

“THE TALK OF TOWNLEY”

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

February 2020 / Issue 25

Matthew 25:31–46

³¹ “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory.

³² All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, ³³ and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. ³⁴ Then the king will say to those at his right hand, ‘Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; ³⁵ for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶ I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’

³⁷ Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? ³⁸ And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? ³⁹ And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?’ ⁴⁰ And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.’ ⁴¹ Then he will say to those at his left hand, ‘You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; ⁴² for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, ⁴³ I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’ ⁴⁴ Then they also will answer, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?’ ⁴⁵ Then he will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’

⁴⁶ And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

What is a Vision?

“Where there is no vision, the people perish” (Proverbs 29:18, KJV). A vision is a picture of a preferred future. God uses visions to equip us for faithful living. The Bible is full of visions of God’s preferred future: Abram and Sarai’s vision that they will become ancestors to “a multitude of nations” (Genesis 17); Isaiah’s vision that the wolf will dwell with the lamb, and a little child will lead them (Isaiah 11); Mary’s vision that God will bring down the powerful from their thrones and lift up the lowly (Luke 1); Jesus’ visions of the kingdom of God, expressed through parables, such as the ten bridesmaids, the talents, and the sheep and the goats (Matthew 25); and Revelation’s vision of a new creation and a tree of life with leaves for the healing of the nations (Revelation 21–22). These visions were evoked for the people of God in particular times and places — yet they speak to the present moment as well, and continue to comfort, empower and guide us today.

A vision is not a plan. It provides a picture of a destination, but it is not a set of directions for covering the next mile. The Matthew 25 vision points toward a new creation in which racism has been fully dismantled, discrimination has ended and human differences are understood as God’s good gift; poverty has been eradicated and all creatures flourish, their lives no longer bound by an inability to meet needs; the church triumphant gathers at the throne of the Lamb, and saints of every time and place bear witness to the eternal and abundant life that is ours in Jesus Christ.

There are many routes that lead to these destinations. The route we have chosen that best enables us to move toward God’s destination for all creation is through ***Congregational Vitality***. Worshiping communities experiencing *congregational vitality* will find themselves following Jesus into places of injustice and struggle bearing light and hope, demonstrating love and mercy, and working faithfully for justice and peace. Our efforts will be sustained by personal and congregational patterns and practices of prayer and worship, learning and reflection. We will be stewards of God’s abundant gifts in service to God’s children here and everywhere. We will demonstrate to the world God’s promises and life-giving power in this age and the world to come.

Our journey has begun.

WANTED: “SNOW TEAM MEMBERS”

Able bodies are needed to assist in ensuring our facility is safe for access on Sunday mornings following a snow event. Please see Pastor Ron if you are interested.

February 2020						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
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2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17 <small>Presbyter Day</small>	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29

Mark your calendar!

FEBRUARY DATES

Prayer: *Mondays 5:00-6:00 PM*

- FEBRUARY 2** - Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany -- Holy Communion
- FEBRUARY 5** - Bible Study 6:30 PM
- FEBRUARY 8** - Road House 8:00 PM, Doors open at 7:30 PM
- FEBRUARY 9** - Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany
 - Annual Meeting after service
 - Nursing Home Visitation (Delaire 2:00 PM)
- FEBRUARY 10** - Operation Warm Heart (St. Elizabeth 6:00 PM)
- FEBRUARY 12** - Bible Study 6:30 PM
- FEBRUARY 16** - Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany
 - Sweet Heart Brunch after service
- FEBRUARY 19** - Session Meeting 7:30 PM
- FEBRUARY 23** - Transfiguration Sunday
 - Food Bank Sunday
 - March newsletter articles due
- FEBRUARY 24** - Operation Warm Heart (St. Elizabeth 6:00 PM)
- FEBRUARY 26** - Ash Wednesday: Reflections and Prayer 6:30 PM

Contact Us

Townley Presbyterian Church

829 Salem Road

Union NJ 07083

(908) 686-1028

Email:

townleychurch@yahoo.com

Website: Townleychurch.org

Like us on Facebook: Townley Church

BIBLE STUDY: Resumes Wednesday, January 22 at 6:30 PM. We will be looking at what it takes to be a Matthew 25 Church. Please join us for the journey!

SALEM ROADHOUSE CAFÉ: On Saturday, February 8, at 8:00 PM the Salem Roadhouse Café will present Megan Pennington and Band featuring her brand of Country Rock. Megan will be joined on stage by local performers Matt Powers, Ray Powers and “Mad” Mike Cullens. Megan was born and raised in Pittsburgh, PA. She was signed to a recording contract at just 19 years old; she released her first single “Free” and watched it soar to #1 on the VRadio Nashville Top 40 chart – the biggest independent chart in the world at the time. Megan has released four singles to date that have charted worldwide and continues to tour the United States with international dates on the horizon. Original artwork will be on display. Doors open at 7:30 PM. Admission is \$20 for adults and \$15 for students. Admission includes snacks, beverages, tea, coffee and desserts. 2020 Show proceeds will benefit YWCA Union County PALS program.

THE ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING of Townley Presbyterian Church will be held in



Fellowship Hall on Sunday, February 9, 2020, immediately following the 10:00 am worship service for the purpose of electing officers, presenting the budget, and any other business that may properly come before the meeting.

NURSING HOME VISITATION: Join us, on second Sundays, at the Delaire Nursing and Convalescent Center at 2:00 PM for a brief worship service with the shut-ins. All are welcome.

Address: 400 W Stimpson Ave, Linden, NJ.

SWEET HEART BRUNCH: Join us after worship service on February 16, 2020. Please see June Donohue for details.



“Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.” Colossians 3:14

FOOD BANK SUNDAY: Townley’s Program Task Force is spearheading a Food Bank Sunday, where on each 4th Sunday they will receive donations of non-perishable food items to contribute to the Connecticut Farms Food Pantry. We are asking our members to support this initiative by giving one non-perishable food item (or \$1) per week. Kindly drop off your items in the Food Box in Fellowship Hall. Thank you!



“for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.” Matthew 25:35-36

OPERATION WARM HEART During the coldest months, December to March, the Elizabeth Coalition to House the Homeless sponsors an emergency shelter program called Operation Warm Heart. With the help of local churches and community groups, up to 14 homeless individuals are given clothing, toiletries, a hot meal and a warm bed each night of the week. Volunteers to help cook meals, provide hospitality or sort donations to make personal kits for each guest are always needed. Townley has partnered with the St. Elizabeth Episcopal Church in Elizabeth to provide temporary overnight shelter for these individuals. The dates are as follows:

Monday, February 10 Monday, March 9
Monday, February 24 Monday, March 23

Volunteer to greet and serve an evening meal from 6:00 to 8:00 PM. Let Pastor Ron know what dates you are available. You need not volunteer for all the dates. Thank you!

SPRING RUMMAGE SALE: Session has approved Friday, May 8, 2020 from 9:00 am – 6:00 pm and Saturday, May 9, 2020 from 9:00 am – 12:00 noon as sale days for our spring rummage sale. Save the date! Table setup for sale is Saturday, May 2, 2020 at 10 am. Setup for sale is May 4 – 7, 2020 from 10:30 am – 2:00 pm and 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm. Cleanup begins Saturday, May 9, 2020 at 12 noon.



NEW MEMBERS: We welcome Bill Jensen as our new, but not so new, member back to Townley!



“Hi! I’m Bill Jensen and I just rejoined Townley as a member of the congregation. I grew up in Townley and went through the church school, was confirmed, joined the choir, became an elder and then left to become music director of several churches. I first served Immaculate Heart of Mary in Maplewood for a year, came back to Townley, then went to Epworth United Methodist Church in Elizabeth for 29 years. I came back to Townley for a little over a year and then went on to serve The United Methodist Church of Linden for 4 years. All through this time I have come back to Townley to sing with the choir and sub for Edna Bailey from time to time. I enjoy traveling, music, nascar, soccer, reading and being with friends. I was hired last year as music director and felt like I have come home to serve the Lord through music and now to rejoin this congregation.”

We welcome Nadine Pusey as our new member! “I migrated to the United States of America from Jamaica about seven years ago (2012). I was baptized in Jamaica in 2007. The name of church was Christian Prayer Mission. The denomination was Church of God. I was part of the homeless outreach program back in Jamaica. My hobbies include reading and volunteering my time. I am a financial analyst at NYU medical center in New York.”

LAY LEADER: If you would like to serve as a lay leader during worship service, please contact Lynn B. or Diane S.

PER CAPITA: As you know, every December the Board of Trustees of the Presbytery of Elizabeth 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. Our session is committed to paying the full assessment for all the members on our roll because we treasure our relationship with the wider church, and the congregation benefits when members contribute their share to the whole. *The Per Capita for 2020 for Townley is \$45.00 per member.* Please submit your check for this amount before February 1st, payable to Townley Presbyterian Church and put it in the offering plate or mail it to the 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

NEWSLETTER: If you have any items that you would like to have included in March's (monthly) newsletter, please either text them to cell # 908-868-6579 or email them to CeceliaH@comcast.net by Sunday, February 23. Please include your name. I hope to hear from you! Cecelia

WHO IS ST. VALENTINE?



Or should we ask “who were the St. Valentines”? In the early martyrologies, three different St. Valentines are mentioned, all sharing February 14 for a feast day and all showing heroic love for the Lord and the faithful.

The first St. Valentine was a Roman priest and physician. He, along with St. Marius and his family, comforted the martyrs during the persecution of Emperor Claudius II Gothicus. St. Valentine succumbed to the same fate for his faith on February 14, AD 270. He was buried on the Via Flaminia and a basilica was later built over his grave. A small church was built near the Flaminian Gate of Rome called “the Gate of St. Valentine”. It is now known as the Porta del Popolo. In the thirteenth century his remains were taken to the church of St. Praxedes near the basilica of St. Mary Major, where they remain today.

According to one account, St. Valentine signed a letter “from your Valentine” to his jailer’s daughter, whom he had befriended and healed from blindness. Another legend stated that he defied the emperor’s orders and secretly married couples to spare the husbands from war.

The second St. Valentine was the bishop of Interamna (now Terni, located about 60 miles from Rome). By orders from Prefect Placidus, he also was persecuted during the time of Emperor Claudius II.

The third St. Valentine was persecuted in Africa with several companions.

Since historical records are sparse, it is noted that there is a possibility these are different versions of the same account and refer to only one person.

Our custom of showing love and affection on St. Valentine’s Day may also be rooted in England and France’s common belief that birds began to mate on February 14.

There is an overall Christian message which we can take from all of this. The love of our Lord is a sacrificial, self-less and unconditional love. By offering our love to the Lord, we are then able to properly love those who are entrusted to our care. This is a love that each Christian is called to express in his own life, for God and his neighbor.

St. Valentine’s Day gives us the opportunity to again pledge our love to our loved ones, praying for their intentions, promising fidelity to them, and thanking them for their love in return. Love is the greatest commandment in the Bible.

“He answered, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.’” Luke 10:27

WHAT IS LOVE?

Fill in the Blanks. Color the picture.



“ Love is _____ and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is _____ arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not _____ or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but _____ with the _____. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, _____ all things. Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will _____ away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for _____, it will pass away. ”

(1 Corinthians 13:4-8)

