

NOVEMBER

MOUNT NITTANY NEWS

The Newsletter of Mount Nittany Church

Pastor's Ramblin's

BY PASTOR MIKE



Cold, frosty morning that bleed into sunny, warm afternoons; brilliant colors that wave in the breeze then swirl away in a gust of wind; sky so blue you can get lost in its clarity. This has been an Autumn that has given me pause, calls me to slow down and take in the beauty and warmth of

the sun before the starkness of winter arrives. These pauses give in to reflection and memory.

This Autumn has caused me to remember times of winter preparation in my growing up. I remember the kitchen table laden down with baskets of apples, cinnamon, flour, and sugar. My mother's Victorian sieve anchored to one end of the table ready to take the cooked apples and turn them into applesauce. The knives, freshly sharpened by my great-grandfather, on the counter ready to peel and slice apples for canned apple pie filling. The whole family gathered in the house or backyard, each with a responsibility. Those in the house canning a processing, those outside, helping run saws and axes preparing wood to heat the house.

I remember that days like this were not wasted, but also not rushed. Stories were shared, laughter uplifted, and memories deepened. When the day was done, we would sit down and eat whatever was put together that morning in the crockpots. The bonds of family deepening around the table and on into the evening when everyone would pack up and head to their respective homes (but not empty handed!).

Reading and rereading Scripture is like that. It is time spent laughing, crying, remembering and deepening our bond with God and each other. It offers opportunity to share coffee, some apple pie (or my favorite apple grunt), or a soulful meal together as we share again the stories of faith, the faithfulness of family and friends, and to not steer clear of the challenges faced, loss and hurt. Those, too, have been part of our faith development.

Con't on page 3

MNUMC WE BELIEVE IT IS OUR MISSION TO...

NURTURE ALL IN THE JOURNEY TO BE DISCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST

TO FULFILL OUR MISSION, IT IS OUR VISION...

TO BE A WELCOMING AND INCLUSIVE FAMILY MEETING SPIRITUAL AND PHYSICAL NEEDS FOR ALL THROUGH TEACHING, WITNESSING, SERVICE AND MISSIONS.

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CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTRY

by Patty Decapria

Parents Night Out

Our children had great fun when we met on October 2 for s'mores and exploding ghosts! We talked about how we are like leaves; we are all created by God (green), but we have true gifts and talents that allow us to be one-of-a-kind (colors) when the leaves drop in autumn. We will meet Friday, November 6, from 6-7:30 pm, and it is open to all children ages 4-12. Children are encouraged to bring a friend.

Trunk or Treat

What an amazing day!!! The weather was perfect, and our trunks were cleverly decorated. The fun was explosive in the FLC, and the food was wonderful. This year we had a face painter and a family picture spot (this will stay up until the end of November). We saw over 270 people (100 more than last year). Lots of dressed-up children and parents; families enjoying the afternoon! What a fantastic way for us to share our talents, our time, and our love with those within our community! Thank you to those who decorated trunks, helped children with games, greeted guests, shared the AllWays Well Welcome room, helped in the kitchen, decorated, and donated money for this event. We already know this is something our community needs. Looking forward to next year's Trunk or Treat!!!!

Sunday Morning Education

Our elementary Sunday morning time has seen some wonderful increases in children. Elementary Education is available to all children ages 4-12. We hope in the next month to split our Sunday Education to 2 rooms; one for the lower ages and one for the upper ages. Both rooms are located in the Education building and are right across the hall from each other. More information when we are able to begin this exciting chapter in Sunday Education!!!! Many, many thanks to Heather Zalno for her creative lessons!

Nursery

We welcome Chloe Klinger to our nursery staff. Chloe has been part of our Mount Nittany family for many years. She has been in the nursery since October and has been part of our Sunday Elementary mornings a few times. She joins Darria Dixon in the nursery. We are indeed blessed!

