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S.T.O.R.M. REPORT

Short Term Outreach, Relief & Missions

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

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“...which now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, for which I was appointed a preacher and apostle and teacher, which is why I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that day what has been entrusted to me.”

—2 Timothy 1:10-12

Who Did God Save Me to Be?

by Mark Richline, OPC Missionary to Uruguay

As a college student in the late 1980's I often found myself wondering what God's will was for my life. Eventually I discovered I was asking the wrong question. Who did God save me to be? That was the question I needed to answer. But in the years to come God patiently showed me how He had made me His son and as His son He calls me to serve Him. In whatever calling He gave me, His will for me was to serve Him and others with all my heart. He guided me into various short-term ministries which confirmed to me these truths, shaped me more into Christ's character, trained me to serve others, and directed me into full-time pastoral ministry.

During those college years, the Boardwalk Chapel in Wildwood, NJ changed my life. I spent two summers on staff and one in leadership as a Summer Assistant. This was the true EE: Exhausting Evangelism! We worked during the day and proclaimed the gospel all night long through songs, skits and personal testimonies. Many vacationers resting on boardwalk benches listened patiently as my evangelism partner and I shared Jesus with them. One summer my partner was Jeni Stevenson who has become my life-long partner for 27 years, with whom I continue to serve the Lord.

As I was finishing college, OPC missionary to Japan, Cal Cummings, visited our church and invited people to serve with them as Missionary Associates. I signed on for two years. This was yet another life-changing

experience. Together with other MAs, I organized and directed conversational English programs for all ages for two of our church plants. While we taught English, the missionaries gave gospel messages in Japanese. During these years the Lord impressed on me our missionaries' sacrificial love, and He turned my heart toward the full-time ministry of God's Word.

While in Japan, our missionaries encouraged me to spend a month at the Missionary Training Institute in Seoul, Korea. I was there to help these future missionaries polish their English. They were there to make their final preparations before beginning their lives of gospel service in foreign fields. I remember their prayer meetings outside in the mountains at 4:00am, as well as the sanctified sound of all their voices in worship praying aloud at the same time.

Four years later I found myself going from door to door with a godly woman in her eighties whose urgent mission was to share Christ with total strangers. In my final summer of seminary, the Presbytery of New Jersey had invited me to pastor a group of mostly elderly believers in Toms River, seeking to start a reformed church. I preached every Sunday, lead them in weekly Bible studies, and organized gospel outreaches in the community. This was the short-term mission God used to confirm me in my calling.

Looking back now at more than twenty years of ministry I see clearly how these short term opportunities trained me for my calling as a missionary pastor. I

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Donate: GIVE.OPC.org/diaconal-ministries-summary



Presbytery of the Southwest:

By the grace of God, the plumbing issues initially reported to the presbytery have now been resolved! As such, at this time there is no longer a need for plumbers to travel to Texas! We praise the Lord for his provision for the families in need.

The Presbytery of the Southwest diaconal committee chairman, Rev. Joe Troutman, will continue to monitor the situation there and update OPC Disaster Response as needed. We are thankful for those plumbers who so readily expressed their willingness to give of themselves and their gifts to serve the body of Christ in this way. What a blessing to be part of such a connected church!

Presbytery of the Mid-Atlantic:

Drywall and plaster repair are nearly complete, which means we are almost ready for paint! In the next few weeks, Lord willing, site coordinator, Curt Sproul, will lead volunteers from Vienna, VA, Glenside, PA, and Ringoes, NJ as they work to paint and/or install flooring. The next task will be to clean and disinfect some of the contents of the home (weather permitting.) We need many hands for that, so please email Trish if you are interested: isaiaevolunteers@opc.org. Let's get the Bowles family back into their home in the next few weeks!

We are about \$8,000 short of our needs to complete the project, so any donation you can share would be very much appreciated!

The Committee on Diaconal Ministries' COVID-19 Pandemic Response (CPR) Fund

As COVID-19 continues to impact the world to varying degrees, many of our brothers and sisters are struggling to survive. To date, the CPR Fund has received \$90,550.19 in generous donations. Your gifts are appreciated. Find out how the donations are being disbursed on our website: opcdisasterresponse.org/opportunity/covid-19-pandemic-response-fund/.

Earthquake in Japan

On February 13th an earthquake of 7.3 magnitude rocked the country of Japan. We thank the Lord that our missionaries there are safe and are using this opportunity to build relationships and care for others.

Laurie Lauer says, "We are deeply grateful for your prayers for us, Yamamoto, and Japan and thankful for God's mercy in this latest quake." 172 Yamamoto homes have roof damage, with repair estimates close to \$100,000. Approximately 70% of the town was without water initially, but most were restored within 24 hours. The only local hospital suffered cracked and falling walls, equipment damage in addition to damaged water pipes, which has led to some services being curtailed for possibly a month or more. Trains continue to run, helping the elderly get medical help north of the town. Some fear the recent quake may be a precursor to a larger, more devastating one to come. This latest earthquake comes just about a month shy of the tenth anniversary of the devastating earthquake and tsunami of 2011, causing many to relive that trauma. Please continue to pray for this region.

To contribute to OPC Disaster Response, go to:
give.opc.org/diaconal-ministries-summary.



Short-Term Missions News

Due to varying COVID-19 restrictions all over the world, some OPC STM fields have had to cancel their plans, while others are prayerfully deciding. Check our website regularly for updates on all of our opportunities: opcstm.org.

The Boardwalk Chapel

There are many different opportunities to serve at the Boardwalk Chapel this summer:

- work groups
- church groups
- staff
- training

[Interested? Contact: boardwalkchapel@gmail.com](mailto:boardwalkchapel@gmail.com)

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