

# TOWER CHIMES



Vol. 16 Issue 9

September 2025

## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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### Thank you!

A shoutout to Diane, Selva, Sue, Cheryl Anne, Gail, Robin, and anyone else who has been taking pics and sending them to the office. As you can see in this issue, a lot of fun and living faith is taking place. AMEN!

## From Pastor Ed...

*"Moved with anger, Jesus touched the leper and said, "I do choose to heal you. Be made clean." Mark 1:40-45*

Dear Friends,

Most of the English translations of this verse have chosen to ignore a variant reading of that says Jesus was moved with *anger* when the leper came and asked Jesus to heal him. Instead, most of them translate, that Jesus was moved with compassion or pity (because it doesn't make sense that Jesus would be mad at someone who was seriously ill). However, if we take a look at the surrounding story, there is a way it can make sense to say he was moved with anger. What if it was directed at all the people who were saying that God's love is reserved only for pious, rich, and healthy people? What if it was directed against the affliction itself? What if it was aimed at the temple that excluded and judged people who suffered? Maybe Jesus' anger was directed at the religion that told the man with leprosy that God was condemning him and that his disease was proof. If these reasons are so, that would explain why Jesus sent the man to the temple, to say to the religious authorities, "See, God's love is *specifically* with people like me who suffer!"

The question is, "Are there ways in which we, as followers of Jesus, are called to emulate him in similar ways?"

Maybe this story calls us to be angry at the ways people break the ties of humanity that bind us to each other. Maybe we're called to be angry:

- About wars that are used to build bigger bank accounts.
- About lies that are told with straight faces, and accepted without blushing.
- About a society that tells us to love things and use people, instead of the other way around.

Maybe as disciples of Jesus, we're called to be angry:

- When any faith justifies hating our neighbors.
- When any faith "sharpens our minds only by narrowing them." (Coffin)

As we keep seeking to pursue God's work in our congregation, and in our individual lives, may we learn how to live by the *same kind of angry compassion* Jesus had in this story. This kind of compassion rolls up its sleeves to get in the fight against exclusion, oppression, injustice, and suffering. Whatever we do in response will most definitely make a difference *in our hearts*, and, *will promote* God's love and aid to our neighbors!

Peace and Blessing,  
Ed



**Confirmation Class Fun ... Batter Up!!!**



On Sunday, August 3, the confirmation class and their mentors went to see a ballgame to have a little time for bonding. They watched the Somerset Patriots trounce the Richmond Flying Squirrels. It was a beautiful evening for baseball!

Selva captured the fun in a reel available on our TikTok and YouTube channel. Here's what she had to say about the evening: **We had so much fun at our confirmation class trip yesterday! We went to TD Bank ballpark to watch the Somerset Patriots play the Richmond Flying Squirrels.**

**Final Score:  
Patriots: 9  
Flying Squirrels: 1**



**6th ANNUAL:  
SHENANIGANS  
IN THE PARK  
Saturday, Oct. 4, 2025  
11:00 am - 5:00 pm  
ADMISSION IS FREE!  
Games, tricky tray, 50/50,  
food, crafts and more!**

**Come join us to celebrate the life and love of  
Shannon Reilly Gutches!  
Rahway River Park,  
Rahway, NJ Pavilion A**

This is a day to remember Shannon and also a fundraiser. All donations are welcome. All proceeds go directly to the Dr. SRG Scholarship Foundation . Hope to see you there! ❤️❤️

If interested in learning more, the website is: [srgscholarship.org](http://srgscholarship.org)

Donna



# Joyous News!



Ashley and Anthony and Gammy Simpson would like to share the joy of our new addition to our blessed family, born August 7, 2025...

***Nicolò Anthony***  
7 pounds, 7 ounces, 20 inches

*Congratulations on another beautiful blessing for your family. May your growing family be blessed with all of God's abundant gifts!*



**From Linda Simpson:**

I would like to thank everyone for their blessed prayers during my two surgeries. I have been home recovering and healing well.

I would also like to thank you all for your prayers for my grandson Logan, during his surgery, who is home and recovering well.

Thank you, Church Family, for all your prayers.



