

TOWER CHIMES



Vol. 17 Issues 5 & 6

May / June 2026

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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"The Chosen"
gatherings are moving
to a new night!

We are meeting on Friday
evenings at 7:00 pm at
the manse. Please join in
the discussion! May and
June are focusing on
Maundy Thursday. July
begins looking at Good
Friday and beyond.

June 5 and 26; July 24
and 31; August 14 and 28;
September 18; October 2
and 9; November 20;
December 11

From Pastor Ed...

On the last day of the Festival Jesus said, "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and let the one who believes in me, drink. Out of the believer's heart shall flow rivers of living water." Now he said this about the Spirit which believers in him were to receive.

Dear Friends,

Pentecost may feel a bit anticlimactic for people today. It's probable that none of us have caught fire in prayer like in the upper room. It's probable that none of us have experienced the Spirit of God like a tornado in our living rooms. Yet, those are not the experiences of the Spirit Jesus is talking about. He said, "Out of the Believers heart shall flow rivers of living water." Clearly this is not describing a conventional faith. At the same time we might wonder: about the times when we feel dry or sad or overcome by what 's going on in our lives? Does it mean the Spirit has left us? Does it mean we have to dig harder and deeper to get to the well?" Do we have to study more, pray more, pray *differently*?

There are some clues in scripture that might help us. Do we remember the metaphor in Jeremiah 18 about the Potter and the clay? "God, the Potter said, 'Will you allow me to do with you as I will, O Israel?'" Paul used a similar image when he said, "We each are clay vessels filled with a treasure so that it may be clear that the extraordinary power comes from God and not from us." Jesus used a different image when He said that we are each branches, and if we remain in the Vine, we will bear much fruit.

What all these point to is that the power of the Spirit does not come from our effort – it comes from being in a relationship with God. However, this does not mean we do nothing at all. In both testaments, *walking* is a metaphor for describing the life of faith. It reminds us that the point is not arriving – it is the walking – it is the consistency and staying the course. There will be switchbacks and roadblocks along the way, but they don't stop us – because God will help us throughout the journey. Paul said, "God will complete the work that God began in us." As we continue our journeys, we will be changed from the inside out by the Spirit flowing within us, transforming the old parts of our lives into new and better parts. All that wells up within us, is what helps us to become a well for others, too. The promise of Pentecost is that by the Spirit, we are becoming what we receive, as we keep coming to God to drink, which gets poured out to others, too.

Peace, and Blessing,
Ed

Editor:
CAB
office@1stpresrahway.org



Mark Your Calendars!

On **Friday, May 29TH @ 7 PM**, our congregation is hosting **Tim Whitaker**, a nationally known speaker who will deepen our understanding of Christian nationalism, and the ways that it is having an impact on justice, faith, and politics.

Tim Whitaker is a former evangelical who was caught up in the rhetoric that has become Christian Nationalism. He began to notice striking discrepancies between what his church was doing and saying and the teachings of Jesus.

He began relearning and reconstructing his faith. Tim now uses that firsthand experience to expose how faith is being weaponized for political power — and why it matters for everyone, not just the religious. The founder of *The New Evangelicals*, Tim breaks down the theology, history, and politics behind Christian Nationalism through his YouTube channel *Tim Whitaker Speaks* — serving his subscribers with equal parts scholarship and raw honesty.

This event is intended to provide information so that everyone attending is equipped to differentiate between authentic and inauthentic faith claims. This is an event one might want to invite persons to, who may be wondering about the messaging they are receiving from their church or social media. After Tim presents what he has learned, there will be ample time for Q&A.

The rise of Christian Nationalism is a genuine concern, and a well-informed Church is needed to address it. Please plan to come to this very important event! Please think about who you will invite, and contact them so that they can put this on *their* calendars! Looking forward to seeing you on Friday, May 29th at 7 pm.



On Tuesday, May 5th, I had my last radiation treatment and got to ring the bell! I thank everyone for your prayers and positive thoughts throughout my cancer treatment! I can now say in all honesty that "I am a Survivor". I was truly overwhelmed by all the offers and kind gestures I received from my church family. You all are an amazing group of people who demonstrate Jesus' love and healing in so many ways. May you continue to be blessed and be a blessing.

With love, Cheryl Anne



Baptism of Nicolo Anthony Nevi April 19, 2026



Proud parents, Ashley & Anthony, had their son, Nicolo, baptized on April 19th.

A joyous occasion for both the Nevi and Simpson families.

We were blessed to celebrate this beautiful moment with you as Nicolo was welcomed into faith. May this special day bring your family joy, blessings, and a lifetime of grace.

Host a Coffee Hour

We are looking for people to host coffee hour. Sign-up sheets are on the food table in Davis Hall. **Please see the article on page 7 about Coffee Hour Ministry. Hosting is easy & doesn't require a lot of your time.**



**Rahway's Best
Summer Camp 2026
K-5th Grade**

Fun, safe, and affordable! Activities include martial arts, dance, sports, games, field trips, and much more.

