

For God SO loved THE world,  
THAT HE GAVE HIS ONLY  
begotten Son.

JOHN 3:16

***“They’ve taken away my Lord, and I don’t know where to find him.” John 20***

Dear Friends,

We’re approaching the day of resurrection - and when we read Mary’s sorrowful cry at the beginning of what ought to be a happy story - it takes some of the wind from our sails. But, in a strange way, it also contains good news for those of us who know what it means to struggle with changes. Her cry empathizes with all of us who’ve ever felt like we’ve lost our sense of direction, or our sense of meaning. Her cry echoes how we feel when the things we thought were settled once and for all, get pulled out from under us. Mary’s cry expresses how we feel when we’re brought to a crossroad where we have to decide if we’ll venture out beyond where we’ve been. It’s the crisis we all have to deal with when we’re at a crossroads between darkness and light - the known and the unknown.

So what do we do? The way we deal with times like these, at first, is we retrace our steps - like we do when we misplace our keys. We try to think about where we were last. We look again and again at where we know we’ve been before. We go back, hoping that somehow what we need will find its own way back to where it was before. So Mary, sat at the tomb, retracing her steps, going over everything she thought she believed. She sat there weeping over her loss, and over her questions that had no answers. But then, suddenly, Jesus came to her, and by his very presence, he showed her all the new possibilities that were there for her to receive. Then Mary understood - and she could see beyond where she was, to something completely new, and it changed her life.

This story has something wonderful to say to us when we’re troubled over loss, and changes that we don’t know what to do with. It says, that instead of a resurrection that bursts into our lives like an earthquake - instead of changes that roll over us like a stone - Jesus gently calls us by name, and invites us to know him in a new and resurrected way. The good news of this story is that his resurrection invites *us* to change and grow, but *at our own pace*. Jesus lets our hearts *adjust* to the light of resurrection, to the possibilities of a new life - even as he invites us to strike out into those deeper waters with him. All we have to do is stay with the process - stay with him, as he helps us through, step by step. This is good guidance for approaching Easter, as well as life itself

Peace, and Blessing,  
Ed

# TOWER CHIMES



**Vol. 17 Issues 3 & 4**

**March / April 2026**

## **FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

### Special points of interest:

- Church Community News - pgs. 3 & 5
- Prayer Requests pg. 9

### Inside this issue:

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Schedule

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Resource Ctr.

Community Pg. 8  
Outreach /  
Wellness Fair



During Lent, we will have a Taizé Service from 7—8 pm on Wednesday evenings.

**March 18, 25 & April 1**

## HOLY WEEK AND EASTER

### **Palm Sunday, March 29, at 10:30 am**

Jesus invites us to follow him into a life that will change us in ways we can't anticipate or control. It is riskier to live our faith this way, but it is also more satisfying and transforming too. Jesus, cares about the quality of life we can know, and it's never too late to get on the road towards discovering the things that make for peace.

### **Thursday, April 2, at 7:30 pm**

We will commemorate the last supper, Jesus had with his disciples. We will explore the messages Jesus was so careful to convey to them, and we will celebrate Holy Communion in remembrance of him.

### **Easter Sunday, April 5, at 9:30 am**

There will be an Easter morning breakfast served before worship, featuring fresh hot bagels and beverages. (There will not be a coffee hour after the Easter service.) Come to break bread together as we gather to celebrate the resurrection of Christ!

### **Easter Service, April 5, at 10:30 am**

This service will focus on the new day - the new reality - for all time, for all the world, that began with the resurrection of Christ!

### **Chair Yoga**

All sessions have been put on hold until further notice. We're anticipating starting them again at some point in the spring.

**Stay tuned!**

Happy to announce the arrival of...

*Veronica Isabella*

February 6, 2026 @ 9:10 am  
6 lbs. 13 oz. & 19 1/2 inches long

**Proud Parents:**

Allyson Padavano & Isaiah Prunty

**Proud Grandparents:**

Joanne & Ted Padavano

**Proud Great-Grandmom:**

Florence Oppmann

*New parents & baby are all doing well.*



Mar.

