun spreading some holiday joy! (Check out more photos on Osceola’s Facebook page, December 30, 2024.)

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Youth Group Celebrates (continued)



The Youth Group kicked off 2025 with a post-Christmas party at the Dietze's that included lots of games, snacks and penguin visits! Three Youth Group alumni also joined the fun!

The next regular Youth Group meeting will be Tuesday, January 21st from 7:00-8:30 pm. We're also looking forward to a Lock-in early in February. Everyone is looking forward to an exciting (and exhausting) night!!

Food Pantry Update

Our December distribution includes lots of special touches. All of our families received their basic boxes, a bag of holiday "fixin's," and a \$25 ShopRite gift card. The families also received a church 2025 Osceola calendar, a bowl of holiday treats with homemade cards (courtesy of our Youth Group), a Nativity ornament (courtesy of our Sunday School), and a tin of Christmas cookies (courtesy of Osceola's bakers). The families were invited to select new items of donated items collected throughout the year and an assortment of Christmas items. Additionally,



16 children from our families also received Christmas gifts from the Deacons' Angel Tree projects. Thanks to a special donation of small appliances (made by someone through our social media contacts), each family was able to select a brand new appliance. Additionally, we provided food and frozen turkeys and Angel Tree gifts to families at the Jardine Academy.

Special thanks to Osceola's talented bakers that enabled us to add a very special and sweet holiday touch to our Christmas distribution.

Food Pantry Needs

Looking ahead, Osceola's Food Pantry needs:

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|-------------------|-----------------|----------|
| Canned fruit | Canned pasta | Jelly |
| Cleaning products | Paper products | Crackers |
| Pasta sauce | Tomato products | Pasta |

Carols, Cookies & Community

Osceola's first annual Carols, Cookies & Community event was a joyful day of music, fellowship, hot beverage bars and cookies! Hope everyone will join us again next December!



OPC website now has on-line giving for donations

OPC embraces “tech” of the 21st century!

The 21st century is the current century in the Gregorian calendar, it began on January 1, 2001 and will end December 31, 2100.

The term "21st century" may refer to 21st century skills, which are a set of skills that are considered important in the modern world.



These skills include:



- **Flexibility:** The ability to adapt plans when needed
- **Leadership:** The ability to motivate a team to achieve a goal
- **Initiative:** The ability to start projects and plans on one's own
- **Productivity:** The ability to remain efficient in a world of distractions
- **Social skills:** The ability to meet & network with others for mutual benefit

Let's use those skills to build up Osceola Presbyterian Church! Remember, go to our website <https://www.osceolapresbyterianchurch.com/> for on-line giving via credit card or Google Pay.



Give

<h3>BY MAIL</h3> <p>Osceola Presbyterian Church 1689 Raritan Road Clark, NJ 07066</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Every gift counts!• Your contribution matters! <p>Thank you!</p> <hr/>	<h3>YOUR TIME</h3> <p>Share your talents with us! Use your skills to help others!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sing the choir or play an instrument.• Lead a Bible study or a devotion.• Help with planning or maintenance.• Send card, visit shut-ins with the Deacons.• Mission events like <u>Blog Against Hunger</u>. <hr/>	<h3>DONATIONS</h3> <p>Provide for the <u>Food Pantry</u>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Needed non-perishable food items• Volunteer with sorting and monthly food distribution <p>Support Our Outreach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Friendly's FUNraising</u>• <u>Clothing Drive</u>• <u>Yard Sale</u> <p><i>Check <u>Facebook</u> or call office to plan a drop-off.</i></p> <hr/>	<h3>ONLINE</h3> <p>Online giving is available using credit card and Google Pay.</p> <p>Donate</p> <p>Thank you!</p> <hr/>
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