

So. Otselec Methodist News

Pastor Melanie Simmons

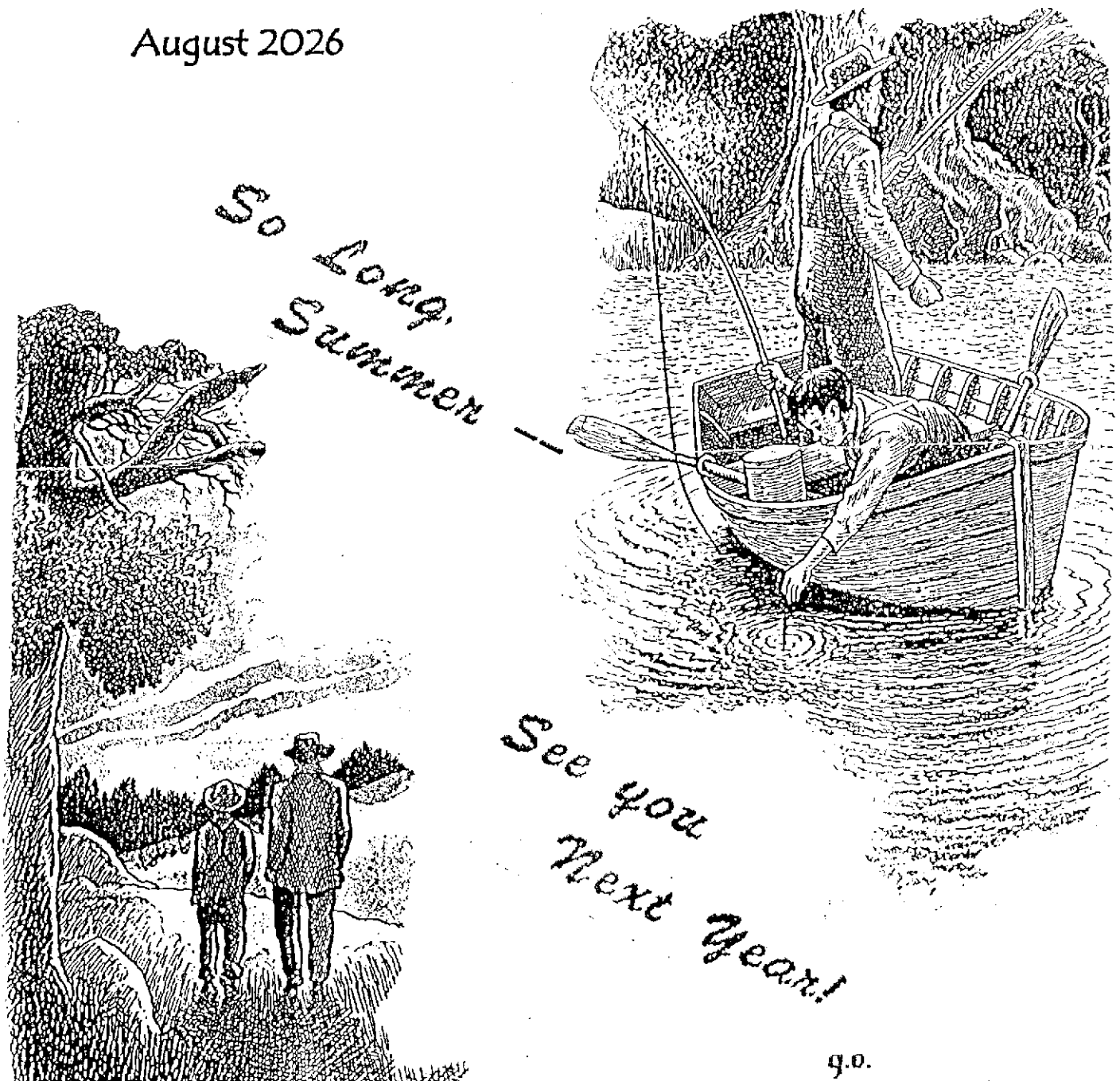
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August 2026



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Ann Campbell, Editor



MESSAGE FROM YOUR PASTOR ...

