

Shepherd's Staff *We gather to worship, we go to serve our Lord.*

January 2017 "You will be my witnesses...to the ends of the earth!"

Parkersburg Christian Reformed Church

Sunday Worship 9:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m. ~ Church School 10:45 a.m. ~ Life Plus Wed., 6:30 p.m.

Looking Ahead

I am not big into New Year's Resolutions. They seem to minimize what Christ taught about letting our yes be yes and our no, no. If we need to make a promise to ourselves to accomplish something worthwhile, maybe we are not as seasoned in life as we should be as Christians. Still the idea of setting a goal for the year ahead is something I would like to propose for this year.

This idea came to me after reading Psalm 150. The call to praise God with the many different musical instruments resonated with me but left me wondering if this could be taken symbolically? What if WE are the instruments that are to bring the praise? I know the cacophony of sound the listed instruments could make would indeed be a joyous sound. So what if believers everywhere were to join hands, hearts, and voices in a chorus of praise to God?

Is it possible that this is what the Psalm writer was hoping for? More importantly, could this mighty sound quiet the multitude of voices trying to deny and drown out the hope found in the true knowledge of God? The list of musical instruments may be the entire collection known to the writer. I also wonder how the balance might be achieved if all these were played together. Still, we can almost hear the excitement the writer likely was picturing in his mind when we read this song.

While I do not hold out a great deal of hope for this kind of massive choir occurring any time soon, I do think that it could begin with each of us. A single voice singing praise could actually be contagious. We may be exactly what someone is needing to hear even though we may not know the impact our song makes. God is able to use us in powerful ways when we are willing to praise Him in all things, at all times, and in all places.

Having said all that, you may be thinking that this sounds like a New Year's resolution. Still resolutions are personal promises and I hope to make this a large goal for life. The question is, "Who will join in this goal to let the praise to God fill the earth?" A corporate goal of all believers from all walks of life may seem unachievable to some. Yet is this any different from what Psalm 150 is seeking? With all the technology we have today to reach the multitudes often being used for far less important material, maybe it is time to think and dream bigger.

If we are willing to be one church determined to let the praise of God fill the air we may very well be surprised at the impact that we may have. God still is in control and can use the simplest praises to do even more than we ask or imagine. So what have you to lose? After all, we are called to praise Him anyway. Why not make it a goal to start the singing so that the world may join in and praise God as we should? It may simply make the year 2017 the best!

Happy New Year! Pastor Rus

Cheesy Potato Soup (Cooking for Two)

2 slices bacon
3/4 cup chopped onion
2 1/2 cups diced peeled russet potatoes (about 3 small)
1/4 cup chopped celery
2 cups Progresso™ chicken broth (from a 32-oz carton)
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon pepper
1/4 cup all-purpose flour
3/4 cup half-and-half
1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese (from an 8 oz bag)

Notes:

- a. One-half cup fat-free half-and-half or milk can be substituted for the half-and-half.
- b. Add 1/4 cup sliced carrot with the vegetables.

In 10-inch skillet, cook bacon over medium heat, turning occasionally, until browned and crispy. Remove from skillet, reserving fat in skillet. Drain bacon on paper towel, then refrigerate. In same skillet, cook onion in bacon fat over medium heat 4 to 5 minutes, stirring frequently, until tender.

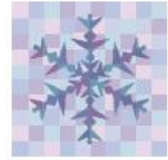
Spray 3- to 3 1/2-quart slow cooker with cooking spray. In cooker, mix onion, potatoes, celery, broth, salt and pepper.

Cover; cook on Low heat setting 6 to 7 hours.

In small bowl, beat flour and half-and-half with wire whisk until well blended; stir into soup. Increase heat setting to High. Cover; cook about 20 minutes longer or until thickened. Stir in cheese until well melted. Crumble bacon; sprinkle over soup.

From Pillsbury.com

Lord's Winter



Snowflakes are delicate pieces of glass
Gliding down from heaven.

Delicate snowflakes
Shining bright like Jesus.

A robin is a chorister, singing to the
Lord.

