

According to Mark . . . April 2018

Easter is upon us! If you have not been to church in a while, come to Easter Sunday services, the most well-attended service of the church year when new friendships are made and old friendships are renewed. We will celebrate communion this day as it's the first Sunday of the month, and since it's April Fools' Day, a specially entertaining sermon will be offered!

But Easter isn't just about the details of a worship service. It's a time of understanding the meaning of the resurrection in our lives. For almost 4 years now we've made a commitment to making our church community more vibrant and outward focused. And we're succeeding.

We see it in our Youth Group where recently 11 kids went to a Youth Retreat focusing on the meaning of God's presence in our lives, and why we need the church to help us remember that God's grace is ever-present and ever-near. We see it in the Wednesday and Saturday suppers which attract over 250 people each month. And we see it in the folks who attend our Bible studies and wander into our services, seeking God's message, but in a way that is open and affirming to their lives, not passing judgment.

So we've undertaken forming a community outreach vehicle that will help us to make a greater and larger impact in Townsend. The Fund for Advancement and Community Enhancement in Townsend (FACET) is an ecumenical outreach that currently has over \$52,000 in monies, and is eligible to receive grant requests for programs that have social purpose to benefit the people of Townsend. The Board is comprised of the pastors of the Catholic, Methodist, and UCC churches in Townsend and one member of the laity from each church, and they will discern grant requests for awards up to 10% of the Fund's assets (annually) to ensure the Fund's long-term viability.

Have an idea for something cool and useful that would benefit the seniors, school kids, the poor and underserved? Bring a proposal forward to any pastor and let's get it done with some seed money from FACET and funding from the people of Townsend. Together, we can make a difference and launch programs and ideas that no one church can do on their own, but with funding from interested citizens, it can happen.

Host after-school programs at TCC and/or St John's. Start a car pool for seniors getting to medical appointments. Seed a Boys/Girls club activity program for the summer. Begin a single mother's club that helps share the burdens of raising kids. Bring in experts and help the community understand the whys and wherefores of the new marijuana possession laws, and how we can keep Townsend residents and kids informed and safe. Whatever your imagination can come up with, let's get it out there and start getting grant funding so that we can take action.

Townsend is a jewel; what FACET would you like to see?

Come to our congregational meeting on April 29 and find it.

Pastor Mark