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# 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.

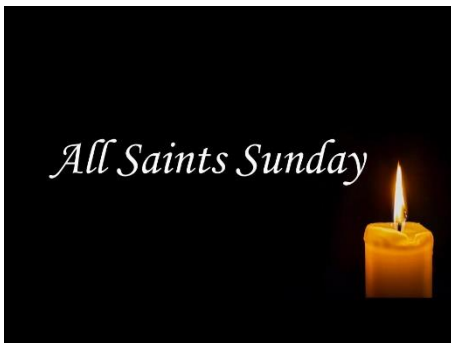
*Psalm 118:22-23*

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Volume LXXI Number 44

November 2, 2023



## Who Are The Saints?

*The saints are those who, in some partial way, embody – literally incarnate – the challenge of faith in their time and place. In doing so, they open a path that others might follow.*

---Robert Ellsberg

*"I have always been drawn to the Feast of All Saints. It is a time to remember with gratitude all those persons whose goodness has inspired me in my beliefs and given me courage to act on what I believe. It is a day to acknowledge that these holy men and woman have helped me find my own potential for goodness.*

*I think of "saints" as not only those women and men who have been canonized by the church, but all people whose lives reflect the goodness of God. Saints are not perfect people. They have their faults, idiosyncrasies, and weaknesses. They have their own struggles and difficulties. Even the canonized ones are noted to have been difficult to live with because of some of their unique mannerisms. Yet, the saints are people of integrity. They have a central focus at the core of their lives: the love of God. They consistently choose to act out of that central reality, no matter how ordinary or extraordinary their lives may be.*

*One of the finest books I have used for daily inspiration is Robert Ellsberg's All Saints. In this book of 365 daily reflections on saints, Ellsberg notes that the "communion of saints" was a vivid reality for the early Christians. They would gather at the gravesites of martyrs to remember the martyrs' witness to the gospel and commemorate the anniversary of their deaths. This ritual was the seed for the future feast of All Saints' Day. As we celebrate this feast, we gather to commemorate not just martyrs or people we might tend to put on spiritual pedestals, but all those people who have drawn us to God because of who they were and how they lived. All Saints' Day is an excellent opportunity for us to be re-inspired by their virtuous lives and to cherish the union we have with them."*

--- Joyce Rupp

\*Taken from *Out of the Ordinary, Prayers, Poems, and Reflections for Every Season*, Ave Maria Press, 2000.

This Sunday we will celebrate All Saints' Day. A worship service to celebrate and remember the lives of those who have gone on in faith.' It is the day we celebrate those who have died and gone on to eternal glory. Together with Christians across the world, the first Sunday of November offers the opportunity to praise God and to witness to our faith as we celebrate the lives that we have lost. 'We all know people in this faith community, in our families, in our circles of friends, and in our global neighbors who have passed away this past year or throughout our lifetimes. All Saints' Sunday invites us to acknowledge our human loss while celebrating our faith, knowing that those who have passed away are seated at the banquet table with our Lord.

So, I invite you in to this service of celebration and remembrance as we share our faith together through New Orleans-style hymns, Scripture, meditation, Communion, and a time of remembrance as we light candles for the lives to whom we love and miss. **(Don't forget to set your clocks back)**

See you in church, Jill

*All Saint Jazz Service*  
*Sunday, Nov. 5th 9:30 a.m.*

*A service of remembrance,  
jazz music, candlelight  
and communion.*





## Thanksgiving Baskets

### MERCY CENTER THANKSGIVING BASKETS

Once again, it is collection time for the annual Mercy Center Thanksgiving food drive. Families in need are provided Thanksgiving baskets containing all the ingredients for a complete holiday dinner. The Mercy Center food pantry currently serves over 3,540 families a month in the Neptune/Asbury Park area!

Since it is a large project, the Mercy Center requires the food be delivered to them early. Therefore, starting **October 22nd**, there will be a table in the church foyer to receive your donations. The Thanksgiving food drive ends on **November 5<sup>th</sup>**. Donations can be dropped-off during church office hours or on Sundays.

**UPDATE/TURKEYS: Mercy Center's turkey supplier has cut-back on its donation this year so turkeys are needed. Mercy Center is seeking 15-18 lb. turkeys or turkey breasts. Turkeys can be left in the church freezer MARKED MERCY CENTER.**

The food items being collected:

PERISHABLES---Please put the butter and biscuits in the refrigerator-MARKED MERCY CENTER

Butter

Refrigerated tube biscuits

#### NON-PERISHABLE ITEMS

Stove-Top boxed stuffing

Canned vegetables: yams, corn, carrots, collard greens, spinach

Canned turkey gravy

Cranberry sauce

Cooking oil



### UWIF World Thank Offering 2023

The World Thank Offering (WTO) is an opportunity for personal thanksgiving, and for participation in global mission outreach. Through this offering, mission projects in all 50 states and in almost 100 countries are supported. It is working to eliminate racism, and sexism, and loneliness. Mission is Christ's challenge to us to bring the possibility of food, shelter, and fulfillment to all of humanity.

