

To: OBC Members
From: Caroline Krueger
Re: Ministry Center 2020 Reflections

As we approach the end of 2020 with hopes of 2021 being a much better year, I wanted to reflect on some of the good things about 2020 in the Ministry Center. In spite of our having to change drastically the way we have been helping our community due to Covid, these are some of the positive accomplishments:

- 1) Thanks to many faithful volunteers, we are opening our ministry center on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays for two hours (10 AM to 12 noon) and allowing only four shoppers each day. These shoppers may shop for their families, but we are allowing only four folks each day by appointment only, made with Missy at the church. At 803-329-3864. These appointment times are staggered so that we have a minimum of folks in the Center at any one time. These shoppers are allowed the usual allotment for each person for whom he/she is shopping as well as choosing toys, housewares, seasonal items, etc.
- 2) We are accepting a limited number of donations through the front door by appointment only. Our drop box is locked so that we can control what is donated and to make sure we have enough volunteers to sort through the donations. Appointments may be made with me at 803-493-0383 or email at ckrueger@comporium.net
- 3) For most of the year we have been giving to Kidney Foundation our excess items and those which are below our standards, but in Nov. the Foundation stopped crossing state lines due to Covid. Fortunately, we now have Dream Center/ Hands Up in Rock Hill coming to get the donations every Thursday. Any items that are stained, need mending, etc., are given to a recycling agency which gets the items in good shape and sends them to overseas areas.
- 4) We are continuing to work with local agencies with whom we partner. We have recently aligned ourselves with the Bethel Men's Shelter. We have served many of these men on Sundays after they were served a sumptuous meal, the financing provided by many of OBCs SS classes, Bible Study Groups, and individuals in our church and outside the church. The meals were for the most part prepared by Lori Hoffman. She started with 25, and last Sunday, her last day to do this, she served 48. Hopefully, other churches or organizations will step up to the plate and provide meals. We are now working with the coordinator at the Shelter to help with clothing and shoe needs. (We particularly need men's work boots if any are available.)
- 5) We began an "online order" project in which we sent requisition forms to schools and other agencies so that we at the Center could fill orders and either deliver or arrange for pick up once the orders are filled. This has been of minimum success. We are hoping that now that the Christmas rush is over, maybe agencies will take more advantage of this, which works well for us and for those in need. We have a special form for middle-school uniforms, and we did get some of those into the hands of students by this plan.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the church for its support, especially during these difficult times, and to all volunteers, many of whom are not members of OBC. We are all helping the "least of these," regardless of who we are and regardless of the difficult times. We do look forward to returning to our regular shopping days.

Gratefully,

Caroline Krueger