

“THE TALK OF TOWNLEY”

Monthly Newsletter
JULY 2023

¹³ For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters, only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become enslaved to one another. ¹⁴ For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”
Galatians 5:13-14

JULY BIRTHDAYS

7 James Norton	15 Glenn Zehner
9 Marty Lindner	21 Vyonna Thompson
10 Robert Deller	26 Alfred Obner
10 Carruthers Tumfour	31 Elaine J. Brooks

PASTOR’S MESSAGE:

STAYCATION

A staycation is a period in which an individual or family stays home and participates in leisure activities within day trip distance of their home and does not require overnight accommodation. Staycations achieved popularity in the U.S. during the financial crisis of 2007–2010. In 2020, staycations became common due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Common activities of a staycation include the use of a backyard pool, visits to local parks and museums, and attendance at local festivals and amusement parks. Staycations are likely to be less costly than a vacation involving traveling. There may be no lodging costs and travel expenses may be minimal. Costs may include transportation for local trips, dining, and local attractions. According to the American Automobile Association, “the average North American vacation will cost \$244 per day for two people for lodging and meals. Add some kids and airfare, and a 10-day vacation could top \$8,000”.

While I do encourage all to take either a staycation or vacation every now and then, I do want to remind you that it does not take much to distance ourselves from our Lord. I want to suggest 5 common reasons we might feel distant from the Lord:

1. Unconfessed Sin

9 times out of 10, when we take time to confess our sins to the Lord, we will feel the gap close. If we have unconfessed sin, we will feel a distance from the Lord.

2. Pride

When we *think* we can handle things on our own, there is little reason to go to God. The truth is, even on our best, most capable days, we still need God. Have you noticed that in your most desperate moments, you realize that God is the only hope you have? When we humble ourselves and come face to face with our need for God, we will experience a sweet intimacy with the Lord as we draw closer to Him.

3. Idolatry

Idolatry is thinking something else will satisfy us more than God. Crossing 5 more things off my to-do list FEELS more productive than prayer. Watching that movie FEELS like it would be more restful than prayer. Controlling the situation or worrying FEELS like it would be more purposeful than prayer.

But “Prayer is productive”. We need to know that the VALUE of prayer is bringing us closer to God. We need to knock off the things we place on pedestals because we know our relationship with God is worth so much more.

4. Selflessness

Selflessness is valuing the service of others above all else. How can this create distance between us and God? If it causes you to miss your personal quiet times with the Lord, see it as Satan’s way of trying to disconnect you from the Lord. Not by having you do something inherently sinful but by using your good against you.

5. Good Deeds

This one is really like selflessness, but I think the difference is this: we spend so much time trying to earn our own salvation instead of accepting the gift. We’re too busy trying to pay a bill God never asked us to pay. Instead, God has invited us to the dinner of our lives and we’re spending the whole night in the kitchen doing dishes trying to pay God back for it. Our actions should be a response to God’s gift of salvation, not the payment for it. Our actions should be an outflow from time in God’s presence. When we’ve spent time in God’s presence, these good deeds become an offering and an opportunity to point others to God’s handiwork.

These are 5 reasons we might feel distant from the Lord. I encourage you to spend time praying and asking the Lord what it could be for you. These all overlap a bit, but I think it’s good to see the different nuances of why we may feel distant from God to better identify and not miss what’s going on in our own situation. So that whether we are on a staycation or vacation, we are not distant from our Lord.

*Gospel
Brunch*

Join us for Gospel Brunches on **Sunday, July 9th** and **September 10th**. These will be services held in Bailey Hall the mornings after our Summer Roadhouse performances. Let’s describe them as: “*Good News, Good Music, and Good Food*”. Services start at 10:00 AM.

