

So. Otsefic Methodist News

Pastor Melanie Simmons

(church) 315-653-7728

(home) 607-674-9527 ... (cell) 607-371-0431

Email: Melanie@simmonsasylum.com

=====

July 2026

She stands, a monument of strength,
And reaches towards the sky.
She holds a torch to light the way
Of ships approaching nigh.

She stands, a symbol welcoming
Strangers through the door
To freedom, peace and liberty
Upon America's shore.



=====

Ann Campbell, Editor



MESSAGE FROM YOUR PASTOR ...

July 2026

"Who will separate us from the love of Christ?... neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Romans 8:35a, 38b-39 (NRSVue)

Happy Summer!

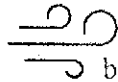
It's our country's semiquincentennial (250th anniversary) and festivities are all over the place. There is a lot to celebrate since thirteen colonies successfully seceded from the British Empire: democratic governance, westward expansion, social evolution toward equality for all people, many scientific advances from which the entire world has benefitted – the list goes on and on.



Sadly, even with our rich history, many do not really feel like celebrating. Our country is at a pretty low point with regard to international influence, social structures have been demolished, the "melting pot" is being segregated for racial purity through deportation of people who came here legally, and even the celebrations themselves are criticized because the noise of fireworks bothers pets and triggers PTSD episodes.

BUT... **God** has given us:

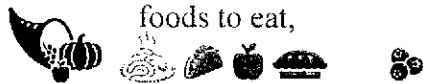
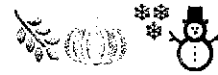
sunrises every morning,



breath to breathe,



seasons of nature filled with wonder



foods to eat,



people to love,

a Son who died for us  and a Holy Spirit to dwell within us,

... and a myriad of other blessings besides.

So, whether or not I celebrate the US semiquincentennial, I will celebrate our awesome God and give thanks for the beautiful world and wonderful people I know. God gives us enough to share with one another, and the variety we enjoy when we do share our gifts enriches our lives.

May the Lord gift your life with many opportunities to share the blessing that you are, and joy in every season!

With love in Christ,
Pastor Melanie



**Love Boldly
Joyfully
Lead Courageously**

"The mission of the South Otselic United Methodist Church is to worship God, serve Him, each other and our community and to share His love and actions while helping inspire and nurture followers of Christ."

Reflections Reflections

7/95

Ready for a short quiz? Ready or not, here it comes:

Question #1 - What famous sculpture among all those over the face of the Earth, whether on display in any of the great museums or standing watch in some local park, has served in replica as the base for thousands of table lamps?

Question #2 - What sculpture has been both the inspiration and invitation to countless millions, who gazing upon it for the first time, felt the thrill of new freedom and promise in their lives?

Question #3 - What sculpture, with true magnificance, stands firmly on its own private island while stretching skyward to a height of 305 feet, or slightly more than a football field tipped up on end?

Answer - Give yourself an "A" if your reply to any of the above is "The Statue of Liberty".

More than one hundred years ago, on July 4, 1884, this great Lady was presented to the people of the United States as a gift from the people of France at a ceremony in that country. This gift, symbolizing the friendship existing between the two nations, came about as the result of a proposal by Edouard de Laboulaye, a French historian and writer. Laboulaye envisioned a great statue which would be a monument to liberty and to American independence, while commemorating the alliance of the United States and France.

I first heard the story of the Statue of Liberty when I was a grade-school student many years ago, but although the statue is a familiar figure to millions of people world-wide, I don't recall ever hearing much about its origin since then. I do believe that Hollywood and Television have missed out on a possible movie based on the story of this Lady of Liberty. Certainly, the romance of its history would offer many fiction possibilities...

Anyway --- When Laboulaye approached Auguste Bartholdi with his idea, the famous French sculptor was greatly impressed and immediately became an enthusiastic participant in the project. So much so, that in 1871, he traveled to the United States to investigate its possibility. During his voyage to this country, he drew sketches of different ideas for the statue but none of them suited him.

Then, while on deck on the morning that his ship entered New York Harbor, Bartholdi noticed a small island that seemed to be there solely for the purpose of welcoming him to America. As the ship passed tiny Bedloe Island, the sculptor was suddenly struck with a vision of his statue. Immediately he hurried to his cabin and sketched a rough version of what would eventually become the Statue of Liberty!

Showing his completed sketches to President Grant and other prominent people, Bartholdi received enthusiastic approval. This was repeated by his friends in France when he returned to that country. After viewing the sculptor's sketches and a clay model, Laboulaye, originator of the idea, proposed to form a fund-raising committee to finance the project.