Missions

We will soon begin our campaign for our annual Angel Tree Grocery Gift Cards. We have been able to provide grocery gift cards to families around the Christmas season for help with food purchases. We have partnered with two elementary schools for this ministry and last year provided 54 grocery cards. The kindness and love of Mount Nittany is evidence of God's love in our congregation. Patty DeCapria

NOVEMBER HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Payton Monsell	Nov. 03	Judy Smith	Nov. 10
Bob Jones	Nov. 04	Kim Beebe	Nov. 15
Donald Kerr	Nov. 05	Bob Lamb	Nov. 17
Nate Jankowski	Nov. 06	BJ Rhodes	Nov. 17
Dick Lassman	Nov. 07	Rik Harris	Nov. 20
Ginny Kline	Nov. 10	Jonathan Rideout	Nov. 21
Lydia Olsen	Nov. 10	Don Peters	Nov. 24
		Marissa Yoder	Nov. 30



Money Counters

October

Nov. 01: Lee/Ellen Copper Tom/Ginny Kline
Nov. 08: Cathy/John Rideout Chris McCann
Nov. 15: Pat Weaver James Beatty
Nov. 22: Lee/Ellen Copper Patty DeCapria, James Beatty
Nov. 29: John?Louisa Shawver Joann Voigt

Liturgists

October

Nov. 01: Judy Smith
Nov. 08: Chris McCann
Nov. 15: Cathy Rideout
Nov. 22: Kooper Knepp
Nov. 29:

Ramblins con't. from page 1

Why does this Scripture reflection matter? Loss of home, moving, loss of family members, anger, broken relationships, betrayal, fear, excitement, war, peace, love, friendship, enemies, romance, hatred, birth, death, and any other thing we experience in life is recorded in Scripture. Reading and reflecting on Scripture together ties us again to those who came before us, keeping the tradition of reading and teaching Scripture (God's speaking, working, and relationship building with humanity), ties us to those who will come after.

This Autumn feels like the ones of my youth. Made me reflective of how my family worked and loved together. Then parallels with the Old and New Testaments came to mind. Stories of our grandparents (Abraham/Sarah) our parents (Isaac/Rebecca), brothers (Jacob/Esau), friends (Jesus/disciples) and I feel connected. This month, I encourage you to go read some of those stories you may have heard in your childhood, or for those newer to faith, spend some time reading more about the people we have talked about in worship and Sunday school. It is a season of preparation for the cold of winter, when gathering may be more difficult, and these stories, they ensure we stay connected.



FOCUS ON MISSION NOVEMBER

NOVEMBER 01: SALT'N LIGHT YOUTH MINISTRY

Salt'n Light Youth Ministry vision is youth reaching youth with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Our mission is to provide Christ-centered events and resources that cultivate students' faith and aid youth leaders in making disciples.

NOVEMBER 08: CENTRE VOLUNTEERS IN MEDICINE

CVIM offers free medical care for those with a household income at or below 250% of the federal poverty level, seeking to ensure that all those who live and work in Centre County have access to health care services. As Centre County grows, so do the demands on the healthcare infrastructure around us. CVIM is in the middle of a capital campaign to help them move from their current 6,700 square foot space to a new facility with more than 11,000 square feet. The larger space will allow CVIM to provide more and broader services to those in the medical community who struggle to obtain medical care.

NOVEMBER 15: HARVEST HOME OFFERING FOR WORLD HUNGER

By participating in the Harvest Home for World Hunger Offering you can take one action to help address the urgent need of the hungry in our midst. From the donations taken on November 15th, 50% of funds go to fight hunger in the Susquehanna Conference. UMCOR distributes 25% of the funds to fight hunger in America and 25% to fight hunger internationally. In 2019, 49 different hunger projects in the Susquehanna Conference received grants from the Harvest Home for World Hunger Offering. The number of projects represents an increase of over 30% from 2018 and includes Mt. Nittany United Methodist Church. (See the full list here: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PtHsbbGmS9RhuWLvenohzqlrmvNq8Y74/view?usp=sharing>)

