

“THE TALK OF TOWNLEY”

Monthly Newsletter
MARCH 2024

“Frankly, there isn’t anyone you couldn’t learn to love once you’ve heard their story.”

– Fred Rogers

Fred Rogers was an ordained minister of word and sacrament for the PC(USA) and is a notable public figure whose work around peace and reconciliation are worth remembering. Rogers was also a pioneer in the world of Christian education and formation of young children. March 20th was his birthday and the day that the PC(USA) has chosen to highlight all we can learn from his work.

PASTOR’S MESSAGE:

How’s That Working For You?

During this Season of Lent, some of us are being challenged with checking our emotions. In our study on *“When Your Way Isn’t Working”*, we have learned that four emotions typically show up when our way isn’t working. These emotions are **Discouragement** (a loss of confidence and enthusiasm), **Fatigue** (the extreme physical and mental tiredness that comes from a prolonged period of concentrated exertion), **Frustration** (feeling upset or annoyed, especially because of an inability to change or achieve something) and **Anxiety** (a feeling of worry or unease, typically when facing an imminent event or an uncertain outcome that we have no control over).

Our emotional response to any situation needs to be examined. Its source or root needs to be understood. Why am I feeling this way? What is the cause of the feeling? How we feel, directs how we act. Yes, it is a challenge to question our own actions. It is as if we have been taught that our way is the only way. Guess what? None of our ways will work if we are not connected to Jesus. Jesus says: He is the vine, and we are the branches. Apart from Him we can do nothing. Surprisingly, He says this to His disciples. If anyone should know how important that it is to stay connected to Jesus, it should be His disciples. In March of 2024, if there is anyone who should know how important it is to be connected and stay connected to Jesus – it should be His Church.

How do you feel? Are you discouraged, fatigued, frustrated, or anxious? To check your connection with Jesus, ask yourself the following questions: Are you plugged in? Would the people you’re closest to say that when they talk to you, you listen well? Is it difficult to fall asleep at night? Do you wake up feeling lethargic? How do you spend the first fifteen minutes of your morning? What’s the last thing you do before going to bed at night? What’s the last passage of Scripture you read and meditated on? Are you having a difficult time keeping commitments? How many unread or unanswered texts do you have right now? Have you been more irritable and easily annoyed with people? How often do you say you’re too busy when asked to do something you want to do? How often do you volunteer or find ways to serve every month? These questions can help you break down the broader question, *How’s that (your way) working for you?*

Chances are, if your way isn’t working, you have a poor or broken connection with Jesus. It may be hard to admit—but it is the starting point. The most needed thing for all of us is to be connected to Jesus. Then and only then can we bear the fruit He desires. Text AMEN to 908 477-4706 if you agree.



HOLY WEEK SERVICES

Palm Sunday, March 24, 2024 at 10:00 AM
Maundy Thursday, March 28, 2024 at 7:30 PM
Good Friday, March 29, 2024 at 12 Noon
Easter Sunday, March 31, 2024 at 10:00 AM

SUNDAY ASSIGNMENTS:

<u>DATE</u>	<u>*ELDER-IN-CHARGE</u>	<u>*LAY LEADER</u>	<u>COMMUNION</u>
Mar. 3	Linda Zehner	Cynthia Manno	Linda & Cynthia
Mar. 10	Irene Schoenwalder	Lynn Bailey	
Mar. 17	Janet Sangekar	Lisa Heims	
Mar. 24	Karen Brelowski	Kathy Kreie	
Mar. 31	Carol Gordon	Irene Schoenwalder	
April 7	Lois Tangowski	Karen Brelowski	Lois & Karen
April 14	Kathy Kreie	Bruce Tangowski	
April 21	Irene Schoenwalder	Vyonna Thompson	
April 28	Lisa Heims	Santiago Guzman	



*** If you are unable to be Elder-in-Charge or Lay Leader for your assigned Sunday, please switch with someone and inform Pastor Ron. If you switch a month or more in advance, please also contact Cecelia, so the Sunday assignments can be listed correctly in the following month's newsletter. Please give yourself enough time to set up prior to worship, 30 minutes is suggested.**



COFFEE HOUR: Volunteers are needed to bring baked goods for Coffee Hour on Sunday mornings after worship. There is a sign-up sheet in the kitchen. If you have any questions, you may contact Linda Zehner.