Sculptor Bartholdi was authorized to commence construction of the statue and the committee set about raising the necessary funds. The school children of France united in giving what they could, while the committee convinced French philanthropists to donate much of the large sum essential to their goal. Meanwhile Bartholdi completed a 36-foot model of the proposed statue which was then divided into 300 sections. Each of these individual pieces was carefully measured and then reproduced into new sections four times larger.

America celebrated her Centennial in 1876 and it was then that her citizens received their first indication of the immensity of France's gift. By that time, the statue's arm holding the torch had been completed. This 42-foot arm was shipped to Philadelphia in August of 1876 for exhibition at the Centennial.

While the design and model of the statue was the work of Auguste Bartholdi, the actual construction of the finished project required the skill of an expert in steel fabrication. Thus, building the framework of the giant figure was intrusted to Gustave Eiffel who would later design the famous Eiffel Tower. The head of the statue was finished in 1878 in time to be displayed at that year's Paris World Fair.

The actual construction was all done in the courtyard of the sculptor's studio where Eiffel formed a framework of four steel supports. To this framework, wooden battens were attached and covered with a plaster cast. A skin of copper sheeting 3/32 of an inch thick was then hammered into place. As the statue grew closer to completion, it soon towered over nearby buildings. The statue was finally finished in May of 1884 and formal presentation was made to the United States representative, Minister L.P. Morton on July 4, 1884. The completed statue was then dismantled and packed into 214 crates for shipment to America by steamship.

In the meantime, the Americans had agreed to prepare a base for the statue on Bedloe's Island. This necessitated obtaining funds on this side of the ocean. Joseph Pulitzer, publisher of the New York "World" newspaper, succeeded in raising the \$100,000 needed to finish the base and the long project was finally nearing completion.

The great statue was painstakingly reassembled piece by piece until at last the dream of Laboulaye, the vision of Bartholdi and the skill of Eiffel, came to fruition on October 28, 1886 amid great celebration. On that memorable day, the gift of the People of France to the People of America was dedicated by President Grover Cleveland as the French Tricolor was dropped from the face of the statue in the unveiling by Auguste Bartholdi.

Since that day, the statue of "Liberty Enlightening the World" has stood tall on the renamed Liberty Island. Proclaimed a National Monument in 1924, the Lady of Liberty holds high her torch, the world's brightest symbol for Peace, Freedom and Democracy.

George Ortiz

The family of George Ortiz has granted us permission to continue to use his writings for this newsletter.

Treasurer's Corner

Happy Birthday America! We are so blessed to live in this country and to have the freedoms that we enjoy. But this 4th, for me has been very different. This day I lost the love of my life, by rock, my best friend and my biggest supporter. The day started out cooler in the weather department, but I knew it would become a darker day. Hank had been up and down with this last bout of COPD and his body was just tired and worn out. We had discussed a long time ago what to do and although neither of us thought it would be this soon, God had the master plan. So today, once all of my family and children could be there, we stopped his meds and God took over. He got to say to each family member what he had to say and they in turn got to say their good-byes and whatever else was on their respective minds and about an hour later he just went to be with his heavenly family. Oh, how he wanted to stay longer, but I told him it was time for him to finally rest and that everything would be ok. He looked so peaceful and for that I will be eternally grateful. No more pain, no more trying to breath, no more heart issues...just peace. I was so blessed to have met him some 35 years ago...took on not only me but my 2 young children, which he loved to the ends of the earth, and he left saying he loved us all. I could not ask for more.

Here is the report for June 2026. Please keep our little church in your prayers.

Ann Campbell, Pres.

<i>Receipts:</i>			<i>Beg Balances:</i>
Envelopes & Pledges	3315.00		Chng: 6907.68
Loose Offerings	59.00		Savings: 8921.72
Interest (Wells Fargo)	109.00		
Tr fr Trustees	25.00		
	TOTAL	3508.00	
<i>Payments:</i>			Receipts: 3508.00
Minister's Salary	312.00		Payments: 6048.48
Housing	1670.00		Balance -2540.48
Treasurer	169.00		
Travel	473.39		<i>Ending Balances:</i>
Organist	0.00		Chng: 4367.20
Secretary	0.00		Savings: 8921.72
Tech Support	156.99		
Postage	44.32		
Fuel Oil	702.00		
NYSEG	169.90		
Apportionment	1005.11		
Penny Stone	30.00		Year to Date: - 492.08
Website	19.00		
Domain name	83.38		
Brotherhood Mutual Ins. Co. (multi-peril - 3rd qtr)	1030.75		
Great America Financial Services(copier)	182.64		
	TOTAL	6048.48	

Love Boldly
Joyfully
Lead Courageously



Our online giving at
<https://www.sotselicumc.org/>
now has a QR code:



Up to the minute...