**Happy Birthday,  
Sulaiman!**



Some pics from a b-day celebration for Sulaiman, who turned 4. Our church is assisting him and his family, who are refugees from Afghanistan. Looks like a great time was had by all!



**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

**"The Chosen"**

We are finishing Season 4 of "The Chosen" on Sunday at 12:30 pm on September 7.



**Fabulous Finds Mini Mart**  
**Saturday, September 6**  
**9 am — 1 pm**



**Scrapbooking  
August 9th Pictures**

There was a nice little turnout for our community scrapbooking event in August. Selva created a reel of the event, however, here are some stills to enjoy. And no, the goodies pictured aren't a part of a scrapbook, they were there for everyone to enjoy while scrapbooking.

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

Not only will there be discussions on looking at the pieces of our lives being sewn together, but you can choose to participate in many activities such as hiking, boating, zip lining, nature watching, etc.

Registration for the Fall Women's Retreat will open at **noon on Wednesday, August 13th!**

We have a great retreat planned and led by Rev. Hannah Faye Allred, pastor of the Kitchell Memorial Presbyterian Church in East Hanover.

The retreat will begin with dinner at 6pm on Friday, October 24th, and run through lunch on Sunday, October 26th. There are several different accommodation options, including Saturday only.

**Please plan to register early if you need private room accommodations, as those options sell out quickly!**

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us!

For registration click here: <https://www.campjburg.org/events/womens-fall-retreat/>

We hope to see you in October!

**Linda Thorstenson**

### Faith in Action

JoAnn, Lita, Gail, and Cheryl Anne with baskets that were passed out at the Nursing Home in Rahway. The baskets were put together by the Confirmation class, the Free Masons from Lafayette Lodge #27, and funded by the Deacons. Members of 1st Pres., who are not always able to come, had baskets delivered the following week.



Cheryl Anne shared some pictures of the program held in August teaching valuable life skills. A sincere **THANK YOU** to all who took part, especially those who were instructors, who shared their expertise, knowledge, and time; to the volunteers who helped; and of course, the young people who came to learn some valuable life skills while having fun.

# L.I.F.E.

# Program



We had a special musical treat during worship one Sunday in August. Evan played his accordion for us! Thank you. Evan, for always making worship fun and gracing us with your musical talents!

**Evan, you never cease to AMAZE us!  
Are we blessed, or what?!?**



***We will be returning to the Sanctuary for our worship services beginning on September 7th, as long as the weather is permitting and it isn't too hot. Livestreams and recorded services will be available as well.***

***Rahway's Best will be returning to their After School Program hours on Wednesday, September 3rd.***

***BREAKING NEWS:***

***We will be hosting a Neighborhood Town Hall on Sunday, October 25th. Details to follow shortly.***





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

Kaiser, Portia & family, Agnes & family, Ken & Gail, Ellen, Anne H., Flo, Diane H., Leo & family, Mike & family, Maryann, Pat, Carol & Jake, Savannah B. & family, Carole H., Gary J., Louise C., Logan, Linda S., Linnea & Roger, Diara, Antoine, Becky, John, Sam, Benjamin, Michael, Sara & Joan P., Mary "Cookie" F., Nicole, Allison, Mary R., Helen, Logan, Harper, Helene & Diane, Dorothy R., Amy

*Monthly quote printed in our August bulletins:*

"Be wary of the voices that want us confined and compliant without capacity to change. To be loved is to be changed, and God will change us. But these changes are carving away what has made us less true, less colorful, less incandescent. Letting God love us will make us bigger, expand us, and will push the boundaries of what was once considered safe."

Rev. Lizzie McManus-Dail



# Prayer Persons

## **SEPTEMBER**

**Sept. 7th** - Dawn Mandela  
**Sept. 14th** - Caroline Balla  
**Sept. 21st** - Dan, Hillary Martin & family  
**Sept. 28th** - Michele Panila

## **OCTOBER**

**Oct. 5th** - Joan Pender  
**Oct. 12th** - Christine Jeffries  
**Oct. 19th** - Fred & Debby Russell  
**Oct. 26th** - Kenneth MacFarlane

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**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)  
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