August 2026

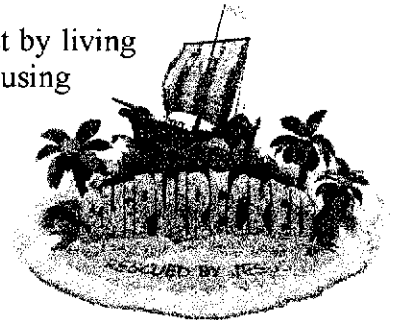
"O give thanks to the LORD; call on his name; make known his deeds among the peoples. Sing to him, sing praises to him; tell of all his wonderful works. Praise the LORD!"
Psalms 105:1-2, 45b (NRSVue)

Happy August!

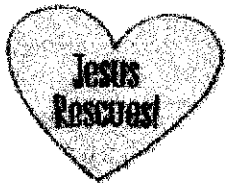
Our sermon series this month is "Praise Break." That does not mean going on vacation and skipping church! Rather, it means taking time to notice God in everything we see and do, and to respond with praise for all the blessings God brings to us.

I think kids do that more naturally than adults do, and they inspire us just by living who they are. As I write this, we are ramping up for a super-energized VBS using the Cokesbury "Shipwrecked!" program. It looks to be a great week!

When I first heard the name of it, I assumed it would use scriptures about boats – you know, Noah's ark, Jonah, disciples on the Sea of Galilee, and Paul's shipwreck story in Acts 27. I was startled to see none of those! Instead, the focus is on how Jesus rescues us in a variety of situations.



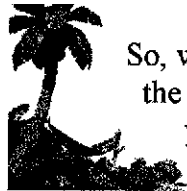
No matter what your situation, you can count on the Lord to be with you:



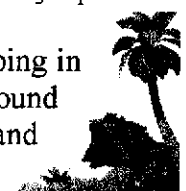
- ✦ Whether you are lonely or surrounded by warm friendship
- ✦ Whether you are worried or feeling at peace
- ✦ Whether you are struggling or resting
- ✦ Whether you do wrong or do what is right
- ✦ Whether you are powerless or able to affect what is happening to you

Jesus travels with you through all of your adventures and experiences, even when things may feel hopeless and lost. Turning to Him enables you to find a way back home, to the warmth of loving relationships and secure knowledge that you are not and never will be abandoned by God.

Jesus rescues, and we can (and should) praise God continually for that! Even more, we can praise God continuously for the blessings showered on our lives through the power of the Holy Spirit.



So, whether you prefer to spend your vacations relaxing on a beach, camping in the woods, going to big entertainment, adventuring somewhere, staying around your home, or in some other way, take time to notice God's presence and blessings of love in your life – and give thanks in joyous praise!



May the grace of God, the love of Jesus, and the peace of the Holy Spirit keep you always.

With love in Christ,
Pastor Melanie



Love Boldly
Serve 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

It is generally accepted that New York State's nickname of "The Empire State" was originated by George Washington upon his realization of the potential of her vast, but still untapped, natural resources. However, the actual fulfilling of this grandiose title only came about after the completion of the Erie Canal in 1825.

In addition to being called "the father of his country", George Washington was also acclaimed by early writers as "the father of American canals". At the close of the Revolution, but before peace was actually declared, Washington left from his Newburgh, N.Y. headquarters, and journeyed across central New York to explore the possibility of a canal system from the Hudson River to western waters.

As a surveyor and engineer, Washington had, even before the war, successfully obtained official sanction for one of his projected canal plans. In 1791 a private company was chartered for the purpose of improving existing natural waterways. Over the period of a half-dozen years, rivers and streams of New York had been improved enough so that several tributaries of the Hudson were carrying much produce from the eastern part of the state.

However, to tap the vast areas of fertile land of New York's interior, it became apparent that only a cross-state canal system would suffice. To most people, this idea seemed to be one of impossible accomplishment in view of the hundreds of miles of mountainous terrain that would have to be conquered for the completion of such a project.

Today's giant earth-moving machines would make short work of that kind of task, but two centuries ago, every engineering project depended solely on horse, mule or ox power, and strong human backs. The idea of creating a navigable waterway up and down the high rockbound hills of New York seemed beyond even remote possibility.

The Federal government was of the same opinion and refused to sponsor any part of the project. In 1817, however, Dewitt Clinton, long a proponent of the canal and now Governor of New York, finally convinced his state to undertake construction of a canal that would link the Hudson River in the east to Lake Erie in the west. Still, most people doubted the feasibility of the plan and derisively dubbed it "Clinton's big ditch".

