



The Messenger

Osceola Presbyterian Church

1689 Raritan Road, Clark NJ 07066

☎ 908-276-5300 ✉ pastorosceola@gmail.com

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“For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving”

1 Timothy 4:4

The apostle Paul wrote a letter or two in his later years to a young man named Timothy. Timothy was a fellow preacher and was much younger than Paul. This mentoring relationship between Paul and Timothy gives us a rare glimpse into the kind of instruction that a young man might receive from an older veteran like Paul. These letters contain advice and instruction and often encouragement, as we read here in verse 4:4.

It's a great message for the season of Thanksgiving - a message of giving thanks for everything that God created. But note that the only way to live this kind of a thankful life is to actively receive all things with thanksgiving. It doesn't suggest that everything in this world is easy to give thanks for, but rather that if you make a point to receive even rejected things with a thanksgiving attitude, everything will be received as good.

November is always a month for me that conjures up images of family gatherings - turkey feasts, football games on TV, Trivial Pursuit battles and a songfest with the whole family around the piano to sing. So, whether I will be sitting at a great feast with scads of relatives and friends surrounding me, or whether I will be sitting at a small table with a small meal by myself or just my closest family or friends, I intend to receive the gifts of this world, as difficult as they may be sometimes, with an attitude of gratitude and thanksgiving. Thanks be to God. My prayer is that you will too.

Take time this month and ponder the many ways God's grace has been extended to us.

The blessings of God be with you,

Bobbie

A Note from the Mission Commission

Rise Against Hunger is an international hunger relief agency driven by the vision of a world without hunger. Their focus is getting people involved in hands-on work and engaging local volunteers in meal-packing events. During these events, thousands of meals are packed and shipped around the world to areas suffering from chronic hunger.



On World Communion Sunday, October 6th, Osceola members, friends, neighbors and students from Kumpf Middle School came together to pack 10,000 meals with Rise Against Hunger. This marked our seventh meal-packing event. During the event, Fellowship Hall was filled with energy as more than fifty volunteers put on their gloves and hairnets and worked at their different stations. The exciting bang of a gong signaled each 1,000 meals we had packed and each time the bangs seemed to be closer and closer together as we were eager to reach our goal. As we celebrated the tenth gong, signaling our ten-thousandth meal, the Deacons provided a delicious lunch for all volunteers to enjoy. Let us forever give thanks that we do not know hunger the way that so many in the world do.

The Mission Commission is excited to announce where the meals we packed are being shipped as soon as we get the news.

We would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to everyone that participated in this year's event, helped set up, clean up or helped prepare lunch. This year, we especially want to highlight the participation of our congregation members and friends in our various fundraising and fellowship events including our Friendly's Fundraising series, Clothing Drive, Pasta Lunch and more!

Well done good and faithful servants!

Recapping The Special Congregational Meeting

A special meeting of the congregation and corporation of Osceola Presbyterian Church took place on Sunday, Nov. 3, following the morning worship service. The meeting, which was also broadcast via Zoom, was called to discuss important matters including revisions to the church's by-laws and the approval of the Nominating Committee's slate.

The meeting was opened with prayer by Rev. Roberta Arrowsmith, Moderator, at 11:15 a.m. After confirming a quorum with 25 members in attendance, the body reviewed and approved the meeting's agenda.

Carol Riddlestorffer, chair of the Nominating Committee, presented the slate of candidates for various church committees. The committee nominated Jim Dietze, Jr. and Bob Cunningham to serve on the Auditing Committee, and Shirley Augenstein, Samantha Leff, and Francesca Germano as members-at-large on the Nominating Committee. The motion was unanimously approved.

Pastor Bobbie led the discussion on proposed changes to the church's by-laws, specifically regarding the frequency and content of congregational meetings. The proposed revision called for reducing the number of regular congregational meetings from three to two per year. The revised schedule would include:

- ****February**** for approving changes to the pastor's terms of call, presenting annual reports from the Treasurer, Financial Secretary, and Auditors, and receiving the operational budget.
- ****May**** for electing Ruling Elders, Deacons, and committees.

Following some discussion, including clarification that the church's fiscal year will remain unchanged, the motion to accept the revisions was approved unanimously.

Pastor Bobbie also announced that the church will host a celebration luncheon on Sunday, November 17, which will feature a budget presentation by Bob Cunningham, illustrating how funds are allocated, with food provided by the Youth Group.

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m. after a closing prayer by Pastor Bobbie.

Adult Bible Study Opportunity

"Season's Greetings" is a collection of letters from the "minor characters" of the Nativity, and will be the basis of our fall/Advent bible study, beginning Sunday, Nov. 17th at 9:00 a.m. in the Conference Room, with an overview. Pastor Bobbie and Carol Riddlestorffer will share in the leadership of this study. Please join us!

A Stewardship Message

“out of the believer’s heart shall flow rivers of Living Waters.” (John 7:38)

This year’s Stewardship Campaign is in full swing. Our theme is Out of the Believer’s Heart Flows Rivers of Living Water. Our faith narrative is filled with allusions to water. We sing of blessings flowing, peace like a river, and fountains flowing deep and wide. We read of great floods and mighty seas parting, water miraculously changed into wine, and of baptisms in the in Jordan River.

Once creeks have merged into a river, it’s impossible to know where the separate drops of water originated. As each stream contributes its water, the river becomes fuller, stronger, and more powerful, tugging the water in a single, relentless current to the sea.

Like streams and rills that converge and become rivers, the officers, boards and committees of the Osceola Presbyterian Church (OPC) are striving to flow seamlessly into the single river that is the church. And we need the whole congregation to be part of the streams of living water.

