

TOWER CHIMES



Vol. 13 Issue 2

February 2022

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Special points of interest:

- **Church Community News - pg. 3**
- **Prayer Requests - pg. 5**

Inside this issue:

Where do we go... (cont.) / E. O'Donovan Pg. 2

R. Crowley - Eagle Scout / Pg. 4

R. McCarthy Letter

Souper Bowl Continuing through mid-February

Items can be brought with you when attending in-person worship, or you can drop them off at the church office on Thursdays between 9:00am -12noon. If donating monetarily, please write the check to "First Presbyterian Church" and be sure to include, "Souper Bowl" in the memo.

Where do we go from here?

2020 and 2021 were years of uncertainty and caution. Every church community, every organization, every business, and every individual had to wrestle with the serious questions of how to deal with the pandemic, how to get back to normal, and at the same time, how to remain safe.

We were faced with the dilemma here at First Pres. In March 2020, we closed our doors, as did everyone else across much of the country, with no assurance of when we could resume in-person services. Session deliberated over the recommendations from Presbytery, always choosing to remain on the safe side. During the Lenten and Easter season, Pastor Erin created worship videos, a first step in reaching out to the congregation. For the rest of 2020 and into 2021, all the while consulting with Presbytery and heeding the advice of the scientific community and governmental agencies, we continued with virtual services only. It wasn't until April of 2021 that we met for an in-person Easter service in Davis Hall with safe guards which included temperature checks, masks, and social distancing. Services would continue with a virtual component throughout the summer. Davis Hall was chosen to be the worship space because it afforded better ventilation than the sanctuary, yet another safety measure. We were taking more steps on our way back.

On the first Sunday in Advent, November 28 of this past year, we returned to our newly painted and restored sanctuary continuing our safe practices with masks and social distancing. We also enhanced our worship services with the hiring of an excellent musician, Evan O'Donovan, and by installing a new video system that allows us to offer a better virtual presentation.

If dealing with issues of the Covid 19, Delta, and Omicron viruses was not enough to upset and disrupt the worship practices of our congregation and the life of our church, we now find ourselves without a pastor. So where do we go from here?

To find the answers we have to look to the Bible, we have to pray together, and we have to discern the plan that God has for us.

(Continued from pg. 1)

The Old Testament books of Exodus (Chapter 17) and Numbers (Chapter 20) tell the story of Moses and the Israelites who had been in the desert for 40 years. The people were in a wilderness without enough to eat and without enough water to drink and it didn't look like things were going to get any better. They constantly quarreled with Moses and questioned his authority. One can understand why they were so upset and so worried about their future. But it turned out that their struggle was a test set before them by God. It was a test to see if they could learn to truly believe that God would be faithful to them in the midst of their struggles.

Some years back, a newly elected Moderator of the General Assembly presented some thoughts in his acceptance speech that are appropriate at this time. Addressing delegates from across the country, he noted, "Nothing is too hard or wondrous for God. If a church steps out in faith and is intent on being faithful, and joins together based on our common covenant with Jesus, we will be able to live in a future in which we are a vital and vibrant presence in the world."

Let's make 2022 a year when we reignite our spirit as Christians. After almost two years of being cautious and separated it's time to return to corporate worship. The sanctuary is beautiful and safe. Masks are still required and social distancing is still practiced. If you're unable to join in person join us virtually via our new and improved video system.

Let's deepen our faith together as God leads us to a new place. Jesus is inviting us.

Elder A. Shipley
Session

E. O'Donovan, Music Director

As you already know, we have a new Music Director, Evan O'Donovan. He is an amazing vocalist and musician, so if you haven't joined us for in-person worship or viewed our live stream via Facebook, please do so to hear him perform. Below is Evan's biography:



Evan O'Donovan is a vocalist, multi-instrumentalist and composer based right here in Rahway. Evan grew up in Bellmore, Long Island where he spent his youth studying piano and opera, performing in theatrical productions, and leading his high school's music ministry. He went on to study at Fordham University, performing in the university's choir and with numerous bands all around NYC in his spare time. Evan is honored to join the congregation at First Presbyterian Church for weekly worship and looks forward to potentially expanding the church's musical operations in the future!

Our church family is so very blessed and grateful to have him stay on as our Music Director. We are also looking forward to what the future holds with Evan at the musical helm!

2022 Per Capita Assessment Time - \$40.00

With the beginning of the New Year, comes the announcement from our Presbytery concerning the Per Capita Assessment for all the members on the roles in its congregations. This assessment is the only charge to be a member of a Presbyterian Church. This year, the announcement comes from our new Presbytery, The Presbytery of the Northeast of New Jersey.

The per capita assessment for 2022 is \$40.00, \$1.00 less than last year. Enclosed in this mailing is a blue envelope for Church members to remit a payment for this assessment.

A blessing of being a member of a connectional church is that we are able to support the work of our denomination through per capita giving. When we each share we enable our Presbytery – Synod – and General Assembly to do the creative work of the Holy Spirit throughout the world. Presently with our regular pastor gone, Presbytery will help us to find an interim minister. We all remember our recent interim ministers, Howard Bryant, Helen Beglin, Douglas Grote and Brooks Smith.

