# Outreach Newsletters & Taking the Faith




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# Choice Food and Resource Center News




The number of households reserved at the Choice Food and Resource Center at Unity Square (CFRC) rose slightly from August to September, but was within the range of households for the year. Since the Community Food Bank of New Jersey (CFBNJ) can send us at most 150 packs of wipes each month, donations of wipes are still needed. We can also use volunteers four Tuesdays and the second Friday of the month for food distribution, the third Wednesday for the big delivery from CFBNJ, and the first and third Fridays for the "open" distributions where no registration is required. Thanks to Doug Bonar and Mark McMahon for their faithful volunteer service onsite and to Pat Buckendahl for data support.

| 2025 | August | September |
|---|---|---|
| Households | 328 | 353 |
| Individuals | 1222 | 1326 |
| Adults | 769 | 850 |
| Children | 453 | 476 |
| Seniors | 165 | 178 |
| Sanitary pads (Packages) | 330 | 394 |
| Babies diapered | 136 | 136 |
| Potty Training pants | 4 | 8 |
| Adult incontinence | 7 | 4 |






Catherine Ambos, Christ Church Coordinator
Choice Food and Resource Center @ Unity Square

Your contributions to Laundry Love are continuing to make a difference in the lives of our neighbors in New Brunswick and beyond. Requests continue to come in each month: a grandmother who recently became guardian for her three young grandchildren, a family whose washing machine has died and now needs to use the laundromat.

As reported earlier, Laundry Love stopped "in person" gatherings in February, 2025, to protect our neighbors from the threat of ICE insofar as we could. The first two weeks of February missed giving Choice Food and Resource Center (CFRC)guests their Laundry Love packets as we transitioned to the new system. In addition, by March a CFRC volunteer, began making phone calls to the Spanish-speaking guests who did not have appointments for food at Unity Square.

The August numbers are down in part because the Univerity Behavioral Health/Elijah's Promise outreach partners did not receive their allotment of 10 Laundry Love packets. At this time, however, we are receiving a small but steady flow of requests for Laundry Love assistance. Your financial support of this program will allow us to continue to meet these needs as cuts in SNAP and other assistance lead to even more requests for help.

At this time, we can purchase 42 Laundry Love $20 cards. This does not account for any funds used to purchase "big" cards--usually $50 to $100--to be used for in-person "single person" sessions arranged by our volunteer, Tony Scimone.

## 2025 Laundry Love Distributed January - September

| Date | Families | Singles | Family Individuals | Single Individuals | Total Individuals | Total loads |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Jan** | **31** | **5** | **93** | **5** | **93** | **361** |
| Feb | 28 | | 79 | | 79 | 280 |
| March | 53 | 1 | 245 | 1 | 246 | 253 |
| April | 37 | | 111 | | 112 | 388 |
| May | 38 | | 125 | | 125 | 380 |
| June | 36 | | 121 | | 122 | 360 |
| July | 36 | | 122 | | 122 | 360 |
| August | 26 | | 104 | | 104 | 260 |
| September | 42 | | 136 | | 136 | 420 |
| | | | | | 1139 | 3062 |

Christ Church's faithful support of this ministry has done much to help our neighbors have the dignity of clean clothes. (Shout out to Mary Lou Taylor for packing the supplies!)

**And because all of the above is never enough . . .**
Thanks to all who have continued to join us on the third Sunday of the month. We are currently packing flatware sets for Elijah's Promise. Elijah's Promise is still (and for the foreseeable future) serving only to-go and through their Elijah's Promise on Wheels truck. When I delivered September's box of 500 sets of flatware, Chef Curtis (who makes all the magic from food procurement through cooking to delivery happen) was delighted that the volunteers for that day could actually make sandwiches instead of flatware packages. Every bit helps.