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| March 3 – Lois Tangowski | April 7 – Ruth Ammerman |
| March 10 – Lisa Heims | April 14 – Marie Lindner |
| March 17 – Karen Brelowski | April 21 – Vyonna Thompson |
| March 24 – Susan Doyle | April 28 – Bill Jensen |
| March 31 – Pastor Ron (Easter Sunday) | |

NURSING HOME VISITATION: Our nursing home ministry is held at AristaCare, located at 400 W. Stimpson Avenue in Linden on every **second Sunday** at 2:00pm of each month. Please see Pastor Ron if you are interested in being a part of this ministry.

SESSION MEETING: The next session meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, March 20, 2024**, at 7:30 pm in the upstairs meeting room. (Session meetings are usually held the 3rd Wednesday of each month.)



THE PRESBYTERY OF NORTHEAST NEW JERSEY: The next meeting of the Presbytery is scheduled for Saturday, May 18, 2024 from 9:00 am to 11:30 am. Website <https://pnenj.org>

PROGRAM / MISSION:

SWEETHEART BRUNCH: We had 23 basket donations, raising \$512 for our Cherish the Church Capital Improvement campaign. Thank you to everyone who helped and attended. Everyone had a wonderful time.

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING: We will again be joining Presbyterians worldwide participating in One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS), a special offering this Lenten season. OGHS has provided Presbyterians a way to share God’s love with our neighbors around the world for 75 years. Three programs supported by OGHS – Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Presbyterian Hunger Program, and Self Development of People – work to serve individuals and communities in need. These programs provide relief from natural disasters, food for the hungry, and support for the oppressed. If you would like to contribute to this special offering, there will be envelopes provided for your donation on the Sundays prior to Palm Sunday. Please bring your donation to Townley Church on Palm Sunday, March 24, 2024 or on Easter Sunday, March 31, 2024. Thank you for your support!

SPRING RUMMAGE SALE – April 26th and 27th 2024 has been selected for our spring Rummage Sale. Save the date!

PLEASE REMEMBER THE CONNECTICUT FARMS FOOD PANTRY. You are encouraged to support this ministry with a monthly donation of \$4.00 (just \$1.00 a week). The food bank prefers a monetary donation so they can purchase what is needed.

PER CAPITA: As you know, every December the Board of Trustees of the Presbytery of Northeast New Jersey presents the Presbytery’s budget for the coming year. The budget includes Per Capita received from its congregations. This money is used to develop programs, such as training for congregations and their leaders and supporting the work of Commission on Ministry. The complete budget can be viewed on the Presbytery website. ***The 2024 Per Capita for Townley is \$38.00 per member.*** Please submit your check for this amount payable to Townley Presbyterian Church. We look forward to your participation in per capita giving, an expression of your commitment to ministry both within our congregation and beyond. Thank you. Janet, Church Treasurer

NOTE FROM YOUR TREASURER: Our Cherish the Church Fund amount is \$25,760 as of 2/26/24. We are not only getting donations from our congregation but also from friends of Townley. Our goal is to raise \$50,000 in 18 months (June 2024). These funds are to be used for our capital improvements. A red mailbox to accept donations and a thermometer to track progress are in Bailey Hall. Donation envelopes are next to the mailbox. Thank you to all who have donated so far to help us reach our goal!

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT CAMPAIGN:

Townley Church needs help to fund several significant repairs.
We appreciate your donations to our **“Cherish The Church”**
Capital Improvement Campaign.

DONATE TO HELP RENOVATE

GOAL

Help Us Reach Our Goal !

