

TOWER CHIMES



Vol. 15 Issue 9

September 2024

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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The Chosen

The Chosen Season 3 has a few more episodes. Let's meet on Sundays at noon at the manse on these dates:
September 8,
October 13,
and November 3.

You don't have to watch these in their original sequence to benefit from the message they are sharing.

Please consider stopping in!

From Pastor Ed...

"And Jesus cured many who were sick with various diseases, cast out many demons...and.. proclaimed the message in their synagogues." Read Mk 1: 29-39

According to this story in Mark, one of the premier purposes of the Church is to work for bringing healing and wholeness. Notice that one of the most important aspects of this work, is to *bring people to Jesus*. The story says that right after lunch the disciples went and brought many of the local people who were in need to Jesus. While medical and psychological treatment is certainly part of how healing happens, it's just as true that much of the healing we need in life comes through the power of faith. We know about psychosomatic illness – how a positive mindset can help our bodies to heal faster. The same is true when it comes to a vital spiritual life. Our spirituality aids both the health of our bodies and our minds. With all of this in mind, the story so far reminds us that we are healed and saved so that we can be agents of healing and salvation for others. We are given new life in Christ to pass along to others who haven't encountered God's love and grace.

Did you notice that right in the middle of the work Jesus was doing, he stopped, and went off to regain his strength and perspective in prayer? The example he left us, tells us that we can't do everything, and we're not supposed to! He shows us the value of rest, and receiving the strength and guidance of the Spirit who *leads us* to serve - and in ways that not only are life giving and healing for others but also for us.

So what is the application of all this for the Church and us? Clearly God's Church is all about the healing of minds bodies and spirits – which is the definition of salvation. Clearly, the Church's mission is to BRING people to Jesus which is very different from attraction or advertising. Clearly the Church's mission is to GO OUT into the world bringing the message to people around us. Even though this may be challenging to us it's not a surprise.

There is one more thing that's is kind of under the surface for us to receive. All of this ministry to others, began with Jesus' ministry to them "in house." (Mk1: 30-31) What that means is that, the times we spend in fellowship, even when it is virtual, is a prerequisite for all that follows. We gather, however we can, to receive the healing, the encouragement and nourishment we need to be Christ's followers in daily life . We receive those things from the Spirit – sure – but we also receive them from each other. We know St. Theresa's prayer – that we are Christ's hands and feet – that we are his voice and embody his compassion to each other and then to the world. We should take every opportunity we can to access this, so that we can, each of us, bless others.

Peace and Blessing, Ed

Something GREAT is Rising Up for the Future of FPC, on Nov. 9 & 10 2024

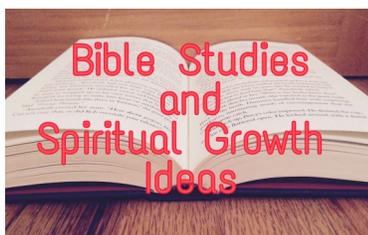
At our last Session meeting, it was decided that we schedule an opportunity to receive some expertise, encouragement, and practical understanding of how there are possibilities for First Presbyterian Church, to help us move forward into the future. We've invited Firebird Spirit a nationally recognized organization that specializes in church transformation and growth, to present a weekend-long seminar to introduce our congregation to the possibilities for creating a future path for FPC. The ministry of Firebird Spirit helps congregations learn ways to deepen spirituality, grow disciples, do effective outreach to the community through innovative ministries, and more, in ways that will "fit who we are" at FPC.

The November 9th weekend will feature an *exciting* comprehensive event from 9:30-12:30 on both Saturday and Sunday (including a worship service). There will be plenty of food and drink, and some small group offerings on topics to be announced (based on the feedback we receive from our congregation). Some possible topics might be: how to lead change; how to implement our church's mission, discipleship in the 21st century, reaching out beyond our doors, and more. The most important part of this event is that the specifics of the presentations will be created in consultation *with us*, so that we are part of determining the content of the weekend.

More details will be forthcoming! (Please regularly check our website and weekly newsletters.) In the meantime, if you want to be part of making sure that FPC will be a thriving spiritual community *well into the future*, save the dates, and make *your* commitment to being part of building the community that will be here for the next generations to come!



Peace and Blessings, Your FPC Session



Spirituality Studies for the VERY Busy

Our Session has learned that our transitional pastor has a knack for condensing books into manageable portions! In response, it has been decided that short-term Bible and book studies need to be offered more frequently. (Topics and books to explore can be submitted to Carol Ann or Cheryl Anne.) At its last meeting the Session called Pastor Ed to put together a *one-time* "church notes" version of the book, "The Art of Neighboring". This is a book that presents an accessible, natural, anxiety-free, way to engage the people with whom we live in close proximity. It's a 21st century approach to outreach that breaks all the molds.

If this is intriguing, the first offering will be on Saturday morning September 21st from 10 – 11:30 (with coffee and bagels) at the Manse. At least one other offering, in a different place and time will be offered - TBA, based on responses. If you're interested, please email Ed or text him. (Mostly to make sure there's enough bagels!) Come on over!