To contribute to this mission work, please set aside a collection box and give with thanks during the year. Boxes are available in Fellowship Hall or make your own box or jar personal to you. Or use an envelope to give once a year. Our total annual offering is handed in at the end of November. Thank you.

November Communion Offering  
HOPE SCHOOL

Dear Rev. Jill Hubbard-Smith,

Hoping my email finds you well in Christ's name.

I am writing to you on behalf of Hope School in Bethlehem. Your church "**First UMC of Oakhurst**" is printed in our hearts and minds for its role in supporting our ministry in the Holy Land through GBGM-Advance project #12018A. I am sure you heard about the collapsing situation in the Holy Land. Our school location is in a very critical area where all the roads to the school are blocked right now, so we immediately converted to on-line, yet, we have problems in doing so, because some of our students have no devices at all, while others haven't enough devices because they use the devices of their parents which are not available all the time. The situation cannot be described; we are in a mess. It is a very difficult time for our Hope School ministry. We are asking our friends to extend a hand of help to our ministry in these gloomy days so we can continue our mission. Our ministry has been thriving over the past years; we are serving more than 330 vulnerable children of all ages starting from our Kindergarten "the little Angel" up to high school students. In addition, we have 20 boarders, who we've sent back to their homes temporarily because of the situation and lack of resources. The war, which claimed the lives of thousands of innocent people, including children and women, devastated thousands of homes, and displaced thousands of families from both sides. It seems to continue without any hope to be stopped. Yet we never stop trusting in God, who is the protector and who can put an end to this awful war. God never forsakes His children in the days of trouble.

Our urgent needs:

1. To provide devices for our children.
2. To provide food parcels for the extreme-poor families of our children.

Hoping our appeal finds open ears and can be heard by your hearts and minds; for He said "Hear my prayer, Lord; let my cry for help come to you. Do not hide your face from me when I am in distress. Turn your ear to me." (Psalm 102)

We thank all those who consider our children and ministry in their prayers and support: "Blessed is he that considereth the poor, the Lord delivers him in the time of trouble." (Psalm 41)

We pray for the victims of this ugly war.

We pray for our children and ministry.

We pray for you, your family, clergy, staff, and the congregants of **First UMC of Oakhurst**.

Blessings,

Tula Stephan

Hope school – Charitable Association

International Relations



November 5, 2023  
23rd Sunday after Pentecost

Counters: Patty Aria, Abby DiNapoli, Judy Gorra

Greeter: Scott Danielson

Usher: Gerry Busfield

Acolyte: Sue McRae

Lay Reader: Barbara Novick

Fellowship Hosts: Pam Lynch & Jeff Danielson

Altar Flowers:

Given in loving memory of Bob More by his wife,  
Joy.  
Given in loving memory of Richard Beckmann  
by Peg, Kenneth, & Kimberly.

# WORSHIP with us

November 12, 2023  
24th Sunday after Pentecost

Counters: Kitty Amato, Peg Kuchen, Chip Stoll

Greeter: Jeff Danielson

Usher: Jay Aretino

Acolyte: Joy More

Lay Reader: Carol Steinat

Fellowship Hosts: Gerry Busfield & Diane Plumser

Altar Flowers:

Given in loving memory of James & Patricia  
Whitney's wedding anniversary by their family.  
Given in loving memory of Phillip McRae by  
Susan & Sean.



## 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 November:**

- *Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*

(1 Chronicles 16:8 NIV)

**Altar Flowers**

Thank you to those who dedicated altar flowers for November. Just one opening remains-one bouquet for Nov. 19th. If you would like to reserve it, please contact Diane Maher at 732-513-8413. \$18 to Altar Guild.





DEADLINE NOVEMBER 12

Many thanks to those who have offered (or been persuaded) to write a page for the Advent devotional booklet. So far I have only six in hand and the deadline is Nov. 12! We need 16 more! PLEASE! If our booklet is going to be the special gift it has been in the past, we need help from you!

What to write about? Any meaningful experience, anecdote, thoughts, impressions, poems, hymns, or memories that have touched or inspired you. Your submission need not be long. Please call me at 732-513-8413 or email at [dianeserine07712@yahoo.com](mailto:dianeserine07712@yahoo.com) if you have any questions, or need a sample.

Thanks so much,  
Diane



Laura Eble sends a word of thanks for all the loving concern, cards, and prayers she received from our church family. She is doing much better.



Interfaith Neighbors wishes to thank our congregation for the generous collaborative gift in support of their mission to service "the least of these" in our communities.



