

Shepherd's Staff

January 2014

We gather to worship, we go to serve our Lord.

"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.

I Resolve by Pastor Rus

I don't know where you stand on New Years resolutions but I have one that I like to recycle year after year. The trouble is that as soon as I make it I have broken it! It is not a diet that I resolve but even more fundamental. My annual resolution is: "I resolve to not make New Years resolutions!" You see my dilemma! Yet what we resolve to do can be very good if we strive for the correct things.

World peace is not likely to depend upon any of us but we can resolve to be kinder to our family and neighbors. We may not be able to feed the world from our gardens but sharing with those around us may bring a blessing to both the recipient and ourselves. Of course, there are also the personal resolutions, cleaning out our closets, taking on (and finishing) projects that have been put off too long. Even these may prove helpful but....

Maybe we should look to making life changes for a more biblical reason. When looking at the instruction Paul is giving the church in Philippi we find Paul giving direction to our resolutions. Philippians 3:12 shows Paul realizing we have not reached our goal but that we are to keep striving (the resolving part!). Paul also tells us we are to "forget what is behind and strain toward what is ahead." Living out who we are takes two steps, forgetting what is not changeable, the past! We can not undo what we have done or the wrong choices we have made. While we may fret over these we do have the promise of God that He forgets, even casts them into the "sea of forgetfulness!" If God is willing to forget why do we keep holding on?

Next we find that Paul reminds us that moving forward is something requiring effort. Striving toward what is ahead is what we are to do. We are not spectators in life but to be participants. Doing what we resolve is more important than making the resolution! Words can come easily but the follow through is not always as easy. Experts tell us that to become a habit, we must repeat the activity we are longing to reproduce twenty-one times. Maybe that is what Paul had in mind. In Philippians 3:14, Paul tells us, "I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God is calling me heavenward in Christ Jesus."

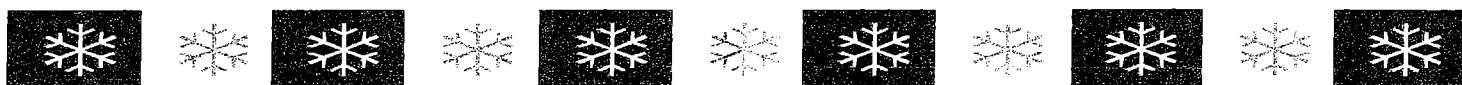
The resolution has a clear, distinct goal! Winning what is ours in Christ Jesus! While we are saved by grace, the fruit of our salvation is seen in what we do! This brings me back to New Years resolutions. How many of us resolve to live out our salvation to the fullest? It is likely we all have areas of our lives that can be more completely given to God. Can you imagine the joy we will have knowing that we have moved closer to our Savior in our everyday lives? We also can know that the joy is not only ours but also resounding in heaven!

Maybe there is hope for New Years resolutions. We simply need to make sure they are in keeping with who we are as children of God! Living out our faith as we strive to be the children God wants us to be is always worthy of our effort. Not only is this something we can do but we are promised help in the very person of the Holy Spirit. God is pulling for us as we strive to press on for the goal. Maybe it is time to rethink resolutions?

WORLD MISSIONS NEWS: Joel and Patty Hogan, missionaries in the Philippines, trekked out to a remote region to share the gospel with the Mamanwa people. While talking with an elderly woman, they found out that they held an ancient belief that an amananubos, a savior, would come and end their need for blood sacrifices. Joyfully, the Hogans told her that the amananubos, known as Jesus, had already come 2000 years ago. She stood up and said what? You mean to tell me he came 2000 years ago and nobody bothered to come up to the mountain to tell us? Her question is one that the missionaries have never forgotten. Thank God that people like Larry and Ann Vanderaa and Mike and Victoria Van Der Dyke, as well as many others, are spreading the news to those who have never heard. Please keep them in your prayers and find ways that you can help tell others yourself.



Sunshine Circle News: We are enjoying our study of the Book of Proverbs. We had a good time at our Christmas Tea and collected \$120.00 for the Christmas Cheer Project. We will be going to Maple Manor several times next year to help with Bingo. Our "Make A Joyful Noise" (formally Hostess Supper) will be March 9, 2014 so mark your calendar now. Hope to see you there!



An Atheist's View on Life

I will live my life according to these beliefs
God does not exist
It is just foolish to think
That there is a God with a cosmic plan
That an all-powerful God brings redemption and healing to the pain and suffering in the world
Is a comforting thought, however
It
Is only wishful thinking
People can do as they please without eternal consequences
The idea that
I am deserving of Hell
Because of sin
Is a lie meant to make me a slave to those in power
"The more you have, the happier you will be"
Our existence has no grand meaning or purpose
In a world with no God
There is freedom to be who I want to be
But with God
Everything is fine
It is ridiculous to think
I am lost and in need of saving

A Christian's View on Life

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January Birthdays/Anniversaries