EXCITING NEWS

Congratulations to the following families...



Rachel, Sarah, & Ruby welcomed a new edition to the family on Friday, June 28:

Dean Miles
8 lbs. / 1oz.

He is now a happy, healthy 2 month old!

Sean & Andrea welcomed their son on Monday, July 1st:

Logan Gene
6 lbs. / 13 oz.

Big brother, Lucas, and big sister, Juliet, as well as the proud 'gammy', Linda, are feeling very blessed.



Would you Like a Visit From Our Pastor

Our pastor would love to come and see you! Anyone who would like a visit, or Home Communion, is invited to call pastor Ed directly or send an email. Your call will be returned right away to schedule a time!

Peace and Blessings to you!



Sept.

- 1 - Andrew R.
- 4 - Rev. Howard Bryant
- 5 - Ryan C.
- 7 - Rachel R.
- 9 - Anga N.
- 11 - Patrick W.
- 12 - Gail W.
- 13 - Ted P.
- 15 - Francis N.
- 18 - Emily O.
- 20 - Steven O.
- 23 - Hudson R.
- 26 - Rev. Ed Hoener
- 26 - Bryan K.
- 29 - Sarah R.
- 30 - Christine J.



Sept.

- 1 - Dana & Bill
- 2 - Tara & Eric
- 7 - Hillary & Daniel
- 29 - Annelise & Evan

Manse Fireside Chats, 7 pm

September Friday Dates:
13 & 27

As fall approaches, it's time to get out our sweaters and gather around a nice warm firepit for some refreshments, fellowship, and prayer.

All are welcome to stop in!

Annual Fall Flea Market

Mark your calendars!
The date: Saturday, September 28th

One of the awesome jewelry displays that Carmen created for our sale! Thank you, Carmen! <3



That's when we are going to have our annual fall flea market from 9 am until 2 pm.

We will begin bringing up our items from the flea market area after church on Sunday, September 22nd and we will be setting up Davis Hall that week from 10 am until 2 pm.

We hope that you can help out getting ready for this event. Not only do our efforts help support our church financially, it also provides items to those in our community at reasonable prices.

As we did in the spring we are not going to put everything away the week after our sale. Instead we are going to have another flea market the following Saturday, October 5th from 9 am until 1 pm in place our "Fabulous Finds" Mini Mart on the first Saturday of the

month. We will pack up what doesn't sell the following week.

Please join us whenever you can. We enjoy working together and we truly appreciate your help.

A Show of Appreciation

We are continually blessed to receive many donations for our flea markets. I just wanted to share with everyone what someone did who always enjoyed coming to our flea markets. Recently Joe Gibilisco's mom passed away. He was going to have an estate sale with all her house contents, but it was his mother's wish that he donate everything that she had to First Pres. because she wanted to share her things with the church that she loved coming to for their flea markets. Already we have received many boxes of things, but that's not even a dent in what she has! It's amazing what our flea markets provide to our community.

If you haven't yet become a part of helping, perhaps now is the time to do so. The flea market team could really use more help each week; sorting, cleaning and pricing donations that we receive. Prayerfully consider joining us if you are available.

JOIN THE
WORSHIP TEAM

Worship Support Team is Growing

As you are probably aware our worship services have evolved to include live streaming the service for viewing live on Sunday morning on our website, Facebook and YouTube. Earlier this year we added presentations throughout worship projected on a large screen in the front of the sanctuary. Both of these additions have enhanced the worship experience and allow for new elements to be part of the service.

With these new enhancements we have equipment that runs both the live streaming and the presentations. When we worship in the sanctuary we have two volunteers who manage the equipment. During this summer, due to the weather, we have worshipped in Davis Hall. We do not have the ability to live stream the service in Davis Hall but we do have the ability to run the presentations. Therefore, when worshipping in Davis Hall we only need one volunteer.

We are blessed to have a group of volunteers managing the equipment informally known as the "Worship Support Team". This team has grown over the summer to a total of six (6) individuals who take turns running the equipment.

We are looking for a few more volunteers to compliment our 'team'. You do NOT need to be a 'techie' or have experience, we will gladly train you!! So if this opportunity appeals to you please speak to the Pastor, call the church office or see the person running the equipment following worship on Sundays.

We look forward to YOU joining the Team.

Worship Support Team

Cheryl Anne Cammann
Sara Pender

Sue Krivenko
Rachel Remelgado

Princeton Nwosu
William Siocha

Church Members Respond To Call for Pulpit Assistants

Members of the congregation who worship each week in person in the sanctuary or who view the service virtually at home probably have noticed that a different pulpit assistant takes part in the service each week. These members fill an important part in the order of service and Session feels it's refreshing to see a different member at the lectern. Since January, 2022, 17 members have responded to the call.

