A New Year—A New You?

So then, if anyone is in Christ, that person is part of the new creation. The old things have gone away, and look, new things have arrived! 2 Corinthians 5:17 Common English Bible (CEB)

Are you like me and make New Year’s Resolutions only to break them by January 2? I have the best intentions at heart, but I find that my intentions alone can’t help bring the change to life that I desire. So what do we do? Try harder? Live in shame or guilt? Give up? I don’t think any of those are really options when we claim to follow Jesus, the Redeemer of Life.

If we want to see lasting and transforming change in our lives, then we have to surrender EVERYTHING—heart, soul, mind, money, children, spouse, work, etc.—to God in Jesus and trust the Holy Spirit to guide and strengthen us on the journey. We cannot change ourselves, we certainly cannot change others, but we can be changed when we seek to change in the strength of Christ. To do this we not only have to want it, but we have to partner with God in full surrender to His Lordship.

At our Annual Charge Conference in November, one of the guest speakers said something very bold. First he quoted JD Greear, President of the Southern Baptist Convention, “You are never farther from God than when you are close to God and say ‘No’.” Wow! Read that again...if we follow God and want to have God’s strength on us to change, then we cannot say, “No” to God about anything in our lives. After quoting Greear, Mark Elleessor of Compass UMC in the East District, said that we cannot claim that Jesus is Lord of our lives if we say no to him. Think about that. If you desire lasting change in your life, and you have asked God for help, then you have to do what he leads you to do. If you say Jesus is Lord, then he is master, and you cannot tell your master no.

This is why it is so important to surrender EVERYTHING. We become new people, new creations, in Jesus. He changes us and it is a lifelong journey of change. I have seen this evident in my own life. I wanted to change, I didn’t like being so negative and judgmental. So, I asked God to help me. You know that old adage, “Be careful what you ask God for—or pray for?” Well, God began bringing the change I asked for. At first I didn’t like it because I was used to being negative, to expect the worse, to see the bad. Now that God was working in my life, I was beginning to see the good, to hope for the best, and to have a positive outlook. It was a strange thing. Another thing that has happened to me is that I am less judgmental. I don’t make assumptions about people like I did. I still make assumptions about things; God will bring that change next, I assume. I have seen this at work in how I look at the people I learn from. Five or six years ago, I would never have been so optimistic about a quote from a Southern Baptist preacher, especially one who had been elected President of the Convention. But now, I don’t see that he is Southern Baptist, I see that what he said is true and that he can teach me about God and about life. God is changing me.

So, in 2019, my resolutions are few. I seek to continue this journey of transformation. I seek to have my mind, heart, attitude, outlook on life, and even my personality transformed each day by the God who created me, saved me, and gives me the strength daily to be a more Christ-like person. Will you join me on this journey for 2019? I pray you will!

See you Sunday,
Pastor Amy

Our mission is To Make Disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World.
At First UMC Decatur, we do that as we Connect in Community, Grow in Faith, Serve in Love
as followers of Jesus Christ.
Thank You

Dear Friends,
On behalf of all of us at Golden Meadows Home, I want to thank you for presenting a Thanksgiving Service for our residents. Everyone who attended told me that is was a beautiful service and they all enjoyed the goodies you brought for them. Your church family continues to be a great support to our residents throughout the year and we are very thankful to all of you. We wish your congregation a very Blessed Christmas and a wonderful New Year. Thank you very much for caring about our residents.

Sincerely,
Kristina A. Nichols
Administrator

FUMC Staff & Members,
Thank you very much for your donation! We greatly appreciate your generosity. Your partnership allows us to continue to love and serve individuals in our community! You’re a blessing to the clinic and the clients we serve :)

Thank you,
Kara & Kristin
Unfailing Love Clinic

Thanks to all who donated gifts to the Love INC Emmanuel Project.

Thank you, First UMC, for your continued generosity to your staff. We are so very grateful for the love and support you offer us each year at Christmas. May our ministry continue to be a blessing to you and our community!!

Pastor Amy and the Staff at First UMC

Dear Friends at First Church:
Thank you for all the remembrances I received this holiday season. They were greatly appreciated.
Also thanks to those who give of their time and talent in the Church office and to those who faithfully help with the newsletters each month.

God Bless You!
Janet Frauhiger

Sunday Soups are back!!!
On Sunday, January 20, we will have our first Sunday Soup of 2019. Plan to stay after the 10 o’clock worship service for chili and hot dogs and all the fixin’s in the Fellowship Hall. The proceeds from the lunch will go to our local mission projects. Hope to see everyone on the third Sunday in January for food and fellowship!!

