

“THE TALK OF TOWNLEY”

Monthly Newsletter
SEPTEMBER 2024

*¹⁷ The words of the wise: Incline your ear and hear my words and apply your mind to my teaching,
¹⁸ for it will be pleasant if you keep them within you, if all of them are ready on your lips.*

Proverbs 22:17-18

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

1 Merle Lyte
22 Diane Smith
24 Kathy Kreie

PASTOR'S MESSAGE:

What Is a Tithe?

Historically, tithing means giving 10% of your income to the church. The Oxford English Dictionary defines tithing as “A tenth of annual produce or earnings, taken as a tax (originally in-kind) for the support of the church.” In other words, it’s one-tenth of what you made that year given to the church. However, it’s not widely agreed upon or even understood by many Christians. A recent Barna survey shows that 42% of practicing Christians claim that they tithe 10% to their church. But in the same study, 59% of Christians said they were unclear about what the term ‘tithe’ means.

In many circles, tithing has become synonymous with giving. In other words, if you give, you tithe. That’s not what the term means. Many church-giving statistics and studies show that only 5-10% of churchgoers actually give 10% to their local church. The lower figure of 5-10% resonates because most churches struggle to make ends meet. For example, consider a church with 100 members. Let’s imagine that there are 100 donors in the church (eliminating children and spouses as individual donors). The average US household income is \$77,500, which means, that a tithe would be about \$7,750. Quick math would show that if every household tithed, that church would have a budget of \$775,000. Very few churches with 100 members have a budget that size (it’s usually \$200,000-\$250,000). This analysis lines up with a 2021 Church Salary analysis that showed the average church offering per person and found that the yearly range was somewhere between \$1,144 and \$3,432, which averaged out to \$2,262. In 2022, that number rose to \$2,848. Bottom line? Most people aren’t tithing.

A good portion of the population struggles with money, carries too much debt, and has a fear of not being able to pay the bills if they give more away. Money is a spiritual issue because money is a trust issue. If you don’t think money is a trust issue, just see how comfortable you are giving someone your bank card and PIN number. You would never do that. That is because at the heart of money is trust. If it’s a trust issue, it’s also a faith issue. Jesus talked about money more than he talked about sex. He knew it was critical to our spiritual development.

That is why giving opens up room for God to move. It’s not that God doesn’t move regardless of what we do financially; giving doesn’t save us. We all have heard story after story from generous people who tell you that when they opened up their finances to God, God provided. I can’t predict

when, but when you move, God moves. I don't know where you are in your giving, but will you give God some room to move? Are you willing to enter into a financial faith journey with God that will allow him to show you his faithfulness?

SUNDAY ASSIGNMENTS:

<u>DATE</u>	<u>*ELDER-IN-CHARGE</u>	<u>*LAY LEADER</u>	<u>COMMUNION</u>
Sept. 1	Kathy Kreie	Bruce Tangowski	Kathy & Bruce
Sept. 8	Irene Schoenwalder	Vyonnia Thompson	
Sept. 15	Lisa Heims	Santiago Guzman	
Sept. 22	Marty Lindner	Cynthia Manno	
Sept. 29	Linda Zehner	Diane Smith	
Oct. 6	Janet Sangekar	Lynn Bailey	Janet & Lynn
Oct. 13	Carol Gordon	Lisa Heims	
Oct. 20	Karen Brelowski	Kathy Kreie	
Oct. 27	Janet Sangekar	Irene Schoenwalder	



*** 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.**

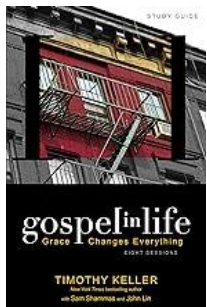


COFFEE HOUR: Volunteers are needed to bring baked goods for Coffee Hour on Sunday mornings after worship. There is a sign-up sheet in the kitchen. If you have any questions, you may contact Linda Zehner.

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| September 1 – Linda Zehner | October. 6 – Gospel Brunch |
| September 8 - Lois Tangowski | October 13 |
| September 15 - Gospel Brunch | October 20 |
| September 22 | October 27 |
| September 29 | |



BIBLE STUDY RETURNS: Join us on Wednesday, September 4, 2024 at noon, as we begin an eight-week video Bible study on the gospel and how to live it out in all aspects of life--from your community to the world at large. The ***Gospel in Life*** study begins with the city, your home now, the world that is. The final week closes with the theme of the eternal city, your heavenly home, the world that is to come. Throughout this eight-week ascent--from earthly work to the final revelation of grace--we'll learn how the gospel can change our heart, our community, and how we can live as a disciple of Jesus Christ in this world, right now, even as you look forward to the promise we have in him. It was written by the late bestselling author and pastor Timothy Keller. See Pastor Ron for your book. **Please read/review Session One for our first gathering.**



GOSPEL BRUNCHES: Join us for Gospel Brunches on **Sunday, September 15 and October 6.** "Good News, Good Music, and Good Food." Services start at 10:00 AM.

