

# Spirit Soundings

## October 2020

**A NEWSLETTER OF OLD FIRST CHURCH, MIDDLETOWN, NEW JERSEY**

### **A SEASON OF REFLECTION**

Autumn is often thought of as a season of reflection. It's not so close to the end of the year that we just simply become depressed thinking of all the things we intended to do this year and never got done because there's still time in the year to meet at least some of the goals we set for ourselves. There's still time for us to consider altering our schedules, not to mention our lifestyle to get it all done.

But if we really consider it, we just know that we are fooling ourselves into thinking that the number of tasks we often set for ourselves can really get done by year's end. For most of us, including me, we'll be lucky if some of them get done at all. Reflecting on all the unfinished tasks often puts us in the position of considering our own mortality. Autumn is not the mellow season, as one writer claimed. It is a season to hurry up and get it all done.

This year has, of course, been different than simply pulling ourselves out of the lugubrious summer to schedule meetings and think about going here or there to do this or that. In spite of, or perhaps because of, the impact of the virus on our lives, we feel an increased pressure to get things done.

However, we need to find in this season a time for reflection, a time to open ourselves to the Spirit of God calling us to feel the beauty of the Infinite. In the dark of the early morning, let us be open to God's Presence. In the wind that swirls around us let us feel God's breath, God's Spirit. As we move about our tasks, let us take a moment to hold a leaf and to consider its complexity and beauty and to reflect on the world that God has given us.

Rev. Joyce

### **WHY THIS MONTH'S SPIRIT SOUNDINGS IS LATE**

Our new church secretary and I discovered that the Spirit Soundings format in Publisher which we have been using for Spirit Soundings in the past is not compatible with the older version of Outlook we have in the church computer. We are investigating new ways to send the newsletter, so for now, it comes as the Word document from my home computer.

Rev. Joyce

### **BOOKS! BOOKS! GLORIOUS BOOKS!**

The AAUW Bookstore will be open this Saturday, October 10. There is an early opening for book fanatics (like me!) at 8 AM with a \$5 contribution to the AAUW. Regular store hours will be from 9 AM to 1 PM.

Funds raised go to scholarships for women

**Face masks and distancing required!**

## What's a virtual Crop Walk?

This year Church World Service is sponsoring a Virtual Crop Walk— CWS still needs our contributions for local, national, and international projects. You can mail your donation to Crop Walk, PO. Box 8022, Red Bank, NJ 07701. With your check, please identify yourself as a member of OFC.

**The Calico Cat is having a sale!** On Friday and Saturday, October 9 and 10, the Calico Cat is having a sidewalk sale from 10:30 AM to 2:30 PM of overstock because it was closed for so long during the spring. Bring your own bags. Most items will be on sale for just \$1.00

## Being Together as a Community

**Elaine** continues to improve and welcomes your phone calls. She's reading up a storm and has managed to maintain her sense of humor in spite of all that's happened.

**Ruth** also welcomes your phone calls and communications on Facebook. She still does not want visitors at this time.

The Church Directory has the email addresses of our community.

## Never Cease to Pray

Everywhere, wherever you may find yourself, you can set up an altar to God in your mind by means of prayer.

St. John Chrysostom (d. 407)

**Remember:**

**Margaret Ann & Bobby B.**

**Gretchen & Jim H.**

**Jean H.**

**Ruth J. & Family**

**Sandy K.**

**Elaine L.**

**All of us in this time of concern for the health of our community, the Nation, and the world.**

## Social Media

[www.olderfirstchurchnj.org](http://www.olderfirstchurchnj.org)

**Website:** Please check out our website: [www.olderfirstchurchnj.org](http://www.olderfirstchurchnj.org). Here you have links to the *prayer and thoughts for the week*, *prayers for our denominational missionaries* across the globe, *Pastor Joyce's sermons*, and the *calendar*.

[facebook.com/old1stchurch](https://facebook.com/old1stchurch)

## **Serving the Community**

Shop [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com): Sign in to smile.amazon.com on your desktop or mobile phone browser. From your desktop, go to Your Account from the navigation at the top of any page, and then select the option to Change your Charity. Or, from your mobile browser, select Change your Charity from the options at the bottom of the page. Amazon donates a small percentage to OFC. Choose OFC as your charity.

### **An Important Notice**

**Avoiding Misinformation & Online Scams:** The Office of Homeland Security published a [list of rumors, scams, and disinformation campaigns](#) related to COVID-19 to keep New Jersey residents safe and aware.

## **Be A Peacemaker in a Turbulent World**

Old First Church is dually affiliated with the American Baptist Church and the United Church of Christ.  
We are a community of faith, open, welcoming and affirming to all.

69 Kings Highway, Middletown, NJ 07748-2001

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Joyce Antila Phipps • Worship 10:30 am • Communion 1st Sunday

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