

# “THE TALK OF TOWNLEY”

*Monthly Newsletter*  
**JANUARY 2022**

## **JANUARY BIRTHDAYS**

7 Akachukwu Obiako  
31 Glenda Ramdeen



## **PASTOR'S MESSAGE:**

### **Mission 2022**

*“While we openly welcome new disciples into our church family, we recognize that it is not sufficient to celebrate the love of God only among our own congregants, but to bring the love of Christ to those in need outside of our immediate church family.*

*Our mission is to demonstrate and grow our faith and the faith of others by providing Christ-like compassion and caring opportunities for service, outreach and improvement to our community. Our mission is to share God’s reconciling love in Jesus Christ through prayer, worship, love and action.”*

Do the two paragraphs above sound familiar? If not, read them again. It’s our Mission Statement. Often organizations, even the church, need to be reminded of what their mission is. We can and will get distracted very easily if our focus is not maintained on who we are and what we believe.

Matthew’s Gospel describes the mission of the Magi (Wise Men). These visitors from the East were on a mission – to find and worship the child born King of the Jews. They were able to accomplish their mission because they maintained their focus on His Star. “We have seen His Star” they explained to King Herod.

A question that I ask of myself and a question that I ask you, as members of Townley Church, is “have we seen His Star”? Like the Wise Men, in order to accomplish our mission we have to focus on His Star. In all of our doing: mission work, worship, Bible Study, church finances, buildings and grounds, congregational vitality and etc. – is our focus on Jesus??

As we move forward into the New Year, let us recommit ourselves to following His Star. It is His Star that gives us the direction we need to follow Him. Follow the Star!

## SUNDAY ASSIGNMENTS FOR JANUARY:

<u>DATE</u>	<u>*ELDER-IN-CHARGE</u>	<u>*LAY LEADER</u>
JAN. 2	Lisa Heims	Maryanne Cove
JAN. 9	Linda Zehner	Cynthia Manno
JAN. 16	Carruthers Tumfour	Lynn Bailey
JAN. 23	Kathy Kreie	Irene Schoenwalder
JAN. 30	Carol Gordon	Kathy Kreie



\* 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 next month's newsletter. Also, give yourself enough time to set up prior to worship time.

**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 received a thank you letter from Presbyterian Disaster Assistance for our \$550 donation.

On November 15<sup>th</sup> a check in the amount of \$400 was sent to Elizabeth Coalition's Operation Warm Heart (to house the homeless). This represents 10% of the Fall Rummage sale proceeds.

Connecticut Farms' December Newsletter acknowledged the monetary and grocery donations our church made throughout the year.

Family Promise received \$1,000 from our December 4, 2021 Holiday Concert's "free will" offering.

For the first time, we donated proceeds from our Christmas party. \$250 was donated towards the YWCA's domestic violence services.

The Connecticut Farms Food Pantry is in need of peanut butter, jelly, canned tuna, canned fruit, boxed cereal, soup, macaroni & cheese, and spaghetti sauce.

Twenty "comfort kits" were assembled containing winter hats, gloves and toiletries donated by our members. The kits presented at December's Union County Homeless Persons Memorial Vigil.

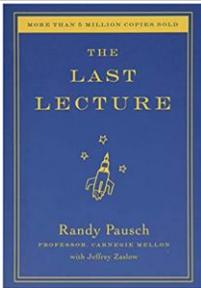
**ANNUAL REPORTS** - are due to Lois by January 15, 2022.

**SESSION MEETING:** Next meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 19, 2022 at 7:30 pm.

**LAY LEADER:** If you would like to serve as a lay leader during worship service, please contact Lynn B. or Diane S.

**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.

**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. Cecelia

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

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

**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

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



**THE CENTER FOR LIFELONG LEARNING (COLUMBIA THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY):** For church professionals and lay people, Columbia's Center for Lifelong Learning provides non-degree courses and events—opportunities to learn with and from others for faithful discipleship. Led by top-notch seminary faculty, our offerings are biblically and theologically grounded, with a practical focus to help participants identify and address specific, real-life needs. [Consider these upcoming opportunities.](#)

## **REGARDING RULING ELDERS: A MONTHLY SERIES FOR SERVING FAITHFULLY**

*Leaders Believe by Rodger Nishioka – December 15, 2021*

"I just don't get it! How can you just believe?" the young man asked.

He was clearly exasperated. I was privileged to be speaking to a group of young Asian Americans from several Reformed Church of America congregations at a weekend retreat outside of San Jose, California. I was talking about faith when the young man raised his hand and asked his profound question.

Before I could respond, the young woman seated next to him turned and incredulously said, "You just do! It's simple! Just believe!"

He responded first by rolling his eyes, then dropping his head into his hands. I heard him grumble, "But it's not simple. At least, not for me."

Afterward, I told him that for some of us, believing was simple and easy. And for others of us, believing was hard and elusive. He looked at me with tears and said, "But I want to believe. I want it to be simple. It just isn't."

That's when I told him he had great company. We read together the story about the father and son who suffered from the son's seizures, and when Jesus told the father the boy could be healed if the father believed, the dad responded, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!" (Mark 9:24).

Leaders believe.

There are times when belief comes easy. In the midst of a candlelight service on Christmas Eve with loved ones around us singing. At the close of a weekend retreat when the Holy Spirit has drawn us near. By the bedside of a loved one whose life was well-lived and who is ready to peacefully make their way to their eternal home. Belief comes easy.

There are times for us when belief comes hard. In the midst of a contentious committee meeting where hurtful words have pierced one another's hearts. In the desert dryness of a ritual that has long since lost its energy and meaning. By the bedside of a loved one whose life was cut short by a tenacious disease, robbing them of a future of loving and laughing and living. Belief comes hard.

But whether easy or hard, leaders still believe.

Later at the retreat, I was talking with the young woman who told the young man that faith was simple. She asked me why he couldn't just believe. I told her I didn't know, but that for some of us, believing was more challenging. She thought about it for a while. Later I heard that she went up to him and said she was sorry she yelled at him and that if faith was harder for him, she was good with that and promised she would believe *for* him until she could believe *with* him.

That's what leaders do. Leaders believe, and through grace, trust that God will help us with our unbelief.

---

*Rev. Dr. Rodger Nishioka serves as the senior associate pastor and director of adult faith formation at Village Presbyterian Church in Prairie Village, Kansas. Prior to joining the staff at Village Church, he served as a professor of Christian education at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Georgia.*

***This article is the last in a 12-part series focusing on PC(USA) leader formation as a part of the Year of Leader Formation: Investing in Ruling Elders and Deacons. Additional resources are available at [www.pcusa.org/leader-formation/](http://www.pcusa.org/leader-formation/). Past issues of the articles are available in [Equip](#), the church's online training site.***

**Townley Presbyterian Church, 829 Salem Road, Union, NJ 07083    Office: (908) 686-1028  
Email: [TownleyChurch@yahoo.com](mailto:TownleyChurch@yahoo.com)    Website: [TownleyChurch.org](http://TownleyChurch.org)  
Facebook: Like us on "Townley Church"**