He's as small as your hand, searching
for food.

A cloud is a marshmallow, floating in
the sky.

Snow is a quilt warming the ground,
Waiting to be used.

Snow is a diamond sparkling to heaven,
Shining bright like Jesus.



Steven Bland



Recipe for Life

1 c. good thoughts
1 c. consideration for others
2 c. sacrifice for others
3 c. forgiveness
1 c. kind deeds
2 c. well-beaten thoughts
2 heaping cups patience

Mix these thoroughly and add tears of joy, sorrow, and sympathy for others. Flavor with little gifts of love. Fold in 4 cups of prayer and raise the texture to great heights of Christian living. After pouring all this into your daily life, bake well with the heat of human kindness.

Serve with a smile.

BULLETIN DIGEST via Colorado Springs, CO



January Birthdays/Anniversaries



Happy Birthday

- 1/6 Lila Reints
- 1/11 Dennis Mennen
- 1/16 Gerald Haan
- 1/17 Lauren Husz
- 1/18 Hermina Everts
- 1/22 Levi Hay
- 1/24 Arnie Swanson
- 1/28 Mary Boersma
- 1/30 Harold Coplen

Happy Anniversary

- 1/13 Larry & Mary Johnson

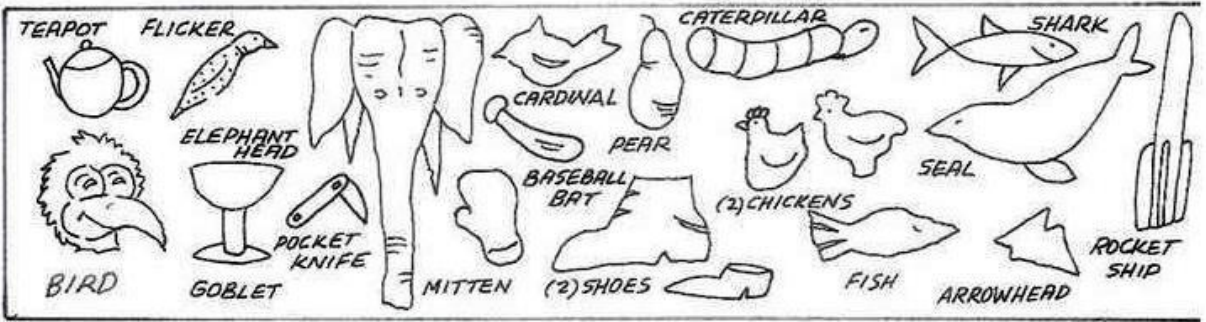
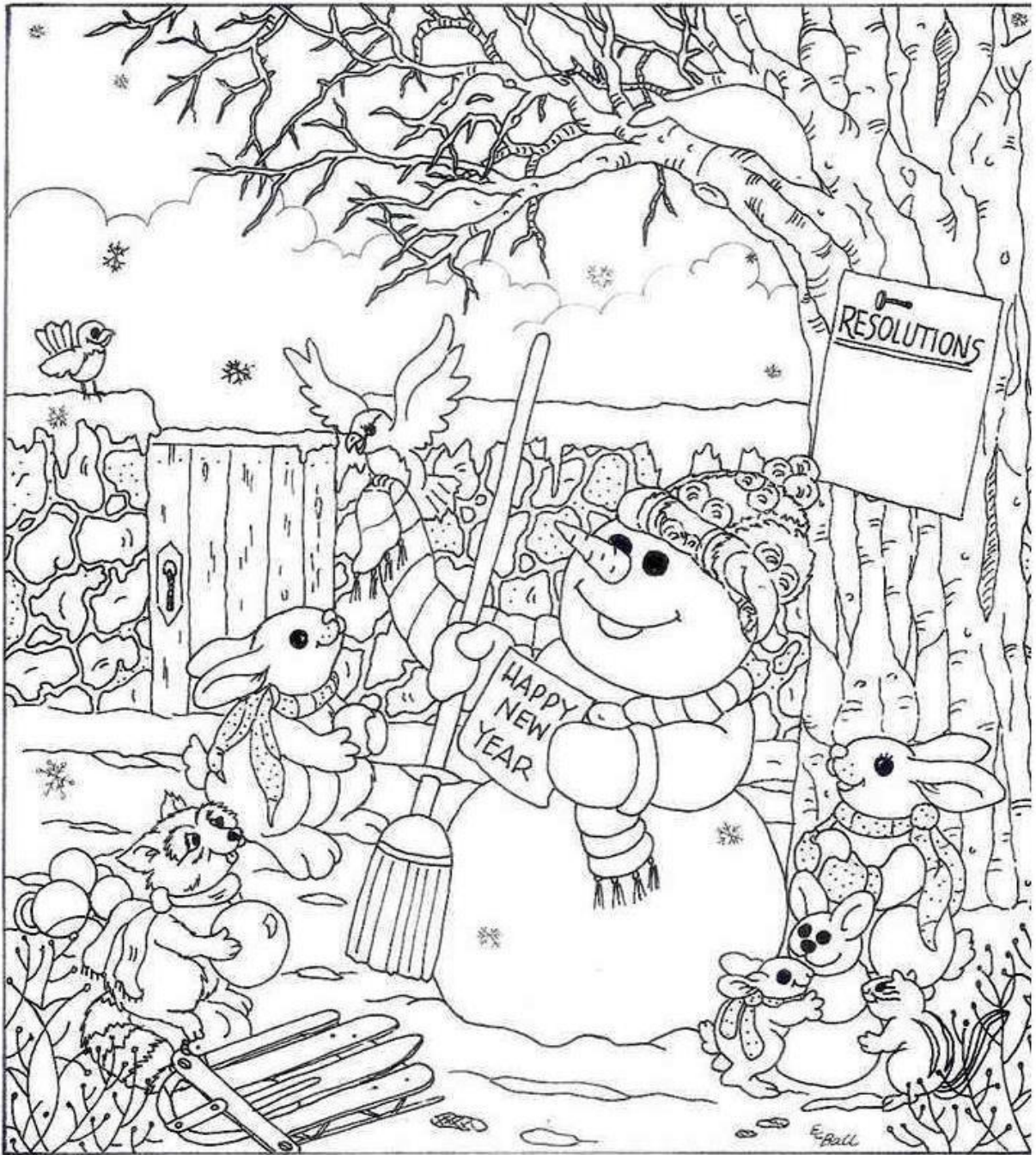


