

# “THE TALK OF TOWNLEY”

*Monthly Newsletter*  
**DECEMBER 2025**

*<sup>6</sup> There was a man sent from God whose name was John. <sup>7</sup> He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup> He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. <sup>9</sup> The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. John 1:6-9*

## **DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS**

7 – Janet Sangekar  
29 – Linda Zehner

## **PASTOR’S MESSAGE:**

### **Year-End Giving**

A belated Thanksgiving Blessing to all that I did not see before the holiday. I appreciate the giving of yourselves throughout the year. Did you know that more charitable giving happens in December than any other time of the year? Over one-third of all charitable giving is done in the last quarter of the year. The majority of that giving happens in the month of December. The Presbyterian Foundation provides help to our churches in making these year-end charitable gifts.

Consideration to the type of assets and the gift plan that will be most effective for your situation must be given. The following is a brief overview of types of assets and gift plan options:

### **Cash**

This is the most common charitable gift, and often takes the form of checks, credit and debit card payments, and other types of electronic transfers. You may be eligible for both federal and state income tax savings.

### **Appreciated Securities**

Appreciated securities, such as stocks, bonds, and mutual funds, are a great option for your charitable giving. Gifts of appreciated securities owned more than one year can provide you with additional tax savings since you do not realize long-term capital gains and the current value, rather than your cost, may be reported as an itemized deduction. Please allow enough time for securities gifts to be processed by starting the process to donate securities by **December 12, 2025**.

### **Retirement Plans**

Donors 70 1/2 years old and older can make Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs) directly from their IRA to their church or other public charities. You can also name your church, the Presbyterian Foundation, or another special mission as the beneficiary of your retirement plan when you pass. This may help to reduce taxes that your heirs have to pay.

### **Insurance Policies**

The gift of a life insurance policy may also help you qualify for certain tax deductions. By transferring ownership of a policy to your church or a charity, you may claim a charitable deduction for the cash surrender value of the policy. Additionally, if the policy still requires premium payments, you may be able to pay and deduct premiums as a gift to the organization.

### **Gift Plans to Consider**

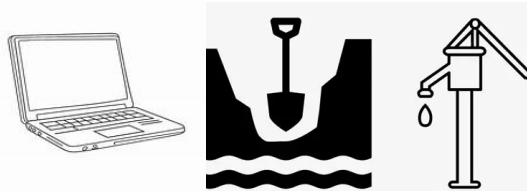
**Direct Gift:** You can make a direct gift to your church through the Presbyterian Foundation. This is especially helpful for individuals who would like to make an anonymous gift to their church or those that would like to make a security gift to a church that does not have the capability to accept securities.

Endowment: These funds will provide a source of support to your church in perpetuity. Endowments are often used to create a memorial or legacy gift.

For further information, please consult Janet, me, or your financial advisor.

### **Laptop and Drinking Water Mission Project**

We will be concluding our collecting of laptops and donations for Aboabogya, a village in the Ashanti Province of Ghana, on December 1, 2025. Numerous laptops have been collected, and donations are still being accepted for a Porehole water system for clean drinking water. See Caruthers or Marty for additional details.



### **The Journey from Advent to Epiphany**

What if darkness is simply the stage for a new dawn? Our journey from Advent to Epiphany begins on Sunday, November 30. During our journey, I aim to demonstrate how hope rooted in scripture arises from a sense of longing. The lectionary readings for this season, travel from Isaiah's vision of swords turned into plowshares to the angel's proclamation of good news (the Gospel) to terrified shepherds. These scriptures teach us that hope is not born in ease but in longing. During Advent, we see the flicker of God's rays through prophets and dreamers, exiles and travelers, and those who dared to believe that even the coldest night could blaze with glory.

Advent reveals what it means to stay awake and read the signs of God's coming—whether they arrive as a whisper in the night or as a star guiding wise men from far-away lands. This journey causes us to remember that the one who comes as a vulnerable child is also the Light that no darkness can overcome. Are you ready for Peace, Hope, Joy, and Love? Are you ready for Christ?