At times during the next eight years, it often seemed as if the skeptics were correct in their dire predictions of failure, but as each new obstacle made an appearance, it was somehow overcome and work progressed, sometimes at a snail's pace, yet always stubbornly forward. Hills of solid rock and miles of mosquito-infested swamp were met and conquered. "Clinton's big ditch", forty feet wide and four feet deep, slowly crawled across the state, not in a straight line, but in loops and curves as dictated by the terrain - and every inch gained was by hand-powered shovel and pick, mostly wielded by Irish immigrant labor, but also often by local workers.

The easier sections of the canal were finished first, and

some were placed in use even before the final completion. The immediate success of these parts of a still unfinished canal ended the unfavorable criticism.

On October 26, 1825, the completed Erie Canal was at last opened, as the first fleet to traverse its entire length left from Buffalo, traveled the width of the state, and then down the Hudson to New York City. Passengers on the boat, "Seneca Chief", which led the fleet on this initial journey, were the now-heralded Governor Dewitt Clinton, the Lieutenant-Governor and a group of prominent citizens.

New York City, which until then had been a second-rate seaport, far behind Philadelphia and Boston, soon easily surpassed both and in a few years became the most important port in the new nation. Thousands of tons of freight from the interior of New York and even from the western states via the Great Lakes, were carried on barges to city markets and the seaport. New York had, indeed, finally become "The Empire State"!

From time to time in its history, the canal has been enlarged as it handled more and more traffic. Becoming known as "The Barge Canal", it has served admirably as a freight carrier during its long career. However, in this century of the growth of highway trucking and improved railways, it has lost ground to faster services.

Now it is once again simply "The Erie Canal" and is seeing a new rebirth of use as a recreational waterway. Many thousands of pleasure boats annually travel its waters, which when considering all the rivers and lakes joined by its canals, stretch out for more than 800 miles. From tidewater level at Albany of 0 feet, it rises through a series of locks to an elevation of 565 feet at Buffalo.

For relaxing travel and a change of pace, it is hard to beat a trip by boat on the peaceful waters of the Erie Canal. No speeding water-skiers or fast bass-boats are allowed, but the canaler can fish at leisure, tie up at one of the many canal parks (even for the night) or visit museums and historic places plainly marked on canal maps.

Recently, son Mike and I took advantage of this by taking our boat up the canal, our destination being Newark. Arriving there after a pleasant trip during which we were lifted through six locks, we tied up overnight at the town canal park. By pre-arrangement we were met there by daughter Jeri and her husband Jim, who live in nearby Victor. After a meal at the local Ponderosa, we all went back aboard the boat and visited for awhile. Then, the hour growing late, they returned home, while Mike and I turned in aboard the boat.

The next morning, we walked to a close-by diner and had our breakfast. Then putting about, we headed back east through the same six locks, finally arriving at our home slip in a Cayuga Lake marina after a very enjoyable cruise through some of New York's prettiest locale.

There are many ways to enjoy the beauty of God's Good Earth! I find this to be one of my favorites!

George Ortiz

Treasurer's Corner

Good heavens – the first half of the year is over and soon we will be heading into fall! It has been a wild ride so far! The last few days it has been super-hot - then we get a thunder bumper of rain - and then gets even hotter! BUT, as I tell my customers that complain about all the rain... at least we have water! Parts of our country and the world are experiencing either low water tables or no water at all. As breathing beings we cannot live without water!

As I now experience a new normal of my life without Hank, I have found a quiet inner strength and have completed a lot of tasks that needed to be done. The lawns and outside projects have been finished. I have made some progress on Hank's 'organized' pile on his desk! ☺ So now am down to a mild roar! All of my summer bands will finish up this coming week and I will then start getting our leaders of our committees to start thinking about their annual reports to the conference, which will be November 1st. In between I will begin making my Christmas ornaments for the year and that should round out my schedule! As one would say ... "Idle hands make idle minds." Not around here! I helped with VBS this past week and got my steps and aerobics in, along with being super tired, but what an exhilarating tired it was! God is good!

