

“THE TALK OF TOWNLEY”

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

August 2019 / Issue 19

Here are the seven marks:

1. A commitment to forming disciples over every member's lifetime. This leads first to personal transformation, as people put on the heart of Christ, and then to social transformation, as people joyfully go forth into the community and tackle the issues facing today's culture.
2. Embracing the call to evangelism. We show forth the love of Christ by our actions and our lives even more than by our words. Our relationships are genuine and caring. People know we are Christians by our love.
3. An outward focus. Our church is not a place to escape from the world, but rather our gateway to our community where we may be the hands, feet, heart and mouth of Jesus Christ for people who are suffering or marginalized.
4. Empowering every member to discover their individual calling and the gifts God has given them so they can go forth and serve.
5. Spirit-inspired worship that challenges, teaches, transforms, convicts and energizes us so when we are sent out, we have experienced the wonder of God and are changed for the better from when we arrived.
6. Caring relationships modeled on God's love. We open our doors and hearts to all people, and we build relationships modeled on God's love, which leads to genuine reconciliation and peace.
7. Congregations with healthy systems. Our mission focuses are clear. There is fiscal responsibility and accountability. We have thoughtful decision-making structures. Our leaders and staff enjoy a sustainable balance of work/rest time.

Building Congregational Vitality

Last month we accepted our denomination's invitation to become a Matthew 25 Church (*as detailed in July's Newsletter*). We recognize Christ's urgent call to be a church of action, where God's love, justice and mercy shine forth and are contagious. While taking notice of the declining Christian share of the U.S. population, we also recognize that the church is no longer at the center of American culture. Some say the church is no longer relevant at all. As much as this new reality is alarming, it is also an opportunity for our congregation to seize the moment.

What is congregational vitality?

You might think that the vitality of a congregation or worshiping community is based on the number of members, the scope of programs, the size of financial gifts or some other statistics.

Not so — at least not entirely.

Rather, a community's vitality is primarily its spiritual strength and its capacity for purposeful mission. Congregational vitality is evident in a worshiping community when its structural systems, finances and discipleship practices are aligned in such a way that the community is actively engaged in the mission of God in their local community and the world. When we are powerfully focused on growing as disciples in the way of Jesus Christ. Our faith comes alive when we boldly engage God's mission and share the hope we have in Christ.

What must we do to revitalize our own congregation?

To some extent, many local churches find themselves spiritually exhausted, financially fragile and structurally unsound. Sometimes, congregational life is discouraging — both for pastors and other church leaders who see apathy in their members, and for members who see the numbers in the pews declining year by year. The Presbyterian Mission Agency of the PC(USA) has made a profound commitment to help us turn things around.

It proposed that there are seven marks to help us determine our current level of vitality — and then various processes for self-assessment, discernment and renewed commitment to the habits that foster an energetic engagement with the Spirit's work in the world.

Worshiping communities experiencing congregational vitality will find themselves following Jesus into places of injustice and struggle bearing light and hope, demonstrating love and mercy,

2019 AUGUST						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Mark your calendar!

Contact Us

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Townley Church

and working faithfully for justice and peace. Their efforts will be sustained by personal and congregational patterns and practices of prayer and worship, learning and reflection. They will be stewards of God's abundant gifts in service to God's children here and everywhere. They will demonstrate to the world God's promises and life-giving power in this age and the world to come.

AUGUST DATES

Prayer: Mondays 4:00-5:00 PM

August 4

- Eighth Sunday after Pentecost - Holy Communion
- Delaire Nursing Home Visitation 2:00 PM

August 10

- Roadhouse 7:30 PM

August 11

- Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

August 17

- Youth & Young Adults Explosion 3:00 PM

August 18

- Tenth Sunday after Pentecost // Book Club

August 21

- Movie Night – 6:30 PM

August 25

- Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

TOWNLEY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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