NURSING HOME VISITATION: Our nursing home ministry is held at AristaCare, located at 400 W. Stimpson Avenue in Linden on every **second Sunday** at 2:00pm of each month. Please see Pastor Ron if you are interested in being a part of this ministry.

THE SALEM ROADHOUSE CAFÉ – Presents PIKTORS METAMORPHOSIS on **Saturday, September 14, 2024, at 8:00 pm.** Piktors have four extremely talented and precise musicians who brought the extremely intricate tenets of Fusion Jazz to the stage. Doors will open at 7:30 pm. As always, the Salem Roadhouse Café is lively, intimate, up front, and personal. All ages are welcome. See attached flier.

HOUSING NEED: Paul Klink, who does plumbing work for Townley Church, is looking for an elderly man or woman who has an extra room in their house and may be in need of someone to cut their grass, do snow removal, perform maintenance and repairs, and/or painting in exchange for a place for him to stay. He would like use of a kitchen, and laundry facilities and is willing to pay his share of the utilities and perhaps pay something towards their property tax. He would work out the specific details with them. Please call Paul at 908-868-1359.

PER CAPITA: There are a few members who have not yet paid their 2024 Per Capita of \$38.

If you have not yet paid your per capita, please submit your check for this amount to *Townley Presbyterian Church* and put it in the offering plate OR mail it to the church. Please see Janet if you are not sure whether you paid OR if you are unable to pay this amount because of any circumstances you may be facing at this time. Thank you.

SESSION MEETING: The next session meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, September 18, 2024.** at 7:30 pm in the upstairs meeting room. (Session meetings are usually held the 3rd Wednesday of each month.)

THE PRESBYTERY OF NORTHEAST NEW JERSEY: The next meeting of the Presbytery is scheduled for **Saturday, September 21, 2024,** from 9:00 am to 11:30 am via Zoom. Website <https://pnenj.org>



NEWSLETTER EDITOR: If you have any items you would like to have included in **October'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!

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.

CHRISTMAS PARTY: SAVE THE DATE! This year’s Christmas Party will be held on **Saturday, December 7, 2024** 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.

- **NEW ITEMS NEEDED:** Please donate any new items you may have for our **Christmas party prize baskets**. The prize baskets always make for a lot of fun at the party, as well as raise funds for the mission project we choose for the event. We usually acquire many of our new items from the rummage sale donations, but this year we will not be having a fall rummage sale. Please see Lisa or Kathy if you have any new items you would like to donate. Thank you!

CHRISTMAS “SOUNDS OF THE SEASON”: Mark your calendar for this special musical Christmas show on **Saturday, December 14, 2024**. Watch for future announcements.

REGARDING RULING ELDERS: A MONTHLY SERIES FOR SERVING FAITHFULLY

*Serve the Lord with Gladness
By Valerie Izumi – August 15, 2024*



Raised a Baptist, for ruling elder Felica Ezell-Gillespie, a trained jazz vocalist and musician, it was the music and jazz concerts where she occasionally performed that first brought her to visit a Presbyterian church. Several years later she found herself singing at a funeral held at [Third Presbyterian Church](#) in St. Louis, Missouri, and knew then that she wanted to return. Eventually, she became a member.

The congregational nominating committee of the church has a rigorous process for identifying potential ruling elders. Felica, now the current nominating committee co-chair, was considered twice before being called to serve as a ruling elder.

Those seeking to be ruling elders are asked to read particular scriptures in preparation for their examination and asked to share their thoughts on the text. From questions about participation and involvement in Bible study or Sunday school, to ascertaining their willingness to take on projects that benefit the community, to their commitment to read the

Book of Order, the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and more, the nominating committee takes seriously its process for discerning which members are “persons of wisdom and maturity of faith, having demonstrated skills in leadership, and being compassionate in spirit” [G-2.0301]. The process also allows candidates to pray and discern God’s call to this ministry.

As a part of this process, one of the questions asked is how the leadership responsibilities and expectations of ruling elder would contribute to life beyond the walls of the church. Felica, a municipal judge, responded that “it keeps me connected to the ministry and I know that I am always connected to the ministry. I’m not just Felica, I’m not Judge Felica, I am *ruling elder* Felica.”

As an illustration, Felica shared a story about officiating a wedding this summer on the Sunday after returning from Salt Lake City, Utah, where she served as a ruling elder

commissioner to the 226th General Assembly from the [Presbytery of Giddings-Lovejoy](#). After the wedding, the owner of the venue and the piano player complimented her on presiding over such a beautiful service. They asked what church she pastored. When she responded that she was not a pastor but a judge, they were incredulous! They told her that they’d witnessed ceremonies where judges officiated and never saw a judge do a ceremony like that.

“That’s my give-back. It’s my spirituality. It transcends,” Felica said, “and so, even though I’m acting in the role of judge, I know what my faith brings and how it adds to a person’s life. And the covenant that the couple is making, it’s a covenant with God. It’s important that they understand that and that I understand it. I respect that covenant.”