NOVEMBER 22: HOPE MADE REAL

Hope Made Real is dedicated to improving the lives of orphaned and abandoned children, and the poor and vulnerable people of Rwanda, Africa. Hundreds of thousands of children who managed to live through the 1994 genocide and its aftermath in Rwanda are struggling for survival in desperately impoverished situations. Due to AIDS, disease, and poverty many younger children have become orphans or throw away children. The number of vulnerable children in Rwanda is not decreasing. They are without help. Most of them live in loneliness, neither loved nor cared for. Many children have been traumatized and the psychological consequences of invisibility and powerlessness is devastating. These circumstances overwhelm them. Most, feeling hopeless about their future, end up wandering and begging in the streets where they are routinely exploited, girls in particular. Hope Made Real believes that all children are precious and are a sign of hope for Rwanda's future. They need the love they deserve before they become blind and deaf by abuse and hardships. Your donation today supports Hope Made Real's mission to care for and educate these vulnerable children of God.

NOVEMBER 29: ANGEL TREE

Over the years our Angel Tree program has evolved. We used to buy, wrap, and deliver gifts. After Covid, we began addressing more immediate food insecurity needs of families in our schools. For the last several years we have been given the number of families, identified by the schools, who face the greatest need. We collect funds for food cards so that families will not go hungry. Please consider being generous as each year the number of children in our schools facing food insecurity grows.

HAPPENINGS NOVEMBER

Holiday Craft Fair

Christmas is just around the corner and we are getting ready for the Holiday Craft Fair on Saturday, December 5. We are still looking for vendors. If you know of anyone, direct them to me to sign up to participate. We also need bakers to supply our baked goods tables. Volunteers are needed the day of the event. More information in our December newsletter and Sunday morning bulletins. For more information, talk to Wendy.



District Day

The Mountain Valley District will be having a day apart at Woodycrest UMC on December 5th from 9 am-2 pm. The focus for our time apart will be Congregational Care. If this is a topic of interest to you, please let Pastor Mike know so that he can get a group registered.

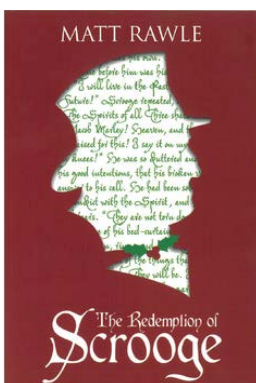
Christmas Poinsettia

As the Christmas season approaches the loved ones we have lost are in our thoughts. A nice way to honor the memory of a loved one is to purchase a poinsettia. Order forms need to be in by **November 15. This date is firm and order forms will not be accepted after November 15.** The cost of the Poinsettia(s) are \$11.00 each.



The Redemption of Scrooge

Go from "Bah! Humbug!" to a blessed Advent and Merry Christmas. The Redemption of Scrooge, based on Charles Dickens's a Christmas Carol, will explore the world of Ebenezer Scrooge, Tiny Tim, and the Cratchits, with an eye to Christian faith. Along the way we will meet the Ghosts of Christmas Past, Present, and Yet to Come and learn about living with and for others in a world blessed by Jesus.



Banquet Help

Banquet help needed for Tuesday, November 10 (dinner). If you are available and can help, please see Wendy.

Foot Ball Dinners

Penn State football might be losing, but Mt. Nittany is winning at our football dinners for each Penn State home football games. We have the last two of the 2026 season in November. November 14 (Turkey) and November 21 (Roast Beef). Help is needed to finish up strong. See Wendy each Sunday morning where you are able to help.

We will start this study on Sunday, November 29th at 7 p.m. Pastor Mike will offer it as a hybrid class (in-person and via ZOOM). Signup sheet is on the bulletin board in the Hallway.



New ministry: AllWays Welcome:

A ministry of accessibility, inclusion and belonging.

Creating spaces where everyone can worship, connect, participate, and belong.