January Birthdays
1/04 Ryan Brickley
1/04 Angie Geimer
1/04 Rochelle McBride
1/04 Donna Owens
1/04 Corey Wilson
1/06 Doug Rieth
1/08 Stan Allison
1/08 Mia Jackson
1/09 Elva Smith
1/12 Carson Friedt
1/13 Don Heimann
1/15 Remington Everett
1/15 Mandy Poling
1/18 Nateshia Witte
1/20 Lily Johnson
1/20 Phyllis Mills
1/22 Chris Everett
1/23 Colleen Gaunt
1/23 Dot Vanhorn
1/24 Katie Gent
1/24 Jenny Littler
1/25 Deb Porter
1/25 Gail Taylor
1/27 Chris Covington
1/27 Linda Drake
1/27 Beverly Hill
1/28 Jason Brune
1/29 Richard Evans
1/30 Helen Walters
1/31 Jane Friedt
1/31 Brendan Gilbert

January Anniversaries
1/09 Stan & Jane Allison
1/13 Rod & Teresa Simon
1/25 Richard & Janet Evans

Baby Shower for the Hope Clinic
We love babies! And we love their moms and dads! In support of Sanctity of Human Life month, we are providing you with the opportunity to purchase new baby items for the Hope Clinic in Decatur and Berns. We are hosting a church-wide baby shower during January, so that we can bless moms and dads who have chosen life for their child.

The following items that are always needed: diaper bags, diapers (especially sizes 4 or 5 or 6) and wipes, new baby equipment (cribs, mattresses, high chairs, baby gates, strollers, carrier infant car seats, car seats for up to 40 pounds, and toddler seats/boosters), crib sheets, laundry soap, potty chair or ring, pacifiers, teething toys, bottles and sippy cups, baby tableware, baby toys, baby clothes (newborn through 2T), receiving blankets and formula. We would especially like to have children’s books for infant through at least 3 years of age. Items not needed at this time include: baby powder and baby oil. For our mothers, we need gently used maternity clothes in sizes large and extra large that are suitable for the work place. Bring your Baby/Mom items to church and place them in the boxes at the rear of the Sanctuary starting January 6 through January 27.

Thanks!
Charlie Brune
260-223-1105
Baby Shower Coordinator for The Hope Clinic
HAPPY WINTER

The Hope Chest
The Little Shop with a Big Heart

The Christmas Jar project was a big success and with all our other projects we did this past year, we were able to help several families in the community have a much better year.

Thank you for your support,
The Hope Chest Staff
Tana's Colorful Words

Learning To Read

Children can begin learning to read at an early age using the whole word method, also called sight words. Point out signs reading McDonalds, Exit, STOP, even street signs, say the word together and soon they will be recognizing and reading words. How exciting for your child to say and you to hear “I know that word!”

A calendar on your refrigerator can encourage word recognition for the week days, months, holidays and even numbers. Parents are their child’s first teacher. Learning together can be fun!

You might also choose to put labels on household objects. Write the names of items (lamp, door, couch, table) on separate sticky notes. Help your child post each word on the correct object. Your child can walk around the house reading the words. The labels can become a flash card game when new labels are placed on different objects. Or have fun helping your child make their word book in a binder of words they’ve learned. A “picture walk” through a book as your child tells you what they see extends their word vocabulary. Learning is cool and fundamental!

Until the CRAYONS come out again!

That’s A Fact

Requirements for Level #2

November 21st, Paths to Quality state representative spent the day observing KFCCM. She rated the physicality, classrooms, and teaching techniques in order for KFCCM to qualify for advancement to Level #2.

* Provide an environment that is welcoming, nurturing, and safe for the physical, emotional, and social well-being of the children.
* Provide a variety of learning materials that reflect the age, interests, and abilities of each child.
* Provide for children's language and literacy skill development.
* Provide pertinent program information to families.
* Promote staff development and training.

She finished in my office with paperwork; her words of praise were as follows:

“You have a very clean facility! Your staff is very knowledgeable, in any situation that was presented in front of them, they handled with professionalism and kindness. It shows they are warm, kind, and loving care givers to the children. As I watched and looked around, I look forward to returning soon to move you to a level #3. Keep up the great work and the wonderful quality service to your community.”

KFCCM QUALIFIED FOR LEVEL #2!!!
# January 2019

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<td>6 pm-Faith 101</td>
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<td>5 pm-Fishes &amp; Loaves 6 pm-A Better Life -- Brianna's Hope</td>
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<td>9 am-District Staff Parish Relations Training</td>
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<td>11:15 am-Discipleship Groups</td>
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<td>3 pm-Bible Study 6 pm-Finance Committee 7 pm-Ad Council 7 pm-A.A.</td>
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HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Sunday, January 20

Sunday Soup