Ruling elder Felica, who also reports for the music ministry and provides coverage when needed for the transportation ministry, offered these words of encouragement to ruling elders: “Don’t be afraid to step outside your box. Someone thought enough of you to present your name, and you thought enough to speak with them about this role. Now make the most of this ministry. Don’t just carry it in title, but get engaged, show up, support others, ask if there is a need to be filled and go ahead and do it. Get involved!”

‘Serve the Lord with gladness; come into God’s presence with singing.’

-Psalm 100 NRSV

COMMUNITY NEWS

Paper Mill Playhouse Special Events



- August 28, 2024 6:00PM , Piano Bar with Joe Regan ,
- September 4, 2024 6:00PM , Piano Bar with Joe Regan ,
- September 7, 2024 6:15PM , Golden Girls Murder Mystery ,, **Sold Out!**
- September 11, 2024 6:00PM , Piano Bar with Joe Regan ,
- September 13, 2024 6:00PM , Best Men Trivia ,

Union Movie Under the Stars



UNION, NJ - Which movie will it be? The Township of Union Recreation Department asked residents to pick the September 6 'Movie Under the Stars'. The movie with the most votes will be shown on Friday, **September 6** at Rabkin Park. The movie choices were: --The Garfield Movie --Kung Fu Panda --Wish. Pre-movie entertainment begins at 7 p.m.

Union's Soul House 2024



UNION, NJ - Soul House 2024 will be held at Biertuempfel Park, 1300 Winslow Avenue from 2 to 10 pm. on **September 7**. Event hosts, Roxanne Shante, DJ Cool V, and Kia Stewart, have planned an afternoon and evening of music and food. Live performances by Ladies of Skyy will perform their iconic hits, "Here's to You", "Call Me" and "Let's Celebrate." Food trucks, and vendors will also be on site.

Union's Hispanic and Latino Heritage Celebration Set for Sept 21



UNION, NJ - Live music, performances, Latin food trucks, dance demonstrations, a beer garden and more are planned for this year's Hispanic and Latino Heritage Festival, celebrating the rich traditions, diverse music, delicious cuisine, and colorful artistry of the Latin and Hispanic culture. The event will take place on **Saturday, September 21**, from 2 to 10 p.m. at Biertuempfel Park, Winslow Ave. Admission is free and open to all!

On Site Help with SNAP Applications Scheduled at the Union Senior Center



UNION, NJ - New Jersey's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides food assistance to families with low incomes to help them buy groceries through a benefits card accepted in most food retail stores and some farmers markets.

Eligibility for the program is set by several factors, such as income and resources. Help to apply for the program will be available at the **Union Senior Center on Sept. 26**. Representatives will be on site to help residents with the application process from 11 a.m. to noon.

To make the application process quicker and easier, residents should bring (as applicable):

- Proof of income
- Proof of address
- Medical expenses (if age 60+ or have disability)
- Cost of rent and utilities
- Child or adult care expenses

You should never be asked to pay for assistance to fill out an application. This is a free service. The Union Senior Center is located at 652 Rahway Avenue.

A Grand opening celebration of the Union Library and Arts Center



The Grand Opening is set for **Saturday, October 19, 2024** at 1980 Morris Avenue.

- The Main Lower Level will house the Union Arts and Events Center, which will include a café and Union's art gallery, and also contain the Union TV Studio.

- Main Level will include the circulation desk, private study rooms, a story-time seating area, a sensory room, a recording studio for small-scale audio projects, the youth services department, computers for public use and an outdoor seating area. The library will also have a drive-up window to pick-up or drop-off library material.

- Third Floor will be a boardroom for meetings, a computer lab where the library will offer computer instruction classes, individual study pods, a reading lounge, and an outdoor reading area.

HUMOR

Why I Like Retirement!

Q: How many days in a week?

A: 6 Saturdays and Sunday

Q: Why are retirees so slow to clean out the basement, attic or garage?

A: They know that as soon as they do, one of their adult children will want to store stuff there.

Q: What is the biggest advantage of going back to school as a retiree?

A: If you cut classes, no one calls your parents.

Q: What do you do all week?

A: Monday through Friday, NOTHING. Saturday & Sunday, I rest.

Q: What is the biggest gripe of retirees?

A: There is not enough time to get everything done.

Q: Why don't retirees mind being called Seniors?

A: The term comes with a 10% discount.

SERENITY

- Reporters interviewing a 104 year-old woman:
Reporter: 'And what do you think is the best thing about being 104?'
Woman: 'No peer pressure.'
- The nice thing about being senile is you can hide your own Easter eggs and have fun finding them.

- I've sure gotten old! I've had two bypass surgeries, a hip replacement, new knees, fought prostate cancer and diabetes. I'm half blind, can't hear anything quieter than a jet engine, take 40 different medications that make me dizzy, winded, and subject to blackouts. Have bouts of dementia, poor circulation, hardly feel my hands and feet anymore, and can't remember if I'm 85 or 92. But, thank goodness, I still have my driver's license!
- I feel like my body has gotten totally out of shape, so I got my doctor's permission to join a fitness club and start exercising. I decided to take an aerobic class for seniors. I bent, twisted, gyrated, jumped up and down, and perspired for an hour. But, by the time I got my leotards on, the class was over.

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