

Osceola Presbyterian Church  
1689 Raritan Road  
Clark, NJ 07066

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# The Messenger

## CELEBRATING EIGHT YEARS OF GIVING

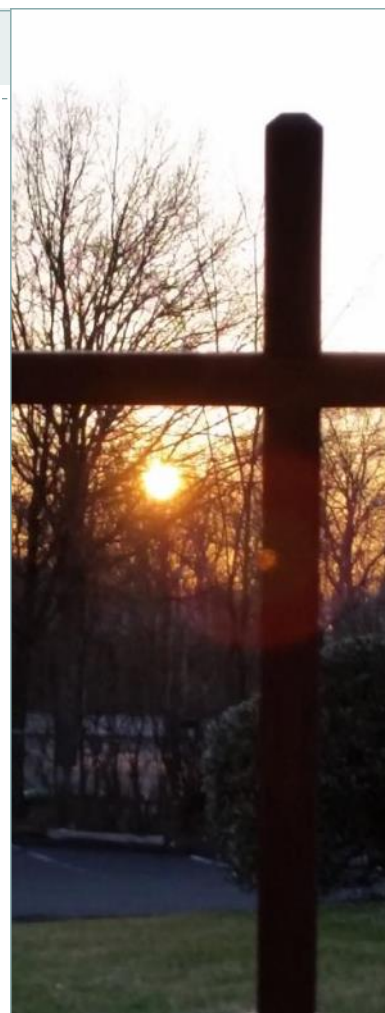
September marks eight years since Osceola expanded our Food Pantry program. That's 96 months of food distributions and we'll reach distribution #100 by the end of 2023! We continue to provide food for those in need and are averaging 23 families per month, as well as "emergency boxes" for those who reach out to the church. This year we set a new record by giving out 13,437 pounds of food – over 6½ tons! And the grand total for the eight years is 87,712 pounds! We've also given out \$15,460 in gift cards over the eight years. What a blessing!

In addition to providing food, we have worked hard to develop relationships with our families. This has enabled the program to provide for individual needs and we have recognized ways to better serve those in the program. Over the years, we have added many special touches, such as including paper and cleaning products, health care items, holiday foods, and a variety of treats. Each August, school supplies are given out. Donations of non-food items such as used clothing, household items, furniture, appliances and toys have been made available for selection by our families.

The expanded Food Pantry has truly been a church-wide ministry. Our congregation has been extremely generous in donations of food items and financial support. Many members have also donated specialty items, provided recipes for us to distribute, and baked Christmas cookies. Osceola's Mission Commission regularly provides funds or donates the Advent/Lenten offerings to the Food Pantry. Osceola's Deacons include the Food Pantry children in their annual Angel Tree gift program in addition to their coin offerings, Reverse Advent Calendar and Picnic food collections. The Sunday School children have held Noise Offerings, collected and sorted food, and made seasonal crafts to be included in our food boxes. The Youth Group are our expert date-checkers as well as supplying Thanksgiving pies, pasta dinners, and holiday treat bags and cards for Christmas and Easter.

Osceola Food Pantry has also made our church more visible in our community. Many outside groups, including Arthur L. Johnson High School, scout groups, local businesses, and sister churches such as First Pres. of Cranford and St. Agnes R.C. Church (with the Knights of Columbus), have been regular donors. Our presence on social media has also brought in a steady flow of food donations. Thank you to Osceola members who have spread the word about the Food Pantry and reached out to their contacts!

Thank you for your amazing support! Please continue to pray for this wonderful mission of our church. We are truly feeding our brothers and sisters as we serve the Lord. **HAPPY 8th ANNIVERSARY TO US!**



## 80<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY PLANNING

Osceola Presbyterian Church was chartered in the fall of 1943 which means it's time to celebrate our 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary! A special worship service will be led by our church leaders on Sunday, October 22<sup>nd</sup> followed by a luncheon in Fellowship Hall. Plans are underway and a brief meeting will be held after worship on Sunday, September 24<sup>th</sup> for anyone interested in assisting with the preparations, or contact Carol Riddlestorffer or Alice Dietze. **SAVE THE DATE** and join us as we praise God for His faithfulness in 80 years of ministry, mission, and fellowship!



## RISE AGAINST HUNGER

Save the date! Sunday, October 1 will be the sixth time Osceola partners with Rise Against Hunger to help fight hunger around the world.

After worship on World Communion Sunday, volunteers will come together to pack 10,000 nutritious meals that will be sent wherever they are most needed. In previous years, meals have been sent to Sri Lanka, Timor-Leste and Haiti.

If you would like to volunteer, please sign up online at <http://bit.ly/RiseOPC> or in person on the day of the event.

Thank you to the Deacons for providing refreshments for this event and everyone who donated to pay for the meals that we will be packing and sending to people in need.

*“After worship on Oct. 1, volunteers will come together to pack 10,000 nutritious meals that will be sent wherever they are most needed.”*

### WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sept. 24 – Rev. Roberta Arrowsmith

Oct. 1 – World Communion Sunday, Rev. Dr. Chris Belden, Communion

Oct. 8 – Rev. Roberta Arrowsmith

Oct. 15 – Rev. Roberta Arrowsmith

Oct. 22 – Osceola’s 80th Anniversary Service, led by church leaders

Oct. 29 – Rev. Roberta Arrowsmith

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](http://www.facebook.com/OsceolaNJ)

### A WORD FROM THE SESSION

Session met on September 6th, and went full swing into planning ministries for the fall!

Our Pastoral Search Committee continued their work over the summer months, and will start reviewing resumes and setting up interviews; more information will be shared as it becomes available.

The Rise Against Hunger food packing event, coordinated by the Mission Commission, was approved by Session to be held on October 1st following worship.