Catherine Ambos, Coordinator
New Brunswick Laundry Love

## OCTOBER 12, 2025
## EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

taking faith home

*Jesus shows a foreigner mercy.*

## DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Sunday** | **Luke 17:11-19** | **One leper gives thanks to God** |
| **Monday** | **2 Kings 5:1-3, 7-15c** | **Elisha heals Naaman** |
| **Tuesday** | **2 Timothy 2:8-15** | **A soldier of Christ Jesus** |
| **Wednesday** | **Jeremiah 30:12-17** | **Restoration promised to Israel** |
| **Thursday** | **2 Timothy 1:13-18** | **Encouragement to be faithful** |
| **Friday** | **Leviticus 19:33-34** | **Love the alien as yourself** |
| **Saturday** | **Psalm 111** | **Praise God for wonderful works** |
| **Sunday** | **Luke 18:1-8** | **Parable of the persistent widow** |

## SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

*"Was none of them [the ten lepers] found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?"* **Luke 17:18 (NRSV)**

## PRAYERS AND BLESSING

**A Prayer for the Week:**
Merciful God, your compassion reaches out to those in need; give us thankful hearts for reaching out to us through Jesus Christ, the great healer of our lives. Amen.

**Mealtime Prayer:**
Dear God, we are thankful for this gift of food we receive today and for all that you do to care for us. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

**A Blessing to Give:**
May God show you kindness and mercy.

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# OCTOBER 12, 2025

taking faith home

## HYMN OF THE WEEK

*Have You Thanked the Lord?*

## WEEKLY MILESTONES

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

## CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- Have you ever been left out of a group? Explain.
- Where have you witnessed God's love shown to a stranger?

## DEVOTIONS

*Read:* Luke 17:11-19.

The Bible, especially the Old Testament, tells of an intimate connection between foreigners and God's people who had been slaves in Egypt and poorly treated. It is easy to have negative thoughts about people we do not know personally and sometimes tempting to go on the attack against them. This is especially true of people we may call strangers or foreigners. Jesus confronts our negative bias about others when he lifts up the Samaritan as a *"foreigner"* (Luke 17:18), someone God protects yet others often attack. For Jesus' own people, lepers were unapproachable, and Samaritans were belittled, yet Jesus approaches lepers and praises a Samaritan. For those moments when we, ourselves, may feel unapproachable or belittled, this is good news. For the unapproachable and belittled around us, Jesus' message is a calling to have a thankful heart filled with mercy.

*Discuss:* How does Jesus' mercy for foreigners encourage you to reflect on the needs of foreigners in your community?

*Pray:* **Loving God, you know our temptation to criticize people; help us to see others with your mercy that we may have thankful hearts through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings and theme for this week, how can you support an organization that helps refugees?

## RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

Psalm 111 gives praise for God's wonderful deeds. God is holy and awesome (v. 9). Take a walk around your neighborhood and note the things you see that you consider to be awesome. For example, trees, buildings, the sky, and clouds. Then sit down in your home and write a list of what you saw. Take time to say a prayer of praise to God using words from Psalm 111 to be thankful for *"his wonderful deeds"* (v. 4), *"the power of his works"* (v. 6), and *"the work of his hands"* (v. 7).

# The Rev. Canon Stephen Connor




The Rev. Canon Stephen Connor is the Canon to the Ordinary. Rev. Connor recently served as Rector of Holy Trinity Episcopal Church in Ocean City from 2018 to 2024. He was co-chair of the Committee on Priesthood for 4 years. He attended General Theological Seminary for an Anglican Studies Year and completed a Master of Sacred Theology (STM). Rev. Connor was received into the Episcopal priesthood on June 30, 2018. Rev. Connor is a former member of The Paulist Fathers, a Roman Catholic religious community where he served from 1983 – 2005.

During his time with the Paulist Fathers, he received an M.Div. from Catholic University, and he was ordained to the Roman priesthood in 1989. Rev. Connor served in a variety of ministries with the Paulist Fathers including urban ministry, campus ministry, religious publishing, vocations, and a member of the Paulist Fathers leadership team. Leaving the Paulist Fathers in 2005, he worked for ten years in religious publishing for Loyola Press in Chicago as the Director of Adult Spirituality Resources leading a team of writers and editors. It was during his time in Chicago that he began attending the Episcopal Church.

Rev. Connor authored *The Dynamic Leader: Balancing Faith & Work* published by Renew International and Loyola Press in 2017.