



The Growth of Hope 2008

Osceola
Christian
Ministry Center



Annual
Report



Our Vision

To grow hope where there is no hope.

Our Mission

As an expression of our love for Jesus Christ
and in obedience to God's will,
it is our mission
to meet the physical and spiritual needs of our community
through benevolent ministries.

Osceola Christian Ministry Center has begun its ninth year of growing hope where there is no hope. We have been providing that hope by providing an array of services free of charge to the homeless and working poor in Osceola County.

Last year over 2,000 individuals came to the Center to receive help. While some of these people are regular clients, most were people who were in need of temporary assistance because of financial difficulties or because they were new to the area. For many of them, we were a helping hand that helped get them on their feet.



We had nearly 18,000 volunteer hours logged in 2008! Without our volunteers The Center would not be able to operate. If you would like to help grow hope, please call or visit the Center.



The City of Kissimmee and Osceola county have been including the Center in their funding for a combined total of \$52,000 per year. However, they are not funding us for 2009. While this is not much for many organizations, we rely so much on volunteer help and gifts-in-kind that it is about half our budget. This means that the Center is now totally faith-based.

One sign of God's provision was very evident in 2008. Our entire plumbing system had to be replaced. Even before the project was completed, a couple donated money enough to cover the entire expense. We will be trusting God to bring in the funds we need to grow hope in our community.



Cathleen brought her 2 year-old for a meal everyday for two months. It helped her make it until the job finally came through. She came back and helped serve meals.

The Daily Meal

A hot lunch is available at the Center each weekday for all who wish to partake. The meals were prepared and served by 27 local churches who supplied food, dinnerware and workers on a rotating basis.

- 26,537 meals were served in 2008 for an average of 106 meals per day.
- There has been a 36% increase in meals served over the last two years. 78 meals per day has become 110.
- The fourth quarter of 2008 averaged 110 meals per day.
- Some churches volunteered to skip one of their monthly spots in order to make room for other churches who wanted to help serve.
- Publix donated bread and pastries four times a week.
- Bag lunches were distributed on Saturday afternoon three times a month.
- Volunteer hours: 10,487.
- Gifts-in-kind donations: \$219,000.
- An additional 8,138 takeout food was provided.



Gina had just been laid off; she had never had to ask for help before. We were able to help her feed her kids for a couple more days a month.

The Food Pantry

Families with children come to the Center to receive a bag of groceries each month. Special bags are made up for families who have only a microwave oven. It is essential help for families who have found themselves in financial straits.

Nearly all of the food used has been donated. It has been truly amazing to see how the radical increase in demand for this service has been matched by the supply of food to meet that demand.

- 1,233 bags of food for an average of 103 families per month were served in 2008.
- There has been a 250% increase for the food pantry over the last two years. 55 bags per month has become 138.
- Chamberlin's Natural Foods made donations of food twice a week.
- Gifts-in-kind donations: \$26,753.
- We are contracted with the Department of Agriculture to receive food through their distribution program.
- Several schools and churches conducted food drives for the food pantry.



Joe didn't expect the temperature to drop 25 degrees. We were able to give him a coat and blanket.

The Clothes Closet

We have a variety of adult clothing so that clients can get clothes for work or interviews. Men receive eight items and women are allotted 12 items of clothing per month. All clothing is donated except for socks and underwear. We depend on donations and have received them from many businesses, organizations, churches and individuals.

- 7,099 client visits for clothing for an average of 36 per day.
- There has been a 29% increase in client visits over last two years.
- Volunteer hours: 1,547.
- Gifts-in-kind donations: \$58,811.
- The Valentine's Dessert Auction, a major fund-raising event, netted \$5,400.
- The use of a needs checklist in a Center newsletter has greatly increased the supply of our most needed clothing.



*It had been two weeks since Ed had a shower.
We didn't recognize him when he got through.*

Showers

We are the only place that offers showers in Osceola County and often the client is hard to recognize after a shower and with clean clothes. Each client is provided a fresh towel and washcloth as well as soap, toothbrush and razor.

- 4,629 showers were provided in 2008 for an average of 91 showers per week.
- There has been an increase of 20% in showers taken over the last two years.
- Volunteer hours: 948.



Bill had just got out of the hospital after a heart attack. He couldn't afford the prescription they gave him. We got it for him and monitored his blood pressure in the following weeks.

The Medical Clinic

The Medical Clinic provides a place for the poor and uninsured to attend to their primary care medical needs. All services are free, but we only serve the uninsured.

This was our third year in our new Clinic. It has three exam rooms, a large waiting room, office, and dispensary.

- Patient visits: 456.
- St. Cloud Regional Hospital agreed to donate some tests for our patients.
- Volunteer hours: 785.



*Rasheed's jaw was swollen and the pain showed in his eyes.
We were able to take care of the infection and
pull his tooth. Then the relief showed in his eyes.*

Family Dental Clinic

Dental care is extremely important to overall health. Many, many people have a dire need for dental care but lack insurance and financial resources to get help. The Dental Clinic makes it possible to alleviate immediate tooth pain through fillings and extractions without cost to the client.

The mobile Dental Care Unit of the Florida Baptist Convention came to the Center for a week to provide free dental care.

We are excited announce that the last months of 2008 were used to transform one of our medical exam rooms into a fully equipped dental unit! It will be staffed with through volunteer help of some local dentists and hygienists. We were able to serve our first patient in January, 2009. This will be a very valuable addition to our ability to grow hope.

- 72 patients received free dental exams and care.
- Volunteer hours: 206.



Debra had been on drugs and alcohol for decades. When she finally had had enough she knew where to come and we were there for her.

Spiritual Help

It has been said that “people don’t care what you know until they know you care.” We have found that people become willing to seek spiritual help from us when they find that we truly do care. This is the door through which we are able to provide the ultimate Hope through counseling, daily Bible studies and Wednesday night worship services.

- Our Wednesday night worship service was attended by 1,512 people in 2008.
- Our Bible Studies were attended by 523 people.
- In October our Bible Studies expanded from one time per week to four times per week.

Substance Abuse Recovery Support Group

Hope is also offered through a Christian 12-Step support group each Thursday at 7:30 pm. Total attendance for the recovery support group last year was 447. There are many testimonies of changed lives and lives are being restored because someone cares about people in need.

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