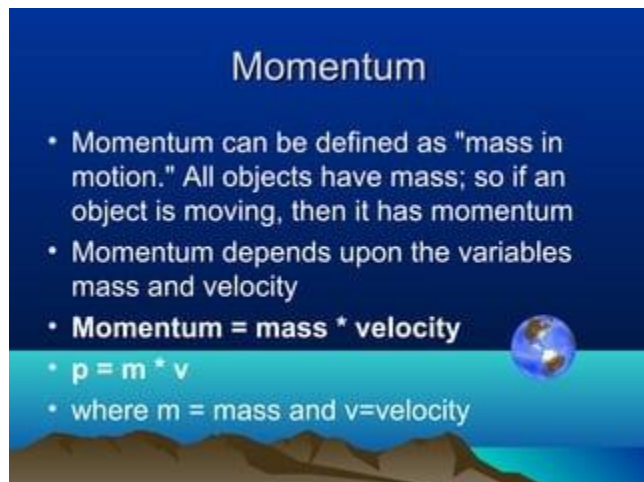


# The Cornerstone

The stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.  
*Psalm 118:22-23*

Volume LXXII Number 4

January 25, 2024



## **Momentum: Mass in Motion**

Taken from Michael Slaughter's Book: *Momentum for Life*.  
(pg. 7-24)

Since the New Year of 2024 rolled in on Epiphany Sunday, January 7<sup>th</sup>, our worship series entitled *Momentum for Life: D.R.I.V.E* has been inviting us into reflection as we look at our individual forward movement in faith and life. I have personally felt that momentum in life and faith should never pause. For everything our God created has forward movement. So, it is necessary for forward movement for both the first and second half of our lives. Nothing is ever retired from forward momentum. Goals for success and achievement are necessary yearly. This is true for individuals, for sports teams, for all organizations and business, and for the church – our church.

We cannot get where we want to be in our faith and life if we are not maintaining positive movement. Maintaining life-momentum is imperative if we are going to navigate our way faithfully through our relationships, our work and interests, and our health. Visualizing our future is necessary to a momentum of growth and devotion to God and the life God calls us to live as disciples.

"We are all people of influence. Each of us has an effect on those in our circles of acquaintances, friends, and family. Influence is most often about our actions more than our words. And we dream about the incredible opportunities we have to influence the world for God's purposes. We know through God's Spirit we can make a lasting contribution that benefits the well-being of others. But having a dream and having the disciplined, lifelong dedication to realize that dream are two different things. Most good things are the result of predetermined desires and an ongoing commitment to build momentum for life." Faith and things worthwhile are not quickly acquired, they are an ongoing result of continual forward motion. People often dream of walking closely with God and making a difference in the world. Yet, we often compromise those idealistic visions by life distractions instead of dedication, money instead of meaning, jobs instead of enduring contributions. God wants so much more. God wants to build lifelong momentum...YES, even in this stage and season of our lives...YES, at our age. God does not want to see us plateau or retire from continued forward movement in our faith, our relationships, our influences, our work, our interests, our health, our vision for our future. Thus, why I chose for us to begin this year with: *Momentum for Life: D.R.I.V.E*. As Rev. Michael Slaughter shares, "Every follower of Christ needs self-management practices that create momentum for life in the elements of Devotion to God, Readiness for Life Long Learning, Investing in Key Relationships, Visioning the Future, and Eating and Exercising." Faithful discipleship includes God's vision for all these areas moving forward in each of our lives with intentionality.

I hope you will join me as we explore the **V** in our model for living; D.R.I.V.E. **V=Vision for the future.** This is the most critical discipline. It is critical for us to have a vision because as Jeremiah 1:11-13 reminds us, it is important to see and develop the life picture God has given us – our unique calling to become who God has created us to be and dreams for us as individuals as well as a church.

I look forward to seeing you Sunday and I look forward to a time where we will gather for a time of visioning when the congregation is invited to meet with Gina Yeske from the conference staff as we begin to create our vision and goals for 2024 at the First UMC in Oakhurst.

"See you Sunday," Jill



**January 28, 2024  
4th Sunday after the Epiphany**

**Counters:** Mary Bailey, Cheryl McLoughlin, John Montgomery

**Greeter:** Jim Scisco

**Usher:** Gerry Busfield

**Acolyte:** Mallory Mitchell

**Lay Reader:** Bob Crowther

**Fellowship Hosts:** Judy Gorra & Soon Hur

**Altar Flowers**

Given in loving memory of Mae & Harry Duerrler  
by Kitty Amato.

Given in celebration of the birthdays of Alice  
Timms (1/28) & her son, Scott (1/29).

**Altar Rose:**

Given by the Henderson family in honor of  
Jaxon Liam Henderson's 2<sup>nd</sup> birthday.



