

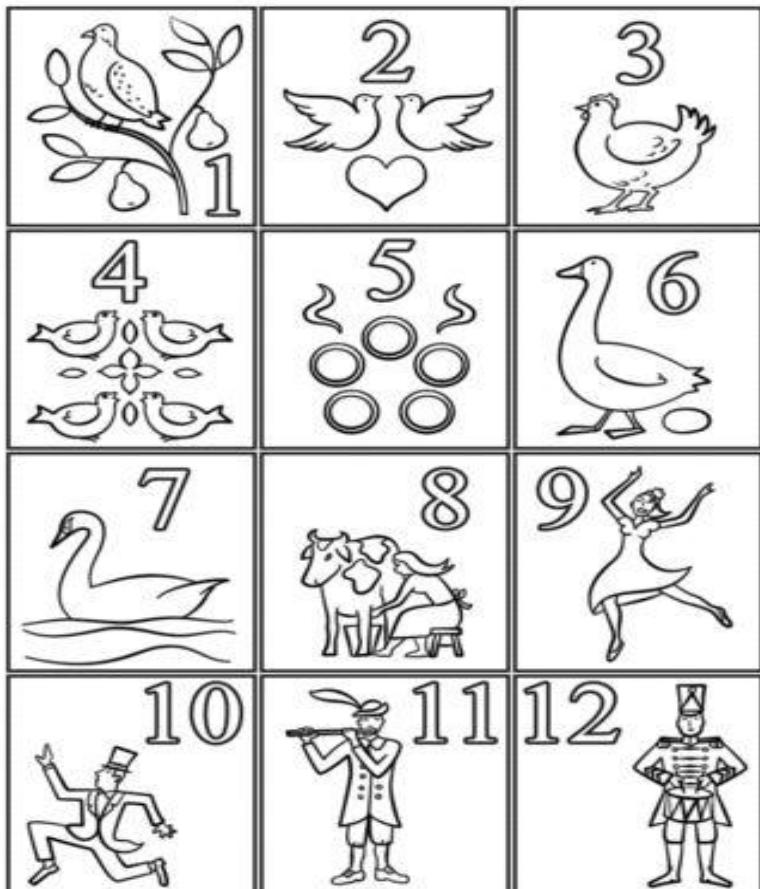
The Cornerstone

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 LXXIII NUMBER 51

December 25, 2025



Join us on Sunday 12/28 as we celebrate the birth of Christ with a carol sing and a special message on the 12 Days of Christmas.

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP

FAMILY CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

5:00 P.M.

CANDLELIGHT & COMMUNION SERVICE

11:00 P.M.





2025 OUTREACH COMMITTEE THANK YOU

Once again, the congregation has allowed the light of Christ to shine throughout the world by responding with Christian love in its generous support of the many missions and projects that have helped our neighbors both near and far. You gave generously to the monthly Communion offerings, continued your steadfast support of the annual CROP Walk, kept the Mercy Center food pantry stocked, allowed families to share a beautiful Thanksgiving dinner together with your gifts to the Mercy Center Thanksgiving food basket ministry, knitted up a storm, and most recently adopted 25 adults and children as part of the Adopt-A-Family project that will allow those families to enjoy a Merry Christmas. On behalf of those lives that have been touched by your Christian generosity, the Outreach Committee would like to thank each member of this congregation. Your acts of love honors God. We hope that you and your families have a very Merry Christmas and a happy, healthy and blessed New Year.

The Outreach Committee



Seated-Shirley Bailey; standing from left to right-Joy More, Gerry Busfield, Diane Maher, & Faye Snorton

In early December, the Women's Covenant Group celebrated a very special birthday for a very special member, Shirley Bailey.

CLUSTER UM CHURCH CALENDAR

Old First (Jill Hubbard-Smith) 197 Locust Ave., West Long Branch (Stream: Facebook)

Wayside (David Geller) 1229 West Park Ave., Ocean (Stream: YouTube)

Oceanport (Donna Nielson) 50 Mail St., Oceanport (Stream: YouTube)

St. Luke's (Chungmi Kang) 535 Broadway, Long Branch

Embury (Chungmi Kang) 49 Church St., Little Silver

FUMCO (Jill Hubbard-Smith) 103 Monmouth Rd., Oakhurst (Stream: YouTube, Facebook)

CHRISTMAS EVE

5:00 p.m. – Family Candlelight Service – FUMCO

5:00 p.m. – Candlelight Service – Embury

7:00 p.m. – Candlelight Service – St. Luke's

7:30 p.m. – Candlelight Service – Old First

7:30 p.m. – Candlelight Service – Oceanport

9:00 p.m. – Candlelight Service – Wayside

11:00 p.m. – Candlelight & Communion – FUMCO

Dec. 28	5:00 p.m.	Free Community Spaghetti Dinner	FUMCO with Old First
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2026

Jan. 17	5:00 p.m.	Chicken Dinner	Oceanport
Jan. 18	5:00 p.m.	Free Community Spaghetti Dinner	FUMCO with Old First
Jan. 24-31		Mission Trip to WV	
Feb. 15	5:00 p.m.	Free Community Spaghetti Dinner	FUMCO with Old First
Feb. 17	5:00 p.m.	Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper	Oceanport
Aug. 19	5:00 p.m.	Peach Festival	Oceanport