Our church is called to be a place where **every person is welcomed, valued, included, and able to fully participate**. An Accessibility Ministry will help us make that vision a reality.

Accessibility – focuses on removing barriers and making church participation accessible to everyone

Inclusion – emphasizes belonging and participation

Belonging – emphasizes community, relationship and welcome

Accessibility is about more than accommodating a person's needs. It is about removing barriers that may keep someone from experiencing worship, fellowship, service, and community alongside everyone else.

There are people and families in our community who may want to be part of a church but encounter barriers they don't know how to navigate—sensory needs, communication differences, mobility challenges, neurodiversity, cognitive differences, or simply uncertainty about whether they will truly be welcomed.

This ministry will help our church move from **“How can we accommodate you?”** to **“How can we make sure there is a place for you here?”**

The goal is not to create a separate ministry for a particular group of people. The goal is to make our **whole church more welcoming and accessible to everyone**.

An Accessibility Ministry will help us:

- Identify and reduce barriers to participation.
- Provide sensory and regulation spaces when people need them.
- Equip volunteers and ministry leaders with practical tools for inclusion.
- Help families feel comfortable bringing loved ones to church.
- Encourage people with disabilities and neurodivergent individuals to participate in worship and ministry.
- Connect people with resources and support.
- Help our congregation grow in understanding, compassion, and hospitality.
- Build relationships with families in our community who may not currently feel that church is a place for them.

Ultimately, this is not about creating another program. **It is about creating a culture of belonging.** We don't want someone to walk through our doors and wonder, "Will my family fit here?" We want them to know: **"There is a place for me here."**

When we remove barriers, we don't just make church more accessible—we make the church more **reflective of the inclusive community God calls us to be.**

As part of our Accessibility Ministry, we will look at the church experience through an accessibility and inclusion lens—from the moment someone encounters our church online or walks through our doors, to worship, children's ministry, fellowship, events, communication, and opportunities to serve.

We will identify barriers that may unintentionally prevent people from participating fully and work with church leaders and ministry teams to find practical, sustainable ways to remove those barriers.

This isn't about finding fault or expecting everything to change overnight. It's about asking a simple question: **"What might make it harder for someone to belong here, and what can we do about it?"**

Our goal is to continually grow as a church where people of all abilities, ages, communication styles, and sensory needs can **worship, connect, participate, serve, and belong.**

We will do this by:

Listening:

Seeking input from people with disabilities, neurodivergent individuals, families, caregivers, ministry leaders, and the congregation.

Identifying:

Looking at our physical spaces, worship experiences, communication, programs, events, technology, policies, and ministry practices to identify potential barriers.

Improving:

Prioritizing changes that will have the greatest impact and work alongside ministry teams to make accessibility and inclusion part of how we naturally do church.

The first step in this ministry will be to create a permanent regulation/sensory area. The goal will be to have the space completed by October 25th, the date of our community Trunk or Treat event.

Why do we need a regulation/sensory room?

It benefits more than one group

You don't have to have a diagnosis or disability to need a quiet space. A child who is overstimulated, a teenager who needs a moment alone, a parent who needs to regroup, or an adult experiencing anxiety or sensory overload could all benefit.

Supports families

For some families, having a regulation space can make the difference between thinking "We can't do church" and "We can actually be part of this community."

Makes inclusion practical

Instead of simply saying, **"Everyone is welcome,"** we're creating an environment where people can **participate.**

Is not a replacement for the nursery.

The purpose is regulation, not entertainment. It will be a calm, intentionally designed environment with sensory tools, comfortable seating, reduced stimulation, and clear expectations.

Are you called to serve in this ministry?

This ministry will rely on volunteers from the congregation. We will review the ways in which we can create spaces where everyone can worship, connect, participate, and belong.