It was in January 2022 that we found ourselves without a minister and realized that we would be inviting pulpit supply ministers to conduct services. The need for member assistants became extremely necessary as the guest ministers would need help in navigating through our order of worship. We had no idea how many months we would go with guest ministers. At the time, we had 6 assistants who had some experience, so to ease the commitment of the 6 a call went out to the membership.

The congregation's response was outstanding. As of August 2024, we have 17 members who serve. This growth has meant that each assistant is scheduled to serve only one Sunday every 3 ½ months, a manageable schedule for everyone.

Our pulpit assistants include:

Gail Anderson, Lauris Beam, Cheryl Anne Cammann, David Kalu, Glory Kalu, UK Kalu, Levi Knippel, Sue Krivenko, Cheryl Martin, Diana Nwosu, Princeton Nwosu, Scott Nwosu, Anga Nyambi, Kennedy Nyambi, JoAnn Roesch, Debby Russell and Al Shipley.

It should be noted that our list includes 3 high school students and 1 college student.

If you feel called to serve contact Al Shipley following Sunday services. One or two sessions will be set up to make you more knowledgeable and comfortable with the responsibilities.



We are
blessed
to be a
blessing
to others.

Something to consider when donating...

We at Old First are very generous and community centered, and we recognize that there is food insecurity here in Rahway. As we continue to care for people by doing our collections, here are some suggestions. I do not know who originally wrote this list, but I am grateful for the information. Some of the items we cannot gather because we only collect non-perishable foods, but the ideas are enlightening. May we continue to be a blessing to those in need.

Some tips and guidance if you donate to food pantries derived from feedback by those who use them:

1. Everyone donates Kraft Mac and Cheese in the box. They can rarely use it because it needs milk and butter which is hard to get from regular food banks.
2. Boxed milk is a treasure, as kids need it for cereal which they also get a lot of.
3. Everyone donates pasta sauce and spaghetti noodles.
4. They cannot eat all the awesome canned veggies and soup unless you put a can opener in too or buy pop tops.
5. Oil is a luxury but needed for Rice a-Roni which they also get a lot of.
6. Spices or salt and pepper would be a real Christmas gift.
7. Tea bags and coffee make them feel like you care.
8. Sugar and flour are treats.
9. They fawn over fresh produce donated by farmers and grocery stores.
10. Seeds are cool in Spring and Summer because growing can be easy for some.
11. They rarely get fresh meat.
12. Tuna and crackers make a good lunch.
13. Hamburger Helper goes nowhere without ground beef.
14. They get lots of peanut butter and jelly but usually not sandwich bread.
15. Butter or margarine is nice too.
16. Eggs are a real commodity.
17. Cake mix and frosting makes it possible to make a child's birthday cake.
18. Dish Soap / Dishwashing detergent is very expensive and is always appreciated.
19. Feminine hygiene products are a luxury and women will cry over that.
20. Everyone loves Stove Top Stuffing.

Most people buy what they think food pantry users want, but have never asked them. If you help families, single people, foster youth and the homeless, this list can help better tailor your donations!

-Elder Susan Krivenko

The food collection for the Food for Friends Pantry was held during the month of June. As in the past, the congregation responded with generosity: **337 lbs. of food items were collected!**

Items were brought to the pantry on Monday, July 1st. Thank you to Andy, Cheryl Anne, and Carmen for their help loading and delivering the food.

Thank You



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

Alyne B., Amy, Anne H., Avril Muller & family, Barbara-Rudy & family, Carlos B., Celeste & Doris, Chrissy, Christine, Diane & Helene, Dorothy R., Eileen P., Eunice, Barbra, & Dave, Falicity & Rita, Fred R., Hazel R., Jean K., Jesus M., Joan L., Kayla D., Kulsoom, Liam, Marilyn & Jasmine, Meli, Michael, Patty-Travis & family, Russ G., Savannah B., Vicky, Those in war-ravaged areas

Those that are homebound—Caroline Balla, Doris Kapus

Our deepest condolences to...



An email Ilanda sent:

Good afternoon Prayer Warriors,

We are asking for comforting prayers for Helene Haith and her family, Her nephew, **Robert Scruggs**, who passed away on August 25.

Please uphold the family at this time. I know Helene said he is at Peace, but the family will still feel the void that his passing has left. So remember them in your prayers.

*Thank you, Ilanda, for notifying our Prayer Warriors of requests.
Your words are always faithful, thoughtful, and comforting ... we are blessed!*

If you have a prayer request please give Ilanda a call at 732-382-6193 or send her an email: ikero-bo@comcast.net. Ilanda will ensure that your request is addressed/sent to our wonderful prayer warriors.

Prayer Persons

SEPTEMBER

Sept. 1st - Carole Huntley
Sept. 8th - Jon Paul Daye
Sept. 15th - Ruth Noemi Belonni-Rosario
Sept. 22nd - Rodrigue Joseph & Family
Sept. 29th - Daniel DeLuca

OCTOBER

Oct. 6th - Odrigue Joseph
Oct. 13th - Donna Gutches
Oct. 20th - Russihon Daye
Oct. 27th - Candace King

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PLEASE RUSH**



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**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