5th Annual Summer Rummage Sale

The Annual Summer Rummage Sale will be held at the South Otselic United Methodist Church for 3 days in July: Thursday July 9th and Friday July 10th from 10 to 4, and again Saturday, July 11 from 9 to 2. Come and shop and fill your bags and your generous donation will again support the purchase of school supplies for Otselic Valley Central School District students.

It is a great sale this year with many small, practically new kitchen appliances. Books are plentiful and appear to have been read only once or twice. DVD'S and CD'S are numbering close to 100 and there are many vintage Disney VHS tapes also. Stock up for winter and those cool summer nights from the great selection of polar fleece blankets and lightweight quilts. Sheet sets are in all sizes as well as a variety of bed pillows and decorative pillows. Luggage is clean, baby and children's toys are plentiful, and kitchenware is ready for a new home! A few items are specially marked!

Think the HOLIDAYS! Christmas decorations abound and the many sets of lights have all been tested and work!

You will discover all sorts of interesting small items from tea lights and plate stands to dishes and pots and pans and great storage containers.

This sale is for everyone! There is even a practically brand new belt sander.

Plenty of bags are available for filling with your needed treasures.

Come and SHOP and BE GENEROUS! Support the annual OVCSD school student supply project.

And by the way, you will certainly want to check out the SUNSHINE SHOP next door and the surprises that await! The Shop inventory (women's sizes from XS to 5X!) is bursting at the seams!

(Same days and same hours for both the Rummage Sale and the Sunshine Shop! See you in a few days!)

REMEMBER: July 9th and 10th: 10 to 4, and July 11th 9 to 2!

FREE Community Church Lunches

The dates for the lunches have changed as a result of various reasons!

The next lunch will be July 16th in the UMC Fellowship Hall at noon. Lunch will be a pasta dish, Italian bread, a salad, and dessert.

The August lunch will be on the 20th, same time and place. Lunch is TBD. The program will begin at 1pm with a speaker from NBT Bank who guide folks through both banking online and mobile banking, followed by a Q&A session.

Please make your reservation with Sarah: call 315-653-7490 or text to 607-244- 2447.

'Shipwrecked' ... Saved by Jesus

Feeling like you are lost on a desert island, not knowing if you will be saved? Then you need to come to the So. Otselic UMC on August 3 to the 7th from 12:30 to 4:30 and join the gang of 'shipwrecked' souls and the VBS program!!! There will be adventures, songs, games, snacks and crafts. Plus, it is said that we all will be saved! So, mark your calendars and come enjoy the adventures of being 'shipwrecked'!

(If there are any adults that can come during any of these days/times, please contact Pastor Melanie or Chris. They are in need of adult supervision. You do NOT have to stay the entire time, but help is really needed!)

Annual Church Picnic

On July 19th we will be having a joint church service and picnic with our sister church, Georgetown, starting at 10 at the home of Ann Parkhurst. (906 Upham Road / Georgetown). Please bring a dish to pass, drinks, table service and chairs. Dessert will be provided. Come and relax and enjoy this time together! Hope to see you there!

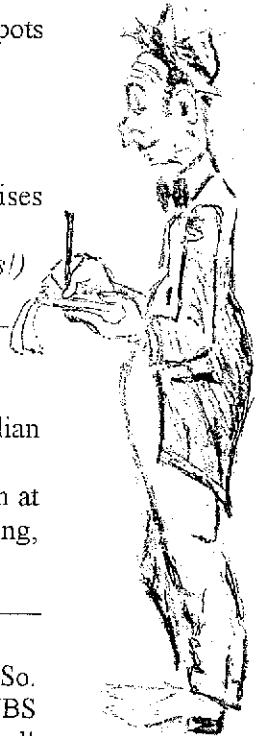
Georgetown UMC News

Happy 250th America! While we are in a heat wave, we don't have to shovel it! In a few short weeks, we'll be wanting some warmth.

We are busily preparing for our combined church picnic, at least Ann is. It promises to be a good afternoon of worship, food, and fellowship. Please remember to bring your own table service, beverage, and a chair not to mention your favorite dish to pass with your favorite food item to share.

If you are looking for something to do on a lazy, hot and hazy Monday evening, why not venture over the hill on Route 80 to Smyrna and enjoy an hour of music provided by The Smyrna Citizen's Band? They play several toe tapping tunes in that hour. You won't be disappointed! You don't even have to get out of your car, except for the Star Spangled Banner. Just park perpendicular to Route 80 across or near the Library. We hope to see you there!

Until next time.....



