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The people of The United Methodist Church™

# The Hilltopper

New Hope United Methodist Church's Monthly Newsletter

## January 2019

### New Year Resolutions

By: Rod Ellison

In many circles, New Year's Resolutions have become more of a joke than a serious attempt at changing behavior or life-style for the better. You will most likely recognize the scenario below, because it has been around for some time. Nevertheless, it still makes the point of how resolutions evolve to fit our current lifestyle, rather than transforming over lives for the better.

- ~ I will get my weight down.
- ~ I will watch my calories.
- ~ I will try to develop a realistic attitude about my weight.
- ~ I will exercise more.

While the scenario is humorous, it also serves to illustrate the futility of nebulous objectives; Christians need to stay away from such vague goals. Without fidelity of purpose, our lives become ships without rudders and are carried away by currents in a sea of sin. That is why Paul reminds us that we are pursuing the greatest goal of all: "I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." (*Philippians 3:14*)

I know many people who never makes plans; they are content to leave everything to chance. However, as followers of Christ, we are doubly blessed because we know both our purpose and our goal. However, we must dedicate ourselves because our goal cannot be achieved by accident or coincidence.



That is why it is crucial for us to be specific in setting goals that will bring us into a right relationship with God:

- A. Be more God-like (Live a life of love).
- B. Recognize the value of time (Do more for God).
- C. Do not become a slave to the past (Let go and let God).
- D. Establish Godly priorities (Big things first).
- E. Shun the evil of this world (Let your light shine).

To be a Christian is to be part of an intentional and committed community. It is not enough for us to make resolutions at the beginning of the year. Christianity requires us to - "*Resolve to grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord.*" (*II Peter 3:18*)

*We are* doubly blessed because we have Christ as an example and God's inspired word to guide us in our resolve. Just as Paul instructed Timothy, we also should resolve to be diligent in our study of the scriptures. Christians never stop learning and a frequent, consistent study of scripture is essential to our growth. (*II Timothy 2:15*)

Finally, Peter instructs us to resolve to grow in our faith:

"But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. . . . Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." (*2 Peter 1:5-11 NKJV*)

Pray that all of us will grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord and receive God's blessings of a happy and prosperous New Year!

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## **Lectionary Readings for January**

### **January 6**

Isaiah 60: 1-6  
Psalm 72:1-7; 10-14  
Ephesians 3:1-12  
Matthew 2:1-12

### **January 20**

Isaiah 62:1-5  
Psalm 36:1-10  
1 Corinthians 12:1-11  
John 2:1-11

### **January 13**

Isaiah 43:1-7  
Psalm 29  
Acts 8:14-17  
Luke 3:15-17; 21-22

### **January 27**

Nehemiah 8:1-3; 5-6; 8-10  
Psalm 19  
1 Corinthians 12:12-31  
Luke 4:14-21



# What a busy December we had here at New Hope UMC!



With everything from our 2nd Annual New Hope Christmas Parade, to our outgoing Lay Speaker, Kim Maugans delivering the message during Sunday Worship, to our annual church-wide Christmas Dinner, to the decorating of

our Chrismon tree, to the decorating of the Sanctuary with poinsettias - *honoring and remembering those we love*, to our celebration of Advent, to our very first Parent's Shopping Day Out...



...We also had our Christmas Cantata, our Christmas Eve Service and Remembrance Sunday - *to honor and remember members of our church family who went to be with the Lord in 2018.*



We thank everyone who helped us make 2018 at New Hope UMC a blessing for all of us, as we continue to reach out into our local communities and around the world, to act as the body of Christ here on earth and to share the good news of Jesus with as many people as possible! **May New Hope UMC continue to be a blessing in 2019!**





