

“THE TALK OF TOWNLEY”

Monthly Newsletter
JANUARY 2026

*“And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah,
for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel.” Matthew 2:6*

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

13 – Favour Nwosu
31 – Glenda Ramdeen

PASTOR’S MESSAGE:

HAPPY “HALLOWEENTHANKSGIVINGCHRISTMASPALOOZA”

Ellyn von Huben, a contributor for *Word on Fire*, writes: "I've noticed that so much of society's sense of holiday celebrations has been condensed that it is hard to even see what holiday we are headed toward. We used to have a short Halloween season, a nice slow-paced Thanksgiving, and then around mid-November we'd see Christmas stuff out for sale. Well, now these three events are getting mashed together in what one author calls a "*HalloweenthansgivingChristmaspalooza*. Ellyn's sentiment resonates with me. And here it is, the last week of 2025, and I am about to wish everyone the best for 2026!

"*HalloweenthansgivingChristmaspalooza*". I don't like the word. I don't even like the way it sounds! But maybe it can be something that causes us to slow down and take a deep breath – not to pronounce it properly, but for us to slow down and take a deep breath to focus on Christ. To focus on the true meaning of this season. Traditionally, this is the time of year in which we prepare our hearts for the celebration of Our Lord made flesh to dwell among us. I suggest that rather than using a made-up term to **describe it**, use the God given title that **defines it** -- year-round. Emmanuel – God is with us. So instead of Happy New Year, I say -- **Emmanuel!**

Laptop and Drinking Water Mission Project

We appreciate your generous contributions of used laptops and financial support for Aboabogya, a village located in the Ashanti Province of Ghana. Numerous laptops were collected, including 16 that were refurbished to operating condition by Alan Schoenwalder. Special thanks to Caruthers and Marty for organizing this project.

Inclement Weather

No doubt, winter is here. In the event of a significant winter storm, you will be contacted via telephone as to whether the church will be opened for worship service. If the church is not open, please join in on our Facebook Livestream at 10 AM.

Morning Message

A short, less than 60 second, message of scripture and encouragement is available for members and friends. Text Pastor Ron – 908 477-4706 if you are interested.

SUNDAY ASSIGNMENTS:

<u>DATE</u>	<u>*ELDER-IN-CHARGE</u>	<u>*LAY LEADER</u>	<u>COMMUNION</u>
January 4	Carol Gordon	Cynthia Manno	Carol & Cynthia
January 11	Karen Breowski	Lynn Bailey	
January 18	Lois Tangowski	Kathy Kreie	
January 25	Kathy Kreie	Irene Schoenwalder	
February 1	Irene Schoenwalder	Lisa Heims	Irene & Lisa
February 8	Lisa Heims	Karen Breowski	
February 15	Marty Lindner	Irene Schoenwalder	
February 22	Linda Zehner	Bruce Tangowski	

* 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 for our current Bible Study called "Rahab, Hagar & Naomi". We will be reviewing Session 7 when we meet next **Wednesday, January 7**.



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.

January 4 – Veronica & Tony Garcia
January 11 – Marie Lindner
January 18 -
January 25 -

SESSION WORKS "Session Works" is a monthly communication of significant decisions made by Townley Session. From **December's** meeting, the following items were approved / discussed:



- ✓ Task Force Reports
- ✓ Personnel Committee to meet in January
- ✓ Lois Tangowski approved as Clerk of Session effective Jan. 1
- ✓ Feret Fenelus membership reinstated
- ✓ Pastor Housing Allowance declared
- ✓ Match Laptop donation with Mission Fund
- ✓ 2026 Communion dates
- ✓ 2026 dates:
 - Congregational meeting Feb 1
 - Sweetheart Brunch Feb 15
 - Rummage Sale May 23/24
- ✓ Worship Work: Prayer

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

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.

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 **1st 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 **January 3rd & February 7th.**

SESSION MEETING: The next Session meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, January 21, 2026,** at 7:30 pm **via Zoom.** (Session meetings are usually held on the 3rd Wednesday of each month.)

NEW LEGACY BOOKS: Have been sending a monthly check to us. We received \$50.55 for November!

CHRISTMAS "SOUNDS OF THE SEASON": Townley's Sanctuary Concert "Sounds of the Season" on December 6, 2025, was a success, receiving approximately \$900 in donations for the Blessing Room.

CHRISTMAS PARTY: At Townley's Annual Christmas Dinner Party on December 13, 2025, we received \$875.00 in donations.

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 **February'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.



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). Away or missed a service? Catch our Livestream!

THE PRESBYTERY OF NORTHEAST NEW JERSEY: The next meeting of the Presbytery is scheduled for **Tuesday, January 27, 2026**, at 7:00-9:00 pm via Zoom. Website: <https://pnenj.org>

A Prayer for the New Year

Dear God,

If I accomplish every goal this year but grow distant from You, I will have gained nothing that truly matters. So, before I pray for anything else, I'm asking You to help me grow spiritually in 2026.

I want to know You more intimately, Father. Not just know about You, but truly know You—to recognize Your voice, to understand Your heart, and to walk so closely with You that people see Your presence in my life.

Strengthen my prayer life this year, Lord. Don't let me treat prayer like a religious duty or something I only do when I'm in trouble. Help me crave time alone with You, to seek Your face daily, and to talk with You throughout the day as naturally as breathing.

Give me hunger for Your word. When I read Scripture, open my eyes to see things I've never seen before. Let Your word come alive in my heart, transforming the way I think, speak, and live.

Holy Spirit, I invite You to teach me, convict me, and guide me. When I'm about to make a wrong choice, stop me. When I'm walking in the right direction, confirm it. When I need comfort, draw near to me with Your peace.

Remove anything from my life that creates distance between us—any sin I'm tolerating, any distraction that steals my attention, any relationship that pulls me away from You. I want nothing to come between us.

Let my faith grow stronger this year. Let my love for You run deeper. Let my testimony shine brighter. May anyone who watches my life see that I belong to You.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

COMMUNITY NEWS



PAPER MILL PLAYHOUSE - will be featuring Disney's Frozen from **November 26, 2025, through January 11, 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.

Paper Mill Playhouse - Coming up in 2026:

"Come from Away" – February 4, 2026, through March 1, 2026

"1776" – April 1, 2026, through May 2, 2026

"West Side Story" – May 28, 2026, through June 28, 2026

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