

Farewell to 2020!

That sounds good doesn't it? Goodbye 2020, please don't linger, just close and lock the door behind you.

Yeah, 2020 was a rough year. Countless friends lost, some to COVID, some to election campaigns and results, some to post on FB. The COVID ones were probably your real friends, the FB probably were not that close anyway. We hope for 2021, a new life, a new attitude, a new career maybe, and some new (real) friends.

Like most trials in your life, no matter how difficult, there is some good that comes out of it. How many people became closer to their real friends and family during this time. How many no longer take their parents for granted, and visit them in any way they can? Some of you might have talked to your family more this year than the years leading up to 2020. Maybe you lost a job and found a better job, or a new career. Maybe you found out you were a 'non-essential' worker (whatever that means) and decided to become an essential.

While 2020 might not have been a great year, a lot of great things did happen. Generosity became a 'thing'. People sharing what they had with other in need. Meals being dropped off for people that were in isolation. Uber Eats and any number of new service businesses became ways to make money in a jobless time.

So where was SOH in all of this? We had to shut down our in-person services, but quickly found the power of Facebook and You Tube to let people hear the Word. Seniors Rock couldn't meet to prepare meals for the homeless and sick, but they took the supplies home and made meals at home. Delivery people stepped up to deliver the meals to Grace so they could honor their commitment to serve the homeless. Food and money were donated to the food pantry in record amounts this year. Turkey dinners for the House of Refuge for women trying to bring some happiness to their families. Toys for kids that would normally have gone without this Christmas. Despite not having much going on, this was a very busy year for SOH. I think we did more outreach and giving this year than in the previous years.

As you know, none of this happens by itself. The lunches don't make themselves; the food does walk over from the store to the pantry. It takes a community of believers to be the church of generosity.

They say you should never try to thank volunteers in public since you might forget someone, and they might feel bad. Well I apologize now because I will forget or not know of some of the things you did. But I strongly believe we need to thank everyone who helped this summer. Here are a few that stand out:

Carl McCoy for generously donating his time and money all year.

Steve Osterman for always being there to help with yard work and building repairs/maintenance.

Wendy Sontag and all you do with the website and seniors rock. You are an angel.

Sandy O for helping at funerals, you make our guest feel welcome at the worst moments of their lives.

Our church council for filling in at the office to help answer phones, organize the membership names, and call every member to check on them.

Our musicians, Donna, Lizzy and Jake. They not only play the music; they get the music into the PowerPoint so we can sing along.

All the members of the teams at church that did as much as you could this summer to keep people involved and active in the church.

Pastor Tony and Carol. You have remained calm throughout this entire season, and never wavered in your faith in SOH. You have been instrumental in keeping our service going, and even expanding our message to more people.

Nicole, who prefers to be in the background organizing the counters as the needs change week to week.

For those I missed, God knows what you did, and He is happy with you.

So, 2020 while you may not be missed, I will miss what you taught us: Honor our Mission to Make Christ Known. This means doing God's work so others will know Christ's name.

Thanks

Duane Gilson

Council President