

“THE TALK OF TOWNLEY”

Monthly Newsletter
MARCH 2022

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

18 Eunice Amarabe

PASTOR’S MESSAGE:

“What If?”

Back in the 80’s, there was a popular question: “What would Jesus do?” The phrase often abbreviated to WWJD. It became popular enough to warrant its share of t-shirts, coffee mugs and bracelets. I didn’t realize that its origin was from a late 1800s book by Charles Sheldon entitled, *In His Steps: What Would Jesus Do*. The intent of this phrase serves as a reminder to Christians. Reminding us of a moral imperative to act in a manner that demonstrates the love of Jesus through our actions.

“What If” Jesus was consulted before you chose what to give up for Lent? What are the chances that Jesus would agree with our choices of chocolate, caffeine, or social media? Or, would his advice lead us to giving up something a little more substantial? Might he suggest that it’s not about what you give up for Lent that prepares you for the cross. It’s about what you take up. In the Season of Lent, we are preparing our hearts and minds to meditate and receive Jesus who suffered, died and rose from the dead for our salvation. What should we take up?

What if we took up components like Belief, Discipline, Holiness, Reconciliation, Faith, and Humility? Components that would improve our Christian character. Afterall, our character counts! When considered through the eyes of the cross, let’s allow this Season of Lent to bring us to deeper obedience to Christ and a fuller trust in Him. *“What If?”*



SUNDAY ASSIGNMENTS FOR MARCH:

<u>DATE</u>	<u>*ELDER-IN-CHARGE</u>	<u>*LAY LEADER</u>
MAR. 6	June Donohue	Lisa Heims
MAR. 13	Lois Tangowski	Janet Sangekar
MAR. 20	Janet Sangekar	Lisa Heims
MAR. 27	Lisa Heims	Diane Smith
APR. 3	Irene Schoenwalder	Bruce Tangowski
APR. 10	Linda Zehner	Carruthers Tumfour



* 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.

CONGRATULATIONS: Bruce and Lois Tangowski are proud Grandparents! Their daughter Sheryl and her husband James gave birth to James Henry Davis on February 19th at 8:50 AM.

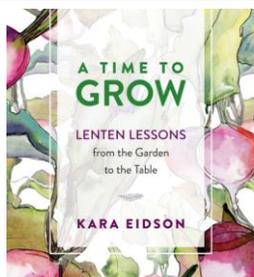
MISSION: June D. asks everyone to please remember the Connecticut Farms Food Pantry. While donations of non-perishable items can be accepted on Sunday mornings at 11:00 AM, you are encouraged to support this ministry with a monthly monetary donation of \$4.00– a dollar a week can bring food to an empty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



We sent a \$100 donation to the Elizabethport Presbyterian Center that was recently flooded out.

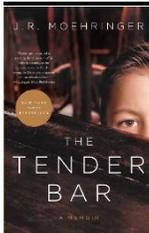
The Sweetheart Brunch held on February 13th raised \$265 from the luncheon and \$169 from the baskets, for a total profit of \$434. Approximately 90% of the profit will go to the church, and approximately 10% will go to a mission to be determined.

LENTEN BIBLE STUDY BEGINS on MARCH 2:



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.

TOWNLEY BOOK CLUB: Our next book is *The Tender Bar – A Memoir by J.R. Moehringer*. A classic American story of the fierce love between a single mother and an only son, and a moving portrait of one boy's struggle to become a man. At eight years old, J.R. turned in desperation to the bar on the corner. The alphas (his uncle and friends) of the bar took J.R. to the beach, to ballgames, and ultimately into their circle. They taught J.R., tended him, and provided a kind of fathering-by-committee.



We will discuss it on Thursday, April 14, at 2:00 PM in Fellowship Hall. Cecelia

NEW SESSION MEMBERS: Welcome to our new Session members: Carole Gordon (2 year term), Irene Schoenwalder (3 year term), and Diane Smith (3 year term).

RUMMAGE SALE: Our next rummage sale is slated for June 24 & 25, with set-up on June 18.

SESSION MEETING: Next meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 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).

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: If you have any items that you would like to have included in April's (monthly) newsletter, please e-mail them to 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, 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



The Johnsonburg Camp and Retreat Center has is a deep commitment to providing experiences that provide children and youth with more balance and peace in their daily lives; people who meet them where they are in an inclusive and accepting way; opportunities to experience God through nature; a sense of what it means to be intentional in hospitality and welcoming in fellowship with others; and learning skills that encourage trust, teamwork and problem-solving. Historically, Townley has made a \$500 annual donation supporting "camperships" to needful youths. This year, in addition to the \$500, Townley will be contributing \$1500 to the camp's Capital Campaign for infrastructure improvements. Please stay tuned for how you can help in this endeavor.

THE PRESBYTERY OF NORTHEAST NEW JERSEY: The next Stated Meeting will be held on Saturday, May 21, 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>



SALEM ROADHOUSE CAFÉ – April 9, 2022: After 2 years of being closed to shows for the pandemic, the staff at the Roadhouse is so very pleased and thrilled to announce our grand re-opening - - at last!



