

Shepherd's Staff

January 2015

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.

Editor's note: Due to a death in the family, we weren't able to get a new Pastor's story inserted. **I Resolve** is reprinted from January 2014.

I Resolve by Pastor Rus

I don't know where you stand on New Year's 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 Year's 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 cannot 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 Year's 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 Year's 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?

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

HOLD ON TIGHT



Recipe for Life

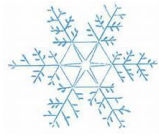
- 1 c. good thoughts
- 1 c. consideration for others
- 2 c. sacrifice for others
- 3 c. forgiveness
- 1 c. kind deeds
- 2 c. well-beaten thoughts
- 2 heaping cups patience

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.

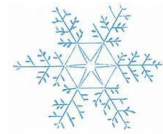
Serve with a smile.

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
 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>
1/4	Ken & Rhonda (N) Pastor Rus & Mary (S)	Gerald Haan	Paul & Gerald
1/11	Sylvia & AnnaMae (N) Jean Trey (S)	Mark Kramer	Mary Vry, Mary Boersma
1/18	John & Karen (N) Cory & Kamie (S)	Delbert Cordes	Kevin & Shelly
1/25	Steve & Charlene (N) Kevin & Shelly (S)	Ken Meester	Dennis & Lois

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

WINTER WORD SEARCH



Created by
Sue Lindlauf
Grand Forks Herald
2010

W	E	A	T	H	E	R	W	G	S	F	P	S	F	M
O	H	J	V	O	L	J	O	N	J	V	H	N	J	J
K	F	R	A	C	S	M	E	O	K	O	L	O	M	G
D	R	H	B	P	T	T	D	P	V	B	P	W	W	N
I	E	L	J	Q	T	O	I	E	L	J	Q	F	O	I
W	E	P	N	I	W	K	L	I	P	N	S	L	K	T
S	Z	Q	M	W	Q	D	S	D	Q	M	F	A	D	A
N	I	A	K	S	B	I	U	W	A	K	F	K	I	K
A	N	S	L	I	D	E	I	S	S	L	U	E	W	S
M	G	W	J	C	D	L	L	A	W	J	M	D	S	W
W	W	X	I	D	S	N	O	W	X	I	R	B	U	X
O	C	C	U	F	D	D	P	C	C	U	A	D	D	C
N	V	D	O	M	G	G	N	I	D	D	E	L	S	D
S	B	E	P	I	C	C	R	E	T	N	I	W	C	E
F	S	L	I	P	P	E	R	Y	R	T	A	H	H	R

See how many of these words you can find in the puzzle. The words can be forward, backward or diagonal.

- | | | | |
|------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| 1. Snow | 5. Shovel | 9. Slippery | 13. Scarf |
| 2. Snowman | 6. Cold | 10. Slide | 14. Hat |
| 3. Winter | 7. Freezing | 11. Sledding | 15. Earmuffs |
| 4. Weather | 8. Snowflake | 12. Skating | 16. Mittens |