

The Circuit Writer

Mt. Jackson United Methodist Church



Pastor's Page

Fellow disciples,

January is the time of resolutions - read the Bible more, lose some weight, make more time for family, finally complete that long-term project... Most times we make resolutions for something we want to improve in our lives, like our health or our relationships. And we're very well-intentioned - "I'm going to read my Bible every night..." But one missed night turns into another, then another... maybe the resolution changes to 'reading the Bible once a week', but by that time it's too late. By about March most of us realize that the good intentions and determination we once had really didn't amount to much action.

Resolutions aren't always made in January, though. My wife Gabriella has noticed in me a consistent pattern of making resolutions that are quickly abandoned. We casually call this behavior 'the 72-hour rule' - I'll resolve to do something one day, and three days later I'll abandon it. I'll get really excited about something - I'll read an article about Shakespeare, for example - and resolve to read a Shakespeare play starting that very night. After a couple of days, though, something else has caught my interest and the excitement of just a few days ago is forgotten. The Shakespeare play is left unread, and Gabriella just smiles and shakes her head. Even I have to chuckle at myself when I realize I've done it again.

This pattern of failed resolve, whether it starts in January or some other time, is one of the principle reasons why weekly worship is a means of grace from God. We are all in need of strengthening our relationship with God by offering our thanks and praise and receiving God's grace and peace. If it were up to us to resolve to set aside worship time, even those of us with the best intentions would give in to other demands on our time - time with family, exercise, hobbies, even just catching up on rest. Even on days when we can make it to worship, we may not 'feel' like worshipping. Setting aside Sunday morning for worship takes us outside of ourselves and our own fickle motivations. As we hear in the Great Thanksgiving, the prayer before Holy Commun-

ion, "It is right and a good and joyful thing always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth." God calls us regularly, every seven days (168 hours!), to go past a mental decision and strengthen our relationship with God and one another. When we go beyond making a mental decision to actively praising God, we find that God has more than 'good intentions' for us - we receive the grace we need for spiritual health!

Living in abundant grace,
Rev. Michael Dettmer



NEW YEAR, SAME GOD

Another year lies before us, a blank page yet to be written. Another chapter is formed as we travel down an unknown path, one day at time, month by month until we reach the beginning of another year. How will we live this coming year? How did we do last year? These are questions that often linger in the recesses of our minds.

Past mistakes are forgiven and forgotten by our Heavenly Father who walks right by our side and he will continue to be there as our pilot for ever long we are here. Be content to let him write the pages of our life as we seek his guidance and let him lead us down that new road that he wants us to travel. We know not what is to come our way, happiness or grief, but be assured that he is there comforting us through our sorrows and sharing in our joys.

This New Year is like a closed bud of a flower that will keep blooming as we continue to serve our Lord as we are his hands and feet, going about doing his work and

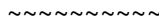
sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ.

“May the Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace.”
Numbers 6:24-26



Happy January Birthdays!

- 01/04 Brenda Driver
- 01/07 Rhea Jett
- 01/08 Teresa Ryan
- 01/10 Margaret Harris
- 01/11 Margaret Oden
- 01/13 Josh Joseph
- 01/14 Marcia Joseph
- 01/16 James Clark
- 01/16 Rick Hassler
- 01/22 Dickie Hawkins
- 01/23 Tracey Swope
- 01/31 Pearl Clem



Church Calendar



For January 2012

- 1/01 Sun. New Year's Day, White Epiphany Sunday**
9:45 AM Sunday School
10:00 AM Children/Youth SS
11:00 AM Worship
- 1/02 Mon. 8:00 PM AA, Library
- 1/03 Tues. 7:00 PM Choir Practice
- 1/05 Thurs. 7:00 PM UMW
- 1/06 Fri. 8:00 PM AA, Library
- 1/08 Sun. Baptism of the Lord, White First Sunday after the Epiphany**
9:45 AM Sunday School
10:00AM Children/Youth SS
11:00 AM Worship
- 1/09 Mon. 8:00 PM AA, Library
- 1/10 Tues. 7:00 PM Choir Practice
- 1/11 Wed. 6:00 PM Church Counsel
- 1/13 Fri. 8:00 PM AA, Library
- 1/15 Sun. Second Sunday after the Epiphany Green**
9:45 AM Sunday School
10:00 AM Youth/Children SS
11:00 AM Worship
- 1/16 Mon. 8:00 PM AA, Library
- 1/17 Tues. 7:00 PM Choir Practice
- 1/18 Wed. 6:30 PM UMM
- 1/20 Fri. 8:00 PM AA, Library
- 1/22 Sun. Third Sunday after the Epiphany Green**
9:45 AM Sunday School
10:00 AM Youth/Children SS
11:00 AM Worship
- 1/23 Mon. 8:00 PM AA, Library
- 1/24 Tues. 7:00 PM Choir Practice
- 1/27 Fri. 8:00 PM AA, Library
- 1/29 Sun. Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany Green**
9:45 AM Sunday School
10:00 AM Youth/Children SS
11:00 AM Worship
- 1/30 Mon. 8:00 PM AA Library
- 1/31 Tues. 7:00 PM Choir Practice