Contact

Call/Text: (732) 381-1933

Email: rahwaytmaa@gmail.com



May

- 1 - Craig L.
- 1 - Jake H.
- 8 - Ruth-Noemi B-R.
- 10 - Carole H.
- 11 - Laura G.
- 13 - Allyson P.
- 15 - Carol Ann B.
- 17 - Andy R.
- 19 - Uchechi K.
- 20 - Ryder E.
- 26 - Jorrod J.
- 29 - Garry G.
- 30 - Glory K.
- 30 - George D.



May

- 11 - Gail & Connie
- 29 - Loretta & Thomas

Congratulations to...



Jay Beam

on becoming a 50 year member of our church.

You are not on a journey to God;
you are on a journey WITH God.

- Steve Maraboli



All good things come to those who wait ... well, we have waited and finally we have physical signs of the Union Street Resource Center's food insecurity outreach - the '**COMMUNITY GARDEN**'. We have had the garden beds for a couple of months but had to wait for the Spring weather to arrive so the fence enclosure could be installed. Now we can move the beds outside, into position, fill with soil, and then begin the planting.

Everyone is invited to get involved in this amazing community project. Whether you are an experienced gardener or just want to get your hands dirty, please come join us! Watch for upcoming events on our social media, emails, and website. For more information email the church (office@1stpresrahway.org) or call 732-382-0803.



Are you aware that Davis Hall at 1st Presbyterian is available for rent?

It is a great location for celebrations, parties, gatherings, and other events. Recently Davis Hall was the site for a baby shower and soon two separate families will be celebrating their respective child's college graduation accomplishment. For more information, please email the church (office@1stpresrahway.org) or call 732-382-0803.



Our church member, **Portia Gaskin**, giving back to her community in Guyana with a kite and basket giveaway.

What a wonderful way for Portia to have touched so many lives in her community in Guyana, in ways that can't be measured. Her kindness reminds us what it truly means to care for one another.



Thank you, Portia, truly inspiring!

REMINDER:

Fabulous Finds Mini Mart

Saturday, June 6

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.



June

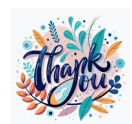
- 2 - Kenneth M.
- 3 - Ashley T.
- 4 - Susan K.
- 5 - Judith R.
- 5 - Portia G.
- 10 - Agnes N.
- 11 - Lauren D.
- 11 - Joshua David G.
- 12 - Arden Joesetta C.
- 12 - Chloe T.
- 13 - Sean S.
- 15 - Jack M.
- 17 - Linda S.
- 22 - Michele P.
- 25 - Daniel Rocco M.
- 28 - Donna G.
- 28 - Allison P.
- 28 - Dean Miles R.
- 30 - Zachary T.



June

- 11 - Carol & Vincent
- 12 - Aleya & Maurice
- 15 - Leslie & Chris
- 17 - Ashley & Anthony
- 20 - JoAnn & Andy
- 20 - Donna & Garry
- 28 - Elizabeth & Steven

Thank you, **Richard McCarthy**, for your Mother's Day and Father's Day wishes for all at our church.



We appreciate you!

Congratulations, Graduates!



Ryan Nicholas Crowley graduated from Rider University with honors on Saturday, May 16th with a Bachelor of Science degree in Finance. He graduated from Arthur L. Johnson High School in June of 2022 and he attended West Virginia University that fall. He didn't enjoy being that far so he came back home. He joined the Clark Volunteer Fire Squad in 2023 and he went to Fire Academy I and II that spring. He also attended the EMT Academy after that. In the summer of 2023, he began taking classes at Union County College before he transferred to Rider University. While he was going to school, he also had a job. Ryan has worked very hard to complete his required courses and graduate. His family is very proud of him and all the things that he has accomplished. We wish him much success as he pursues his dream of becoming a firefighter and a millionaire!



Carleigh and Andrew Roesch will be graduating this June from Frank K. Hehnley School in Clark. They are both looking forward to attending Carl H. Kumpf Middle School in the fall. Both of them are fine students and very athletic. Carleigh is on the Scotch Plains- Fanwood swim team as well as on traveling soccer and lacrosse teams. Andrew had been on a traveling soccer team, but he now focuses his skills on his traveling lacrosse team and Clark wrestling. Their family is very proud of them and their accomplishments so far. Best wishes to Carleigh and Andrew as they begin middle school!



Summer Tutoring Program



The Union Street Resource Center is excited to announce that due to the success of the initial 1st and 2nd quarter 2026 tutoring program we will be offering a 4 week summer tutoring program. The summer program will be individualized tutoring focusing on specialized literacy training for elementary aged school children. The program will run Mondays through Thursdays beginning July 6th through July 30th, 2026. The goal is to hire 4 tutors and enroll a maximum of 16 students. Tutoring is offered free of charge to parents and is sponsored by the 2nd Presbyterian Mission Fund.

Hosting Coffee Hour at Church: Building Community One Cup at a Time

Few traditions in church life are as simple and meaningful as coffee hour. After worship, people gather around tables with warm drinks, baked treats, and conversation. Friendships are formed, visitors feel welcomed, and members connect beyond the pews. While coffee hour may seem like a small ministry, it often becomes one of the strongest expressions of hospitality in a congregation.

