

TOWER CHIMES



Vol. 16 Issue 2

February 2025

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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Manse Fireside Chat

Friday
February 28th

All are welcome!

Feel free to call Ed or Diane if you want confirmation.

From Pastor Ed...

Dear Friends,

I love the story of Jonah- because it is so honest about how you and I feel sometimes when it comes to our relationship with God, and our Christian service.

We know how the story goes. God gave Jonah a preaching job to do in Nineveh. Jonah didn't want to do it, because they were sworn enemies of Israel. So then, Jonah took avoidance to a whole new level. He tried to sneak away on a fishing boat, and God sent that enormous fish to bring him back to his calling.

Now, Jonah was upset in a way that we all can identify with. He liked the way things were in his life. He didn't like the way God was asking a new thing of him. He felt like we do when we see our traditions being changed - to make church more accommodating to new people. He felt like we do when we consider efforts to reach out to people beyond the church's doors – because "they should come on their own, just like we did!"

For more than a couple of generations, all mainline congregations have been facing increasing and very significant membership losses. In our own congregation, and countless others, there are smaller and smaller numbers of people, struggling to keep up long-standing projects and programs. Congregations are recognizing that there are several new generations of "un-churched" people all around them, and the changing demographics of our neighborhoods, and a culture that is comprised of many forms of faith and spirituality.

Like Jonah, there are times when we wish that we didn't have to do what God is calling us to do. There are times when we wish we didn't even have to *consider* changing. It's scary to attempt new initiatives. Sometimes it's all so unsettling that, like Jonah, we "vote with our feet." Nevertheless, the Jonah story tells us that God will be persistent; bringing up our calling again and again, whatever it may be. (This is one way we know that God is doing the calling.)

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God’s persistence in this story is about reaching *all* people with his mercy and grace. This story reminds us that God reaches people, perhaps especially through people like Jonah and ourselves. It also raises some questions for us; to pray about and consider. We may ask ourselves, “What is the next thing God is calling us to do? How will we respond if we’re called to do something we’ve never done before? How will we continue to minister to our present congregation, *and* reach out to those who will be the congregation of the future?”

As we begin preparing for what our next steps may be, let’s pray that we’ll be able to see the ways, and learn the means that will be our response to whatever God is calling us to do and be.

Peace and Blessings!
Ed



Congregational & Corporation Meeting: Sunday, February 9, 2025

We will be holding our annual meeting on Sunday, February 9th, following our worship service. We invite you to participate/get involved in this important meeting as we review the church’s accomplishments in 2024, elect officers, and conduct other church business. We hope to see you there!

**CALL FOR
STATED CONGREGATIONAL MEETING
JANUARY 28, 2024**

A STATED MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, RAHWAY, NEW JERSEY, IS HEREBY CALLED PURSUANT TO THE BY-LAWS FOR THE CONGREGATION IS TO BE HELD ON SUNDAY, JANUARY 28, 2024, DIRECTLY FOLLOWING THE MORNING WORSHIP AND JUST PRIOR TO THE CORPORATION MEETING FOR THE PURPOSE OF APPROVING THE TERMS OF CALL FOR THE MINISTER, REVIEWING THE BUDGET, ELECTING OFFICERS, HEARING REPORTS FROM THE SESSION, HEARING REPORTS FROM THE BOARD OF DEACONS, AND HEARING REPORTS FROM ANY OTHER ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH AS APPROPRIATE.

**BY ORDER OF THE SESSION
DECEMBER 21, 2023**

**CALL FOR
ANNUAL CORPORATION MEETING
JANUARY 28, 2024**

THE ANNUAL CORPORATION MEETING OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, RAHWAY, NEW JERSEY, IS HEREBY CALLED PURSUANT TO THE BY-LAWS FOR THE CONGREGATION IS TO BE HELD ON SUNDAY, JANUARY 28, 2024, FOLLOWING THE CONGREGATIONAL MEETING FOR THE PURPOSE OF REPORTING ON INVESTMENTS AND ANY SUCH BUSINESS WHICH MAY BE PROPERLY BROUGHT BEFORE THE CORPORATION.

**BY ORDER OF THE SESSION
DECEMBER 21, 2023**



Alright, can you guess who this handsome bundle of adorableness is?

If you guessed Aleya & Maurice's son,
MJ (Maurice, Jr.)
you'd be right!!!

Thank you, Grandma Ilanda, for sharing this photo with us. It brings a smile to our hearts!



Who caught the great game of tennis during the Australian Open? Well, here's a photo of Selva & Howard who were in Australia watching it courtside!