SUNDAY ASSIGNMENTS FOR JUNE AND JULY:

<u>DATE</u>	<u>*ELDER-IN-CHARGE</u>	<u>*LAY LEADER</u>	<u>COMMUNION</u>
July 2	Marty Lindner	Carruthers Tumfour	Marty L. & Carruthers T.
July 9	Linda Zehner	Cynthia Manno	
July 16	Carruthers Tumfour	Lynn Bailey	
July 23	Carol Gordon	Lisa Heims	
July 30	Karen Brelowski	Kathy Kreie	
August 6	Janet Sangekar	Irene Schoenwalder	Janet S. & Irene S.
August 13	Irene Schoenwalder	Karen Brelowski	
August 20	Lisa Heims	Santiago Guzman	
August 27	Marty Lindner	Vyonnia Thompson	



*** 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.**



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. This is the current schedule:

- July 2 – Elaine
- July 9 – Gospel Brunch
- July 16 – Lynn
- July 23 – Karen
- July 30 - Kathy

SALEM ROADHOUSE CAFÉ – presents **Carrie Jackson and her Jazzin’ All Star Band** on **Saturday, July 8, 2023, in Bailey Hall.** Carrie Jackson is a New York/New Jersey based jazz vocal stylist who performs with her Jazzin’ All Star Band... “A true ensemble performance...every tune is a musical collaboration...effortless, natural and unscripted.” Carrie is considered one of the most consistently interesting singers in the metropolitan area and is one of the top jazz artists around today providing for classical performances in jazz favorites; from soulful sultry pop to blues to poignant mellow gospel. **The July Show will also feature the artwork of local artist Dr. Francis E. Billups.** Francis’ pieces depict scenes from local areas that are easily recognizable to residents of Union County. **The doors open at 7:30 PM. Show starts at 8:00 PM.** Admission is \$20 for adults and \$15 for students. Admission includes a show, snacks, non-alcoholic beverages, and dessert. The Roadhouse operates as a non-profit that raises funds for several carefully chosen local charities. **The show proceeds for 2023 will benefit Townley Church Missions.** As always, the Salem Roadhouse Café is lively, intimate, up-front, and personal. All ages are welcome. See attached flier.

SESSION MEETING: The next session meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, August 23, 2023 (4th Wednesday)** at 7:30 pm in the upstairs meeting room. (Session meetings are usually held the 3rd Wednesday of each month.) There will be no session meeting in July.

SESSION WORKS



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

- Reports from Task Forces
- Planning for July Gospel Brunch
- Fall Rummage Sale Postponement to Spring 2024
- National Night Out Alternative
- Planning for September End of Summer Event

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



THE PRESBYTERY OF NORTHEAST NEW JERSEY:

The next meeting of the Presbytery is scheduled for Saturday, September 16, 2023 at 9:30 am. Website <https://pnenj.org>

CHRISTMAS PARTY: SAVE THE DATE! This year's Christmas Party will be held on Saturday, **December 9, 2023**, at 5:00 PM. Due to popular demand, it will again be held at La Casa Di Martino. 301 West Clay Avenue, Roselle Park, NJ 07204.

TOWNLEY COMMUNITY GROUP



The "Townley Community Group" is meeting on Thursday evenings from 6:30-7:30 PM in the Prayer Room. The group is having a meaningful discussion of a book entitled "Weird Church – Welcome to the Twenty-First Century." Utilizing Spiral Dynamics as a means of framing the current changes in North American culture, Nixon and Estock give a thrilling forecast of where the church is going as we race toward the mid-century. All are welcome to join the discussion and fellowship – snacks included! See Francia, Sandra, Santiago, or Pastor Ron for more info.

TOWNLEY WEDNESDAY NOONTIME BIBLE STUDY



Please join us on Wednesday July 5, 2023, at Noon in Bailey Hall, as we conclude our study of the book "Weird Church – Welcome to the Twenty-First Century" by Beth Ann Estock and Paul Nixon. We start our next study in the fall.



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.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT CAMPAIGN:

Townley Church needs help to fund several significant repairs. We appreciate your donations to our "**Cherish The Church**" Capital Improvement Campaign.



DONATE TO HELP RENOVATE



Help Us Reach Our Goal !



Online



Locally

Donations are tax deductible

NOTE FROM YOUR TREASURE: The May monthly giving was \$4,897.

We raised \$160 for One Great Hour of Sharing.

We raised \$50 through our Proud Papa Fundraiser. This amount is included in the Cherish the Church Fund amount mentioned below.

Our Cherish the Church Fund is at \$12,782. We are not only getting donations from our congregation but also from friends of Townley. Thank you notes were sent out. (*Our Cherish the Church Fund Thermometer tracks the donations received toward our goal of \$50,000 to be raised in 18 months. These funds are to be used for our capital improvements. A red mailbox to accept donations and the thermometer are posted in Bailey Hall. Special envelopes, designed by Kathy Kreie, are next to the mailbox. It is hoped that donations will not only come from our congregation but will be received from the support groups and others that may use our facilities.*)

Our Food Assistance Fund balance is \$76.17. We spent \$440 to provide several nutritious meals for 20 guests in the Operation Warm Heart Program.

