

According to Mark . . . November 2018

It's November, and the leaves are just about off the trees. It's been a strange year with wet weather, leaves in not-their-usual fall splendor, and the Sox once again winning the AL Pennant? Strange days indeed for those of us who have been around these parts a while.

But it's also the month of Thanksgiving. You might recall that we challenged ourselves this worship year (Sept-June) to begin each day with a prayer of thanks, and then notice if it made a difference in our day. Have you noticed things are a little less hectic, a little less angry, a little more joyful? It's not easy to remember, but I'll guarantee you that when we focus our first thoughts on being thankful in all circumstances (not thankful FOR all circumstances, but being thankful each day no matter what...notice the difference?) God's presence will be more noticeable and tangible in everything we do.

So we are thankful for new members joining on November 4. In this era when folks are more suspicious of institutions in general, it's good to see that folks see the church is a place of refuge, rest, and reflection. Please come and meet our new members and welcome them! I am also thankful that our TCC Youth Group will be coming to my house to once again decorate for the holidays! Thanks to Meg and Heather for organizing the kids for a fun time and helping out Kate and me again this year!

We are also thankful that wars are no longer fought on the scale of WWI, known to veterans of that conflict as the Great War. TCC will join the other churches in Townsend and around the nation by ringing their church bells in a common prayer for peace and cessation of conflict. We pray for peace at all times, but if war comes, the Church prays for cessation of hostilities at the earliest possible time. As Jesus said, we must love one another, including our enemies, and without talking, peace is not possible.

I am thankful that it's been a year (Oct. 25) since my rather serious auto accident, and thank all of you for your support of our church's ministry and my family during this time. I know, I've said that before in this column, and to many of you, but my heart swells when I think of how we came together to continue our work in the church, the town, and in the world whether I'm here or not. So it's great to be here and leading our collective faith journey as we build God's kingdom right here, right now, in this holy place, with each of you.

Finally, let's "be the bridge" and welcome folks who might be spending Thanksgiving alone into our homes. As we sing "Blessed be the Tie That Binds" a few times this month, let's take the words of that hymn to heart and be reminded that we are all one Spirit, one heart, and one love here at TCC. So in that Spirit, Happy Thanksgiving to each and all, and see you at the Townsend Tree Lighting on the Common to kick off Advent on December 2 at 4:30 pm!

Blessings,

Pastor Mark