We'll do this by:

- Training and helping others to understand what it means to be a space of accessibility, inclusion and belonging
- Commit to ongoing training and study to ensure everyone who participates in coordination of this ministry feels comfortable and able to serve in the ways in which they feel called

Keep an eye on the bulletin for meeting info to kick off this ministry. If you are interested learning more or participating in this ministry, please contact Heather Swimley at hswimley@gmail.com or 570-660-9647.



Our sensory/regulation room has officially opened! The purpose of this space is to have a calm, safe, inclusive environment where children and adults can regulate, take a break, and return to worship or church activities when they feel ready. Please be mindful of the following to ensure that this space remains available for its intended purpose:

Everyone is welcome. The Grace Space is a place for people of all ages and abilities. Everyone deserves to feel safe, accepted, and included.

Use the space for its intended purpose. This room is available for calming, sensory regulation, quiet reflection, prayer, and taking a break when the church environment feels overwhelming.

Respect others. Give others space, allow everyone to regulate in their own way, and use quiet voices when possible.

Use equipment safely. Use sensory items, seating, swings, and other equipment as intended. Ask for assistance when needed.

Care for the room. Treat furniture, sensory tools, books, and other materials with care. Return items to their designated places when finished, as able.

Keep the space calm. Be mindful of noise, lighting, and activities that may affect someone else's ability to regulate.

Respect personal boundaries. Ask before touching another person or their belongings. Everyone has the right to personal space.

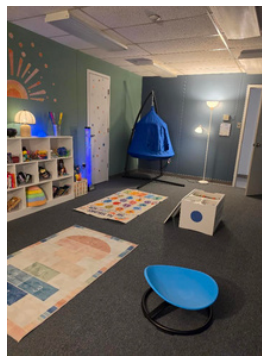
Supervise children appropriately. Children should be accompanied or supervised by a responsible adult according to church policies and the child's individual needs.

Respect privacy and dignity. Allow people to use the space without judgment, embarrassment, or unnecessary attention. Avoid discussing another person's needs or experiences with others.

Leave the room ready for the next person. Put away materials, dispose of trash, and let a designated church contact know if something is damaged, missing, or needs attention.

Take the time you need. There is no expectation to calm down quickly or use the room in a particular way. The goal is support, not perfection.

Remember the spirit of grace. We are all learning, growing, and finding what helps us feel grounded. Patience, kindness, and understanding belong here.



WHY DO WE NEED A SENSORY/REGULATION ROOM IN THE CHURCH?

We need a sensory/regulation room in the church because everyone deserves to feel welcome, safe, and able to participate in worship and fellowship in a way that meets their needs.

Church can be a wonderful place of connection, but it can also be overwhelming. Loud music, crowds, bright lights, unfamiliar routines, and long periods of sitting can make it difficult for some children and adults to feel comfortable and regulated. For individuals who experience sensory sensitivities, anxiety, overstimulation, or difficulty managing big emotions, having a quiet, supportive space can make a meaningful difference.

The Grace Space will provide a welcoming environment where individuals of all ages can take a break, calm their bodies, manage overwhelming feelings, and return to worship or church activities when they are ready. It is not a place for exclusion or punishment. It is a place for support, dignity, and understanding.

Having a sensory/regulation room is important because accessibility is about more than getting through the church doors. It is about creating an environment where everyone can belong. By providing this space, we are demonstrating Christ's love through compassion, inclusion, and a commitment to ensuring that every person and every family knows they have a place in our church community.

Thank you to everyone who has offered their prayers, support and help in creating this new space! It has truly been a work of HEART and I look forward to the continued ways in which Mt. Nittany UMC will continue to break down the barriers for all who desire a relationship with Christ.