- 7 - Jennifer S.
- 13 - Diane H.
- 14 - Jon-Paul D.
- 18 - Brian N.
- 19 - Debby R.
- 20 - Ruby R.
- 28 - Elizabeth O.
- 28 - Robert Br, Jr.
- 29 - Marisa E.
- 29 - Leslie F.
- 30 - Lilliann Queenie S.



Mar.

19 – Uchechi & Ukoha

**The Chosen**



We will meet in the manse at 12:30 pm. Here are the dates; if something should change for the April\* date, Diane will let us know when it is being rescheduled:

March 15, and 29, April 12\*.

**Davis Hall Rentals**

Are you looking for space to rent for a baby shower, graduation party, birthday, or another special event? If so, we have many dates open for the usage of our hall.

Please keep us in mind should you know of anyone looking for space. They can call the church office at 732-382-0803, or email [office@1stpresrahway.org](mailto:office@1stpresrahway.org) to get more information.



Thank you, Deacon Gail, for always decorating our Sanctuary so beautifully!



MUGS OF LOVE



FAITH IN ACTION



**Session Briefs**

Session meetings are held once a month, usually on the 3rd Thursday of the month. The February meeting was held on the 19th. Your session members approved the 2025 Annual Statistical Report. This report is required by the PCUSA and is due yearly in mid-February. The report contains demographic information about our congregation members and summarizes our income and expenses for the previous year. We also heard / received reports from the Clerk, Finance & Personnel, Building & Grounds, Community Engagement/Outreach, Worship & Music, the Union Street Resource Center and the Pastor. For more specific information about any of these topics, please speak with one of the Elders.



**Deacons:  
Easter Flowers**

The deacons will be decorating the altar with a mix of tulips, daffodils, and perhaps a few other varieties for Easter Sunday, April 5th. After the service, the flowers will be available for purchase @ \$5 per plant. If you are interested in a plant, be sure to see Gail after the Easter service so you can choose a plant to take home. Any plants that are not purchased will be planted on church grounds.



**Spring Women's Retreat**

Ladies,

I have really enjoyed the women's retreats at Camp Johnsonburg! It is an opportunity to take in a little and to breathe. Below are links to sign up for the retreat. Please join me.

Diane



Registration is now open for the 2026 Spring Women's Retreat being held the weekend of April 24th. Options and costs can be found on our website: [www.campjburg.org](http://www.campjburg.org).

**Kim Italiano (she/her)**  
Registrar  
908.852.2349 Ext. 209



**Fabulous Finds Mini Mart  
Saturday, April 11  
9 am — 1 pm**

As always, if you find that you have time and would like to come to the church and help, please do so. There are always things that you can do.

**Share our social media posts!**



*Apr.*

- 4 - Carleigh Grace R.
- 4 - Andrew Bruce R.
- 12 - Jean K.
- 14 - Alex S.
- 14 - Eric C.
- 16 - Jacob Francis R.
- 17 - Daniel James M.
- 19 - Olivia P.
- 25 - Katelyn Elizabeth C.
- 26 - Adeline O.



*Apr.*

- 12 - Melinda & Doug
- 13 - Allison & Eddie
- 22 - Jennifer & Jim
- 28 - Marisa & Richard
- 29 - Rev. Erin Hayes-Cook & Lawrence



# RAHWAY'S BEST

**BEST HOOPS**  
PASS ME THE BALL  
SESSION 1

AGES 3-7	AGES 8-12	AGES 13+
March 9 <sup>th</sup> - April 24 <sup>th</sup> Monday & Wednesday 4pm - 7pm \$77	March 9 <sup>th</sup> - April 24 <sup>th</sup> Monday & Wednesday 7pm - 8pm \$137	March 9 <sup>th</sup> - April 24 <sup>th</sup> Monday & Wednesday 8pm - 9pm \$167

**FREE WEEK: MARCH 2<sup>ND</sup> - 5<sup>TH</sup>**  
TRAINING: MONDAY - THURSDAY  
THE BEST CENTER:  
1731 Church St Rahway NJ 07065

SCAN ME  
Love Your Child's Open Mind!