Reminder: If you have anything you'd like included in the Shepherd's Staff, please try to have it to Wendy Mulder by the 20th of the month.

	<i>Greeters</i>	<i>Ushers</i>	<i>Sunday School Teachers w/Lesson Topic[#]</i>		<i>Coffee*</i>
1/1	Gene & Janet (N)	Gerald			Pat & Deb
	Ken & Jan (S)				
1/8	Pat & Deb(N)	Mark K.	Ryan & Stacy	David & Goliath	Ryan & Stacy
	Bernie & Herm (S)		Jodi	Spiritual Bodies	
1/15	Don & Annie (N)	Delbert	Kayla & Shelly	Samson's Riddle	Dennis & Lois
	Henry & Kathy (S)		Brooke	Treasure in Clay Jars	
1/22	Mark & Lanae(N)	Ken Meester	Amy & Kay	Sing Praise to the Creator	Joel & Brandy
	Irv & Amy (S)		JoLynne	Giving Generously	
1/29	Pastor Rus & Mary (N)	Ken Johnson	Kamie & Nancy	Good Men & Women	Kevin & Shelly
	Delbert & Sharon (S)		Brandy & Joel	The Greatness of Knowing Christ	

*If you are unable to serve coffee on your Sunday as listed, please find your replacement. Thank you.

#The teacher schedule and lessons will be in the bulletin. You can always check the website as well- the bulletin is always on there (even before Sunday!!) www.parkersburg-crc.org If you need to change a Sunday, please call one of the teachers.



Hidden Picture by Liz Ball