Thank you for sharing this great pic, Selva! Looks like it was an adventure that will last a lifetime!



Feb.

- 4 - Kathleen R.
- 7 - Patti P.
- 8 - Ilanda K.
- 9 - Nicholas T.
- 10 - Scott R.
- 18 - Linda G.
- 20 - Juliet S.
- 20 - Andrew J. R.
- 22 - Asher R.
- 23 - Hillary M.
- 28 - Nathan H.



Feb.

- 15 - Shawna & Allie

The Chosen Season 4

Here are the dates for "The Chosen" Season 4 for the first part of 2025.

*February 23; March 16; none in April;
May 18; June 8*

I hope you are able to join in the discussion!

- Diane





Throughout the month of February, canned and boxed food items, may be brought to church on Sundays as our congregation continues its discipleship of feeding the hungry. At the end of the month all items will be brought to the Rahway Food for Friends Food Pantry for distribution to those in need.

Food items may also be brought to the Church Office on Thursdays between 10 AM and noon; please call ahead to let the office know you're coming.

The items that follow are some suggestions of food most needed and appreciated:

- ⇒ Kraft Mac and Cheese in a box
- ⇒ Boxed milk (such as Parmalat)
- ⇒ Pasta sauce and spaghetti noodles
- ⇒ Canned pasta
- ⇒ Canned veggies and soup
- ⇒ Rice a-Roni
- ⇒ Cooking oil
- ⇒ Spices, salt and pepper
- ⇒ Tea bags and coffee
- ⇒ Sugar and flour
- ⇒ Canned tuna
- ⇒ Cereal
- ⇒ Crackers
- ⇒ Peanut butter and Jelly
- ⇒ Cake mix and frosting
- ⇒ Stove top stuffing



Board of Deacons Welcomes a New Deacon

Cheryl, who was ordained as a deacon in 1981, joined the Board of Deacons in 2025. So, if you should want to speak to one of our deacons, you can contact Gail, Helene, or Cheryl.

*Thank you, Cheryl, for answering the call to
Deacon Ministry!*





Diane shared this story during the 'Announcements' at the December 29th service; she followed up with some photos of the transport. In case you weren't at the service or didn't get a chance to view the recording of it, it's just too special to not have it featured in our newsletter! Thank you, Diane, for the transport & the pics!

About a year ago, someone came to the church to purchase a quilt she saw that I (Diane) had advertised on Facebook Marketplace as part of the Fabulous Finds Market.

She met me at the church with her daughter and her grandson. She wasn't able to go down the stairs to see the quilts, so I brought them up for her to look through. Her daughter and grandson walked around to shop and look at all we had to offer.

The grandson, a cute little guy on the Autism spectrum, fell in love with a globe on one of the tables. Someone had placed the FREE! sign on the table after our last sale, although nothing on it was free. Of course, I let him have the globe for free.

It turns out that the grandmother takes care of her grandson while the daughter is at work, even though the grandmother is physically handicapped. The grandmother used the globe as an incentive to help her grandson become fully potty trained.

The family received large pull-up disposable pants for the grandson but no longer needed them. The pull-ups were delivered automatically to the grandmother's house. She tried to get the order cancelled but it took a few months to stop the deliveries. The grandmother had half a room stacked with boxes filled with pull-ups.

The grandmother called me to find out if I could help her. She is being evicted because the rent increased on her Perth Amboy apartment and she is behind on the rent. She has half a room filled with pull-ups and she has to move. She asked if I could find someone who can use the pull-ups and trade those for a wheelchair she can give to her friend who wants to have her hospice stay in her own home. (I thought she would ask for money since she was late on her rent.) She said that there are so many people who need so much, she'd like to be able to give something to others.

I found out that there is a family who attends our church who has a child who needs pull-ups in that size. I loaded up one of the four wheelchairs we are offering for free for the grandmother. Once it was delivered, I loaded my car with as many boxes as would fit - 35 in all. Most boxes held 4 packages of pull-ups, so that is 132 packages of pull-ups, almost \$4000 worth!

All this is to say, good work, church! We are connecting with people from different walks of life. We are giving away free items and we are gaining donated items so much so that we are bursting at the seams. This story shows that there is value in what we do - this time a commodity trade-off - that helps people in profound ways. We won't always know all the ways we have helped others because they go on their way without sharing their stories. This is just one story to let you know that your donations, your help with pricing items, your help volunteering at a sale, your patience when the hallways are lined with furniture...all of it is appreciated! Thank you, and as Ed ends his sermons, "Thanks be to God!"

