**“THE TALK OF TOWNLEY”**

***Monthly Newsletter***

***FEBRUARY 2022***

**FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS**

# 7 Marie Lindner

# 18 Lisa Heims

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***We love because God first loved us.***

***1 John 4:19***

**PASTOR’S MESSAGE:**

***Can You Hear Me Now? Good.***

It’s been a while since you’ve seen the commercial. But I bet the phrase still resonates in your head: “Can You Hear Me Now? Good.” Companies take time to produce a catchy slogan and business taglines. This is done to make an impression in the minds of their customers. Verizon’s slogan. “Can You Hear Me Now? Good.” was created in 2002 under the umbrella of the tagline, ” We never stop working for you.” Verizon had to compete with other telecommunication giants, such as AT&T and T-Mobile, and wanted to stand out from its competitors through its service. The service Verizon provides is captured in the catchy slogan of the company.

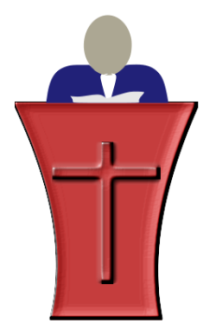
God is more than a company offering services to its customers. God is our Creator who offers His services to us, His creation. God does not need a slogan, but still occasionally checks in on His creation by asking: “Can You Hear Me Now?” God asks through nature, through the Scriptures, through His Son and through the Spirit: “Can You Hear Me Now”?

As God’s creation, our sense of hearing is useful when it is activated for God’s purposes. The practices of hearing and being heard can be learned by listening to Jesus’s words in the Gospel. But it is more than His words; His posture, His orientation, and His relationships speak volumes.

“Can You Hear Me Now”? is a question of our ability to hear and respond. Our response is with our voices and with our lives. As His disciples, it is essential to hear, to listen, and to sense God’s spirit in every situation. God has provided the Holy Spirit as our Helper. The art of hearing requires practice, discipline, and intentionality. “Can You Hear Me Now?” Praying that your answer is “Good.”

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**sunday assignments for FEBRUARY:**

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**date \*Elder-in-charge \*Lay leader**

**FEB. 6 Linda Zehher Cynthia Manno**

**FEB. 13 Carruthers Tumfour Lynn Bailey**

**FEB. 20 Carol Gordon Kathy Kreie**

**FEB. 27 Kathy Kreie Irene Schoenwalder MAR. 6** **June Donohue Lisa Heims**

**MAR. 13 Lois Tangowski Janet Sangekar**

**\* 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. Also, give yourself enough time to set up prior to worship time.**

**NEW MEMBERS:** We are happy to welcome our six new members:

Ruth Ammerman Ronna Duncan

Karen Brelowski, Swarna Koteswara Rao Ratnala

Elaine Brooks Eunice Amarabe.

**MISSION:** June D. asks everyone to please remember the Connecticut Farms Food Pantry. While donations of non-perishable items can be accepted on Sunday mornings at 11:00 AM, you are encouraged to support this ministry with a monthly monetary donation of $4.00– a dollar a week can bring food to an empty pantry. Please mail donation to Townley Church for distribution.

We donated food to the local YMCA organizations for the Martin Luther King food drive.

**THE ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING** of Townley Presbyterian Church will be held on Sunday, February 6, 2022 immediately following the 10:00 am worship service for the purpose of electing officers, presenting the budget, and any other business that may properly come before the meeting.

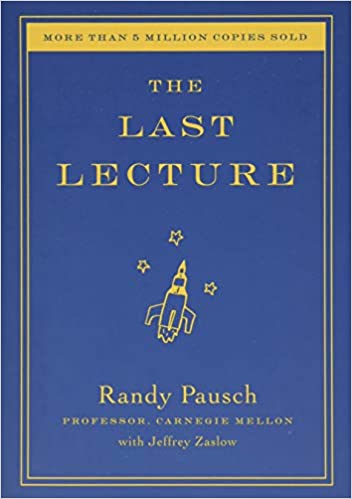
**SWEETHEART BRUNCH:** Join us after worship service on February 13, 2022. Please see June Donohue for details.