# Christmas Cantata 2018





# Christmas Eve Service 2018

**Chloe  
Breeding  
&  
Pastor  
Shin**



**Young Ju  
Lee**

**David Jaewook  
Jeon**





**BIRTHDAYS** and  
**ANNIVERSARIES**

**3** - Sam Arnold  
- Dana Breeding  
- Jack Walker

**4** - Michelle Chittum  
- Brooke Darrah

**5** - Dave Critzer  
- Bucky Darrah  
- Shirley Western

**6** - Gary Campbell  
- Michael Herman  
- Phyllis Jarvis

**7** - Kristin Walker Kniss

**9** - Barbara Arndt  
- Jacob Schreckhise

**10** - Vinda Shaver

**11** - Jackie Wilberger

**12** - Phyllis Fretwell

**13** - Amanda Corbett

**14** - Will Bergman


**17** - Mildred Hartman  
- Candice Kincaid  
- Jason Shiflett

**18** - Crystal Abbe  
- Lynn Shaver

**19** - Kathy Campbell  
- Gina Davis

**20** - Michael Breeding  
- John Western  
- Laura Jenner

**21** - Kenny Fretwell

**22** - Heather Abbe Fitcham  
-  Bob & Jean Critzer

**24** - William Critzer

**25** - Christian Deavers  
- Richard Ritchie

**26** - Jeremy McLaughlin

**28** - Gary Lewis

**31** - Denise Duncan





*Due to the holiday season, we did not have a Church Council meeting in December, but check back in our next month's issue for minutes from our upcoming January meeting.*

**May All Of Your Troubles Be As Short As Your New Year's Resolutions!**

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(See John 2:1-11)

12-31-1998

HEY JESUS, I HOPE TO SEE YOU AT THE NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY ... I'M BRINGIN' LOTS OF WATER





## **Nurse's Health Corner**

The phrase 'healthy lifestyle' is an abbreviated definition of how you should live if you want to get the healthiest body you can - one that both looks good and feels good. You know the obvious behaviors that describe someone who is healthy and takes care of themselves. A healthy person doesn't smoke, tries to maintain a healthy weight, eats healthy foods with plenty of fruits, vegetables and fiber and, of course, exercises on a regular basis.

Then there are other elements to add to the list. A healthy person also knows how to manage stress, gets good quality sleep each night, doesn't drink too much, doesn't sit too much—basically, does everything in moderation all the time. When you look at everything that could possibly go into a healthy lifestyle, you can see just how hard all of those things are in our current world.

The good news is, you don't have to change everything at the same time. In fact, the trick to healthy living is making small changes—taking more steps each day, adding fruit to your cereal, having an extra glass of water, or saying no to that second helping of buttery mashed potatoes. One thing you can do right now to make your lifestyle healthier is to move more.

### **Here's Why You Need Move More**

You know you need to exercise, but there are many excuses not to do it. You're too busy, don't know where to start, you're not motivated or you're afraid you'll injure yourself. Maybe you think exercise has to be really hard or it isn't good enough.

Whatever definition you have about what exercise is or isn't, the bottom line is that exercise is movement. Whether it's walking around the block or running a marathon, that movement is exercise and every time you move more than you normally do, it counts.

It's great if you can spend time exercising—meaning you're sweating, working in your target heart rate zone, or doing something to strengthen your body. But it doesn't always have to be that way. Moderate activities like chores, gardening and walking can make a difference.

### **The Benefits of Moving More**

The great thing about moving is that just a few minutes a day can have lasting benefits, many of which you may not even be aware of.

*Just some of the benefits include:*

- Reduces the risk of heart disease, stroke, and diabetes
- Improves joint stability
- Increases and improves range of motion
- Helps maintain flexibility as you age
- Maintains bone mass
- Prevents osteoporosis and fractures
- Improves mood and reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression
- Enhances self-esteem
- Improves memory in elderly people
- Reduces stress

Even if you opt for small changes and a more modest weight loss, you can see the benefits are still pretty amazing.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention notes that if you are overweight, reduction of 5 to 10 percent of your total body weight can help lower blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood sugar.

In fact, you don't even have to have a goal to lose weight, especially if you have trouble sticking to a program. Why not focus on being healthy to start and worry about the weight loss once you've got some healthy habits under your belt?

### **Simple Ways to Move Your Body**

You can start the process of being healthy and now by adding a little more activity to your life. If you're not ready for a structured program, start small. Every little bit counts and it all adds up to burning more calories.

~ Turn off the TV and computer. Once a week, turn off the TV and computer and do something a little more physical with your family. Play games, take a walk, do almost anything that will be more active than sitting on the couch.

~ Walk more. Look for small ways to walk more. When you get the mail, take a walk around the block, take the dog for an extra outing each day, or walk on your treadmill for five minutes before getting ready for work.