Osceola will be celebrating its 80th anniversary this year, and we will have a special worship service and fellowship time on Sunday, October 22nd.

A new website is being launched, and Osceola will have a new email address...stay tuned!

God is moving in our midst, and exciting things are happening at Osceola!

Please keep the elders, and other leaders, in your prayers as they discern God’s will for us!

*Blessings,*

*Carol Riddlestorffer, Clerk of Session*

## SUPPORTING OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD



The Sunday School children will be filling shoe boxes once again to send to children around the world, spreading some joy and the Gospel. The boxes must be delivered in mid-November to our collection site so we will begin collecting items (and boxes) now and the children will be packing boxes by early November.

Below is a list of items that we collect and a list of items not to include. You may purchase and donate any of these items and bring them to in-person worship or contact Alice Dietze ([adietze@verizon.net](mailto:adietze@verizon.net) or 732-574-8956) to have the items picked up. To make it even easier, you may instead make a monetary donation in either of these two ways:

- Write a check for \$10 per box to cover shipping made payable to “Samaritan’s Purse” with “Operation Christmas Child” on the memo line and place it in the offering plate or mail to the church
- Write a check to “Osceola Presbyterian Church” with “Shoebox items” on the memo line to be used to purchase items to fill the shoeboxes. Checks may be placed in the offering plate or given to Alice Dietze. We have shoppers ready!

### ITEMS NEEDED:

- Empty shoeboxes!
- Small toys (balls, stuffed animals, dolls, cars, puzzles, etc.)
- School supplies (we have already received generous donations of school supplies, but these are the items most requested)
- Hygiene items (bar soap, toothbrushes, combs, washcloths, hair accessories)
- Small clothing items (socks, gloves or mittens, hats, scarves, tee shirts, flip-flops)

- Useful items for older children (sewing kits, fishing supplies, small tools, flashlights and batteries)

### DO NOT INCLUDE:

- Liquids or lotions
- Food items or candy
- Toothpaste
- War-related items (toy guns, military figures, knives)
- Breakable items
- Aerosol cans

### ADULT MINISTRIES

The Thursday morning Bible study group began a study of the book of Proverbs, which continues. We welcome you to join us any Thursday, from 10 am to 12 pm in the Narthex. If you have questions, please contact Carol Riddlestorffer.

Adult Ministries had an “ice cream social” on August 8th in Fellowship Hall, accompanied by the movie *A Dog’s Purpose*.

18 folks attended; 15 had ice cream, and 12 stayed for the movie, which was very well-received! Jane had secured a gift card from Shop Rite for the ice cream; leftover ice cream was taken home by participants. We hope to have another one in the near future! Stay tuned!


Adult Ministries shared a Bible Study opportunity through BSF (Bible Study Fellowship). It is a bible study with other Christians outside of Osceola on the Book of John, and you can attend in person or via Zoom.

The Adult Ministries Commission feels it is an excellent study. The cost of materials is ~\$35. If any member is hesitant to participate due to this cost, please contact TJ Elgin or Carol Riddlestorffer for assistance.


## WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY

World Communion Sunday, originally called World Wide Communion Sunday, was first celebrated at Shadyside Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh, Pa. 90 years ago. It began as an attempt to bring churches together in a service of Christian unity. In 1940, it was recognized by the Department of Evangelism of the Federal Council of Churches.

Today, World Communion Sunday is celebrated on the first Sunday in October around the globe. It is a reminder that all who believe are welcome to share the body and blood of Christ, and all are welcome at God's table.



Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty." (John 6: 35)



## BACK TO SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday School classes began on Sunday, September 17th. The first week began with a "Welcome Back Breakfast". Our theme for the year will focus on John 3:

16-17 as we learn of God's love through the Scripture and special mission projects. We hope all kids in grades 1-High School will come out and learn more about God and His love for us all!

All children are invited to join us in Sunday School each Sunday from 9:00-9:50 am. Registration forms may be obtained from the Sunday School teachers or by contacting Alice Dietze (732-574-8956 or [adietze@verizon.net](mailto:adietze@verizon.net)).



## YOUTH GROUP RETURNS

Osceola's Youth Group will kick-off a new year on Tuesday, September 26th. There will be a barbecue at the Dietze home from 6:00-8:30 pm that will include a time to get acquainted, some fun games and a dip in the hot tub.

Regular meetings are scheduled for October 10th and October 24th from 7:00-8:30 pm at the church.

Any youth in grades 6-12 is welcome to join us. Please contact Alice Dietze (732-574-8956 or [adietze@verizon.net](mailto:adietze@verizon.net)) for more information.



## MISSION GIVING

Osceola recently made financial donations to Pedals for Progress and Samaritan's Purse.

Pedals for Progress is a New Jersey-based non-profit that rescues bicycles destined for U.S. landfills and ships them to developing nations where they help people get to work and school.

Samaritan's Purse is a nondenominational evangelical Christian organization that offers physical and spiritual aid to people around the world. We chose to support their U.S. disaster relief efforts after being touched by their response to the wildfires in Hawaii last month.

The Mission Commission continues to seek suggestions of organizations or individuals who are showing the love of Jesus Christ in the world. If you would like to make a recommendation for the monthly mission giving program, please contact a commission member or visit <https://bit.ly/OPCmission>

## A TASTE OF THE NATION

During Fellowship Hour each Sunday throughout the summer, Osceola held their second “Taste of the Nation” event.

For each of the 10 weeks, volunteers brought in food iconic to specific states. We learned a lot about these states and also learned more about the travels of our fellow church members. A BIG THANK YOU to all who shared in the fun by preparing food and to our resident “fact-finder.”

We hope to visit even more states (21 down and 29 to go) in our travels next summer!

