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“Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.” James 1:27

COVID-19: Serving the Needy in Jesus’ Name

by Pastor Bill Slack

The River of Life Food Pantry has been a part of our diaconal ministry practically since the church began. It has evolved over the years from an occasional ministry to its present form, serving the community twice a month on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of the month.

While the distribution itself is about 2 hours, far more hours are needed for that distribution to take place. Orders from NORWESCAP (our primary food provider) have to be placed, food pickups arranged, other sources of food (of which there are quite a few) coordinated with, as well as records of our distribution being maintained and updated and reports filed with NORWESCAP. (<https://norwescap.org/>)

Along with those responsibilities, we have a few folks who are on “housing” support – which means they have to do community service. The hours they put in also need to be recorded and reported. In all of this, we thank the Lord for providing Stefanie Dowson, our Food Pantry

Coordinator extraordinaire! She has been using her administrative gifts to make all of this happen, while holding down a full time job, and sharing life with her husband Robert, who is also her “right hand man” in this ministry!

Before Corona, we would typically have about 110 to 120 family units come to the pantry. In that context, our facility would be “re-fitted” to accommodate those folks who came for food. Tables would be set up with the items on it, and a line would be formed through which people would pass, collecting the items they wanted. Prior to the start of the pantry, I would give a short Gospel presentation and pray for the ministry. During the event, I would be available for prayer as well. In addition, we have our own “Heaven & Hell” machine – a copy of the Boardwalk Chapel’s device which is up and running as well.

Continue reading on our website: opcstm.org/2020/08/13/river-of-life-food-pantry-how-one-church-is-serving-the-needy-in-jesus-name/



OPC Disaster Response Update

For disaster response, keeping up with current events is essential and this is our usual busy time of year! We are continually communicating within the OPC as well as other denominations where reports come in of those affected by weather and other disasters. The Lord knew we would need a large body of believers to bear one another’s burdens! Here’s what we’re working on:

- **Tropical Storm Isaias** hit the East Coast of the United States last week. OPC Disaster Response Coordinator, David Nakhla is headed to Maryland where he plans to visit a family whose home had several inches of rain rush inside as a result of Isaias.
- **A wind storm known as a “derecho”** with near 100 mph winds hit the midwest region earlier this week. News outlets are reporting widespread damage as well as some deaths. We are working with the Presbytery of the Midwest for an assessment of damages.
- **Requests for COVID-19 aid continue to come in to OPC Disaster Response.** The pandemic is continuing to severely affect African countries. We’ve received another request from our brothers and sisters in the Africa Evangelical Presbyterian Church (AEPC) in Kenya.

- **Flooding in Midland, MI.** We are nearly three months into our work at the home of Glenn and Michelle Moots in Midland. Work is progressing, but we have a few needs there. **Over the next few weeks, we will be needing HVAC installers.** Contact midlandvolunteers@opc.org. Please consider donating to this fund: GIVE.OPC.ORG.

From the Short-Term Mission Fields



Boardwalk Chapel

The summer has been going very well! The Chapel has had some cancellations from groups, but they still have some church groups coming in and out. They are very thankful that, despite COVID-19, they have seen many people open to talking with the staff. They have had street preaching, as well, which has gone extremely

well, with thousands of people hearing the gospel every day. **The Boardwalk Chapel 2020 Evangelism Conference:** August 24th - 29th. The week is all about growing in Evangelism and is led by Dr. Henry Krabbendam, Chris Byrd, and Rev. Al Baker! Please contact boardwalkchapel@gmail.com to reserve a bed!

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