~ Do some chores. Shoveling snow, working in the garden, raking leaves, sweeping the floor - these kinds of activities may not be vigorous exercise, but they can keep you moving while getting your house in order.

~ Pace while you talk. When you're on the phone, pace around or even do some cleaning while gabbing. This is a great way to stay moving while doing something you enjoy.

~ Be aware. Make a list of all the physical activities you do on a typical day. If you find that the bulk of your time is spent sitting, make another list of all the ways you could move more - getting up each hour to stretch or walk, walk the stairs at work, etc.

### **Eating Well Without Being Miserable**

Eating a healthy diet is another part of the healthy lifestyle. Not only can a clean diet help with weight management, it can also improve your health and quality of life as you get older. You already know about the food groups and the fact that you should eat more fruits and vegetables and less processed foods. You probably have a list of things you know you should do for a healthier diet but, again, making too many changes at once can backfire. Going on a restrictive diet may make you crave the very foods you're trying to avoid.

Another approach is to look for ways to make smaller changes each day.

*Just a few ideas for changing how you eat include:*

~ Eat more fruit. Add it to your cereal, salads, dinners, or make it a dessert. Fruit is also a great snack after work or school to keep you going for dinner.

~ Sneak in more veggies. Add them wherever you can—a tomato on your sandwich, peppers on your pizza, or extra veggies in your pasta sauce. Keep pre-cut, canned, or frozen veggies ready for quick snacks.

~ Try a healthy salad dressing. If you eat full-fat dressing, switch to something lighter and you'll automatically eat fewer calories.

~ Eat low-fat or fat-free dairy. Switching to skim milk or fat-free yogurt is another simple way to eat fewer calories without having to change too much in your diet.

~ Make some substitutions. Look through your cabinets or fridge and pick three foods you eat every day. Write down the nutritional content and, the next time you're at the grocery store, find lower-calorie substitutes for just those three items.

Creating a healthy lifestyle doesn't have to mean drastic changes. Making small changes in how you live may seem like a slow process, and it is. You may adapt to change better when it doesn't require you to overhaul your entire life. Just pick one thing and work on that one thing every day, letting the rest of your life and habits stay the same. You may be surprised that those small changes really can make a difference.



# Kid's Corner

*(Parents please feel free to print this page for your kids to color while you read them the story.)*

## What It Means To Become Christian

by Sharla Guenther

The Bible is full of stories about interesting people and the amazing things they've gone through. There's Jonah and the whale, Daniel and the Lion's Den, and Noah's Ark just to name a few. All these stories are very interesting, but there is one common thing about them all, God listened and helped all these people.

Even though these stories happened many, many, many years ago, God was always there for them and he can do the same for you. Even though these men couldn't see God, they seemed to know that He was always with them and trusted Him.

If we believe in God and obey what he said we ask a special part of Jesus to live inside us, that's what it means to

become a Christian, Christ-in you.

When you ask to Jesus into your heart it's just like accepting a gift from God. When someone gives you a gift do you take it and open it up or do you give it back because you don't want it?

When we accept the gift of Jesus amazing things automatically happen. We become a part of God's family and His family is full of people who believe in God and have asked Jesus to live in them too.



Another great thing that happens is that Jesus' Spirit comes to live in us. That means a part of Jesus will always be with us, so if we're ever in trouble, scared, or need someone to talk to He will always be there.

The last exciting thing about becoming a Christian is that we will someday get to live in heaven with God and all of His family. Heaven is a wonderful place God has made for us to live with Him. There is no hurt or sickness there, just happiness all the time (we might even be able to fly)!

We'll also be able to see God everyday and live with Him. Heaven is a place God has saved for all those who believe in Him, who have asked Him into their hearts, and who try to live the way he wants us to. God made earth for everyone, so imagine how great God's home will be for just the people that love Him. It's a place where we will live forever!

If you want to become a Christian and have 'Christ-in' you there are a few important things you need to know and believe:

- God loves you and made you for a reason.

That means God loves you know matter what you've done. He made us even though He knew we wouldn't be perfect, but He wants us to do our best to live the way He asks us to in the Bible.

We're alive because God made us for a reason. By using the talents he gave you and sharing his love, you will be doing the special thing God made you for.