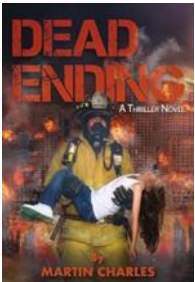
Online **Locally**

Donations are tax deductible

BIBLE STUDY: Winter Bible Study in session -- **Wednesdays at noon** – for you retired folks and on **Thursdays at 6:00 PM** – for the working folks. This is a five-session (5-weeks) study of the book: “*When Your Way Isn’t Working*”, by Kyle Idleman. Many of you remember Kyle for leading us through a study on John’s Gospel.

THE SALEM ROADHOUSE CAFÉ – presents The Wonder Band on Saturday, March 9, 2024. The doors open at 7:15 pm. Show starts at 8:00 pm. Admission is \$20 (Students \$15) and includes show, snacks, non-alcoholic beverages, and dessert. The venue is held in Bailey Hall. See attached flier.

BOOK DISCUSSION



Dead Ending is unique as there is not a book that has incorporated the daily dangers a firefighter must endure with multiple threats from the MS-13 and Al Qaeda, WMD, assassins, and arsonists. This fast-paced thriller, crisply written, will appeal to everyone as the entire McNamara family strives to survive tragedy, then one enemy after another. **Join us on Sunday, March 17**, during Fellowship Hour for a Q&A with its author Martin Charles (AKA Marty).



GIVING TO TOWNLEY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH: You can also support our church using your credit or debit card by using this QR Code or by clicking the “Give Now” button on our church website at www.townleychurch.org.



WE HAVE A FACEBOOK PAGE! “Like” our Facebook page (<http://www.facebook.com/TownleyChurch>) to get the latest updates on your wall. Share your Townley comments, photos and videos. If you want pictures added or notices posted, please send an email to the church office (townleychurch@yahoo.com). Away or missed a service? Catch our Livestream!

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: If you have any items you would like to have included in April’s (monthly) newsletter, please e-mail them to CeceliaH@comcast.net.

SESSION WORKS



“Session Works” is a monthly communication of significant decisions made by Townley Session. From February’s meeting, the following items were approved/discussed:

- ✓ Schedule look ahead: Holy Week dates and time confirmed
- ✓ Discussed Letter of Transfer for Eunice and Akachukwa Obiako to 1st Presbyterian Church of Cranford
- ✓ Distributed and discussed Work of Nominating Committee document
- ✓ Differed spotting of Box Collection Box and neighbor’s trailer request to Buildings and Grounds review

Please note that you do not have to be on Session to work on a committee. Your talents are needed.

REGARDING RULING ELDERS: A MONTHLY SERIES FOR SERVING FAITHFULLY

Be Ready with Your Eyes Open
by valerie izumi – February 15, 2024



So often, ruling elders who no longer serve on the session will say that they used to be a ruling elder. Ordination as ruling elders does not expire when their service on the session has been completed, however. Ruling elders can and should continue their vibrant ministry of service to the people of God.

Alex Maxim, ordained a ruling elder and a deacon at Mercer Island Presbyterian Church east of Seattle, is one of those ruling elders who has taken this to heart and believes in the importance of church

members participating and not just observing.

Not steeped in religion or polity, Alex was a bit intimidated when he received the call to serve as a ruling elder. He was assigned as an elder for worship and music in the congregation. Because of his love for music, British and Anglican hymns came easy to him. Liking contemporary music as well, the church role was a good fit. He was not as confident about the worship part of the assignment but accepted the task. Time and time again, God calls us to serve in places where we underestimate our gifts; gifts that are recognized by others.

Alex loves the structure of shared leadership in the church — ruling elders and teaching elders together — that is an essential part of our polity and allows the church to flourish. But he deeply values the spiritual covenantal community and sense of shared purpose that comes from serving on the session as well.

