

TOWER CHIMES



Vol. 16 Issues 7 & 8

July/August 2025

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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Fireside Chats

Fireside Chats this summer will be the second and fourth Fridays of the month, 7 pm, at the manse. Hopefully we'll be able to be around the firepit on the manse's back patio. In case of rain, we'll sit inside by the fireplace. Those dates are: July 11 and 25, August 8 and 22.

Feel free to bring a beverage to share or something to drink for yourself. We have some soft and harder options here if you forget.

From Pastor Ed...

"As Jesus stepped on shore, a man who had demons met him. For a long time he lived among the tombs in a graveyard. Jesus immediately commanded the demons to leave the man, and he was healed. The man, who now was whole again, asked if he could leave that town and follow Jesus. But Jesus said, "No, return to your home and declare how much God has done for you." Luke 8

One of the biggest problems as human beings, is our propensity to divide ourselves into insiders and outsiders. There are so many ways our society separates out the people whose lives make us uncomfortable. We have prisons for those who break our laws. We have hospitals, for the diseased and asylums for the mentally ill. It's not that these places are bad things in themselves – it's just that in addition to the help they provide, they've become a way to keep most of us out of touch with the people who make us uneasy.

This story asks us to reflect on where our comfort zones are, and which ones Jesus might be calling us to work on. It asks us to reflect on where our fears might be getting in the way. It's very important to realize that if we look closely at Jesus' ministry, he hardly ever spoke about *believing* in him. Most of the time when the religious people were trying to nail him down on a point of the law, he responded by telling them to look at what *he was doing*. When it comes to being the church today we have to ask ourselves, "What would Jesus be challenging *us* to be doing today?"

Maybe a message of this story would be that you and I are called to concentrate more on the imitation of Christ than the worship of Christ. The truth is, how that will look for each of us will come in many shapes and sizes. In other words, our Christian calling may exist in any situation or role we already have. Our vocation is expressed in who we are and what we do every day. That is why Jesus asked the man who was healed to stay where he was. It was because the best way to live our faith and make a difference is when the people who know us can see the difference Christ has made in us.

We know that Jesus deliberately hung out with the people who made the religious authorities mad. He met all kinds of people wherever they were, and healed them body mind and spirit. *Then* he invited them to carry on his lifestyle because to do so would spread God's subversive kingdom everywhere! God's agenda is to spread the spiritual power that changes people like us, and it is contagious – changing people's lives until the kingdom comes.



PRESS RELEASE – TOWER CHIMES, July/August addition

The Union Street Resource Center will be hosting a week-long summer program called **L.I.F.E. – Learn. Inspire. Focus. Excel** for children ages 13 to 16 to be held August 18th through the 22nd. The program will have different life skill workshops each day and be held in Davis Hall. Each workshop will incorporate instruction and interactive participation. Maximum participation is limited to 15 children who are being invited from the congregation and Rahway's Best's programs. Funding for the Summer Camp has been provided by a donation. The workshops will be as follows:

Monday, 8/18 - Automobile emergency skills (Presenter: Felix Nodarse, Rahway's Best)

Tuesday, 8/19 - 1st Aid / CPR (Jorge Figueroa - licensed practitioner)

Wednesday, 8/20 - Culinary skills (Presenter: Craig Ludington, Latin Fuego)

Thursday, 8/21, 8:30am – 10:30am - Columbia Bank will have a 1-1/2 hr. workshop on financial literacy

Thursday, 8/21, 10:30am – 12:30pm – Garden of Ink (Rahway business) will have 1-1/2 hr workshop on do's and don'ts of body ink.

Friday, 8/22 - Felice Floyd (photographer from the Grand Opening) will have a workshop on photography and social media

I am looking for a couple adult volunteers to assist myself, the presenters and coaches from Rahway's Best with each day's workshops. Please call the church office if you are interested.



Enjoy your retirement!

Congratulations to both Sue, who retired in June, and to her husband, Cliff, who will also be retiring this summer.

Your church family and friends wish you joy, happiness, good health, and all of life's blessings on this next chapter of your lives and the adventures waiting for you!

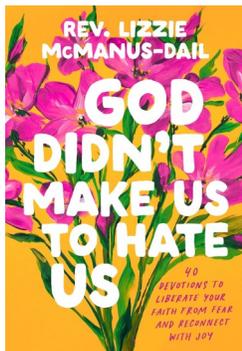




Congrats to the Purcell family, who have two milestones this year...