Our lineup for the shows for this year is full of wonderful, talented performers in many genres of music. Our very first show will be Saturday, April 9 featuring one of our most favorite, solid performers, Carrie Jackson.

Carrie and her backup group, the Jazzin' All Stars, has graced our stage so many times and is familiar to us all. Carrie did an outdoor show for us on the lawn this past September and helped to create a wonderful atmosphere of love and music. Always a reliable performer, Carrie has told me that she is so looking forward to and is so honored to be our first act at our grand re-opening that she is planning to put some extra energy into one of her favorite venues, namely us.

Carrie also donated her time and talent to our Sounds Of The Season show in December, where she not only sang for us, but stayed on to watch and enjoy and encourage all of the other performances. Says Carrie, "I always love coming to Townley Church and the Salem Roadhouse Café because of all of the love I receive. Playing there is like playing for friends in my own living room because of all the wonderful people who welcome me."

The show again is Saturday, April 9th, at 8PM, with doors opening at 7:30. Our usual snacks, desserts and coffee will be served, and we will have original artwork on the walls at the gallery for people to enjoy. As Townley members know, the hall has been recently refurbished and renovated thanks to the Bailey family, and the Roadhouse has installed improved venue lighting and stage lighting. Our sound system is top notch. Please invite friends and share the news about our exciting re-opening. Of course, we will require people to wear their masks, and will have fresh air moving through the room to keep things as safe as possible.

Bruce Tangowski
Salem Roadhouse Café

REGARDING RULING ELDERS: A MONTHLY SERIES FOR SERVING FAITHFULLY

Highlighting the Verbs – Question A by Julie Hester – February 15, 2022

Do you trust in Jesus Christ your Savior, acknowledge him Lord of all and Head of the Church, and through him believe in one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit? (W-4.0404 a.)

There's a lot packed into the first question asked during ordination and installation. If you were already overwhelmed by being ordained, installed, and expected to function faithfully, this first question might tip you over the edge. It only asks about your ultimate trust, salvation,

ecclesiology, and theology of the Trinity. No big deal. You could answer yes without much thought, but I suspect you want to agree with what you are promising. Where to start?

In seminary I learned a suggestion for studying scripture that has never let me down: circle the verbs. There may have been more to the technique, such as underlining names, drawing arrows, and connecting ideas, but none of that stuck like the verb thing did. Circled verbs jump off the page and highlight what we are asked to do—love, serve, ask, seek, knock, rejoice, pray. Focusing on verbs helps us discern how to begin to respond to God’s call through scripture. It can do the same as we answer the call to serve as ruling elders. So, let’s start with the verbs.

This first question contains three big ones—trust, acknowledge, believe—all about Jesus.

TRUST: Do you trust in Jesus Christ your Savior? Not do you trust in yourself, in your fellow ruling elders, or the church as a whole. The question is about Jesus. Do you have confidence in him and in what he has accomplished through his life, death, and resurrection? I don’t think this means you have to understand how it works. The question is “do you *trust*,” not have you collected enough evidence. And it’s “do you trust *in Jesus*,” not can you prove yourself worthy. Trust assumes that you don’t understand and you know you aren’t worthy, but you put your faith in Jesus being who he says he is—your Savior who extends grace freely to you. *Do you trust in Jesus Christ your Savior ...?*

ACKNOWLEDGE: And who do you say that Jesus is to you? To all of creation? To the church you will help lead? This doesn’t assume (and the church doesn’t expect) that you can write and defend a dissertation on the person of Jesus, his work of salvation, and his authority over the cosmos. It doesn’t even assume that you will always remember to act the way a follower of Jesus acts. The question is more like this: Do you agree here today that Jesus should be the one we look to as the leader of all our lives and of the church? Even if every day our decision means a fresh chance to practice living this out, we begin by acknowledging it individually, and together. *Do you trust in Jesus Christ your Savior, acknowledge him Lord of all and Head of the Church ...?*

BELIEVE: Do you, because of your trust in Jesus who is Lord of all, believe in one God—the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit? The Trinitarian language here echoes our oldest confessions of faith, which we say together as a body of believers. In the Apostles’ and Nicene Creeds, and during baptism and other liturgies, you have probably been saying “I believe in God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit” as long as you have been worshiping. There have likely been times it was easy to say and times you needed the voices of others to help you say it. You may have heard multiple sermons trying to explain what we believe about how God is three-in-one. This is one of the mysteries of God that defies complete explanation, and helps us practice faith. It’s an affirmation that our one God works in multiple ways. So, affirm your belief that God shows up in all three ways in your life as you reflect on your call to serve as a ruling elder. Say yes to your belief that God is in relationship with you as Creator, Christ, and Spirit—sustaining, challenging, and loving you. Say yes to your belief that God’s Holy Spirit will surely equip and guide you as you seek to lead. *Do you trust in Jesus Christ your Savior, acknowledge him Lord of all and Head of the Church, and through him believe in one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?*

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.

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