Happy Birthday

- 1/4 Jessica Cordes
- 1/6 Lila Reints
- 1/7 Harold Kalkwarf
- 1/11 Dennis Mennen
- 1/11 Lisa Meether
- 1/16 Gerald Haan
- 1/17 Ryan Meester
- 1/17 Lauren Husz
- 1/20 Ellen Hanna
- 1/22 Levi Hay
- 1/24 Arnie Swanson
- 1/28 Mary Boersma
- 1/30 Harold Coplen

Happy Anniversary

- 1/13 Larry & Mary Johnson
- 1/16 Dale & Mary Vry

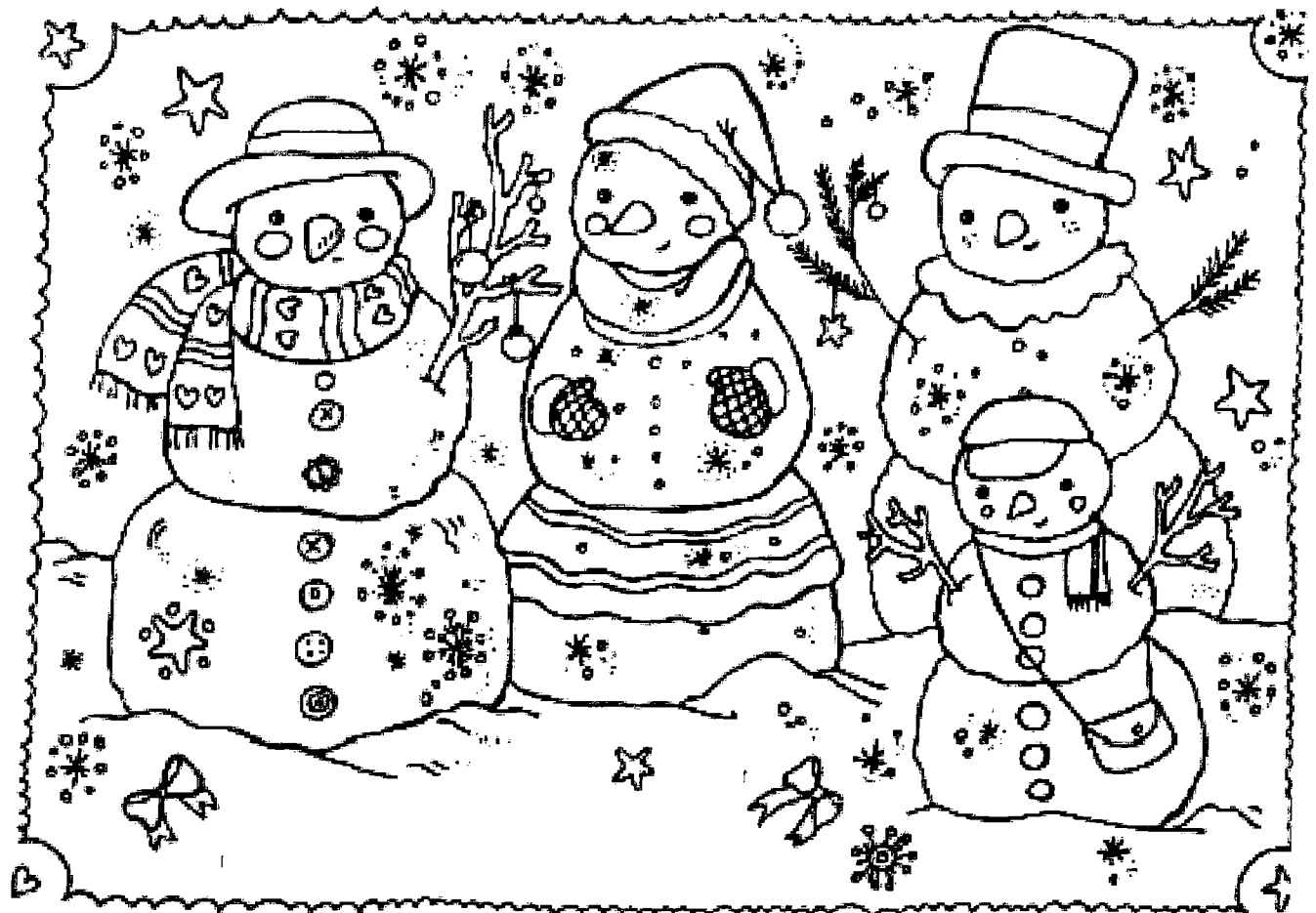


Reminder: If you have anything you'd like included in the Shepherd's Staff, please try to have it to Wendy Mulder by the 20th of the month. The goal is to have the newsletter in your mailboxes on the last Sunday of the month.

CRC Service Schedule

	<i>Greeters</i>	<i>Ushers</i>	<i>Coffee*</i>
1/5	Mark & Lanae (N) Ken & Janet (S)	Gerald Haan	Paul & Gerald
1/12	Pastor Rus & Mary (N) Henry & Kathy (S)	Ken Mehmen	Mary Vry, Mary Boersma
1/19	Jean Trey (N) Delbert & Sharon (S)	Ken Johnson	Kevin & Shelly
1/26	Cory & Kamie (N) Ken & Rhonda (S)	Mark Kramer	Dennis & Lois

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



Find The Differences!