**FELLOWSHIP HALL DEDICATION:**

A picture containing text, clipart, tableware

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On Sunday February 13, right after service – just before the Sweetheart Brunch – we will be dedicating the recent renovations to our Fellowship Hall. The work was made possible by the generosity of the Bailey family.

**TOWNLEY BOOK CLUB:**Our next book is ***The Last Lecture by Randy Pausch.***  “A lot of professors give talks titled "The Last Lecture." Professors are asked to consider their demise and to ruminate on what matters most to them. And while they speak, audiences can't help but mull the same question: What wisdom would we impart to the world if we knew it was our last chance? If we had to vanish tomorrow, what would we want as our legacy?”

“When Randy Pausch, a computer science professor at Carnegie Mellon, was asked to give such a lecture, he didn't have to imagine it as his last, since he had recently been diagnosed with terminal cancer. But the lecture he gave--"Really Achieving Your Childhood Dreams"--wasn't about dying. It was about the importance of overcoming obstacles, of enabling the dreams of others, of seizing every moment (because "time is all you have...and you may find one day that you have less than you think"). It was a summation of everything Randy had come to believe. It was about living.”

We will discuss it on Thursday, February 17, at 2:00 PM in Fellowship Hall. Cecelia

**LENTEN BIBLE STUDY BEGINS on MARCH 2:**

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| --- | --- |
| Diagram  Description automatically generated | From Eden to Gethsemane, the garden in which Jesus was buried and raised, our story of faith wanders through much fertile soil. But in our current world of fast food and to-go meals, we often do not make time to explore where our food comes from and how we break bread together. A Time to Grow encourages us to slow down, move through the painstaking process of growth, and end together with great feasting and celebration of the resurrection. We will be meeting on **Wednesdays at noon, in-person and on Zoom,** throughout the Season of Lent. See Pastor Ron for the book. |

**A Note from Our Treasurer**

Your Session appreciates how you have continued to let giving complete your lives. **Your weekly offerings** are accepted Sundays in person or can be mailed to the church office. **Bill Pay and other online banking** options should also be considered. Online contributions may also be made through our church’s website **“Give Now” button:**

Our church’s Donation Page can also be reached using the **Quick Response (QR) Code** below. A QR Code is a two-dimensional, modular barcode that, when scanned by a smart phone (most phones use the camera to do this) will connect you to our Donation Page.

**PER CAPITA:** As you know, every December the Board of Trustees of the Presbytery of Northeast New Jersey presents the Presbytery’s budget for the coming year. 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. The complete budget can be viewed on the Presbytery website. ***The Per Capita for 2022 for Townley is $40.00 per member***. Please submit your check for this amount before **February 1st,** payable to Townley Presbyterian Church and mail it to the 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

**SESSION MEETING:** Next meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 16, 2022 at 7:30 pm.

**FELLOWSHIP HALL RENTALS**: We are now accepting rental requests for Fellowship Hall. Rentals will follow the current CDC guidelines in force for the selected date(s).

**SAVE THE DATE:** This year’s Christmas Party will be held on Saturday, December 10, 2022 at

5:00 PM. Due to popular request, it was decided to be held again at La Casa Di Martino, 301 West Clay Avenue, Roselle Park, NJ 07204. The price will be $35.00 per person due to a price increase.

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

## THE PRESBYTERY OF NORTHEAST NEW JERSEY: The next Stated Meeting will be held on

## https://mcusercontent.com/3db09d8837d0e887b80a551f4/images/d2ff6ea3-ced6-4d05-bb6d-399ac2a96dcf.png Tuesday, February 15, 2022, at 9:00am via Zoom. The legal address of our

## new Presbytery is 340 West Passaic Street, 3rd Floor, Rochelle Park, New Jersey

## 07662. Website <https://pnenj.org>

**Regarding Ruling Elders: A Monthly Series for Serving Faithfully**

***A Seat at the Table by Julie Hester – January 18, 2022***mailPrint

FacebookTwitterEmailPrint

Round or rectangle? That was the question on the table. Literally. Two ruling elders and I were pondering the shape of the tables we were ordering for a newly spruced-up fellowship space. One elder served on the property committee, and the other had a gift for interior design. Rectangles were what we were used to. They stored well, and we already knew how to set them up to maximize space. Even though someone was always having to shift in their seat to talk to someone farther down the table or twist to listen to a speaker behind them, rectangles were familiar. But we kept flipping back to the dog-eared catalog page of round tables. They were a bit more expensive, but something about them felt right.