Blessings,
Heather Swimley

Financial Reports

January - September 2026

CHURCH BUDGET

General Fund Income 2026	\$274,836.34
General Fund Expenses 2026	\$263,518.08
Mission Fund Income 2026	\$19,889.77
Mission Fund Expenses 2026	\$19,889.77

MISSION GIVING

Mission Fund Income	Monthly Total	Yearly Total
January 2026	\$1,381.00	\$1,381.00
February 2026	\$3,387.00	\$4,768.00
March 2026	\$2,823.00	\$7,591.00
April 2026	\$1,188.00	\$8,779.00
May 2026	\$1,813.00	\$10,592.00
June 2026	\$3,422.00	\$14,014.00
July 2026	\$1,753.00	\$15,767.00
August 2026	\$1,705.00	\$17,472.00
July 2026		
Christian Education Sunday	\$260.00	
IHS - General Fund	\$775.00	
Moshannon Valley Backpack	\$ 20.00	
Sierra Leone Initiative	\$204.00	
Sunday Fellowship/ Donuts	\$20.00	
Trunk or Treat	\$230.00	
UMCOR	\$908.77	
Total	\$2,417.77	\$19,889.77

November Awareness Month

Focuses on:

Health and Wellness

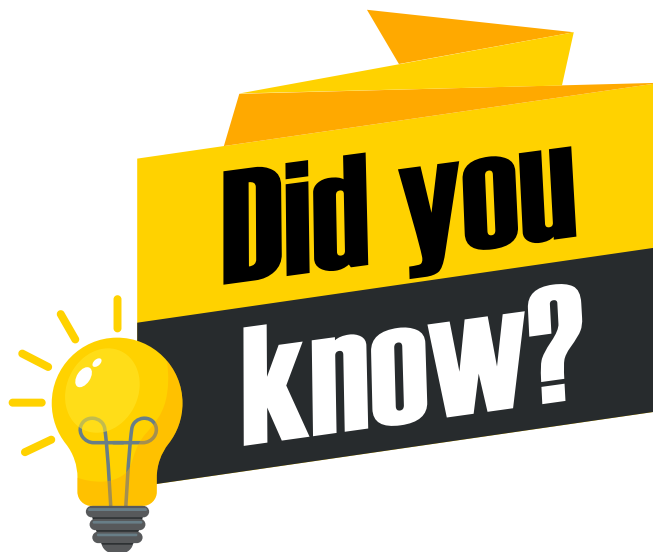
- Nat'l. Diabetes/Am. Diabetes
- Men's Health
- Lung Cancer
- Pancreatic Cancer
- National Family Caregivers
- National Alzheimer's Disease

Heritage/ Cultural Identification

- Native American Heritage
- Military Family

Environmental/ Conservation

- Nat'l. Animal Shelter & Rescue Appreciation
- Nat'l. Tree Week
- World Ecology day (Nov. 1)
- National Bison Day (Nov. 5)
- International Day for Preventing the Exploitation in War and Armed Conflict (Nov. 6)
- America Recycles Day/Nat'l. Recycling Day (Nov. 15)
- World Fisheries Day (Nov. 21)
- Buy Nothing Day (Nov. 27)
- Internat'l. Jaguar Day (Nov. 29)



11 NOVEMBER 2026

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

1 	2	3 	4	5	6 Parent Night Out 6-7:30pm	7
8 Ballroom Dancing 2-5pm	9 Mitts & Hits 5-7pm	10 Civil War Rnd. Table Scouts 5-8pm Trustees 6pm	11 Knitters 9am Choir 6:30pm	12	13 Family Fun Night 6:30- 8:30pm	14 Football Dinner 4-6pm
15 Scout Troop 367 12-4pm	16 Mitts & Hits 5-7pm	17	18 Choir 6:30pm	19	20	21 Football Dinner 4-6pm
22 GirlScouts Troopsgiving 3-7pm	23 Mits & Hits 5-7pm	24 Finance 6pm Admin. Council 7pm	25 Bells 6:30pm	26 	27	28
29	30 Soccer Shots 5:30- 7:30pm					

Pastor Hours 9-11am
every Mon. & Tues.