- We sin which makes us separate from God.

Sin is doing something we shouldn't do. That includes bad thoughts or being jealous of others, how we talk, and the bad things we do (and we all have sinned over and over again)! The trouble is that God can't stand sin because He's perfect. Ever since Adam and Eve ate from the tree in the garden God couldn't have the same relationship with us. So...

- Jesus came to earth to die on the cross so that our sin (the things we do wrong) could be forgiven and then He rose from the dead.

Now we can have a better relationship with God because when Jesus died he took the punishment we deserve for all our mistakes. Our sin is like dirt. If we get dirty, we have to do something to wash it off. So when we ask for forgiveness (or say we're sorry to God) God washes the sin away and he sees us as clean or perfect, and we can have a relationship with Him again.

- Now I want to obey God and do what He wants. I want to please God and do things his way instead of doing things my own way.

That's the free gift! By asking Jesus into your life and trying to live your life to please Him, God forgives you and you will be able to live with God forever in Heaven! Being a Christian is great, but that doesn't mean it will always be easy. There is still 'bad' in the world but as Christians we always have God and other Christians to turn to. You will never be alone again!

Some people (even adults) think that as long as they're nice to others and do the right thing or if their parents are Christians that will get them into heaven someday, but that's not true. **You** have to decide that you accept God's gift and tell God you want it. Once you do that Jesus automatically lives in you.

If you've decided that you want to accept the free gift you need to talk to God and tell him that. Here is a prayer that you can say:

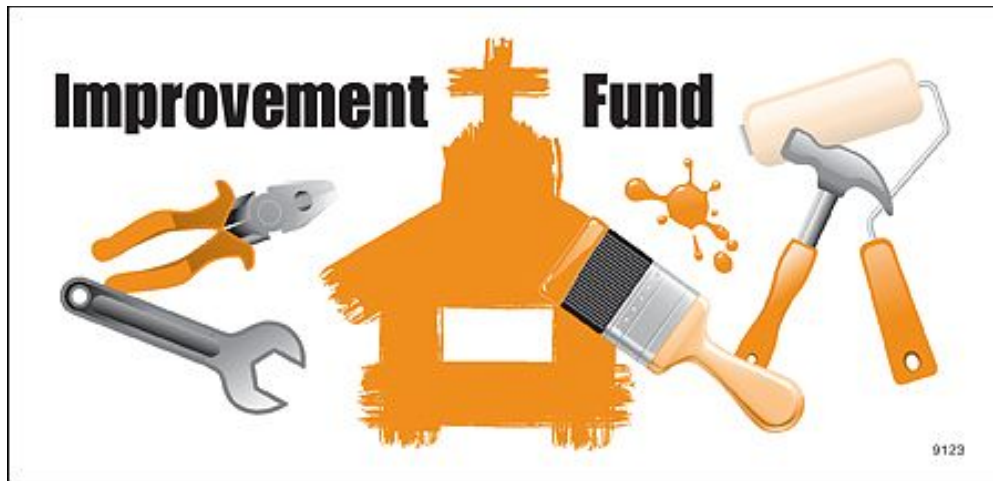
Jesus I'm sorry for all the things I've done wrong and I want to say I'm sorry and ask for forgiveness. I believe that Jesus died on the cross for me to pay for my mistakes. I invite you to come into my life so you can wash all the sin away. From now on I'm going to try to please you. Thank-you for loving me Jesus! Amen.

If you've prayed that prayer you're a Christian! Jesus lives inside of you right now and he's washed all the sin away!

Please let someone know (your Sunday School teacher, parent, pastor) if you prayed the prayer. An adult can help you or answer any questions you might have (after all they are your second family now). And try to stay clean. God washed your sin away but you will still make mistakes. You need to continually ask God to forgive you and while you're at it, talk to Him about anything else, He loves you and wants to hear from you.

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." **2 Corinthians 5:17**





We are still in need of contributions for the Building Fund that will help us pay down our bill for the new Heating & Cooling System. If you have any questions, please contact Kevin Armstrong.

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*If you would like to add an article or announcement to the Hilltopper, please contact The Hilltopper editor, Cindy Sheets at [cds3501@gmail.com](mailto:cds3501@gmail.com) or call/text at (540) 280-1860*

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