



S.T.O.R.M. REPORT

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Short Term Outreach, Relief & Missions

A Newsletter From the Office of the Short-Term Missions and Disaster Response Coordinator

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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

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.

That was then... This is now... Owing to Corona, we cannot have that crowd in our building. So we have had to improvise. Now everyone coming for food must remain outside, and line up down the street. We have a sound system set up for announcements and to pray with the people as the ministry begins.

Read more on this story: 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 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 (AEP) 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. Can you help? Contact midlandvolunteers@opc.org. Please consider donating to this fund: GIVE.OPC.ORG.**

A Couple of Couples Serve in Midland

It's been nearly three months since the devastating flooding in Midland, Michigan. Over that time many (of you!) have given financially, served physically, and prayed faithfully. Recently a couple of couples have been serving together in Midland, and share their experiences:

Judy and Cary Hirdes: We traveled to Midland, MI on June 16 and parked our Fifth Wheel trailer at Christ Covenant OP Church. They were very accommodating and arranged for us to have electric and water hook-ups.

Our assignment was to coordinate the dry wall replacement in the basement of the home of Tom & Linda Kennedy. Just days before we left we only had a few volunteers and wondered if we should postpone it for a week or so. But within a few days, the list grew assuring us that we were ready for this project.

Don & Sue McCrory: For a week in July, we provided hospitality support for volunteers who wielded hammers and saws at the Moots' house outside of Midland, Michigan. Our job was to prepare hot breakfast and supper for the workers, to clean up the shower trailer, and to make sure everyone got a good night's rest for the work of the next day. Our work was a cinch, thanks to the church's two freezers filled with a cascade of casseroles prepared by the church ladies. In the fridge were eggs and milk and breakfast bread and much more.

Read the rest of this story on our website: opcdisasterresponse.org/a-couple-of-couples-serving-in-midland/

News from the OPC 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! It will include "classroom" training and also a lot of opportunity to observe and/or participate in personal evangelism and street preaching with

experienced evangelists and ministers. Come spend the end of your summer with us at The Boardwalk Chapel! Please contact boardwalkchapel@gmail.com to reserve a bed! If you register but then are unable to attend you will be fully refunded.

Check our website for updates on all current opportunities.

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