1st Tuesday of the Month
Scout Leader 7-9pm
Boardroom
Quilting Every Tues. 9:30am
Every 2nd-4/5th Tuesday Scouts 5-8:30

Karate every Thurs 5:30-6:30pm

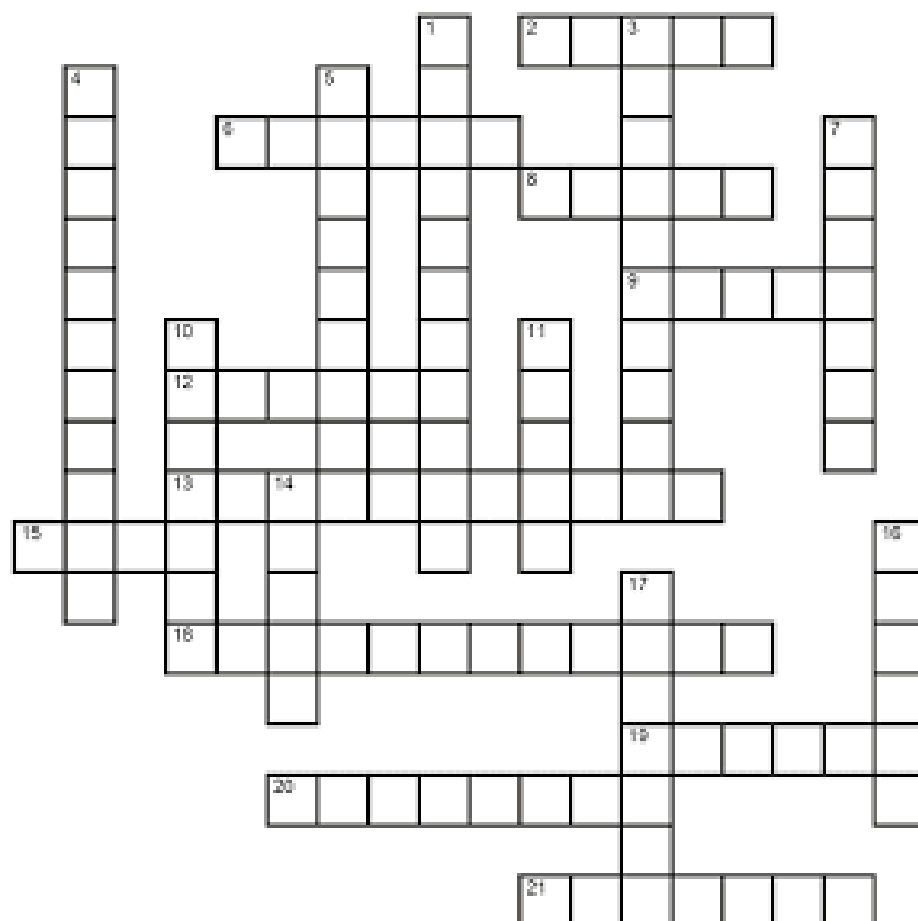


Name: _____ Date: _____



ACROSS

2. Sponsors of the annual Thanksgiving parade in New York City.
6. Traditional Thanksgiving bird.
8. Breezy or gusty.
9. Drink made from apples.
12. Another word for the fall season.
13. November 11th.
15. Tool for gathering leaves.
18. Celebrated on the fourth Thursday of November.
19. What the turkey said.
20. Eleventh month of the year.
21. Often used to make pie in November.



DOWN

1. First Tuesday after the first Monday in November.
3. Horn of abundance.
4. The day after Thanksgiving.
5. Thankfulness.
7. Along with Sagittarius, zodiac sign for November.
10. The gathering of crops.
11. Deposit of small ice crystals.
14. Along with citrine, birthstone for the month of November.
16. They're raked in autumn.
17. Mayflower passenger.

Autumn
Black Friday
Cider
Cornucopia
Election Day
Frost
Gobble

Gratitude
Harvest
Leaves
Macy's
November
Pilgrim
Pumpkin

Rake
Scorpio
Thanksgiving
Topaz
Turkey
Veterans Day
Windy