

November 2011

# Come Grow With Us!

Dear Oak Tree Friends,

It is a fearful time in which we live. People are uncertain about their employment, the economy, unrest in the world, cancer and other health issues, medical coverage, and much more. In fearful times, we become afraid to spend money, and we cut back our giving. While that is a normal reaction to fear, it ends up being harmful to the church and limits our mission and ministry! And it is not God's intention for how his people should live their lives! When we become fearful and hold tightly to what we have, we are forgetting to trust in God. We are forgetting God's promises, God's presence, God's power. We are forgetting that with God there is enough!

Instead of being frightened, we should have courage and faith, knowing, as it says in our scripture for this month, that God **is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble**, that God is with us even in these difficult times, and particularly in the midst of our fear. The Lord of hosts is with us, therefore we will not fear!

As you consider your giving for 2012 and your support of Oak Tree Church, please pray that God will strengthen you and give you courage, that you will be able to "not fear, though the earth should change." The earth is changing, but our God is not. As our sign says this month "Autumn leaves, God doesn't". Trust in that belief. God doesn't leave us or forsake us, the Lord of hosts is with us! Let us give thanks to God for his presence and help, let us give thanks by opening our hearts and hands and giving without fear.

*Rev. Jill*

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change, though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea; though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its tumult. . . The LORD of hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge. **Psalm 46**

## OTPC - November at a glance

- 6—"Bad Girls" Bible Study
- 8—Oak Tree @ FISH Clothing Room
- 10—Brighton Gardens 2 PM  
Knit One, Pray Too 7 PM
- 12—Holiday Boutique & Harvest Bake Sale  
Free Spaghetti Dinner
- 13—Stewarding Breakfast  
Deacons Meeting 11:15 AM
- 14—Session meeting 7 PM
- 19—Fall Clean-Up of Church grounds
- 20—Talk Back to your Pastor 11:15 AM
- 24—Knit One, Pray Too 7 PM
- 27—Ministry Groups meet 11:15 AM
- Choir** — Wednesdays at 7:45 PM
- Bible Study** — Wednesdays at 6:30 PM and Thursdays at 10 AM



# HOLIDAY GIFT BOUTIQUE AND HARVEST BAKE SALE



**Oak Tree will hold our annual Holiday Boutique & Harvest Bake Sale on Saturday, November 12th.**

Unique gift items from local artisans and crafters, such as jewelry, handmade crafts, original art, toys, candles, giftware and food, will be on sale.

And we have some new artists joining us this year! We will also have a great bake sale of home-baked fall favorites! So finish up your hand crafted items and start baking your harvest goodies! Plan to come to help and to shop for unique Christmas gift items. If you would like a table to sell a craft or merchandise, please contact Mary Ellen Martin in the Church office, 732-549-4178.

Following the Gift Boutique we will have our final free dinner for 2011— a **Spaghetti Dinner**. Sign up to bring sauce, Italian bread, beverage or dessert to contribute and plan to have dinner with us on November 12th from 5 to 7 pm. Sign-up for the dinner is in the Narthex.



## God's House

### PAINT PARTY!

We're looking for a few good workers to help stain the cedar shakes on the outside of our building every Saturday until Nov. 19th. If you can help, wear your old clothes & come on over between 10 and 3!



### The Yellow Brick Sidewalk

Walking to Oak Tree Church is a little risky these days. Our sidewalk is turning to rubble and needs to be replaced. Estimates to replace the sidewalk came in at approximately \$160 per square and we need about 60 squares! Won't you consider buying one square of our much-needed walkway?

### Lighting Fixtures

Our lighting fixtures in the classrooms all need to be replaced. Thanks to Rich Listash, the fixtures were replaced in Rev. Jill's office. Fixtures run about \$45 each and there are 8 per classroom. If you would like to adopt a classroom or help with the installation, see Karen Wallner.

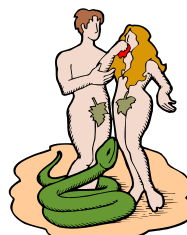
## NURTURING THE SPIRIT

### FALL BIBLE STUDIES

Because we believe that we never stop learning and growing in faith, we are offering two Bible Study opportunities this fall. There will be an evening Study on Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. and a morning Study on Thursdays at 10 a.m. Both classes will be studying the Gospel of Matthew, which is our lectionary gospel for the fall. Everyone is welcome to join us for these group discussions of God's word. No former experience or knowledge is needed, just a willing spirit and an inquiring mind!

### BAD GIRLS OR—AMAZING WOMEN?

A Bible Study that takes a look at some of the "bad girls" of the Bible will be held the first Sunday of every month immediately following worship. Led by Madelynne Lindsey this study will consider some of the amazing women of the scriptures and the bad rap that some of them got! Join us on November 6th in the Conference Room.



### TALK BACK TO YOUR PASTOR...

... but only once a month! After worship once each month you will have an opportunity to discuss and ask questions about the sermon and the topic for the day. Talk Back is usually the third Sunday of every month, and in November it will be the 20th. Bring your coffee and join us as we discuss the sermon for that day.



# OAK TREE CARES

## FOOD DONATIONS NEEDED

Unemployment continues to grow, people all around us are living on the edge, facing foreclosure and wondering how to feed their families. Next time you go to the grocery store why not pick up some extra food to help refill our food pantry and the emergency pantry at Amandla Crossing. Non-perishables such as pasta, soup, canned fish and meat, canned fruit, peanut butter, and cereal are particularly welcome. Donations can be put in the bin in the back of the sanctuary.

## FISH UPDATE

The FISH Clothing Room is a busy place these days. With our current economy, there is a great need for gently used clothing. Donations of new underwear and socks are also appreciated. Bring your clothing donations to Oak Tree this week! We will be going to FISH on Tuesday, November 8th, from 8:30 a.m. till noon.



## GREENING OF THE CHURCH

Join us Saturday, November 26th as we “green the church” for Christmas! We will gather at 10 AM for the hanging of the greens and to decorate the sanctuary for Christmas. If you have decorating ideas, willingness to help, and are good on a ladder — we need you!



## INTERFAITH THANKSGIVING

You are invited to join your neighbors in giving thanks to the Lord at an Interfaith Community Thanksgiving Worship Service. This special service will take place on Monday, November 21st at 7:30 pm at the Second Baptist Church in Metuchen. The church is located at 100 Durham Ave., just a block down from Campbell School.



## CHRISTMAS DINNER AND TREE TRIMMING

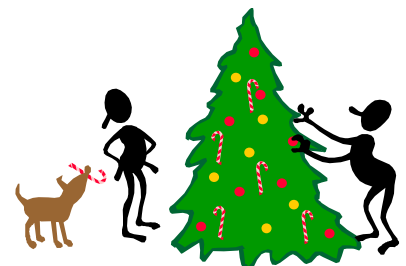


Our annual Christmas potluck dinner and tree trimming party will be held on Saturday, December 10th at 6:00 PM.

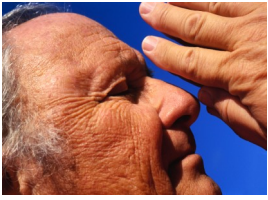
Bring a casserole, salad, or dessert to share and join us for an evening of good food, music and caroling, Christmas crafts for kids and adults, and a time to decorate our tree. Everyone is welcome, bring a friend or two or three — the more the merrier! Each fam-

ily is asked to bring a few new ornaments for the tree. A big thank you goes to Jeff and Laura Reeves for their efforts every year to get us a fresh and beautiful tree!

There is a sign up sheet in the Narthex for the dinner. Please let us know how many to expect so we can plan accordingly.



## Stewardship Thoughts



It is stewardship time here at Oak Tree, the time when we look ahead at our budget and plans for the coming year and when we ask you to prayerfully consider your support of

the ministry and mission of our church for 2012. The Session is working hard to develop a balanced budget for the coming year. We are looking at a three-pronged approach: reducing our budget, raising our revenue, and increasing giving. We will pare the budget down as much as possible, increase the rent of our building tenants, and look at having at least one major fund raising event. We have estimated that if we do these three things, it will leave us with a smaller deficit that could be met by every person increasing their giving by just \$60 per year! That works

out to just \$5. per month. We ask that you prayerfully consider your giving for 2012 and see if you can help us to balance our budget and not have to cut any programs or staff in the coming year. We will receive your pledge in worship on November 13th.

Two men were shipwrecked near an island. When they landed ashore, one of them began screaming and yelling, "We're going to die! There's no food! No water! We're going to die!" The second man leaned calmly against a palm tree. When the first man saw how calm his friend was, he went crazy and shouted, "Don't you understand?! We're going to die!?" Undisturbed, the second man replied, "You don't understand, I make \$100,000 a week." Dumbfounded, the first man looked at him and asked, "What difference does that make!?! We're on an island with no food and no water! We're going to DIE!!!" The second man answered, "You just don't get it. I make \$100,000 a week and I tithe ten percent on that \$100,000 a week. Wherever I am, my pastor will be sure to find me!"

## Come on the Journey



The Presbytery of Elizabeth's Evangelism and Church Vitality Unit has invited us to join the Jeremiah Journey and our officers have decided to accept the invitation! The

Jeremiah Journey is a 3-year journey of exploration where we, as a congregation, listen for what God would have us do. This is not a canned program of church growth where they tell us what to do and how to solve "our prob-

lems". It is program where we, with the help of consultants and congregational coaches, learn to listen and respond to God's leading. It is a journey of discovery and discernment, of listening to the word of God in a new way that just might lead our congregation in a new and exciting direction. The Journey begins in January and we are currently selecting a team of leaders to lead our church in this journey. If you feel that God is calling you to help our church move into the future with hope, please speak with Rev. Jill

## Equipping the Saints

### Leadership Training Event

The Education & Discipleship Unit of the Elizabeth Presbytery will hold a leadership training for Elders, Deacons, and anyone interested in furthering their ministry. The event will be held on Saturday, January 21st, 2012 (snow date Feb 11th), at Princeton Theological Seminary. Further details to follow, but mark your calendars if you would be interested in attending this event.



## Choir is for Everyone!

We have a new Director and some new music! Lisa Simon has joined us as our new interim Director of Music, and she invites everyone to join the choir! If you have ever thought about singing with the choir, this would be a good time to join. So come on out on Wednesday evenings at 7:45 and join us as we make a joyful noise to the Lord! No experience necessary — everyone is welcome! .

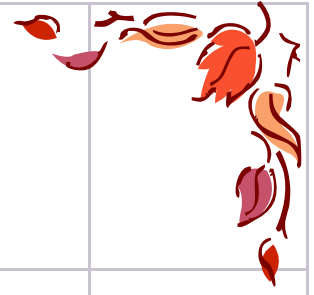


# November 2011



**Sun**      **Mon**      **Tue**      **Wed**      **Thu**      **Fri**      **Sat**

6 10:00 Worship & Church School 11:15 "Bad Girls" Bible Study	7 10:00 Worship & Church School 11:15 "Bad Girls" Bible Study	8 <i>Election Day</i> 8:00 FISH clothing room	9 6:30 Bible Study 7:45 Choir	10 6:30 Bible Study 7:45 Choir	11 7:00 Knit One, Pray Too	12 10:00 Painting Party 10-3 Holiday Boutique & Harvest Bake Sale 6:00 FREE Spaghetti Dinner
13 8:00 Men's Breakfast 10:00 Worship & Church School Stewarding Brunch 11:15 Deacons	14 7:00 Session	15	16 6:30 Bible Study 7:45 Choir	17 10:00 Bible Study	18	19 10:00 Fall Clean-Up
20 10:00 Worship & Church School 11:15 Talk Back	21 7:30 Community Thanksgiving Service, Second Baptist Church, Metuchen	22	23 6:30 Bible Study 7:45 Choir	24 Thanksgiving	25	26 10:00 Greening of the Church
27 10:00 Worship & Church School 11:15 Ministry Groups	28	29	30 6:30 Bible Study 7:45 Choir			





**OAK TREE PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH**

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**Administrator: Mary Ellen Martin**

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WE'RE ON THE WEB!  
OAKTREECHURCH.ORG

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FIRST CLASS MAIL — Address correction requested



## Worship at Oak Tree

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### Prepare your Hearts

Some folks like to prepare for worship by reading the upcoming passages and reflecting on them. Here are the lectionary passages for the month of September:

**Nov 6:** Joshua 24:1-3a, 14-25; Psalm 78:1-7; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Matthew 25:1-13.

**Nov 13:** Judges 4:1-7; Psalm 123; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11; Matthew 25:14-30.

**Nov 20:** Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24; Psalm 100; Ephesians 1:15-23; Matthew 25:31-46.

**Nov 27:** Isaiah 64:1-9; Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; 1 Corinthians 1:3-9; Mark 13:24-37.

### Worship Assistants

Thank you to everyone who helps with ushering and coffee hour at Oak Tree! We appreciate all you do. We have placed the list of Usher duties on the inside door of the usher's closet. Please review the list when you arrive early on your Sunday and make certain that everything is in order for the service. After the service make sure the sanctuary is ready for the next service. Helpers for the month of September are:

**Nov 6:** *Communion Ushers:* Karen Wallner, Joe Ott, Terry Gleason; *Communion Set-Up:* Nandai Sookhoo, Eileen Ruf; *Acolyte:* Dan Kitsko; *Coffee:* Len & Joanne Mesonas; *Nursery:* Nancy Sittinger.

**Nov 13:** *Ushers:* Andy Haug,

Nandai Sookhoo, Debbie Kratz; *Acolyte:* Alexa D'Alessandro; *Nursery:* Chris Alonso; *Coffee:* Stewarding Brunch.

**Nov 20:** *Ushers:* Holly Weakley, Doreen & Laina Magnani; *Acolyte:* Blessing Echie; *Coffee:* Deacons Susan Sendelsky; *Nursery:* Joanne Mesonas.

**Nov 27:** *Ushers:* Steve Kitsko, Hazel & Gary Shelhimer; *Acolyte:* Chris Chukwuneke; *Coffee:* Nancy & Bob Sittinger, Stella Knill.; *Nursery:* Eleanor Ternyik.