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

Receipts:

Envelopes & Pledges	4390.00
Loose Offerings	285.00
Interest (Wells Fargo & Methodist Foundation)	1202.35
Computer tithing	310.00
Tr fr Ch. Ed.	107.47
Interest on savings	2.22

TOTAL 6297.04

Beg Balances:

Chng: 4367.20
Savings: 8923.94

Receipts: 6297.04

Payments: 5061.20

Balance 1235.84

Payments:

Minister's Salary	312.00
Housing	1670.00
Treasurer	169.00
Travel	0.00
Organist	0.00
Secretary	0.00
Tech Support	156.99
Postage	122.74
Office Supplies	0.00
Fuel Oil	702.00
NYSEG	136.40
Apportionment	1005.11
Lightwell Ins. Agency of NY, LLC (3rd qtr)	82.31
Telephone	89.09
US Treasury (FICA - 2nd qtr)	162.03
Website	19.00
Christine Kalin (VBS)	107.47
So. Otselic Water District	116.00
Great America Financial Services (copier)	181.06
Penny Stone	30.00

TOTAL 5061.20

Ending Balances:

Chng: 5600.82
Savings: 8923.94

Year to Date: +545.27

Up to the minute...

Trustees Report - August 2026

While checking on the source of a leak where the church and fellowship hall roofs meet, a colony of bats was also discovered.

NY Roofers are tentatively scheduled to address the leak issue on September 4, while Sweeny Pest Elimination is tentatively scheduled to make an assessment of the bat issue later in September.

Still waiting on the scheduled date from Brenchley Painting as to when the Sunshine Shop roof will be painted.

A new vacuum cleaner was purchased to replace the old one.

If anyone would like to join the 'brain trust' come on Thursday morning at 9 and the men will find a job for you. The more the merrier.

Georgetown UMC News

Greetings from the neighbors to the north! We are enjoying the beautiful days and cool nights August brings us as we gear up for Fall activities. Before we know it, the golden yellow school buses will be dotting the countryside.

We had a lovely combined picnic at Ann Parkhurst's on July 19th. We were glad folks from the South Otselic church were able to join us. Our luncheon was delicious with many unduplicated dishes to share. No one went home hungry.

Our new deck was stained and weather proofed. It looks beautiful. Our elf and her helper did a superb job!

We wish you a safe and enjoyable Labor Day weekend.

Until next time.....

Sunshine Shop News

The Shop has been blessed with an extraordinary amount of wonderful summer clothes for the entire family this year. With this in mind, the ladies have been running a \$3 Bag sale in order to make room for the fall and winter clothes. The sale will run for 3 more days on August 20th and 21st from 10 to 4, and the final day on 22nd from 9 to noon. Think about stocking up for next summer, future warm weather vacation plans, or the warm fall temperatures!

The Shop will be open in September on the 1st and 3rd weekends:

September 3rd and 4th: 10 to 4 / September 5th: 9 to Noon

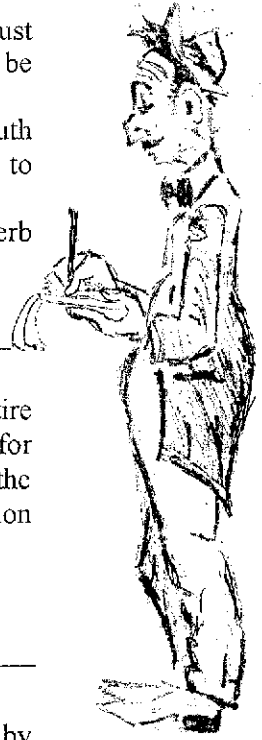
September 17th and 18th: 10 to 4 / September 19th: 9 to Noon

***FREE* Community Luncheons**

The next Community Lunch will be Thursday August 20th at noon. The menu is TBD and is by *reservation*. After lunch at 1pm, there will be a presentation by an NBT representative about mobile and online banking. The lunch (RSVP at 315- 653-7490) is *FREE* and open to the public. The presentation is also *FREE* and you may attend one or both activities that day.

Sidney Federal Credit Union

On the first Thursday of each month, SFCU (Sidney Federal Credit Union) will be in the OVCS parking lot to help establish a *FULL* banking experience for the area. If you are interested in what they can offer you, stop in and they can answer any of your questions. With the loss of NBT, this might offer you some new options. So, stop in on September 3rd! Stay tuned for any further updates by following Mike Foor-Pessin's facebook page and perhaps fliers about town.