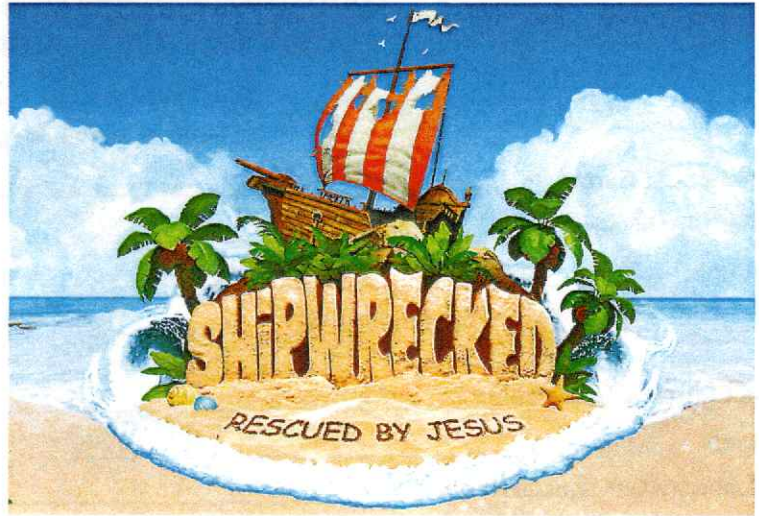
Happy Birthday America !!!

VBS 2026

August 3-7

12:30-4:30 pm

South Otselic United
Methodist Church



Noon – Lunch provided prior to program

First day – parents must register children either in person or by filling out form on back and sending it with their child

Mission project – cleaning kits (flood buckets) to help those in crisis
<https://umcmmission.org/resources/umcor-cleaning-kit-instructions>

<https://umcmmission.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/UMCOR-Cleaning-Kit-Instructions.pdf>



SOUTH OTSELIC UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL REGISTRATION FORM

Shipwrecked - 2026

(One form per child, please)

*Student First Name: _____

*Student Last Name: _____

Nickname: _____

T-shirt size: _____

Age: _____ Grade entering: _____

Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female

Home Church (if applicable): _____

Allergies: _____

Medical Issues or Special Needs: _____

*Parent/Guardian Name: _____

*Address: _____

*City: _____

*State: _____

*Zip: _____

*Email: _____

*Home Phone Number: _____

Cell Phone Number: _____

Other Phone Number: _____

Emergency Contact: _____

Emergency Phone: _____

Alternate Pickup Name(s): _____

Alternate Pickup Phone Number(s): _____

General Information: _____

Medical Release: I give my permission for the VBS staff to administer basic first aid to my child (named above) in the event of an injury. I understand that the VBS staff will contact emergency services in the event of a significant injury and all expenses for such emergency services will be paid by me.

Photo Release: I hereby grant the South Otselic United Methodist Church permission to copyright and use photographs/videos taken at VBS of the minor designated above in any manner or form for any purpose lawful at any time. I waive any right that I may have to inspect or approve the finished product or written copy, that may be used in conjunction therewith, or the use to which it may be applied.

Permission to Attend: I give permission for my child (named above) to attend the Vacation Bible School (VBS) listed above. I understand the information I give for this registration will only be used by the VBS hosting church.

Permission to Leave Summer Camp 2026: If your child needs to leave the summer program at the school to attend VBS, please provide a separate permission slip to the school (see attached).

Parent Signature

Date

Side Notes

Dates to remember

July 4 - Happy 250th Birthday America!

9,10,11 - Rummage Sale! (Th & Fri - 10 to 4 / Sat - 9 to 2)

16 - Free church luncheon starting at noon at the church

19 - Church service & picnic at Ann Parkhurst / 906 Upham Road, Georgetown (starting at 10)
Bring table service, dish to pass, drinks and chairs...

26 - Administrative Board after worship service

August 1 - Deadline for newsletter items due

3-7 - VBS from 12:30 to 4:30 ... 'Shipwrecked' - Saved by Jesus

Service with Dave Wentworth

On June 14th we took our service to the Veteran's Home in Oxford and celebrated with Dave Wentworth and 4 fellow veterans! We had a lovely time chatting with the other veterans and they joined in the service as well. They all loved singing the hymns! After afterwards we had a small dish to pass luncheon and there was plenty of food to go around! It was a lot of fun visiting with Dave and listening to what he does at the Vet's home. We hope to do it more than once a year - the more the merrier!