Our insurance agent, Brown & Brown, informed us that Philadelphia Indemnity Insurance Company is our new carrier. We had an audit of our Worker's Compensation policy, and we were refunded \$148 as a premium adjustment.

Thank you, Janet, Church Treasurer

FALL RUMMAGE SALE: There will **not** be a Fall rummage sale this year.

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

REGARDING RULING ELDERS: A MONTHLY SERIES FOR SERVING FAITHFULLY

One Theology of Ministry by Valerie Izumi – June 15, 2023



Have you noticed there is now one single ordination and installation service for deacons, ruling elders, and ministers of the Word and Sacrament? The Rev. Dr. David Gambrell, associate for worship in the denomination's Office of Theology and Worship, explains:

"You'll see that an important theological and structural difference [from the previous version] is that there aren't separate ordination liturgies for deacons/ruling elders and ministers of Word and Sacrament as in the 1999 *Book of Occasional Services*. We wanted to emphasize

that **there is one theology of ministry** and one service of ordination."

Dr. Rebecca Davis, professor of Christian education and director of the masters of arts in Christian education program at Union Presbyterian Seminary's Charlotte campus, was recently featured on [Along the Road](#), a podcast about faith and leadership for PC(USA) ministry leaders. Davis said that the Directory for Worship, in the Book of Order, sets a pattern for us outlining the theological reasoning behind our practices and provides a framework for us to better understand "who we are as theological beings and, in particular, as Reformed and Presbyterian people of faith."

Have you thought of yourself — a ruling elder — as a theological being or your ministry as a ruling elder as part of one theology of ministry?

Of course, seminary training is not required to serve as a ruling elder, but training and ongoing education are essential for your formation in this ministry. While you may have received training within your congregation or through your presbytery, consider challenging yourself to continuing the necessary formation to faithfully live out your call.

As one method of ecclesial formation, Davis encourages picking up the Directory for Worship (W-1.01—W-5.04) and approaching it like a theological text, one that you are reading for formation, not just for information.

Whether you are a newly ordained ruling elder or a seasoned one, read and reflect on the following passages so that they may bring a deeper understanding of your ministry as a ruling elder and a crisper response to your call to ministry.

W-3.0303: Scripture

“The public reading of Scripture is to be clear, audible, and attentive to the meaning of the text. Reading from the church’s Bible conveys a sense of permanence and weight of the Word of God, and demonstrates the communal nature of the biblical story ... Because deacons are charged with the ministry of witness to the gospel and ruling elders are responsible for the proclamation of the Word, it is fitting for a deacon or ruling elder to read Scripture.”

W-3.0308: Prayers of Intercession

“Because pastors are called to serve as good shepherds for God’s people, it is fitting for a minister of the Word and Sacrament to lead the prayers of intercession and supplication. Because deacons are responsible for ministries of compassion and ruling elders are charged with the nurture of the congregation, it is also fitting for a deacon or a ruling elder to lead these prayers.”

W-3.0502: Blessing and Charge

“The Service for the Lord’s Day concludes with a ... blessing, [and because it] is an expression of the gospel of God’s grace and an extension of the ministry of the Word and Sacrament, a minister of the Word and Sacrament ordinarily speaks the blessing ... The charge calls the church to go forth as agents of God’s mission in the world. Because deacons are responsible for the church’s ministry of witness and service, and ruling elders have oversight of the church’s faithfulness to God’s mission, it is fitting for a deacon or ruling elder to speak the charge.”

Valerie Izumi is a ruling elder serving the Office of the General Assembly as an assistant stated clerk, coordinating the General Assembly nominations process.

BUSINESS AS USUAL

The pastor of a large church always scheduled meetings for his administrative staff at 4:30pm on Friday afternoons. When an assistant pastor joined the staff, he asked his new boss why he chose such an odd time for meetings. "Two reasons," the pastor replied. "One: No one asks me any questions; and two: No one argues with my proposals." (From: "Hey! Christians Have a Sense of Humor, too! By Patricia Mitchell)

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