That commitment to a sense of community extends beyond the walls of the congregation for Alex. As the spouse of a mid council leader, he often joins his wife as she visits the 45 congregations within [Seattle Presbytery](#). The opportunity to participate in worship and observe the witness and ministry of each of these churches is one most of us do not have. Alex has noticed the impact of the ongoing effects of the pandemic, shifting demographics, and societal norms on local churches. One of his learnings through this experience is that often we hope for a particular type of diversity and feel disappointed when it doesn't come to fruition. Instead, we should welcome and celebrate the unexpected aspects of diversity that do show up. Broadening our understanding of what we mean when we say the fullness of our diversity and not limiting that diversity simply to categories can expand opportunities to make space and open opportunities for groups.

Alex hopes that Mercer Island Presbyterian Church's thriving house-building ministry in Tijuana, Mexico will provide opportunities to foster a re-growth of the once thriving youth ministry. He imagines that the incredible experiences current and former participants share as they "come together, work, sweat together, enjoy and suffer together, and share together in a safe space" will inspire the youth to feel called to be involved.

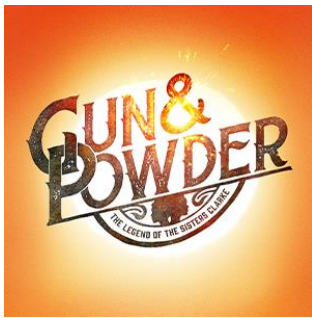
As a part of strengthening his physical, emotional, and spiritual growth while not currently serving on the session, Alex shared some of his practices and activities, such as being mindful of his health. Good health is critical as a leader, as a ruling elder. He notes that we also have to be strong emotionally. We all seek advice — some express it verbally while others let you know as long as you are willing to listen. And spiritually, that's the deepest

relationship. That's how we share joy, inspiration, and love. He enjoys cycling, swimming, walking ("the dog, when we get one!"), playing with the grandchildren at their level, and playing piano to strengthen his spiritual growth.

For further inspiration and encouragement to ruling elders, Alex offers, "Be ready with your eyes open for what's to come!" After all, one of the constitutional questions asked of those being ordained to the office of teaching elder, deacon, and ruling elder is if they will "pray for and seek to serve the people with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love." Clearly Alex Maxim has answered and continues to answer, "Yes, I will."

valerie izumi is a ruling elder serving the Office of the General Assembly as an assistant stated clerk, coordinating the General Assembly nominations process.

PAPER MILL PLAYHOUSE: APR 4-MAY 5, 2024 Gun & Powder is a new musical inspired by the true story of Mary and Martha Clarke, African American twin sisters who take extraordinary measures to settle their mother's sharecropper debt and save her home. In 1893 Texas, the Sisters Clarke—passing as white—embark on a remarkable Wild West adventure that examines race, family, and identity with two electrifying women who transformed from farm girls to outlaws to legends. Featuring book and lyrics by Angelica Chéri (a real-life descendant of Mary and Martha Clarke), music by Ross Baum, and direction by Obie winner Stevie Walker-Webb (Ain't No Mo').



Saint Patrick's Day Parade – will be held on **Saturday, March 9, 2024** in Union. t Patrick's



Day parade is less than two weeks away. The parade will begin on Morris Avenue, at Commerce Avenue, and will proceed on Morris, making a right turn on Stuyvesant Avenue and then proceeding toward the Pearl Harbor memorial at Stuyvesant and Elmwood Ave. Traffic will be rerouted in the area

beginning at 9 a.m. until approximately 5 p.m. Travel delays should be expected. Vehicles will not be permitted to drive on or across the closed section of Morris Avenue or Stuyvesant Avenue.

Marchers, spectators, and residents may park in the following lots free of charge: The upper and lower lots of town hall, the Atlantic City daily commuter lot at Morris and Adams Avenue, the Stowe Street municipal lot, the Biertuempfel Park lot, the Hannah Caldwell School lot, the Burnet Middle School lot, the Caldwell Ave municipal lot near police HQ, the Union High School lot, the municipal lot at Stuyvesant and High Street. Legal on-street parking is also available. Robert Wade will be this year's parade grand marshal.

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