Lucas will be graduating from PreK 4 and heading to Kindergarten in the fall.

On August 15, **Allison** will be graduating from Montclair State with her second masters. This will be in School Leadership. A mom of two young children and getting a second Masters? God bless, what a wonderful achievement!



Book Study:

Our Book Study began June 20th at 6:30p m. The book we will be reading is 'God Didn't Make Us To Hate Us'.

Future dates and times will be announced.



Our Online Donations

FYI: The Presbyterian Foundation sent an email reminding us that only charitable donations can be made using our online categories, they cannot be used for received goods and/or services. Please use another form of payment if purchasing items from our mini marts, otherwise the Pres Foundation will flag it when they do their audits.



Fabulous Finds Mini Mart
Saturday, July 12th
9 am — 1 pm



July

- 1 - Monyka Elyzabeth K.
- 1 - Erwin A.
- 1 - Logan Gene S.
- 3 - Ray M.
- 4 - Fred R.
- 8 - Rev. Doug Grote
- 10 - David K.
- 10 - Richard M.
- 19 - Bridget N.
- 23 - Lauren H.
- 27 - Joanne P.
- 27 - Uma K.



July

- 14 - Debby & Fred

Reminders:

Childcare

Through the summer months, the childcare room is available if requested, however, we ask that a parent stay with their children while using the room. Ask for the room to be opened if you would like to use it.



Rahway's Best Summer Camp

The program will be operating Monday through Friday from June 23rd to August 29 during the hours between 7:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. The basketball camp, only in the gym, is until 8:00 p.m.



Scrapbooking & Brunch Event in August

We're having a scrapbooking/crafting event at the church on Saturday, August 9 from 10 am - 2 pm (you don't have to stay for the whole thing). Bring scrapbooking supplies (junk journaling supplies are great too) and a brunch item to share. Sign up with Diane (for table space).

Hope you can make it!



Speaking of scrapbooking...

October Event:

**A Women's Retreat
Johnsonburg Camp & Retreat
October 24th—26th**



**Fabulous Finds Mini Mart
Saturday, August 2nd
9 am — 1 pm**



Aug.

- 7 - Vincent D.
- 15 - Lawrence C.
- 15 - John L.
- 16 - Zachary W.
- 18 - Tracie W.
- 20 - Hazel M. R.
- 21 - Eric R.
- 21 - Sam S.
- 21 - Lucas S.
- 27 - Ashley C.
- 27 - Bill D.
- 31 - Michael T.



Aug.

- 8 - Kristen & Russell
- 13 - Carol & Jake
- 22 - Judy & Eric
- 29 - Robin & Alex
- 29 - Candy & Michael

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We are finishing Season 4 of "The Chosen" on Sundays at 12:30 pm (note new time) on August 3, 17, and September 7. These episodes are the life and times of Jesus and the Disciples during Holy Week. Witness the triumphant entry into Jerusalem, the Last Supper, the Garden of Gethsemane, and that damning kiss by Judas.

We know these stories already, so it is fine to jump in for an episode, even if you haven't watched all the others.

Join us for heartfelt discussion and a greater understanding of Jesus' last days on Earth.



“We” Are Having a Baby!

Notice the quotation marks? We, the congregation, are about to welcome a new baby into our midst.

We will host a **church-wide baby shower on Sunday, July 20 during Coffee Hour at about 11:30 am**. There is a list below of items needed. (They have nothing; if you know of a must-have item not in the list, it is needed.)

Read on to learn more about this family.

Kiana is expected the end of July/beginning of August. She is the baby of the Afghani refugee family who many of us in the congregation have been supporting.

Jawad first came to the church in the fall of 2024, looking for diapers. Gail and Ken and Andy and JoAnn (and others) quickly went into action with diapers, food, and a job at the cemetery. Jawad is just learning English, so he brought his English-speaking wife and son to one of our luncheons the week before our big Fabulous Finds Market in November.

Jawad’s wife, Marmareen, his two-year-old son, Sulaiman, and he had recently been relocated here by the U.S. Government from Afghanistan on a C-2 Visa.

Jawad was a member of the police department in Afghanistan, helping to enforce the new laws the Allied Forces put into place. He and his little family had been hiding out for three years in large Afghan cities, trying to remain anonymous and hidden in plain sight. If found, the family would be murdered as traitors after the U.S. pulled out of the country after the new regime took power.

