

# TOPEKA RESCUE MISSION MONTHLY REPORT JULY 2021

Topeka Rescue Mission • 600 N. Kansas Avenue • Topeka, KS 66608-1240

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# A YEAR IN OPERATION FOOD SECURE







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***In the midst of the great uncertainty of this past year, we have found a new and profound joy beginning to burst forth through Operation Food Secure, a program developed by TRM in partnership with the USDA and their Farmers to Families food box program, addressing food insecurity in Topeka and NE Kansas communities.***

Through a platform of neighbors helping neighbors, Operation Food Secure (OFS) has gone “beyond the box” - working with local churches, civic groups, and partners in the nonprofit community to utilize food boxes to create relationships with those in need. Sharing the knowledge that when we create relationships, we create long-term opportunities to change someone’s life.

For the past year we have seen churches, individuals and groups come out of the

woodwork to volunteer with OFS to help us bring food boxes into their neighborhoods. Whether in extreme heat, cold, or pouring rain, TRM staff and OFS volunteers have worked alongside each other to reach people right where they are.

Equally as important as addressing hunger, our volunteers and staff have received training to see people not through our own lens and experiences, but through the eyes of Jesus, striving to reflect the love of Christ in all we do. For

someone who is living in trauma, addiction, homelessness or poverty, receiving this kind of love can change their life.

We have worked hard to ensure each person who receives a food box knows they are loved, they are valuable, and that we see them; that they have a place and belonging in our community. But it hasn’t just been the people we help who are changed - time and time again we’ve had volunteers tell us this is changing them, their church, and the way they interact with their neighbors.

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“Our volunteers have said, out of all the programs our church has been a part of, this is the best program they have partnered with. It really connects you one on one with the people in need. You can see the end results. It is tangible and making a difference.”

Karen, Trinity Presbyterian

“This program has done so many things for our church body. It has helped launch us into our community and really get to know our neighbors. I have never seen the passion and drive of volunteers as I have seen with OFS! It is something from the Lord because of your faithfulness to serve the hungry in our community.”

Jason, Pastor of Oakland New Life

“We have been able to develop relationships and connections with those who live in the apartment building across the street from our church. We honestly would have never connected with them if it weren't for Operation Food Secure.”

- Jacqui, Grace Cathedral

In addition to bringing more connection between churches and their neighbors, in several neighborhoods families have received food boxes who had never received help before.



“We’ve always lived from paycheck to paycheck, but we never needed help.

We counted ourselves so lucky over this past year to have kept our jobs and our home when many of our family and friends had lost theirs. Then right in the middle of the Covid winter, our heater stopped working and our car broke down simultaneously. Suddenly we were facing bills we couldn't pay and no transportation to get to work. We were scared...then our neighbors told us about OFS. Because of OFS we were able to drastically cut back our food expenses and catch up on bills. Now we're volunteering to hand out food boxes and meet other needs in our neighborhood. We want to pay it forward!” - Jeremy G.

OFS staff and volunteers know that food is just the vehicle to building relationships; a way to break down barriers and reach into someone's life right where they are. For Anna, a disabled woman in the Oakland neighborhood, OFS brought her connection with her community for the first time.

“I have a chronic health condition and am unable to walk or go to work. I've lived in the same neighborhood for years but have never known my neighbors...it's hard when you can't leave the house. When OFS volunteers began coming into my neighborhood, and people started coming up to my door with these beautiful boxes of fresh food, asking if I needed help...for the first time in years I felt like I mattered. I started building relationships with my neighbors. Now I'm connected with people who take me to doctor's appointments and spend time with me. It's changing my life!” - Anna S.



In addition to offering food and meeting physical needs, the OFS team offers prayer and emotional support to both our volunteers and people in need.

“When Light of the World distributes food boxes they have a line to receive food, and a line where a prayer team is available to anyone who would like to receive prayer. An individual had come through the prayer line and asked for healing for her friend who had been diagnosed with breast cancer. A couple weeks later this individual came back to report that the prayer worked, and the cancer was GONE! The individual was shocked that it had come to pass and asked for additional prayer for other areas. The Lord is showing us how far this is impacting people beyond food. People are being given the opportunity to see God move in other ways besides just receiving food for their table.”

- Chelsie, Site Captain, Light of the World

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“We are not only making connections with those we are serving through Operation Food Secure, but further connections with those who are volunteering. A church member’s husband, who was not a follower of Christ but a go-getter volunteer who was always willing to jump in and help...his wife had been praying for him for 10+ years for his walk with the Lord to develop and become his own. On Valentine’s Day he surprised his wife by being baptized and accepting Jesus Christ as his Lord!! This individual said, ‘Because of what I have seen the church doing and what I have been able to a part of, I have realized, wow, this is God, this is what it means to serve people.’”  
 - Angela, Rock Hills

As life continues to move through the pandemic, OFS is working to assess the needs of our community and further resources needed to meet those needs going forward. Everything we have accomplished over this past year has been made possible through the magnificent generosity of our donors and supporters, including the USDA and a generous grant from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas. Operation Food Secure has touched many lives in our community, but we could not have done this without you coming alongside us with your love and support. †



**Thank you for sharing your heart to help those going through their darkest moments, and thank you for helping us create new light in their lives!**



# Impact Numbers

As of June 5, 2021

**435 Volunteers**  
 Served **25,841 Hours**  
 Averaging **59 Hours/Volunteer**  
**Valued at \$737,502\***

\*Value of \$28.54/hour by the independent sector

  
**123,794**  
 Food Boxes  
 Distributed

**> Equaling!**

  
**< 96,200**  
 Gallons of Milk  
 Handed Out

**3,838,430**  
 Pounds of Food  


OR

**3.19 Million**  
**Meals**  