Our Church has always been faithful in sending our Presbytery the full amount we are assessed. Each year our budget contains a line item that covers the cost of each member on our role. It is important that each member of our Church, young and old and all those in between, pay their per capita amount. For those members who don't pay their per capita, the Church must use funds from its investments to make their payment.

We are prayerful that this year our membership will respond.

Thank You,
Administrative Committee

Elders & Deacons

There are several openings for both Elders and Deacons following the Annual Congregation Meeting on Sunday, January 30th, 2022. Terms of one, two and three years are available on both boards. As we move forward with discovering our future as a church family, it is truly critical that we have the full complement of leaders. There are many decisions that will need to be made and we will all benefit from a wider array of voices and points of view. If you are interested or would like to know more, please contact the church office to speak with a member of the Nominating Committee.



Feb.

- 4 - Kathleen R.
- 8 - Ilanda K.
- 9 - Nicholas T.
- 10 - Scott R.
- 18 - Linda G.
- 20 - Andrew John R.
- 22 - Asher R.
- 23 - Hillary M.
- 28 - Nathan Alexander H.



Feb.

- 15 - Shawna & Allie

Dear Congregation,

I am writing this letter to thank Pastor Erin for all her service. God calls us in many areas of life. Not only was she my pastor but my personal friend. I wish her well in all aspects of life. She will be a good asset anywhere she goes. She will be missed by all who knew her well.

Richard McCarthy





Congratulations, Ryan Crowley

We are very proud of Ryan Crowley. Two years ago, he chose to do his Eagle Scout Project outside of First Presbyterian Church. The project took a lot of time and effort and turned out beautiful. Unfortunately, Covid hit before we could celebrate, and we put his party off until December of 2021. The Crowley family is very proud of Ryan and his accomplishment. We wish we could have opened it up to more members of First Presbyterian, but due to Covid we had a smaller party outside of the church. Great job Ryan, we are extremely proud of this huge accomplishment!



Congratulations, Ryan Crowley!

Grandma and Grandpa are very proud that you earned your Eagle Scout Award from Boy Scouts. Keep up the good work and success will surely follow.

And of course, your church family couldn't be any prouder of you, too! Not only did you receive this impressive award, but you did so with a project that made our church even more beautifully landscaped. Congratulations and thank you!

AWESOME

Dear Congregation,

It is time for me to say goodbye. My journey has ended. God is leading me in a new direction. My faith is strong and I will be an asset at any church I belong to.

Keep me in your prayers. I will try to update you from time-to-time. Keep in touch. I will pray the church grows and gets a good leader.

Your brother in Christ,
Richard McCarthy

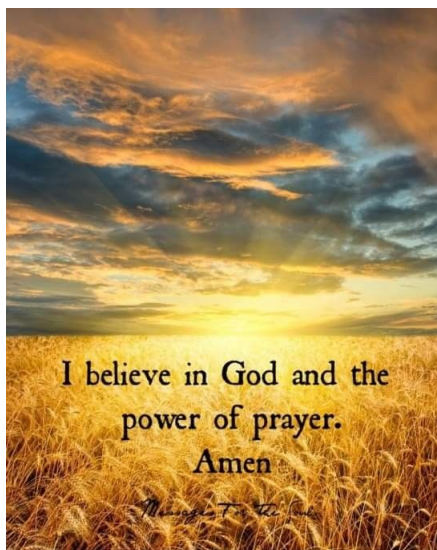


Please consider either calling or sending a card to church family who are homebound; call the church office (732-382-0803) if you need phone numbers and/or addresses.

Prayer Requests

Alyne B., Ann D., Christine H., Debbie C., Diane W., Eileen P., Evelyn, Gail, Harold W., Ilanda K., Joey H., Kenny R., Mary, Patty R., Russ G., Savannah B., Travis R.

Those that are homebound—Caroline Balla, Doris Kapus, Beverly Woolley



Prayer Persons

FEBRUARY

- Feb. 6th** - Russihon Daye
- Feb. 13th** - Rebecca Abungwo
- Feb. 20th** - Daniel DeLuca
- Feb. 27th** - Gail Anderson

MARCH

- Mar. 6th** - Gladys Bond
- Mar. 13th** - Jon-Paul Daye
- Mar. 20th** - Cheryl Anne Cammann
- Mar. 27th** - Marisa & Richard Ebbe

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
1731 CHURCH STREET
RAHWAY, NJ 07065

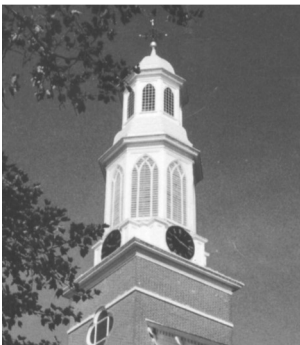
732.382.0803

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
RAHWAY, NJ 07065

PERMIT NO. 111

**DATED MATERIAL
PLEASE RUSH**



**Worship with us
Each Sunday at 10:30AM**
In-person / Facebook Live Stream/ Recorded Video

Office: office@1stpresrahway.org



1stpresrahway.org