### **SUNDAY ASSIGNMENTS:**

<b><u>DATE</u></b>	<b><u>*ELDER-IN-CHARGE</u></b>	<b><u>*LAY LEADER</u></b>	<b><u>COMMUNION</u></b>
December 7	Kathy Kreie	Irene Schoenwalder	Kathy & Irene
December 14	Marty Lindner	Bruce Tangowski	
December 21	Linda Zehner	Vyonnia Thompson	
December 28	Janet Sangekar	Diane Smith	
January 4, 2026	Carol Gordon	Cynthia Manno	Carol & Cynthia
January 11	Karen Brelowski	Lynn Bailey	
January 18	Lois Tangowski	Kathy Kreie	
January 25	Kathy Kreie	Irene Schoenwalder	

\* If you are unable to be Elder-in-Charge or Lay Leader for your assigned Sunday, please switch with someone and inform Pastor Ron. If you switch a month or more in advance, please also contact Cecelia, so the Sunday assignments can be listed correctly in the following month's newsletter. Please give yourself enough time to set up prior to worship, 30 minutes is suggested.

**BIBLE STUDY:** Join us on **Wednesdays** at noon, as we have started a new Bible Study called "Rahab, Hagar & Naomi". It's not too late to join us! Please see Pastor for the book.

On Halloween, Friday, October 31, the Bible Study group set up a table and offered hot apple cider, refreshments, and conversation for the Townley Pre-School parents during their children's "Trunk or Treat".



**COFFEE HOUR:** Volunteers are needed to bring baked goods for Coffee Hour on Sunday mornings after worship. There is a sign-up sheet in the kitchen. If you have any questions, you may contact Linda Zehner.

December 7 – Elaine J. Brooks	January 4 – Veronica & Tony Garcia
December 14 – Pastor Ron	January 11 – Marie Lindner
December 21 – Diane Smith	January 18 -
December 28 – Chris & Lilian	January 25 -

**SESSION WORKS**

“Session Works” is a monthly communication of significant decisions made by Townley Session. From **November’s** meeting, the following items were approved / discussed:



- ✓ Letter from Connecticut Farms expressing appreciation for Townley history to be included in 250<sup>th</sup> celebration
- ✓ Financial Committee beginning 2026 Budget formation
- ✓ Presbytery Meeting report: For 2026 - Per Capita lowered to \$37. Pastors’ comp increased 3%, Renaissance Fund created to help churches in need, Voted to concur with overture denouncing Israel’s treatment of Palestinian
- ✓ Jarvie Foundation introduced
- ✓ Potential 1 year Bailey Hall lease agreement for 22-24 Saturdays
- ✓ Revamp of Personnel Committee to include policies and new committee members

Please note that you do not have to be on Session to work on a committee. Your talents are always welcome!

**PER CAPITA:** Recently, the Board of Trustees of the Presbytery of Northeast New Jersey presented the Presbytery’s budget for 2026. The budget includes Per Capita received from its congregations. This money is used to develop programs, such as training for congregations and its leaders and supporting the work of Commission on Ministry. ***Townley’s Per Capita for 2026 is \$37.00 per member.*** Please submit your check for this amount payable to Townley Presbyterian Church. We

look forward to your participation in per capita giving, an expression of your commitment to ministry both within our congregation and beyond. Thank you. Janet, Church Treasurer

**Clothing Distribution:** *The Blessing Room* is open to Union County residents **who need** essential items. Patrons should park in the rear lot and enter through the rear door. We will have clothing and household items available for distribution at no cost. Patrons should bring proof of residence and bag(s) to carry out their items. The Townley Blessing Room is the location where a ministry dedicated to providing essential items to individuals and families in need takes place. Townley acts as the conduit. As God blesses Townley, we bless others.

*The Blessing Room* will be open on the **1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of each month** from 9 am to 11 am. in the Chapel Basement. Set up and last-minute sorting will start at 8:00 am that morning. Donations and volunteers will continue to be needed. Upcoming distribution dates are **December 6<sup>th</sup> & January 3<sup>rd</sup>**.

**CHRISTMAS “SOUNDS OF THE SEASON”:** This special musical Christmas show is on **Saturday, December 6** at 7:00 pm. Proceeds will go towards Townley’s Blessing Room.

**CHRISTMAS PARTY:** This year’s Christmas Party will be held on **Saturday, December 13, 2025**, at La Casa Di Martino, located at 301 West Clay Avenue in Roselle Park. Doors open at 5pm, Dinner is at 5:30pm – BYOB. \$48 Cash per person is due by Sunday, December 7<sup>th</sup> to Lisa or Kathy. Wear your most Festive, Funniest or Ugliest Christmas Sweater/Outfit for a chance to win a Prize!