Complete Care at Shrewsbury: **Bev Itell**  
Jersey Shore Center, Eatontown: **David Miller, Carol Allen**  
At Home: **Jean Gillette, Virginia Haydu, Bob Sproat, Bertha Ahrens**  
**Cary Carlisle, Carol Allen, Bob Cleary, Priscilla Smith, Elaine Bilotta, Connie Bruckmann**

**OUR NOVEMBER COMMUNION OFFERING  
BENEFITS  
HOPE SCHOOL**



HELP IS NEEDED!

After a book sale and 4 garage sales, there are still MANY books left over in boxes on the stage. All are in good or better condition. Volunteers are needed to cart a box, or two, (or more) to a storage facility in Ocean Grove before the middle of November. From there they will be sold at Ocean Grove's book sale this summer. If you can help out, please contact Joy in the church office.

**Tsedalech Tesfaye, our World Vision Child from Ethiopia, is sponsored for the month of November by Mary Bailey.**

If you were unable to attend our church conference this past Saturday, conference booklets are available to you. They are located on the table in the foyer.



**WEEKLY BIBLE READINGS**  
**November 5-November 11**

John 3:7-17  
Psalm 107:1-7, 33-37  
I Thessalonians 2:9-13  
Matthew 23:1-12



Fellowship hosts are needed for almost all of the Sundays ahead. It's not difficult to do. Instructions can be found in the upstairs kitchen along with the sign-up sheet.



2024 calendars, sponsored by Fiore Funeral Home, have been delivered and are out for your taking. You may find them on the table in the foyer.



**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.



**Tower Hill Veterans Day Choir**

Tower Hill Church is looking for voices to perform a one day concert celebrating our veterans and country. One day rehearsal, November 11<sup>th</sup>, 9AM-noon; concert, November 12<sup>th</sup> at 4PM. Please contact Fiona Sutherland, [finoa@towerhillchurch.org](mailto:finoa@towerhillchurch.org) with any questions or to sign up.





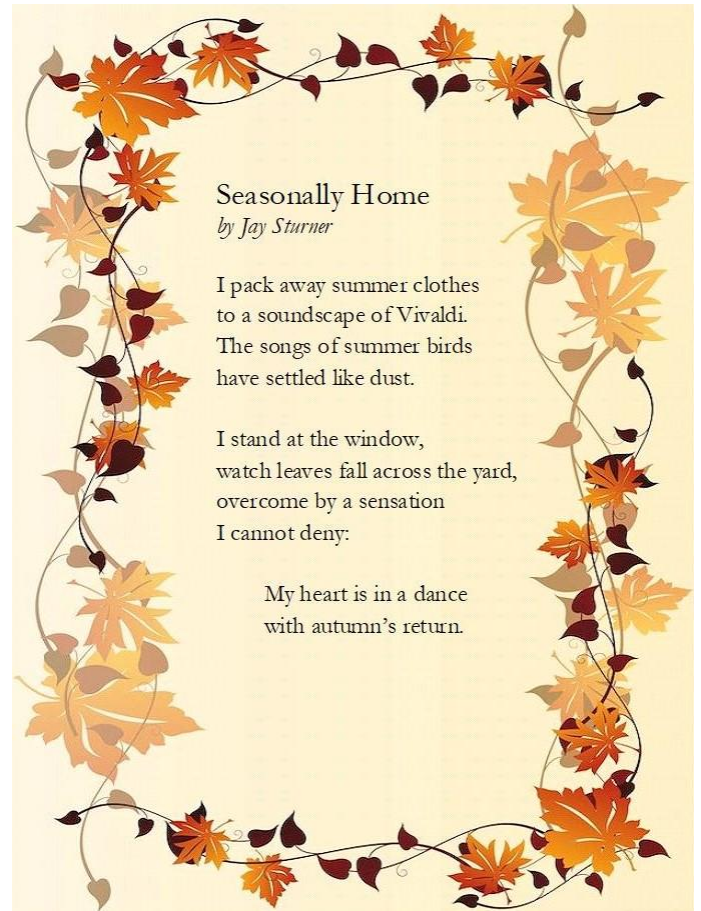
**Something to think about:**

Opportunity knocks once. Temptation leans on the doorbell!



**SAVE THE DATE**

A Thanksgiving worship service will be held on November 21<sup>st</sup>, 7:30 pm at Oceanport UMC.



*Seasonally Home*  
*by Jay Sturner*

I pack away summer clothes  
to a soundscape of Vivaldi.  
The songs of summer birds  
have settled like dust.

I stand at the window,  
watch leaves fall across the yard,  
overcome by a sensation  
I cannot deny:

My heart is in a dance  
with autumn's return.



**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:

**Dish Detergent**