As in the best discussions between church leaders, the conversation drifted from how much things might cost to the *why* behind our decision. Why did the shape of table matter to our church gatherings in that space? Was it just a question of the budget? Storage? What we knew already? What would look best? Or might there be something else at work? Something about our ecclesiology — what we believed about the church?

In her book "The Church in the Round," Letty Russell describes the church as “a place where all people gather around as partners in ministry connecting to the world and each other in faith and for a life of reflection and action.” The ruling elders and I talked about how when we’re sitting around a round table, no one is at the head or at the margins. Everyone is visible. Conversation is easier. Perhaps round tables would help us learn to value each voice equally, with seats for all. Thinking about the events that would happen at the tables — fellowship meals, session and committee meetings, intergenerational gatherings, Bible study classes — we wanted that kind of physical welcome for each person who would gather. We ordered the round tables.

Ruling elders and leaders in the church of Jesus Christ weigh choices like this all the time. Piled on the table along with our meeting agendas are often copies of the budget, the Book of Order, Robert’s Rules of Order, and the Bible. Supporting materials include our church directories full of different people, our mission and vision statements, our neighborhood studies, our welcome statements, and all the years of church history that came before us. In meetings where we make decisions, we have

each brought our individual gifts, talents, experience, opinions, and questions. You probably know as well as I do that all this piled-up stuff can lead to some long meetings.

The good news is that we also bring our shared baptism and membership in the church, and a common vocation and calling to serve. Our call to leadership began at our baptism, when we were each claimed by God and commissioned for a life of service as we joined Christ’s ministry of love, peace, and justice. ​​ We’ve each been given gifts to use for the common good of the body of Christ, in and for the world. As we embrace and exercise these varied gifts, we do so in relationship with one another — a community of the called. When we are able to see and hear one another around our tables, and lift up our common commitment to the ministry of Jesus Christ, our differences enable our decisions rather than prevent them.

*The Rev. Julie Coffman Hester is a pastor and writer in the Presbytery of Western North Carolina. She is inspired by faithful ruling elders, like her parents, and the remarkable disciples with whom she has served in local congregations.*

***This article is the first in a 12-part series focusing on the constitutional questions that church leaders answer upon their ordination and installation, using some of the materials from Coming Alive in Christ: Training for PC(USA) Ruling Elders and Deacons Based on the Constitutional Questions, which is available at***[***equip.pcusa.org***](https://equip.pcusa.org/)***.***

**BIBLICAL COUPLES**

Can you guess which woman was married to each of these men?

1. Isaac \_\_\_\_\_ A. Esther
2. Boaz \_\_\_\_\_ B. Rachel
3. Joseph \_\_\_\_\_ C. Abigail
4. Aquila \_\_\_\_\_ D. Ruth
5. Zechariah \_\_\_\_\_ E. Elizabeth
6. Jacob \_\_\_\_\_ F. Eve
7. Elkanah \_\_\_\_\_ G. Mary
8. King Xerxes \_\_\_\_\_ H. Gomer
9. Adam \_\_\_\_\_ I. Priscilla
10. Abraham \_\_\_\_\_ J. Rebekah
11. David \_\_\_\_\_ K. Hannah
12. Hosea \_\_\_\_\_ L. Sarah

Answer Key: 1-J, 2-D, 3-G, 4-I, 5-E, 6-B, 7-K, 8-A, 9-F, 10-L , 11-C, 12-H

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***Facebook: Like us on “Townley Church”***