



Christian Caller

January 2025 Volume 298

Happy New Year

There are two traditions that are prevalent around New Years; Auld Lang Syne and resolutions: Memories and goals. The past and the future.

The changing of the year evokes memories of the past 12 months and gives us a clean slate for the next 12 months.

The 18th century Scottish pub song, Auld Lang Syne, literally means “old long since.” Or better understood as “for old times’ sake.”

The main phrase, “Should old acquaintance be forgot and never brought to mind,” brings sentimental feelings of nostalgia and reflection. It is often a time of reminiscing **of** friends, **with** friends. The bonds of fellowship are found in the line, “we’ll take a cup o’ kindness yet, for auld lang syne,” in which they raise a toast to lost loved ones, bidding them a farewell.

To remember loving or blessed relationships builds connection and bonding. Speaking fondly of someone warms our heart and heals our soul.

Jesus has asked us to remember Him by partaking of the symbol of the last supper: bread and wine. (Luke 22:20) We tip our glasses every Sunday to reflect on what He has given us. Fixing our mind and words on Him, draws us closer to Him. So, we remember often.

New Years also is a time to make resolutions. It represents a clean slate, where you plan the kind of year you want to have.

Your entire future is a clean slate. Your moment-by-moment decisions are what fills your slate. You don't have to wait until a new year, month, week or day. Each minute gives you the opportunity to move toward your goals.

Resolution for an individual means a firm or determined decision to do or not to do something. You set a goal. You make a promise and a commitment to yourself. Your resolution is your solution to something you would like to change.

God's solution to the problem of sin is found in John 3:16, "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whosoever believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life."

God's resolution was when He said that He would never leave or forsake us.

We can participate in the world's traditions of remembering and planning by focusing on what God has done for us and what He will continue to do.

Mission Statement

***To Praise and Worship God**

***To foster Faith in Jesus Christ for the purpose of serving all people**

Note from Chair of the Congregation

2024 seemed to have flown by, where did the time go? Which may be a sign that I was busy doing other things, family, tree farm, church, cancer surgery. And I even turned 70 in 2024. When I look back in the areas in my life that kept me busy in 2024, I find blessings in all of them.

The whole month of December is a family time for us, not only with a lot of birthdays-4 and our anniversary, 46 this year. December also means time spent as a family at the tree farm.

The Christmas Tree Farm is like a lot of projects, there is always more projects than there is time and/or energy. In the coming weeks I will start planting tree seedlings to replace what we cut this year and what trees died. Then comes spring time with spraying the weeds and fertilizing the trees. Summer will bring more spraying and pruning of the trees. Not to mention what other bigger projects need to be done at the Tree Farm. When fall arrives we focus on the harvest of the trees, where are we cutting, preparing the road ways for people to roam the property to find the perfect tree for their family.

Harvest time is the most enjoyable time, being a part of helping families pick out the perfect tree for their family. There are families that come back each year, they have made West Tree Farm a part of their family Christmas tradition.

At an annually doctor's appointment it was discovered that my PSA levels were high. That led to additional testing which led to the diagnosis of prostate cancer. The blessing was that the surgery was successful in removing all the cancer. At this point I need to have quarterly checkups.

This church has been an important part of my whole life. From being in youth groups to chair of the congregation and several other titles in between. As the number of active members decreased, I found myself taking on more and more projects. As we put COVID behind us and we see the numbers on Sunday mornings slowly growing there are positive things to look forward to. One of the bright spots that we need to focus on in the next few years is all the kids. The number of kids is increasing which is a blessing. Bringing Sterling to church is a blessing that is dear

to my heart. With the increase of kids means more planning and organizing of activities for them.

Also, the planning committee has looked at other areas of the church to improve on. As we all know being organized is not one of my strong traits. Cody has taken the lead on chairing the planning committee and has done an excellent job. Julie has the organizational skills needed to help the church move forward. She has been working with the kids for the last several years. So, I have asked Cody and Julie to co-chair the congregation starting in 2025. I still plan to be active in church and help where ever I can. This Sunday I'm singing this song:

When it's all been said and done, there is just one thing that matters; Did I do my best to live for truth, did I live my life for You?

It doesn't matter if it's family, tree farm or church these are the things I strive for.

Jon West

JANUARY EVENTS

Jan. 4 **Taking down the tree and decorations 10:00am**

Jan. 5 **Epiphany Sunday**
Board meeting (after church)

Jan. 11 **Men's Group 8:00am**

Jan. 12 **Congregational Meeting (after church)**

Jan. 13 **Martha 1:00pm (church)**

SOUP KITCHEN NEWS

In the past year the Soup Kitchen has served 28, 201 meals, which averages out to about 2,350 a month. What a wonderful contribution to the community. A HUGE thank you to all the volunteers, who make serving a hot meal 3 days a week possible.

The Soup Kitchen could use the following items: dog food, cat food sleeping, men's jeans-sizes 30-36, napkins, sugar packets and tents. Please drop donations off between 11-3 on Monday, Wednesday and Friday's.

COFFEE HOUR

Jan. 5 Donna
Jan. 12 Nancey
Jan. 19 Myra
Jan. 26 Julie

WORSHIP LEADER

Jon West
Jon West
Jon West
Jon West

If you would like to help with **coffee hour** please talk to **Myra**, if you would like to be a **worship leader** please talk to **Julie**.

BIRTHDAYS

Jan. 1 Doris Westfall
Jan. 6 Solomon Toquero
Jan. 13 Jason Morgan
Jan. 15 Curt Christie
Jan. 17 Kelly Tamerius
Jan. 22 Susie Phillips
Jan. 24 Alyssa Vogt

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Office Hours

Monday Myra 9:30-12:30
Thursday Julie 8:30-11:30