1st Sunday after Christmas
December 28, 2025

Counters: Mary Bailey, Cheryl McLoughlin, John Montgomery

Greeter: Jeff Danielson

Usher: Kitty Amato

Acolyte: Bonnie McNamara

Lay Reader: Ron Puryear

Fellowship Hosts: Jeff Danielson & Pam Lynch



1st Sunday
January 4, 2026

Counters: Patty Aria, John Montgomery, Judy Gorra

Greeter: Randy Danielson

Usher: Greg Scott, Robert Scott

Acolyte: Faye Snorton

Lay Reader: Ron Puryear

Fellowship Hosts: Scott & Russel Danielson

Altar Flowers

Given in loving memory of Russell Danielson by Randy, Aldo, Ron, Jeff, Scott, & Russel

Given in loving memory of Scott Gill by his mother, Carol Whyte.



Note of **THANKS**

Dear members and friends.

Thank you for your prayers, support, phone calls, visits, and cards. It helped me through some difficult days. Peg Kuchen



Pledge Envelopes

Thanks to those of you who have already picked up your pledge envelopes. If you haven't done so, you may find them on the table in the foyer.



We are looking for sponsors for our World Vision child, Tsedalech. All months are open except October. Sponsorship donations are \$39. Please make checks out to the church. If you'd like a dedication, please let the office know.

Java with Jill



Every 4th Tuesday of the month at 10 a.m. Jill and friends meet at the Blue Swan Diner in Ocean for an informal gathering. **All are invited! Next date is 1/27.**



Diaper Drive

Diapers, pull-ups, ointment, and wipes are being collected again this year from now until Epiphany Sunday, January 4th, 2026. Pastor Jill and family will match diaper to diaper before dropping off the items to The Maker's Place, a UM mission. Please leave your donations in the church office.

OUR DECEMBER COMMUNION OFFERING BENEFITS THE DR. JOHN D. BLAIR SCHOLARSHIP

Tsedalech, our World Vision Child from Ethiopia, is sponsored for the month of December in memory of Kay Ayles by her family.



The third Sunday of every month is a FREE to all community spaghetti dinner hosted by the Outreach Committee and Old First UMC. You are invited to Fellowship Hall for a dinner of salad, bread, and spaghetti with your choice of marinara, meatballs, or sausages, and dessert. Birthdays are also celebrated with a cake for those celebrating their birthday during that month. You may eat in or take out. Service starts at 5 p.m. Please spread the word. **Date for December: 28th. (Please note the date change for December.)**

Please be Praying for...

Our homebound: David Miller, Bev Itell, Virginia Haydu, Bob Sproat, Bertha Ahrens, Cary Carlisle, Priscilla Smith, Elaine Gould

At home: Avery Fallon, Peg Kuchen

Sunnyside Manor, Wall: Nancy Burtt

Our church family worshipping at a distance: Barbara Novick, Jean Gillette, Laura Eble, Jack & Caroline Chesbro



Something to think about:
In a world of hate...be a light.

WEEKLY BIBLE READINGS

Dec. 28-Jan. 3



Isaiah 63:7-9
Psalm 148
Hebrews 2:10-18
Matthew 2:13-23



FELLOWSHIP HOSTS NEEDED

Do you have what it takes to be a fellowship host? YES, YOU DO!

Please sign up in the upstairs kitchen. The very simple requirements to be a fellowship host are posted on the poster board. Or you may speak with Bonnie McNamara.



UP FOR GRABS

In Blair Chapel and Wesley Hall there are cushioned folding chairs that are free for the taking. The chairs are being replaced with a different kind of chair and before discarding them they are being offered to all of you. For more information or to set up a time to take them, call the church office 732-531-1150.

There are several chairs still left for the taking.

The Little Free Pantry



Please think of stocking shelf-stable milk, powdered milk, soup, stew, chili, whole grain cereal, toiletries, hygiene products, baby food, applesauce, canned beans, canned chicken, canned tuna, canned salmon, SPAM, canned ham, canned vegetables, olive oil, canola oil, crackers, dried herbs, spices, canned fruit, dried fruit, granola bars, instant mashed potatoes, meals in a box, nuts, pasta, peanut butter, & rice.

A good idea this week:

Jelly



MERCY CENTER

The Outreach Commission thanks you for your continued support of the Mercy Center food bank. Here are the current needs: canned meats, canned fish, beans, lentils, rice, pasta, oats, whole-grain cereals, low-sodium soup, canned fruits, canned vegetables, peanut butter, powdered milk, & nonperishable oils.



I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day

*I heard the bells on Christmas day
Their old familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet the words repeat
Of peace on earth, good will to men.*

*I thought how, as the day had come,
The belfries of all Christendom
Had rolled along th'unbroken song
Of peace on earth, good will to men.*

*And in despair I bowed my head:
"There is no peace on earth," I said,
"For hate is strong, and mocks the song
Of peace on earth, good will to men."*

*Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:
"God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;
The wrong shall fail, the right prevail,
With peace on earth, good will to men."*

*Till, ringing, singing on its way,
The world revolved from night to day
A voice, a chime, a chant sublime,
Of peace on earth, good will to men.*

by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow 1807-1882

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Merry Christmas!