

“THE TALK OF TOWNLEY”

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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Recalibrate: 10 Steps Every Church Must Take This Year

In an article entitled *Recalibrate Church*, Karl Vaters makes several reassuring statements: “The church is not dying. It’s in fine shape.” “Jesus said he’d build it, and he is. Relentlessly and beautifully.” But when we look at individual congregations, and even denominations, it’s a different story. The church of Jesus continues to move forward around the world, but many local congregations are at a standstill or even regressing. Vaters believes that the next decade or two will be critical for the western church. He senses that a recalibration of the way we think about everything from our morality, to our sexuality, to our identity, and our theology is needed. So, what’s the local church to do? Stand strong on the unchanging principles of God’s Word and adapt our methods to a fast-changing world. Here are 10 steps where we can begin:

1. Reestablish the Biblical Essentials

Churches that stand firm on the biblical essentials are more likely to be thriving, while those that compromise on them are more likely to be dying. Any church that abandons biblical principles won’t just fail to survive; they don’t deserve to.

2. Emphasize Discipleship and Leadership Training

The days of hiring a team of pastors to do all the ministry of the church is dying. Instead, churches that thrive are taking Ephesians 4:11-12 seriously by equipping the saints to do the work of ministry and raising up a team of ministers.

3. Reduce Your Overhead

If local congregations, denominations and parachurch ministries hope to survive, they need to get to work on: getting out of debt, reducing the percentage of paid staff, training and empowering volunteers to lead and serve, sharing expenses with other churches and making bi-vocational ministry the new normal.

4. Rethink Your Building

If you own a building – especially if you’re one of the growing number of churches that own a too-big building for your shrinking congregation – be relentless about finding creative ways to utilize the space as often as possible. For many of our churches it’s Use It or Lose It time. As in, use the building or lose the church; facility, people ... everything.

5. Work with Strategic Partners

In many places, smaller churches are banding together – even across denominational lines – to share resources, think strategically, mend old wounds, and minister to their shared community.

6. Engage Your Community

Churches must stop being identified by the location of their building and start being recognized for the passion of their heart. A church that’s known as “the people who love kids (or addicts, or single moms)” has a much higher likelihood of thriving and surviving than the church that’s known as “the old building on the corner of Salem and Huguenot.”

7. Emphasize Jesus Over Tradition (or Denominations, or Buildings, or Politics, or...)

Everything but Jesus and the Bible must be on the table. Ask yourself this question. Would I be willing to give up (insert your preferred method or style here) if it meant doing a better job of reaching our community for Jesus?

8. Restructure What Needs to Be Restructured

Quit fighting to keep your favorite ministry, method or tradition alive. If it’s not part of the solution, it’s part of the problem.

9. Make Disciples, Not Just Converts

Converts join a club. Disciples start a movement. Converts follow traditions. Disciples follow Jesus. Converts change their minds. Disciples change their lives. And other people’s lives.

10. Figure Out Why Your Congregation Should Survive

If your church disappeared tomorrow, what would really be lost? Any congregation that can’t readily answer why they should survive, won’t.

It’s been said that the best time to plant a tree is 20 years ago – the second-best time is today.

JANUARY 2020						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29	30	31	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	1

Mark your calendar!

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

JANUARY DATES

Prayer: Mondays 5:00-6:00 PM

January 5

- Second Sunday after Christmas -- Holy Communion

January 12

- Baptism of the Lord / New Member Recognition
 - Nursing Home Visitation (Delaire)

January 13

- Operation Warm Heart (St. Elizabeth 6:00 PM)

January 15

- Session Meeting 7:30 PM

January 19

- Second Sunday after the Epiphany / Book Club

January 22

- Bible Study 6:30 PM

January 26

- Third Sunday after the Epiphany

January 27

- Operation Warm Heart (St. Elizabeth 6:00 PM)

January 29

- Bible Study 6:30 PM

TOWNLEY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

829 Salem Road

Union NJ 07083