**WEEKLY BIBLE READINGS**

**January 28-February 3**

Deuteronomy 18:15-20

Psalms 111

! Corinthians 8:1-13

Mark 1:21-28

*Laily Sunday*



**February 4, 2024  
5th Sunday after the Epiphany**

**Counters:** Patty Aria, Abby DiNapoli, Judy Gorra

**Greeter:** Joy More

**Usher:** Ron Danielson

**Acolyte:** Faye Snorton

**Lay Reader:** Andrew Snorton

**Fellowship Host:** Bonnie McNamara

**Altar Flowers**

Given in loving memory of Betty Beckmann by  
Peggy, Kenneth, & Kimberly.

Given by Maha Boutros in honor of her husband,  
Awni's birthday on 2/3 & in honor of their  
grandson, Joseph's 6<sup>th</sup> birthday on 2/1.



The Women's Covenant Group is looking for more members. This faithful group of women meets every Tuesday morning to study the Upper Room Discipline for the week and to pray over the prayer cards, emails, and other requests for prayer that they are made aware of. The WCG meets at 8:30 a.m. in the library. Speak with Shirlley Bailey if you want more information or just show up!



## Sending Our SYMPATHY

Our deepest sympathy goes out to Sue Johnson whose father, Clifford O'Neill, passed away on January 17th. Visitation is at Riggs Funeral Home, 130 North Route 9, Forked River, 12-2 p.m. with a service at 2 p.m.. In lieu of flowers the family is asking for donations to the Forked River Fire Dept., PO Box 32, Forked River, 08731 or Lacey Food Bank, 818 West Lacey Road, Forked River, 08731. Expressions of sympathy can be sent to Sue at 1407 Unami Ave., Ocean, 07712.

We also mourn the death of Anthony Bilotta who passed away on January 9<sup>th</sup> with his family by his side, in Naples FL.

## IN OUR Thoughts and Prayers

Jersey Shore Center, Eatontown: **David Miller**  
Jersey Shore Medical Center: **Carol Allen**  
At Home: **Jean Gillette, Virginia Haydu,**  
**Bob Sproat, Bertha Ahrens,**  
**Cary Carlisle, Priscilla Smith, Connie**  
**Bruckmann, Diane Maher**

**Tsedalech Tesfaye, our World Vision Child from Ethiopia, is sponsored for the month of January by Diane Maher in gratitude for healthy grandchildren.**



Wesley Nursery School is collecting toys for pediatric cancer patients ages 0-2. If you would like to contribute, please drop off items at the church office.



## Mercy Center Collection

Mercy Center is need of the following items: applesauce, canned beans, canned chicken, canned fish, canned meat, canned vegetables, cooking oils, crackers, dried herbs and spices, canned or dried fruit, feminine hygiene products, soup packets, peanut butter, canned soup, canned stew, whole grain pasta, cereal, rice, canned tomatoes and pasta sauce, tea, coffee, cookies, shelf-stable milk, snacks, & fruit juice. Please place any perishable items in the Fellowship Hall kitchen refrigerator and tell the office that you did so. All other items may be placed in the cart and bin in the church foyer.

If you would like to sponsor our World Vision child, Tsedalech, for a month in 2024, please contact the church office. Sponsorship can be in memory of or in honor of someone or a special occasion. Cost is \$39; checks made out to the church.



All months are available except,  
February, July, & October.



### **Something to think about:**

Sometimes God says yes; sometimes God says no;  
sometimes God says wait.



### PRAYER GARDEN

You are invited to pray in the Prayer Garden, taking whatever time you need in this holy space, appreciating God's presence in nature.

Prayer focus for January:

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!  
2 Corinthians 5:17

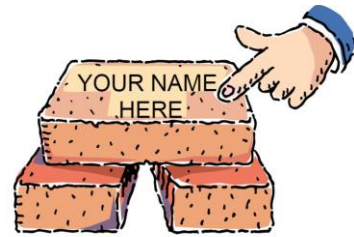
### OUR JANUARY COMMUNION OFFERING BENEFITS THE PASTOR'S DISCRETIONARY FUND



### The Little Free Pantry Items Needed!

Please think of stocking cooking oil, soup packets and ready to heat soup, rice, fruit juice, snacks, jugs of water, and pet food in the bench.

A good idea this week:  
Crackers



If you would like to purchase a personalized brick for the Prayer Garden, please complete the form attached to this week's Cornerstone on or before February 25, 2024. The bricks will be dedicated to the Prayer Garden at the sunrise service Easter morning.

Questions can be forwarded to Gayle Fitzmaier at [gaylefitzmaier@yahoo.com](mailto:gaylefitzmaier@yahoo.com).