As you are aware, the Department of Government Efficiency has slashed the supporting agencies to a fraction of their original size. This family has our church as their support network now.

They are Muslim. They follow Halal dietary restrictions and aren’t accustomed to processed foods. The area food pantry provides some food, but they feel they must honor their religious tenants, so choose only a few items each week from the Rahway Food Pantry.

Marmareen provides freshly kneaded and baked bread for each meal. They eat a lot of basmati rice with chicken and fresh vegetables. Diane and Ed provide Halal beef every other week. (It’s actually pretty easy to find in our area. Any Halal market has this. There is one in Colonia on St. George’s Ave.) JoAnn provides many a rotisserie chicken from Costco.

Since they don’t follow Christianity as we do, they don’t feel comfortable in our worship, however they worship the same God.

They have joined us during Coffee Hour a few Sundays; you have probably welcomed them already! Marmareen has had morning sickness her whole pregnancy so there are Sundays when she cannot be near food.

Let’s help this little family begin their American dream!

Here is Marmareen's list of baby items needed. Again, feel free to add to the list. Some have already donated cash to go toward larger items. Marmareen has also shopped at our Fabulous Finds Market where we set items aside for the baby.

List of Items Needed

(Feel free to contact Diane Hoener with questions.)

- diapers - many sizes for a girl,
- wet wipes for sensitive skin,
- baby shampoo,
- baby soap,
- baby towels,
- baby clothes,
- baby lotion,
- baby formula,
- bottles, nipples, drying rack,
- bottled water,
- bath visor,
- baby toys and enrichment,
- baby bibs,
- car seat,
- blanket,
- small bed for the 3 year old (giving up his crib for the baby) *they all sleep in same room in their one bedroom apartment*,
- and
- bed sheets for the new bed



We had a great time at the *Black Wings: American Dreams of Flight* exhibit at Rahway Gallery Space. Thank you to all who joined us!

Be sure to check our Weekly Announcements for our next community event!





If you have a prayer request please give Ilanda a call or send her an email. She will ensure that your request is addressed/sent to our wonderful prayer warriors.

Prayer Requests

Maryann, Pat, Carol & Jake, Muller family, Irina & her son, Savannah B. & family, Carole H., Gary Jamieson, Louise Campanelli, Logan, Linda, Evelyn, Linnea & Roger, Diara, Antoine, Becky, John, Sam, Benjamin, Jarod B., Michael, Sara & Joan P., Mary "Cookie" F., Nicole, Allison, Zia L., Mary R., Jane B., Pat & family, Major A. & family, Helen, Logan, Harper, Helene & Diane, Dorothy R., Amy

Dana's Email Update on Avril Muller:



I thought you would want to know that Avril passed away last week. Her daughter, Carol, saw her in early May when Avril was expected to recover from a bladder infection, but soon after she had a stroke. It was all rather quick.

The family is planning on doing a celebration of life ceremony in July in Cape Town. They will spread Douglas's and Avril's ashes together at that time.

It seems like an end of an era to me. I remember vividly when Les and I dropped off flowers at their house on Forbes Street as they were moving in. We soon realized that they were as opposite as two people could be, but their mutual respect and love for one another made their relationship work, even when they were separated for so long during Avril's immigration ban. Avril was such a creative, independent free-spirit...a wordsmith story teller, incredible puppet-maker, and a talented gardener with a gift for tending and arranging flowers of all kinds. Les, remember when we tried to come up with an idea to recreate Avril's beloved jacarandas?

They are together now. May they rest in peace in everlasting life. Love to you all! Blessings, Dana



Prayer Persons

JULY

- July 6th** - Nyambi family
- July 13th** - Aleya Daye Hall & family
- July 20th** - Purcell family
- July 27th** - Carolyn Gerhart & family

AUGUST

- Aug. 3rd** - Janis Karpinski
- Aug. 10th** - Kristen Hinckley & family
- Aug. 17th** - Jean Kuc
- Aug. 24th** - Koenig family
- Aug. 31st** - Cheryl Martin

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**DATED MATERIAL
PLEASE RUSH**



Photo: Diane H.

**Worship with us in Davis Hall
Each Sunday at 10:30 AM**
In-person / Facebook Live (when possible)

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Rev. Ed Hoener: edhoener1@gmail.com

1stpresrahway.org



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