Our goal is to become that single, powerful, life-sustaining river—one church, with God’s Spirit giving us all life. We are all working together to “Grow Christ’s Church Deep and Wide.”

Stewardship Sunday is Nov. 17. A sandwich luncheon will be held in Fellowship Hall after worship. Bob Cunningham will do a narrative presentation of the budget.

Carols, Cookies & Community

Save the date and come to Osceola’s new music program, “Carols, Cookies & Community,” at 2 pm in the Sanctuary on Sunday, Dec.15. The program will include a variety of music presentations and a carol sing-along followed by cookies and other holiday treats. You won’t need a ticket but there will be a freewill offering, and we hope you will bring some friends to share the Christmas spirit!



Anyone interested in performing (solo or in groups, adults and children, and instrumentalists too) can speak to Dawn Stegner or sign-up in the Narthex. There will also be a sign-up sheet for cookie donations for the event too.

Deck the Halls

Everyone is invited to help us “Deck the Halls” on Saturday, November 30. We will meet at the church at 2:00 pm to decorate the Sanctuary and hallways for Advent and Christmas. Carols and refreshments will be available. Many hands make light “fa-la-la-labor!”



2024 Advent Journal: “And He Shall be Called...”

We go by names: Sarah, Doris, Bob, David, Michelle. Names tell us much. “What’s in a name,” asks Juliet, “a rose by any other name would smell as sweet.” Ah, but would it still be a rose? Paul’s states in his letter to the Philippians that, “at the name of Jesus, every knee shall bend, on heaven and on earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.” (2:10-11) At the name of Jesus, the whole world shifts on its axis, changes, is transformed into the kingdom of God. We end our prayers by saying sometimes that “we pray in Jesus’ name.”

What power is in a name! This Advent season we will be pondering and praying the rich, very rich, diverse names of Jesus, names by which his followers address Jesus, and by which Jesus designated himself. The First Sunday of Advent is Dec. 1. You can pick up your journal on Wednesday, Nov. 27 at our evening Thanksgiving Service or on Sunday, Dec. 1.

Youth Group Update

Osceola’s Youth Group mixes lessons, service projects and lots of fun! The youth baked lots of goodies for Osceola’s Yard Sale and also had some Halloween fun.



On Nov. 5, the youth made chocolate-covered pretzels to raise funds to be used to purchase Thanksgiving pies for our Food Pantry. They will meet on Nov. 19 to transport the filled Operation Christmas Child shoe boxes to the drop-off site and assist there. During this month of thanks, we are thankful for our youth!

Worship In Person Or On Zoom

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)

Sunday School Update

This fall, our Sunday School children have been focused on John 3: 17 and ways that God Saves those who love Him. They have learned more from the Old Testament as we talked about Joseph, Jeremiah and David.

Osceola's Sunday School families presented a feast of ethnic breads during worship on World Communion Sunday and the children led a blessing of the breads. After worship, our volunteers during Rise Against Hunger snacked on the breads and toppings.



Later in October, the Sunday School classes sponsored a Noise Offering on Oct. 19. The children chose to donate the \$153.65

collected to offset the cost of a new internet router for our church. Thanks to everyone who supported this mission effort!

The classes will be busy in the coming weeks filling shoe boxes for Operation Christmas Child. These boxes will be sent to children all over the world. Each box is a way to show God's love and help spread the Good News of the Gospel. Watch for the boxes to be blessed during worship on Nov. 17!

Join Us Thanksgiving Eve

Osceola will be having a Thanksgiving Eve service on Wednesday, Nov. 27 at 7 p.m. If you are not heading "over the river and through the woods," come out and join us as we offer thanks to God for his bountiful goodness.



There's Still Time!

There's still time to donate items for Operation Christmas Child as our Sunday School children will be filling shoe boxes once again to send to children around the world, spreading some joy and the Gospel.



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 church or contact Alice Dietze (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

Food Pantry Update

Osceola Food Pantry has continued our monthly outdoor distributions, providing much-needed food to our families. We provide “monthly specials”, and paper products were given out in October. Each month, tables are set up in Fellowship Hall for our families to make selections from donated used clothing and household items. This month we will display a variety of donated new items and Christmas items that may be used by our families for holiday gifts.



The generous support of Osceola’s members has allowed the Food Pantry Committee to plan on providing additional “holiday fixin’s” to be provided to all our client families in November and December. Extra holiday boxes will also be prepared for several families from the Jardine Academy and individuals known to our congregation. In addition, turkeys or ShopRite gift cards will be given out with all our Thanksgiving and Christmas food baskets.

To add some special holiday touches, Osceola’s Youth Group will be donating apple and pumpkin pies in November.

We will once again be asking Osceola’s famous bakers to donate Christmas cookies for December. If you are willing to bake at least 4 dozen Christmas cookies (or donate some bought specialty cookies) by December 8, please add your name to the sign-up sheet in the Narthex or contact Alice Dietze (732-574-8956 or adietze@verizon.net). Help by “baking spirits bright!”



Each of the children of our Food Pantry families will also receive a Christmas present in December, courtesy of the Osceola Deacons’ Angel Tree project. Look for the tree in the Narthex in mid-November.



November and December are particularly busy months for our Food Pantry, but the spirit of giving is strong and brings “tidings of great joy!” Praise God!!

FOOD ITEMS NEEDED:

canned fruit	jelly	pasta sauce	tomato products
canned pasta	cooking oil		

LOOKING AHEAD – HOLIDAY ITEMS:

instant potatoes	stuffing mix	canned pumpkin
sweet potatoes/yams	chicken broth	juice
muffin mix	gravy	baking products (flour, sugar)
dessert mixes (pudding and Jello)		

We also accept donations of frozen turkeys