Churches are not only places of worship; they are communities. Coffee hour creates an opportunity for people to slow down and spend time together after the service. In today's busy world, many people long for genuine connection. A casual gathering over coffee can open the door to meaningful conversations, encouragement, and fellowship.

For visitors, coffee hour is especially important. Walking into a church for the first time can feel intimidating. A friendly invitation to stay for coffee helps newcomers feel included and gives members a chance to introduce themselves in a relaxed setting. In many cases, people decide whether to return to a church based on the warmth of the community they experience.

Coffee hour also supports intergenerational relationships. Children, teens, adults, and seniors all have opportunities to interact informally. These conversations help strengthen the sense of belonging within the church family.

Hosting a Successful Coffee Hour

A successful coffee hour does not require an elaborate setup or expensive menu. The key ingredients are already provided. The coffee and tea are already set up when you arrive on Sunday morning. The creamers, cups, plates, napkins and snacks are already in our closets or cabinets. When you come in around 10 am, you need to get out the cups, plates, napkins and silverware if needed. The only thing that you need to buy or make and bring in is some baked goods or fruit for everyone to enjoy after worship. You put out the cups, plates, napkins and silverware if needed. You put out the snacks, cold drinks and water along with your baked goods or fruit. Then you are ready for church. After the service, you come down and take out the creamers and uncover the treats you brought. Enjoy coffee hour with everyone and afterwards it's time to clean up. You bring the coffee pot and tea pot into the kitchen and empty them. You put the creamers back into the refrigerator and package any leftover treats to take home or put in the refrigerator. It's really not that difficult to host a coffee hour! There is a sign-up sheet on the refreshment table. Please consider signing up for a Sunday every once in a while. The goal is not perfection but connection.

Coffee Hour as Ministry

Coffee hour is more than a social event; it is an act of ministry. Sharing food and conversation has always been part of Christian fellowship. Throughout scripture, meals and gatherings around tables symbolize welcome, friendship, and community.

A church coffee hour reflects these values in a simple but powerful way. It reminds people that faith is lived not only during worship services but also in everyday relationships. Over a cup of coffee, members encourage one another, support those facing difficulties, and celebrate life together.

Conclusion

Hosting coffee hour at church may appear ordinary, but its impact can be extraordinary. It creates space for hospitality, fellowship, and connection in a world where many people feel isolated. With thoughtful planning and a welcoming spirit, coffee hour can become one of the most cherished traditions in a congregation.

Sometimes the most meaningful ministry begins with something as simple as offering a warm cup of coffee and a friendly conversation.

—Submitted by JoAnn Roesch



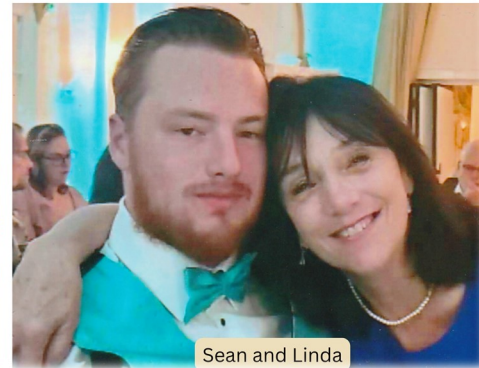
Thank you, Linda Simpson, for sharing these amazing photos of your beautiful family!
Oh my goodness! Look how big Lucas and Juliet are getting!



Sean, Andrea, Lucas & Juliet Simpson



Anthony & Ashley Nevi



Sean and Linda

How to support 1st Presbyterian on social media!

When you see our account



First Presbyterian Church of Rahway, NJ

Scroll down to the end of the post and
click to "like"!



Look out for these icons!



Also, at the end of the post, you will see a
button that says "comment."



Click on it and type out your response!
Let us know your thoughts!

Why it matters...

Liking and commenting on social media posts involves clicking a button (typically a heart, thumbs-up, or similar icon), to signify appreciation, agreement, or support for content. It serves as a quick, low-effort way to boost engagement, show approval, and the more engagement we have, the more likely our posts will be shared with others!

Help our church become more of a
community!



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. Ilanda will ensure that your request is addressed/sent to our wonderful prayer warriors.

Matthew W. & family, Shipley family, Eunice, Barbra & Dave, William S., Hoener & Pender families, Abisiji B., Damilola B., Rosemary B., Bob M., Cheryl Anne, Doug A., Patrick W., Lynn H., 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



Our deepest condolences to...

As you know, Pastor Ed & Sara Pender's mother, **Ann Hoener** passed away on April 2nd. Please keep the Hoener and Pender families in your prayers as they navigate the heartbreaking loss of their beloved mother. May they find strength, comfort, and peace.

Prayer Persons

MAY

May 3rd - Patrick Weaver
May 10th - Mimi Zahradnik
May 17th - Toth Family
May 24th - Linda Simpson
May 31st - Flo Oppmann

JUNE

June 7th - Harold Wilcox
June 14th - Al & Robin Shipley
June 21st - Remelgado Family
June 28th - Pattie Persaud

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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
Rev. Ed Hoener: edhoener1@gmail.com

1stpresrahway.org



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