- Diane Hoener



Kids Corner

WINTER word search

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and even backward



Y	E	V	R	Q	T	N	A	D	Z	U	V	T	A	G	D
S	I	C	I	C	L	E	Q	C	W	P	O	T	E	L	J
C	A	X	Y	L	E	E	J	D	O	U	E	E	T	O	A
M	I	T	T	E	N	S	L	L	E	K	O	K	V	V	X
J	N	R	W	O	S	U	A	D	A	L	K	N	T	E	S
V	R	N	X	E	X	R	D	L	N	I	S	A	H	S	W
S	Y	U	R	Q	B	Q	F	A	C	A	P	L	A	L	E
C	N	O	W	E	W	H	T	T	L	C	B	T	Q	A	
F	L	O	A	Y	O	T	N	I	U	G	N	E	P	Z	T
Z	Y	R	W	N	S	C	A	R	F	I	W	G	R	B	E
C	N	I	S	M	W	G	S	E	I	K	O	O	C	O	R
A	O	M	T	Z	A	L	X	C	S	C	J	V	M	O	A
U	Q	L	K	L	V	N	H	Y	I	G	V	D	S	T	G
X	U	Q	D	C	B	W	C	B	Z	Q	R	S	W	S	D
W	Y	F	R	O	Z	E	N	D	W	O	C	L	E	O	W
E	C	A	L	P	E	R	I	F	D	K	C	K	M	N	Y

MITTENS
ICICLE
BOOTS
POLAR BEAR
COOKIES

SLED
BLANKET
SNOWFLAKE
SCARF
SNOWMAN

childhood
magic
CHILDHOODMAGIC.COM

SWEATER
PENGUIN
COZY
TEA
GLOVES

FROZEN
COLD
HAT
FIREPLACE
CANDLE



Please consider either calling or sending a card to church family who are homebound; call the church office (732-382-0803) if you need phone numbers and/or addresses.

Prayer Requests

Ada, Alyne B., Amy, Avril Muller & family, Barbara O. & family, Carole H., Carlos B., Daphne P., Diane & Helene, Dorothy R., Eunice-Barbra & Dave, Gary, Harper, Harold, Helen, Jim’s family, Kathy, Kevin, Kip, Linda, LJ & Corinne, Logan, Major A. & family, Savannah B., Sue

“Prayer is meant to grow us. Every divine encounter holds the possibility of transforming us a bit more. Genuine prayer is risky. It changes us. and we are never sure what that change might be.” Joyce Rupp



Our deepest condolences to...

Michele on the passing of her beloved mother, **Eileen Panila**, who enter the Church Triumphant on Saturday, January 25th. JoAnn Roesch sent an email to the Prayer Chain with Michele’s message to us:

Good morning, JoAnn & all of our Old First family. It is with a heavy but very grateful heart that I share news of my mom's passing yesterday. She is home. Eternal peace is hers. Thanks be to God.

I want to thank you for all the prayers since her fall in November 2023. The physical therapy went wonderfully, giving her hope that she could again have some independence.

My mom had developed pneumonia in one lung just a short bit ago. With no response to multiple antibiotics, it advanced to double pneumonia and the flu. She was in the hospital 9 days. Her body was shutting down so quickly. And then it did.

God Bless us all with the love of family & friends and good health. Life is a gift from God. Thanks be to God!

Please keep Michelle in your prayers. She has experienced the loss of several loved ones recently and now her mother. May our Lord help her with her newest loss.

Thank you so much for all your prayers for my sister, Barbara. It is a miracle that she is doing so well. We are all eternally grateful and want to let you know how much your prayers and support meant.

Please continue to keep her, Michelle, and the many others we have been asked to pray for in your thoughts and prayers. They truly make a huge difference! Fondly, JoAnn



Prayer Persons

FEBRUARY

- Feb. 2nd - Alyne Borst**
- Feb. 9th - Jack Miesowitz**
- Feb. 16th - Robin Shivers**
- Feb. 23rd - Andrew Russell**

MARCH

- Mar. 2nd - Carlos Allende & Erwin Altona**
- Mar. 9th - Rosalind Casey**
- Mar. 16th - Robert C. Bresenhan, Jr.**
- Mar. 23rd - Robert Pender**
- Mar. 30th - Eric & Tara Crowley & family**

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**DATED MATERIAL
PLEASE RUSH**



QR Code for donations

**Worship with us
Each Sunday at 10:30 AM**

**In-person / Facebook & YouTube Live Streams
Recorded Video Available Also**

**Office: office@1stpresrahway.org
Rev. Ed Hoener: edhoener1@gmail.com**

1stpresrahway.org