Love Boldly
Serve Joyfully
Lead Courageously



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



MISSION PROJECT – VBS 2026

Bottle Drive and Flood Buckets

This year we will be collecting items for flood buckets that are used to help people who have experienced a natural disaster. Attached you will find a list of items that are needed. We would like everyone to bring in at least 1 item.

Our goal is to create at least 1 flood bucket. **Please look at the list closely because each item has certain specifications.**

I found many reasonably priced items at dollar stores such as Dollar Tree and Dollar General, as well as Harbor Freight.

We are also collecting clean 5 cent bottles and cans to help buy items for the flood buckets, so you can help out in that way as well. Of course, monetary donations are greatly appreciated, too. Please bring your bottles, cans, and flood bucket items to the church during VBS week or during the months of August and September. Please let me know if you have any questions or need more information. I can be reached at ckalin@ovcs.org or by calling 315-653-7701.

Thank you for helping others during their time of need.

Christine Kalin

VBS director



Random Randomness. Memes/FB

I am swift as a gazelle.
An old one. With arthritis.
Run over by a Land Rover.
8 days ago.

Random Randomness. Memes/FB

Is it really
necessary for
the first square
of toilet paper to
be glued down?

IT'S WEIRD BEING
THE SAME AGE
AS OLD PEOPLE.

Cleaning Kit

Value: \$75.00 per kit

Cleaning Kit Materials

- **One five-gallon round bucket with lid (14.35" h x 12.19" w x 12.19" d)**
 - No screw lids
 - May be used, but must be free from all residual product
 - Advertisement on the outside acceptable
- **One 32–64 oz. bottle liquid laundry detergent**
- **One 16–40 oz. bottle liquid concentrate household cleaner**
 - No spray cleaners
- **One 16–34 oz. bottle liquid dish soap**
- **One 4–8 oz. pump spray air freshener**
- **One 6–14 oz. pump spray insect repellent (pack of 10–20 wipes also acceptable)**
 - Pump spray bottles must have protective covers
- **One scrub brush**
 - With or without handle
- **18 re-usable cleaning wipes**
 - No terrycloth, microfiber, or paper towels
 - Remove from packaging
- **Five scouring pads**
 - No stainless steel or pads with soap in them
 - Remove from packaging
- **36–50 clothespins**
- **One 50–100 ft. clothesline (cotton or plastic line)**
- **24 roll of heavy-duty trash bags (33–45-gallon sizes)**
 - Remove from packaging
- **Five N95 particulate respirator dust masks (1–3 mm thickness)**
 - No surgical masks
- **Two pairs kitchen gloves**
 - Durable for multiple uses
 - Remove from packaging
- **One pair work gloves**
 - Cotton with leather palm or all leather

Assembly Directions

- Place all liquid items on the bottom of the bucket.
- Place remaining items in the bucket fitting them around and between the liquid items.
- Scouring pads and trash bags can be separated in order to fit all items in the bucket.
- Clothespins may also be placed in a small re-sealable bag.
- Secure the lid on the filled bucket.

Important Notes

- All items must be new with the exception of the bucket and lid.
- All cleaning agents must be in liquid form. No powders are accepted.
- If items have been omitted, label bucket. Please indicate which items are missing
- Sponges have been removed from the list of supplies due to the challenge of locating the non-cellulose sponges that prevent mildew. Non-cellulose sponges will be added to each bucket upon arrival at the affiliate warehouse.
- Do not include any personal notes, money, or additional materials in the kits.
- Contents of kits or the containers of kits should not be imprinted with cartoon characters, advertisements, religious, patriotic, military or camouflage symbols

Instructions for Packing and Shipping Kits

- Packed buckets cannot exceed 70 pounds
- Complete two packing lists, one for your records and one for the shipping box.
- Place the shipping label/packing list on the outside of each box.
- Please send a check to Sager Brown for the total number of buckets times \$3 per bucket for the cost of sponges and shipping. One check may be written for the entire donation.

For the most up to date and accurate Relief Supply Kit List, go to

<https://umcmmission.org/umcor-relief-supplies/>.

Last updated September 2022

Side Notes

Dates to remember

August 20 - Free luncheon at the church 12 to 2. Program will computer banking from NBT

24 - NBT computer banking workshop at 7:00 PM at the church

28 - OVF & HA reading series at 7:00 PM at the church. Topic: 'Daniel Shay's Honorable Rebellion'

30 - Administrative Board after worship service.

