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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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For so the Lord has commanded us, saying, "I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth." —Acts 13:47

In All of the Noise, The Chapel Stands Out

by Molly Rose

Youth Group Leader, Covenant OPC, Orland Park, IL

"Once a king or queen in Narnia," Pastor Jim Zozzaro quipped as we stood around a makeshift dining table in a dingy screened-in back patio for our Friday night debrief. "Everyone who visits is forever part of the Chapel family."

And so it has felt to me. For five years, the Boardwalk Chapel in Wildwood, New Jersey has been a second home; and the diverse group of teens & adults who've made the 13-hour journey to the Jersey shore with me has been a second family. It's so refreshing to step away from the demands of my normal life for a bit to devote energy to prayer, God's word, instruction, street evangelism, and time with my students. Definitely doesn't qualify as a relaxing summer vacation, but I wouldn't trade it for anything!

Wildwood is as close to an incarnation of Vanity Fair from Pilgrim's Progress as I've encountered. Surrounded by colorful, noisy distractions of the beach, food, souvenirs, roller coasters, swimwear, and crowds of people out to have a good time, to say the Chapel stands out is an understatement. This year, our group visited during the summer staff's apologetics training week, sitting in on 30+ hours of lectures on heavy topics like the rules of logic, the Apostle's Creed, and the problem of evil. Even then, the Chapel door is wide open and Pastor Jim's voice is amplified so people walking by might glean a little something, or better yet, stop and listen.

One element of the BWC's ministry that is unique in the OPC and has allowed me to exercise my creative talents is their nightly program; basically a variety show that uses music and drama as segues for the Gospel to be broadcast to thousands of passers by every summer weeknight. But for me, the real personal challenge was after each program, when evangelism teams wander the boardwalk looking for opportunities to strike up spiritual conversations with complete strangers, and prayer teams huddle to worship and pray together. I'm far more comfortable saying anything on a

stage behind a microphone than in a face-to-face interaction. And yet, especially on nights I felt the least qualified or prepared, God graciously provided both the words to speak and the courage to speak them, proving that He alone gets the glory for all my efforts!

Continue reading on our website: www.opcstm.org



Short-Term Missions OPPORTUNITIES

MISSIONARY TRAINING INSTITUTE SOUTH KOREA

ESL (English as a Second Language) teachers are desperately needed at the Missionary Training Institute (MTI) in South Korea!

Two or Three ESL teachers are needed to serve from October 26 to December 21, 2021, March 2 to May 6, 2022, or May 16 to July 22, 2022.

UGANDA

There aren't many short-term missions opportunities out there these days, but our missionaries in Uganda could use encouragement and help from our churches, especially during these trying times!

BOARDWALK CHAPEL, NJ

The Boardwalk Chapel closes out the summer with their Evangelism Conference next week (August 30-September 4) and they are already booking teams for next summer! Don't miss out!

Go to our website to read the details on all of these opportunities: opcstm.org.

Refugee Ministry Article Part 3: What Will We Lose By Inviting Refugees to our Dinner Table?

by Rev. Chris Cashen, Pastor, Trinity Reformed OPC, Lanham, MD and Chairman of the Refugee Ministry Subcommittee

This article is part three of a series of articles by Rev. Cashen on refugee ministry in the church. Go to OPCCDM.org to read the other articles in the series.

Ministering to refugees is an eye and heart opening experience, because the work is very personal. Consider the hospitality practices of those who have fled from Syria and Afghanistan. Their doors are always open, regardless of what they have (or don't have) to offer. Tea or coffee is prepared and served, usually along with nuts, dates, or candies; a comfortable seat is offered, as is their time and attention. Even though Americans are strangers to them, and different languages are spoken, their welcome is immediate, warm, and sincere. That is their culture and tradition, all brought with them. It is so foreign to our Western – even Christian – culture, that it cannot help but touch the heart.

More refugees from Afghanistan may be on their way to the United States soon. Over the past week, incredible photographs of US Air Force cargo planes loaded with Afghans have shocked wide-eyed Americans. Videos have played again and again on our televisions and computer screens of innumerable men, women and children running alongside military aircraft as they taxi for take-off at the Hamid Karzai International Airport in Kabul. They are fleeing their homes and country, seeking peace, refuge, and safety. NBC News quoted Utah's Governor Cox on August 18, 2021, "We understand the pain caused by forced migration and appreciate the contributions of refugees in our communities." The story went further to report that Utah was "offering to assist with the resettlement of individuals and families fleeing Afghanistan." [1]

The secular, civil government is holding out a hand to those who will become strangers and aliens here. What about the church? What responsibility, if any, does the church have in helping refugees resettle? Should the church be involved? Does the church have a role? Is there a scriptural basis for the church to enter this arena? Or, as some believe, is the resettlement of refugees, including Afghans, a bad idea? Some of the more "conservative" political commentators are warning against receiving Afghan refugees. Their position might be restated to their audience as a question: "Have you considered what we will lose if the US allows this many refugees to enter our country?"

The reality is that the church, as an institution, has no say over who the United States will admit as a refugee. That



Praise the Lord, the OPC was not affected by any recent hurricanes.

Haiti Earthquake Update

Praise and thank the Lord that all those we know in Haiti were not directly affected by the recent earthquake and tropical storm. Since the Haiti OPC Mission does not have any reformed contacts in the affected area of Haiti, OPC Disaster Response does not anticipate any involvement in the response effort at this time.

Bahamas Reconstruction

From Julian Russell, MTW missionary to the Bahamas: Skilled individuals are needed for a week or more on the islands of Abaco and Grand Bahama as residents are still reeling from the effects of Hurricane Dorian. Questions? Contact Mike Peifer or Carol Gann at missiontrips@mtw.org

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

To date, the CPR Fund has received \$103,319.19 in generous donations and has disbursed \$77,695 of that to brothers and sisters around the world. Your gifts are appreciated. Find out how the donations are being disbursed on our website: opcdisasterresponse.org/opportunity/covid-19-pandemic-response-fund/.

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

decision will be made by the current administration, which sets a cap on those admitted; Congress, which funds; and other government agencies which vet possible refugees. The only decision for the church is whether to, once they become refugees, welcome them immediately, warmly, and sincerely, in Christ's love.

As Christians investigate whether to engage in mercy ministry
Continue reading on our website: www.opccdm.org

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