CALL / TEXT: 732-381-1933  
EMAIL: RAHWAYTMAA@GMAIL.COM

**FREE FAMILY EVENT!**  
**EASTER**  
Egg Hunt  
March 28, 2026  
Come register online to save your child's seat!

COME JOIN OUR EGGHUNT AND TAKE PICTURES WITH THE EASTER BUNNY!

**ALL ARE WELCOME!**  
1731 Church Street, Rahway, NJ

- 0-4 years old: 9:30 AM
- 5-7 years old: 10:30 AM
- 8-10 years old: 11:30 AM

CALL / TEXT: 732-381-1933 EMAIL: RAHWAYTMAA@GMAIL.COM

**Enroll Today!**  
**SUMMER CAMP 2026**  
FUN, SAFE, & AFFORDABLE!  
SAVE YOUR CHILD'S SPOT! K-1<sup>ST</sup> GRADE!

- MARTIAL ARTS
- DANCE
- SPORTS
- GAMES
- FIELD TRIPS
- MUCH MORE!

CALL / TEXT: 732-381-1933  
EMAIL: RAHWAYTMAA@GMAIL.COM

## ALL ARE WELCOME!

For more information:

732-381-1933 or  
rahwaytmaa@gmail.com



### Candy Toth is celebrating 35 Years as a Librarian

One of our members, has a milestone that we would like to highlight: 35 years as a Rahway Library Librarian!

Candy grew up in Rahway, where she attended Franklin School, Rahway Junior High School, and graduated from Rahway High School in 1977. She went on to attend Georgian Court College, where she was a Dean's Scholar and a member of Sigma Tau Delta (the university's chapter of the international English Honor Society).

She graduated in 1981 with a BA in Art. In 1987, she married Michael Toth and eventually expanded their family with the addition of a daughter and two sons.

Candy started at the library in January 1991 as a Library Assistant/Graphic Artist in the Children's Department at the old library on the corner of St. George and Central Avenues. Aside from her regular duties as a Library Assistant, Candy did all the artwork for decorations, flyers and brochures, all Summer Reading Club game boards, reading logs, and crafts for toddlers, preschoolers, and grade schoolers.

In September 1999, the old library was destroyed by Tropical Storm Floyd. Candy worked alongside many others in waist-high water, to pack up whatever could be salvaged. When the Children's Library was temporarily housed at the Recreation Center, prior to the construction of the new library, Candy worked there making sure the children of Rahway still had somewhere to go for books. At first, there were no computers or card catalog, but fortunately for everyone, she knew where all the books were located!

When the new Rahway Public Library opened in 2004, Candy continued working in the Children's Department until 2007 when she was promoted to Young Adults as a Library Associate, a title she holds to this day. She oversees the teen collections, teen programming, and teen volunteers, and works with inter-library loans and attends the high school and the Academy's Back to School Nights as the library representative.

Candy's hard work, dedication, and infectious smile and laugh have been a true asset to the Rahway Community, and we congratulate her on her 35th anniversary. (Full article and pics in *TAPinto Rahway* January 24th online news.)

**We also extend our congratulations to you, Candy, for all of your hard work through the years!**



### **UPDATE** Resource Center

The Center continues to serve through making space available to our community. In addition to Rahway's Best After School Program and the AA and ACA groups, we have students from the Rahway Academy renting the gym for basketball drills and practice. We are excited to share that the other multipurpose room on the 2nd floor will be outfitted with a projector and audio system the middle of April, making it ready for other groups/purposes.