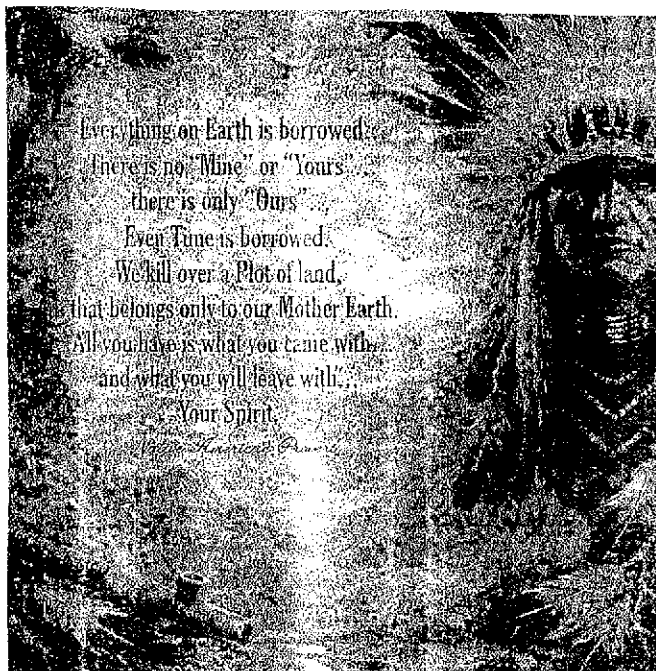
Trustee Report - July 2026

The painting contract for the Sunshine Shop roof and that of the church basement entrance, including the fastening of the loose shingles, caulking all the dormer windows and sealing the chimney flashing, has been awarded to Branchley Painting in Cincinnati to begin late summer/early fall.

Another potential grant opportunity is being explored for the church windows with the New York State Landmarks Conservancy. They accept applications for a 50/50 match (though an average of 20% amount due to competitive requests).

The Trustees have decided to temporarily hold off on committing to converting the outdoor church sign to an LED (\$13305.50) until a decision is made with regard to submitting a grant application for the stained-glass windows.

Estimates are being sought for the church basement lift chair.



How ironic -
that our highest calling is humility.
To give quietly.
To pray behind closed doors.
To live small.
To be like the lilies of the field
and the birds of the air.
To carry our crosses daily.
To choose the road less traveled.
To cherish the ordinary day.

The only thing we need to do
with wild extravagance -
is love.

ullie-kaye

1776 to 2026 ... 250 years of Independence!

If there is anyone that would like to be added and/or removed on our newsletter mailing list please contact:

So. Otselic Methodist News
Editor: Ann Campbell

(home) 607-674-9355
E-mail: deerknoll1948@gmail.com

Sunday Worship:

10:30 AM
11:30 AM

Worship
Coffee Hour

This Month:

Office hours: Wednesday 11-2
Thursday 1-4
(Bible study from 1-2 ... Sept - June)

Check us out on Facebook:

South Otselic United Methodist Church / The Sunshine Shop

The Sunshine Shop

Contact: Sarah Hite
(home) 315-653-7490
(shop) 315-653-7728
Hours: Thurs: 10 - 4
Fri: 10 - 4
Sat: 9 - noon
(Donations at back porch)

Care & Share Pantry

Contact: Deb Williams
315-653-0040
3rd Thursday: 3:00 - 6:00 PM

"The mission of the South Otselic United Methodist Church is to worship God, serve Him, each other and our community and to share His love in words and actions while helping inspire and nurture followers of Christ"

PRAYER LIST: (Short Term):

family of Henry Campbell, Lonnie Hakes, Tim Smith, graduates, school staff & students & their families, Venezuela earthquake victims, other fire/disaster victim, Doug Evans, Angela Harris, Robert Harris, Emily Sheldon, Jim Slocumb, Fran Knickerbocker, family of Wendell Peaslee

(Long Term): Jonna Bartlett, Richard Bishop, David Boyer, Ron Colasudo, Kaity Davis, Doug Evans, Linda Excell, Ted Gargas, Kevin Grewe, Roger Hakes, Chuck Hathaway, Fran Knickerbocker, Patti Lamandia, Diane MacGregor, Cassandra & Christopher Marquard, Chris Marquard, Maverick Mesko, Aaron Miller, Phil Mudge, Mitch Mullenax, Jenny Naber, Elaine Perkins, John & Carole Roalef, Kate Robinson, Justin Sheldon, Matt & Annette Sheldon, Cathy Silver, Jim Slocum, Harvey Stalker, Normajean Stark, Kenneth Sullivan, Angela (Graves) Szlamczynski, David Wentworth

Travel mercies for family and friends

Our men and women in the military, World leaders, our country, & the need for peace

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
South Otselic, NY 13155
PERMIT #4

South Otselic United Methodist Church
PO Box 47
South Otselic, NY 13155
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED