And Mary said,
"My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior…"
Luke 1:46-47, NRSV

Tell Out My Soul

There are many thing things that make us want to sing for joy – our families and friends, our health, the beauty of God's world, the ability to be creative and activities that we enjoy – and certainly our faith. There are also aspects of pain, sorrow, and challenge in life, but when we are grounded in faith we can see the blessing of God's presence, care, and goodness with us. Then our song of joy may be quieter, but we are grateful, nevertheless.

As Christians we approach the world from a distinct perspective. All that we have is a gift from God, and we are called to be good stewards of those gifts. We also know that the world is not divided between friends and enemies of whom we should be suspicious and fearful. Instead, we know others to be children of God, fellow human-beings made in God's image and worthy of love and respect. Understanding the world in *this* way keeps us centered in a position of gratitude, even when the world brings us distressing news.

Our life together as a Church, as a community of Christian faith, reinforces our identity and helps to shape our words, our actions, and our very souls every time we gather for worship, conversation, and prayer.

All Saints' is a parish for all ages and generations. Families with young children are becoming more active and involved. We now have two Godly Play classes for kids, a good group of youth acolytes, and we have re-launched our children's music program. At the same time, our more "seasoned" parishioners continue to offer their wisdom to us, as well as their time and talents.

Our parish life continues to flourish with coffee hour, parties, picnics, and other events. It's an extension of the love of God we experience in worship that is both joyful and reverent. All of this is possible because of the ways we care for our Church through prayer, loving service, and financial support.

Our buildings and grounds shelter and sustain us. They remind us that we are planted in this particular spot where generations before us have gathered and worshiped, and where faith has been nourished**.** This past year we renovated and repaired the Resurrection window over the altar. It inspires us with its beauty. We also installed the new playground climber and fence which welcomes children from the parish and from the neighborhood.

TwelveBaskets FOOD PANTRY SERVING THE LONG HILL AREA

The need for Twelve Baskets Food Pantry, our partnership ministry with First Presbyterian Church, Meyersville Presbyterian Church, and Long Hill Township Community Resources, continues to expand. We are currently serving 79 households a month. More than a third of them are Seniors; 39 children are among the neighbors we serve with basic groceries, cleaning supplies, personal care items, and holiday specials. Because of conditions beyond our local community we know that this need will grow, and we are grateful for the financial donations and volunteer support that helps to feed hungry people.

Time & Talent: *Your Participation Makes All Saints' Go*

In our family of faith, as in any family, life works best when everyone has a role. You know you belong when you have a job (a ministry), however big or small. There are many ways to participate. Here are some of them:

Worship
All Saints' Choir
Bell Choir
Lectors/Lay Eucharistic Ministers
Altar Guild
Ushers

Stewardship
Buildings & Grounds Crew
Rummage Sale
Office Angels
Finance Committee

Formation
Godly Play (Sunday School)
Other family formation events
Bible Study
Parish Life events
Reception Hosts for funerals
Intercessory Prayer Chain

Evangelism/Outreach
Coffee Hour Hosts
Twelve Baskets Food Pantry
Christmas Adopt-a-Family

The Dollars & Cents in 2025: *the Practical Side of Ministry*

How was the operating budget funded?

Pledge income: $196,380 was given by 65 households. Pledges are 65% of our parish income. The average pledge was $3,021. The median pledge (middle of range of all pledges) was $1820. The chart below shows the range of pledges for 2024.

Amount of Pledge	# of Pledges in this Range	Total $ pledged in this Range
Above $10,000	3	$63,000
Up to $9,999	3	$21,800
Up to $5,999	11	$50,710
Up to $2,999	21	$42,700
Up to $1,499	20	$16,820
Up to $499	7	$1,350

Plate income: $13,000 was budgeted; including unpledged parish contributions, holidays, weddings, funerals and baptisms. This income is somewhat difficult to predict. Another $6000 of income was budgeted for donations towards flowers and music.

Fundraisers: $16,000 was budgeted, including the Rummage Sale, Fish & Chips, and the book bins.

Owned assets: the budget was $69,500 for use of the Parish House, and rental of the Rath House apartment and the rectory on Northfield Road. Parish House income is often variable and difficult to predict. This estimate was based on actual 2024 income.

2025 Total budgeted INCOME $304,380

How was the money spent?

Worship: Music Director salary, choir expenses, instrument maintenance, Altar Guild: **$35,011**.

Buildings & Grounds: utilities (gas, electric, water, sewer), building and liability insurance, snow plowing, property taxes, cleaning, lawn care, repairs, and maintenance: **$78,880**. Some of our large capital expenses are funded outside the budget from the Legacy Funds. These include designated monies accruing for the Memorial Garden upkeep, window restoration, general capital, and memorial gifts.

Administration: Parish Administrator salary and pension contribution, office equipment and supplies, phone, internet, postage, audit: **$35,011.**

Outreach: our pledge to diocesan ministry and the Rector's Discretionary Fund: **$28,394.** Other outreach – especially the food ministry is funded outside of the operating budget.

Parish Life & Education: Books, education materials, and events: **$2,500.**

Clergy includes salary, housing allowance, medical insurance, pension, professional expenses & education, supply clergy, sabbatical fund accrual: **$127,767.**

2025 Total budgeted expense $304,294
That gave us a budgeted surplus of $86.

* The figures in these major categories do not equal the actual dollar totals because some minor categories are not listed here.

As we look ahead to 2026 we know realistically there are always increased expenses – utilities, insurance, supplies, maintenance services, and the care of our grounds. We'd like to increase our support for our children's ministry. We'd also like to be able to contribute our full 10% pledge to the Diocese of Newark, up from 9% in 2025.

Making a Pledge

Your giving should reflect your faith and trust in God, the joy and purpose of Christ's mission through All Saints', and your own family circumstances. **Start by calculating what one percent of your income is** (before or after taxes is up to you), and then prayerfully decide what percentage you will commit. The chart included with this packet gives you some examples. The biblical standard is to give one tenth of our wealth back to God. For some of us this is a far-off goal; others are already doing it. Many are increasing the percentage of their giving in small portions year by year.

Whatever you and God decide, your gift is welcomed and needed.
Everyone's participation is so important. Thank you!

Your pledge of financial support to God's mission in and through All Saints' Church is vital. Your prayers and presence are a sign of God's love in and for our community. You may make a pledge by returning the enclosed card or by using the form the giving page on our parish website

If you have supported All Saints' in the past, thank you for all you have done. We are so grateful. Please consider all the ways that you have been blessed by being part of this loving and growing Christian community and increase your pledge to our shared ministry if you are able to do so.

If you are new to the the Church, thank you for joining this community of faith in Christ and blessing us with your prayers and presence.

And to all God's Saints, thank you for prayerfully considering how you can best support All Saints' in the coming year 2026.

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