**NURSING HOME VISITATION:** Our nursing home ministry is held at AristaCare, located at 400 W. Stimpson Avenue in Linden every **second Sunday** at 2:00pm each month. Please see Pastor Ron if you are interested in being a part of this ministry.

**SESSION MEETING:** The next Session meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, December 17, 2025**, at 7:30 pm **via Zoom**. (Session meetings are usually held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month.)

**NEW LEGACY BOOKS:** Have been sending a monthly check to us. We received \$70.07 for September, and \$51.02 for October!

**PLEASE REMEMBER THE CONNECTICUT FARMS FOOD PANTRY.** You are encouraged to support this ministry with a monthly donation of \$4.00 (just \$1.00 a week). The food bank prefers a monetary donation so they can purchase what is needed.

**NEWSLETTER EDITOR:** If you have any items you would like to have included in **January’s** (monthly) newsletter, please e-mail them to CeceliaH@comcast.net.



**GIVING TO TOWNLEY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH:** You can also support our church using your credit or debit card by using this QR Code or by clicking the “Give Now” button on our church website at [www.townleychurch.org](http://www.townleychurch.org).

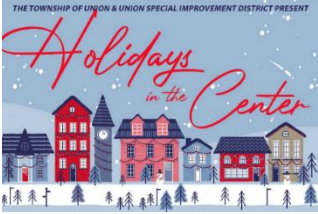


**WE HAVE A FACEBOOK PAGE!** “Like” our Facebook page (<http://www.facebook.com/TownleyChurch>) to get the latest updates on your wall. Share your Townley comments, photos, and videos. If you want pictures added or notices posted, please send an email to the church office ([townleychurch@yahoo.com](mailto:townleychurch@yahoo.com)). Away or missed a service? Catch our Livestream!

## COMMUNITY NEWS



**PAPER MILL PLAYHOUSE** - will be featuring Disney's Frozen from **November 26, 2025, through January 4, 2026**. Disney's Frozen transforms the magic of the beloved animated film to the stage in an enchanting adventure. When sisters Elsa and Anna are torn apart by a mysterious secret power, they each set out on their own journey of courage, self-acceptance, and a discovery of love in all its forms.



The return of Union's "**Holidays in the Center**", inviting residents and visitors to celebrate the season with a variety of family-friendly activities in Union Center. We invite everyone to join us for these cherished December weekends."

The events begin with the annual tradition of **free photos with Santa**. Families are invited to capture holiday memories with Santa Claus on three consecutive Saturdays: **Dec. 6, 13 and 20**. The photo with Santa sessions run from noon to 3 p.m. and will be at Here's The Story Bookstore, 1043 Stuyvesant Avenue. No appointment is necessary.

A **street festival**, transforming Union Center into a wonderland of activities, lights and music, is scheduled for **Saturday, Dec. 13 and 20**, from 4 to 7 p.m. near 1060 Stuyvesant Avenue. Attendees can enjoy horse-drawn carriage rides, strolling carolers, hot cocoa and soup tasting, and appearances by special holiday characters.

All Center events are free and open to the public.



The **New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission's Mobile Unit** will be in Union from **December 8 through December 11**. It will be stationed at the Union Senior Center, 652 Rahway Avenue, operating daily from 10am to 2pm. While all appointments for Real ID services have already been booked, a variety of other transactions will still be available. Residents can complete registration renewals, obtain non-driver identification cards, and request duplicate or replacement titles and registrations. Those wishing to utilize the mobile services must schedule an appointment in advance. Bookings can be made through the MVC's online portal at: <https://telegov.njportal.com/njmvcmobileunit/>



The Union Police Department is once again preparing for their annual **Santa-In-Blue Toy Drive** and are **seeking volunteers** to sort and wrap toys, which will be held at the **Union Senior Center**, 652 Rahway Ave. on **Saturday, December 13**, beginning at 10 a.m. For over twenty years, the Township of Union Police Department's "Santa in Blue" program has benefited and served local families in need through the annual collection and distribution of new and unwrapped toys for children, newborn to 16 years of age.



The **Union Municipal Band**, under the direction of Howard Toplansky, will present a **Holiday Concert** on Monday evening, **December 15**. The concert will be held at the Livingston School Auditorium, 960 Midland Blvd, at 7:30 PM. Admission is free and the public is cordially invited to attend.

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