

“THE TALK OF TOWNLEY”

Monthly Newsletter
MAY 2024

³³ I will sing to the Lord all my life; as long as I live, I will sing praises to my God. ³⁴ May He be pleased with my song, for my gladness comes from Him. Psalms 104: 33-34

MAY BIRTHDAYS

10 Agnes Tumfour

PASTOR'S MESSAGE:

Message from Our Presbytery Co-Leader

During Lent, I had the privilege of preaching at Connecticut Farms PC. After the service, during coffee hour, I had a fascinating conversation with a member of their mission study team. She was engrossed in a puzzle, which she explained was the congregation's traditional Lenten Puzzle, set out on the first Sunday of Lent and worked on collectively week after week until completion.

As we discussed the puzzle, I remarked, “Solving a puzzle is so much easier when you have a clear image to guide you. That's exactly what a mission study does. It helps to craft an image of the future you aspire to create, just like the picture on the puzzle box.”

The church, however, faces a challenge when individuals insist on using pieces that don't fit your puzzle. Some pieces, while beautiful, belong to a different puzzle, one meant to create a different image. In such instances, a mission study team must graciously decline, acknowledging that those pieces don't belong to our puzzle. They won't help us shape the image that God is calling us to create.

The missional invitation reminds us that we must occasionally make painful decisions based on our effectiveness for the Gospel. This can lead to letting go of some ministries and ways of doing things, while at the same time preserving best practices and innovating new approaches.

This is perhaps one of the most challenging aspects of envisioning a new future for a congregation. Sometimes, you must say no to seemingly excellent ideas because they actually steer you away from what you are striving to become.

Whether you are in the midst of exploring a new vision for your congregation or are living into your current vision, I encourage you to ask, "Are these pieces helping to create the image God is calling us to be?" Then commit yourself to bringing the right pieces to the table, aligning your efforts with the mission and vision of your community of faith.

Steve Huston
Organizing Co-Leader & Resource Presbyter

SUNDAY ASSIGNMENTS:

<u>DATE</u>	<u>*ELDER-IN-CHARGE</u>	<u>*LAY LEADER</u>	<u>COMMUNION</u>
May 5	Marty Lindner	Diane Smith	Marty & Diane
May 12	Linda Zehner	Diane Smith	
May 19	Janet Sangekar	Lynn Bailey	
May 26	Carole Gordon	Lisa Heims	
June 2	Karen Brelowski	Kathy Kreie	Karen & Kathy
June 9	Janet Sangekar	Irene Schoenwalder	
June 16	Lois Tangowski	Karen Brelowski	
June 23	Kathy Kreie	Bruce Tangowski	
June 30	Irene Schoenwalder	Vyonnia Thompson	



*** 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.

May 5 – Karen Brelowski	June 2 – Pastor Ron
May 12 – Pastor Ron	June 9 -
May 19 – Janet Sangekar	June 16 -
May 26 – Kathy Kreie	June 23 -
	June 30 – Elaine J. Brooks

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, May 15, 2024**, at 7:30 pm in the upstairs meeting room. (Session meetings are usually held the 3rd Wednesday of each month.)

NOMINATING COMMITTEE: Session Nominating Committee Co-Chairpersons will be Lisa Heims and Bill Jensen. An initial meeting of the committee will be scheduled.

SESSION WORKS



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

- ✓ Pastor and Task Force Reports
- ✓ Task Force Worksheet
- ✓ Day of Pentecost planning
- ✓ The church isn't dying. It's being remade.

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



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>

SPRING RUMMAGE SALE – Our Spring Rummage Sale was a wonderful success! We enjoyed working together as we met new neighbors in our community.

Much appreciation to all involved!

Rummage Sale Committee: Janet Sangekar and Linda & Glen Zehner

THE SALEM ROADHOUSE CAFÉ – Presents CMJ Jazz Band, with an opening act by Flesh World, on **Saturday, May 18, 2024, at 8:00 pm**. Doors will open at 7:15 pm. As always, the Salem Roadhouse Café is lively, intimate, up front, and personal. All ages are welcome. The venue is held in Bailey Hall. See attached flier.

INTERNATIONAL POTLUCK LUNCHEON: Please join us on **Sunday, May 19** after service for an international potluck luncheon in Bailey Hall to celebrate Pentecost. There will be a sign-up sheet in Bailey Hall to let us know what ethnic dish you will add to our special menu to celebrate our heritage as a diverse people of God.

FAMILY AND FRIENDS DAY – will be held on Sunday, **June 9, 2024**. More information to follow.

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

READER'S CORNER: We have another author among us! **Susan J. Doyle** has written two books: Before the Aurora and Revelations of the Pink and Tan Bag. If you have a chance, you may want to read one or both of these books. Both books can be found on Amazon.com.

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.

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



Help Us Reach Our Goal !



Online



Locally

Donations are tax deductible

NOTE FROM YOUR TREASURER: Our Cherish the Church Fund amount is **\$27,207**. 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!



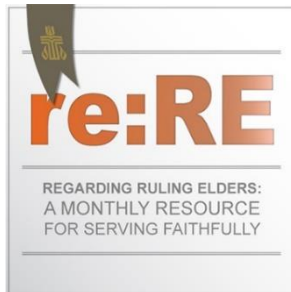
GIVING TO TOWNLEY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH: You can also support our church using your credit or debit card by using this QR Code or by clicking the "Give Now" button on our church website at www.townleychurch.org.



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!