A few weeks ago, pastor Ed received an email from Dr. Elizabeth Atkins, a professor at Kean University, offering 1,000 pounds of non perishable food to non profit organizations; first come, first served. We immediately responded and managed to schedule a pick up. In the email we received to schedule a pick up, we were told to bring enough people to load our vehicle. When we pulled into the lot, we were surprised to find at least 50 – 60 students from Abraham Clark HS and Kean University poised to load our truck. There were huge pallets of at least 20 different kinds of foods and the students swarmed and loaded the truck in minutes. Our next step is to figure out how we will organize and distribute what we've been given. If you'd like to be part of this endeavor, please contact any one of our Session members. Stay tuned for the next steps.



## Blessed to be a blessing!



**April 25, 2026**

10AM - 1PM

Rahway Recreation Center

**Activities Include:**

Screenings, Expert Health Talks,  
Tables for Overall Health Resources,  
Youth Activities, Face Painter,  
Balloon Sculptor, and more!

[www.cityofrahway.com/calendar](http://www.cityofrahway.com/calendar)

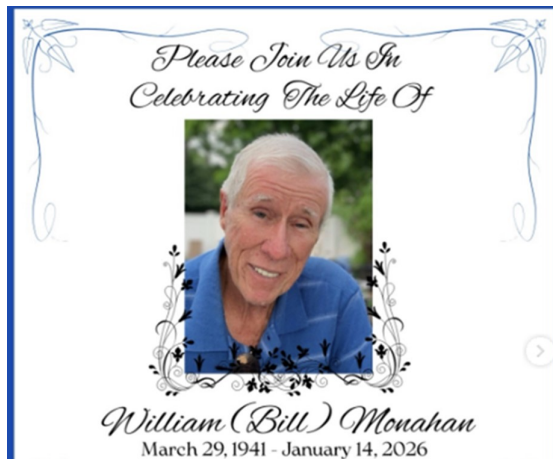


Rahway Senior Citizens  
aged 62 and above,  
please call 732-669-3605  
48 hours in advance to  
schedule transportation  
to/from the event.

# Prayer REQUESTS

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

Cheryl Anne, Anne H., Doug A., Robin S., Patrick W., Lynn H., Miriam M., Michele P., Louise & Teddy, Barbara, Carol & Jake, Sue K., Agnes N. & family, Savannah B. & family, Carole H., Becky, John, Sam, Michael, Sara & Joan P., Mary "Cookie" F., Nicole, Allison, Mary R., Helen, Logan, Harper, Helene & Diane, Dorothy R., Amy



We were saddened to hear of a former member's passing, Bill Monahan. Bill was quite a character and very involved with the church fundraisers, such as the pasta dinners, as well as doing odd jobs around the church. He will be remembered fondly by those who knew him. Please keep his family in your prayers.

## Prayer Persons

### **MARCH**

- Mar. 1st** - Rebecca Abungwo
- Mar. 8th** - Eunice Schwietering
- Mar. 15th** - Jon-Paul Daye
- Mar. 22nd** - Carole Huntley
- Mar. 29th** - Beverly Woolley

### **APRIL**

- Apr. 5th** - Portia Gaskin
- Apr. 12th** - Russihon Daye
- Apr. 19th** - Ebbe family
- Apr. 26th** - Richard McCarthy

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1731 CHURCH STREET  
RAHWAY, NJ 07065  
732.382.0803

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

**DATED MATERIAL  
PLEASE RUSH**



**Worship with us  
Each Sunday at 10:30 AM**  
In-person / Facebook & YouTube Live Streams  
Recorded Video Available Also

Office: [office@1stpresrahway.org](mailto:office@1stpresrahway.org)  
Rev. Ed Hoener: [edhoener1@gmail.com](mailto:edhoener1@gmail.com)

**[1stpresrahway.org](http://1stpresrahway.org)**



QR Code for donations

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