Deadline for newsletter items due.

September - Date to be determined. Free luncheon at the church 12 to

Heartfelt Thanks

I wanted to thank you for all the lovely cards, visits and food after Hank's passing. There were so many touching stories and laughs that have been shared. It is so nice to know that he touched so many different lives. Thank you again.

Ann Campbell

Church Picnic Update

On July 19 we were treated to a lovely, combined church picnic at Ann Parkhurst's home. The day turned out to be wonderful and we had a total of 12 people in attendance. Afterwards, there was a potluck dish-to-pass luncheon and all the food was delicious. Hopefully, we can do this again and enjoy each other's time of worship, fellowship and great food. Our thanks to Ann for hosting us at her lovely homestead.

VBS Review...

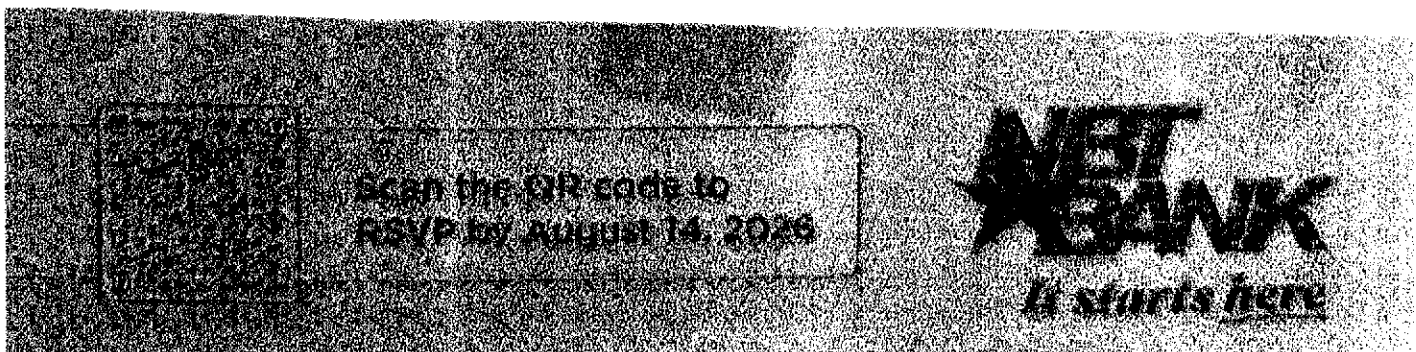
Have you ever been shipwrecked? Well, this past week there were 23 castaways along with 12 shipmates in our VBS program "Shipwrecked" - Rescued by Jesus. Let me tell you first-hand - this ship may have been wrecked and landed on an island, but there was no way they were lonely, afraid or lacking in food! What a wonderful week of adventure, crafts, snacks, songs and Bible lessons... whew - talk about being busy on this island! And the best part is Jesus rescued us all!!! What a fantastic time everyone had and our food and snacks (which we made first) were delicious!!! I would invite anyone to just come and visit this event when it is in progress. It is amazing! Kudos to Chris, Pastor Melanie, Kate, Angela, Debbie and all the youth helpers - great job! *(Please see enclosed VBS mission project sheet. Monetary donations also welcome!)*

Sticky days, cool lit nights... time to think about Halloween!!!

Yes, it is that time of year when all the cobwebs are being dusted off and new and exciting exhibits are getting ready for their annual presence in October! The head witch is in full preparation and the rest of us had better beware! If there are any brave souls out there that would like to help this ghoulish ghoul contact Lori Marquard at 315-416-5680. This event has become one of the most sought-after Halloween scares in the area. People come from as far away as 60 miles! This year's event will be October 16 & 17, so mark those calendars!

NBT Code Scan!

If you plan on attending the NBT computer session, please scan this code so the bank has some idea of how many people plan on coming. Thank you!



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: geerknoll1948@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): Diane Burgess, Janet Coye, Nick D'Elia, Doug Evans, Angela & Richard Harris, Gary & Joan Hart, Fran Knickerbocker, Christopher Marquard, Chris Marquard, Lori Marquard, family of Henry Campbell, family of Bill Haitian Sr., family of Derek Smith, family of Norma Smith, victims of fatal car/horse MVA, all those housebound, those without power/victims of storms, victims of smoke/fires (in Spain, France, Canada, etc.)

PRAYER LIST: (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

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