REGARDING RULING ELDER: A MONTHLY SERIES FOR SERVING FAITHFULLY

*For All the People of God to be Seen and Loved
By Valerie izumi – April 16, 2024*



Just a couple of years out of college and not yet 26 years old, Paul Slaikeu made two very important decisions — he bought a modest house, and he joined a nearby church, First Presbyterian Church in White Bear Lake, Minnesota.

Less than two years later a nominating committee member approached him and said, “We’re looking for new ruling elders for the next three years, would you consider that?” Paul asked the all-important first question, “Don’t I need to be older to be an elder?”

He wasn’t being glib; his experiences as a child growing up at a Wisconsin Presbyterian church were of ruling elders who were older men. No young elders, no women elders. How can you imagine the possibility of serving as a leader when there are no examples of leaders who look like you?

The nominating committee member shared their commitment to a range of ages and experiences on the session and expressed how important it was to have the gift of young voices in leadership.

Having secured a promise that an emphasis on buildings and finances would not be required, Paul was ordained to the office of ruling elder with his ministry focused on fellowship. Paul jokes he was the “party elder,” yet the Directory for Worship lifts up the importance of gathering for “the fellowship and comfort of the community of faith” (W-5.0204) while we hear in W-5.0206 that “God calls the Church to gather as the Body of Christ at other times and places to learn, pray, serve, and enjoy Christian fellowship. ... These gatherings present valuable opportunities for reading, studying, and discussing the Scriptures; Christian formation and nurture; praying for one another, the church, and the world; sharing personal stories, celebration, and concerns; common work, meals, fellowship, and recreation; and living out the gospel through acts of witness and service.”

Nurturing the covenant community of God is an important element of Ruling Elder Paul Slaikeu’s call. Several challenging events and experiences have broadened his worldview and his commitment for all of God’s people to be seen and loved.

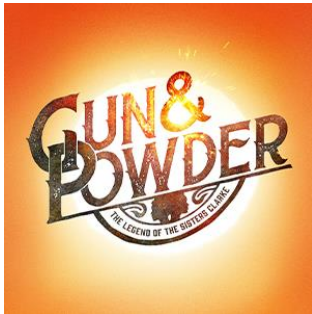
Paul was still in college when the church his family attended finally nominated and elected a woman as a ruling elder, but not without contentiousness which caused harm. Several years later, as a questioning young adult, Paul carefully read through the Book of Order and the Book of Confessions to be sure that there was nothing that would exclude him from

saying “yes” to serving as a ruling elder at the White Bear Lake church. Later still, and before the Book of Order allowed same-gender marriage, Paul witnessed a presbytery panel discussing the right of his pastor to perform a commitment ceremony — his commitment ceremony.

Paul is a person of strong faith, lives out the call to serve not only the saints at Windsor Presbyterian Church, where he is now a member and clerk of session, but the whole church. He has served as a leader and a member of the councils of the church at congregation, presbytery, and General Assembly levels and in his ministry shown the love and justice of Jesus Christ.

Ruling Elder Paul Slaikeu is two courses away from completing his educational preparation to serve as a commissioned ruling elder. With the help of his pastor, he is discerning to what he is commissioned. He knows this, though. He will continue to offer his gifts to the church and the presbytery and serve faithfully so that the ministry of the whole people of God may flourish.

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’).



FOOD & MUSIC FESTIVAL: Join us as we host our 2nd Annual Asian American and Pacific Islander Food & Music Festival and celebrate our local AAPI community on **Saturday, May 4th from 12pm to 4pm on Stuyvesant Avenue!** *Rain day scheduled for Sat, May 11th, 2024.*

About Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month

May is Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month – a celebration of Asians and Pacific Islanders in the United States. A rather broad term, Asian/Pacific encompasses all of the Asian continent and the Pacific islands of Melanesia (New Guinea, New Caledonia, Vanuatu, Fiji and the Solomon Islands), Micronesia (Marianas, Guam,

Wake Island, Palau, Marshall Islands, Kiribati, Nauru and the Federated States of Micronesia) and Polynesia (New Zealand, Hawaiian Islands, Rotuma, Midway Islands, Samoa, American Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, Cook Islands, French Polynesia and Easter Island).

PET HUMOR

CAT: “My name is Riley, I sleep all day and then bug my mom all night. Then when she wakes up, I go back to sleep”.

DOG: “Lord, please help me be the person my dog thinks I am”.

HER HANDS
By Maggie Pittman



Her hands held me gently from the day I took my first breath.
Her hands helped to guide me as I took my first step.
Her hands held me close when the tears would start to fall.
Her hands were quick to show me that she would take care of it all.

Her hands were there to brush my hair, or straighten a wayward bow.
Her hands were often there to comfort the hurts that didn't always show.
Her hands helped hold the stars in place, and encouraged me to reach.
Her hands would clap and cheer and praise when I captured them at length.

Her hands would also push me, though not down or in harm's way.
Her hands would punctuate the words, just do what I say.
Her hands sometimes had to discipline, to help bend this young tree.
Her hands would shape and mold me into all she knew I could be.

Her hands are now twisting with age and years of work,
Her hand now needs my gentle touch to rub away the hurt.
Her hands are more beautiful than anything can be.
Her hands are the reason I am me.

Townley Presbyterian Church, 829 Salem Road, Union, NJ 07083
Office:(908) 686-1028 / Email: TownleyChurch@yahoo.com
Website: TownleyChurch.org / Facebook: Like us on "Townley Church"

