



Dear Family in Christ,
HAPPY NEW YEAR! Along with that greeting, we often think about the changes we'd like to make in our lifestyles to be more spiritually and physically healthy. Remember to let the Holy Spirit guide and encourage you in this.

Keeping you informed:

- **Pick up your new Missions label!** Fill up your World-Changer Containers with \$\$ (green paper ok) for Healing Art Mission, Salvation Army, and our local Benevolent Fund.
- **Family Movie Night** is coming up Friday, Jan. 6, 2017, 7 pm, with the popular "Finding Dory". Bring a buddy for all the fun (and free popcorn & pop).
- New Year's **Soup Supper** at Poo Wilson's house (30087 E. Bay St.), Friday, **Jan. 20 @ 6 pm.** Bring a soup to share and a friend to care!
- Mark your calendar for our **Leadership/Annual Meeting on Sunday, Jan. 22**, following worship. This is a time to celebrate what God is doing and where He is leading us!
- Please note that Potluck has moved to **Jan. 8th** for this month. Bring a dish and invite a friend!

Jesus wants each of us to work toward mental, emotional, and physical wholeness. He is our source of life and is ready to lead us into "abundant life", here on earth and beyond into our heavenly life. Begin each day with a time of committed listening prayer. Watch what wonderful changes God can make in you for 2017!

- *Scott*

MISSIONS

At our Dec. Leadership gathering, we decided to mix it up a little by focusing on *three* mission areas for our next quarterly mission support (Jan. – Mar.):

- **Healing Art Mission** – A medical outreach to the people of Haiti, run by Judy Laing's daughter, Dr. Tracee Laing. Check out their website: <http://healingartmissions.org/>
- **Salvation Army, Soo, MI** - You know them: They reach out to needy families and individuals in the Eastern UP. Check out their website: <http://sasaultstmarie.org/>
- **Local Benevolent Fund** – We are believing that the Lord will be providing some opportunities to really make a difference in the lives of Islanders who could use a helping hand.

Don't forget we will be reaching out to the community in our monthly **Family Movie Nights**, coming up **Jan. 6 (Fri.), Feb. 11 (Sat.), Mar. 10 (Fri.), all at 7 pm.** Mark your calendars and invite a friend or two!

God's Apple Seed

How can someone not be in awe at the life and power God has put in a small apple seed?

IF that seed is put in rich soil with good nutrients, plenty of sunshine and water, the roots grow strong and deep into the ground. IF that same seed were to be placed in sandy, rocky, or dry soil, it still grows, only with the strong roots or solid ground for it to hold on to.

That tiny seed in good soil grows thick and lush branches with leaves that gives shade and protection to birds, squirrels, deer, and even insects, as well as food to all the creatures... including humans. When rain, wind, and heavy storms come after this tree with its strong roots, it can hang on and withstand all that challenges it.

Now that seed in the poor soil tries its best, but grows short of its potential. The branches are weak, leaves are dry, and it produces very few and poor-quality fruit. When the wind and storms blow their way, the roots have nothing to hold on to. The weak branches break and the leave blow away.

When a child is given a good foundation with security, character, morals, with a spirit of honesty, integrity, fairness, kindness, generosity, beauty, and helpfulness, that child has *deep rich roots* that help it to stand strong against the storms of life.

Learning God's Word and doing our best to live His word, gives us the strong roots we will need to fight against all that Satan wants to throw our way. God's word gives us the power over peer pressure, anger, or feeling powerless. We are never too young or old to realize how much God wants to show us his love. If only we would let Him.



- Cheryl Wolf

BE THE MESSAGE in 2017

With the arrival of January, we celebrate not only a new month but also a whole new year. For many, that celebration means indulging in too much partying and too little sleep, too much pizza and chips and WAY too much football.

That may be the world's approach to celebrating the New Year. But as a church body – indeed, as the body of Christ – let us strive to celebrate the arrival of 2017 as an opportunity to be re-energized and renewed in the Holy Spirit. Let us look upon this as a chance to refocus on what it means to be children of God. Perhaps that means *making a different list* of New Year's resolutions this time around.

While the rest of the world is vowing to lose weight or make more money or quit smoking or whatever, perhaps we can resolve to read our Bibles daily or intercede in prayer for someone in need of a blessing
 (over)



or volunteer within our church or community, or support missionary workers or witness to a neighbor badly in need of Jesus.

Whatever resolutions we make for 2017, let them be in the spirit of reverently and lovingly serving Christ. Let us set aside our own ambitions and dreams - not forever - but at least long enough to make a difference for God and maybe even for someone else who really needs to be lifted up.

And let us serve not because we feel *obligated* to but because we want to, not because we love praise but because we love the Lord!

The Apostle Paul instructs us thus: *Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving* (Colossians 3: 23-24)

And James sums up the necessity of serving in even plainer language: *What good is it... If a man claims to have faith but has no deeds?... Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. ...Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do* (James 2:14, 17-18).

With those Scriptures in mind, let us resolve this new year to work with all our hearts to show the world just what our faith can do!

- Fred Kelly

(Chuck & Colleen Barko's son-in-law)

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS:

4 Wendy Hunt-Joppich
10 Steve Danforth

(If we don't have your birthday or anniversary, let us know!)

Upcoming JANUARY ACTIVITIES:

- 6 Family Movie Night @ 7
- 8 Potluck! Following worship.
- 10 Elders meet: 7 pm, Church Library
- 20 New Year's Soup Supper! Wilson house @ 6 pm. Bring a soup to share and a friend to share it with!! It'll be a parrrrrttyyy for sure!
- 21 MEN'S BREAKFAST @ 9:00 am (Note new time)
- 22 Leadership/Annual Meeting. All are encouraged to participate.

JOIN US for Friendly Small Group Fellowship:



- **Tuesdays:**
 - 10:00 **Discussion Group** in the Library on God, life, and the Bible. Current study: **Hebrews.**
 - 11:15 **Prayer Group** in the Pastor's Office. Come grow in your prayer life, in a warm, supportive atmosphere.
 - 11:30 **Worship Team** in Sanctuary. You're invited to listen in as the Team prepares for Sunday.
 - 6 pm: **Discipleship Gathering.** Kirk & Sue's house, 24500 E. Anderson Pt. Rd. Call Sue with any questions: 269-929-6536.
- **Men's Breakfast**, every third Sat. @ 9 am, in the Church basement. Come for a great breakfast in the company of friends!

(If you've got an idea that might gather a group together, let me know! - Scott)

ARTICLES FOR THE FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER ARE DUE TO THE CHURCH OFFICE BY TUESDAY, Jan. 24th (IF YOU CAN SUBMIT BY EMAIL, IT IS APPRECIATED)



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We are revising the CHURCH DIRECTORY. If you aren't sure if you are on the current one and you'd like to be listed, please let us know!