

# Our Journey Together

*All the Law has been fulfilled in a single statement:  
Love your neighbor as yourself. ~ Galatians 5:14*

I have been thinking about the above Scripture, and the others like it that commend us to love our neighbors as ourselves, but we rarely talk about what loving ourself really means. I came across a writing by Donna Ashworth that speaks to how many people feel at this time of year. She writes:

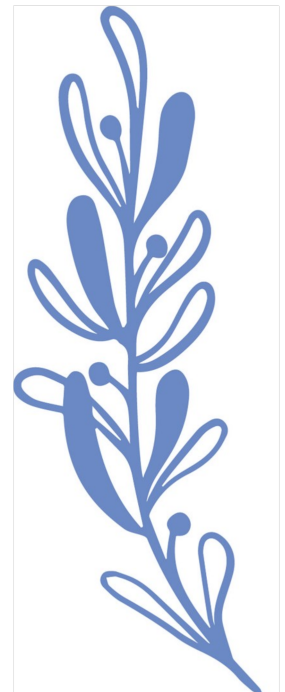
For many, January is a hard, cold month... When everyone is setting new goals, laying down righteous ground rules and striving to become a better version of themselves, some of us are fighting to find ourselves each day... You see, December is a month of giving, and some of us, come January, are completely and utterly spent. A month of remembering everyone, and remembering absolutely everything. A month of including everyone and of reaching out to each and every person we have ever known. A month of reaching breaking point every day trying to have fun, to be the ultimate hostess, to be the perfect guest. A month of stretching ourselves financially, emotionally and of letting our boundaries be breached by many... in the spirit of the season. And then January hits and bam... before we can even begin the arduous task of clearing away the festivities, we are expected to jump on the 'new year, new you' bandwagon and transform ourselves entirely. For some of us this is just too much. January is the darkest and most depressing month of the year and for many sensitive souls, the barrage of 'advice' on how we 'should' be living, is just too much. So perhaps this is a safe place to say that maybe it's okay to take a week or two to recover and to just be kind to ourselves before demanding better. And for those of us who really do fall low in the darkest month of the year. For those of us who have given too much and to whom the future looks bleak - perhaps this is the right place to say - you are absolutely fine the way you are. Just stay. Take some time to breathe. Take some time to not think about anything much at all except breathing in and breathing out. Take some time to build back up, not tear your yourself down. For many, this month is a mountain that looks unclimbable. Be kind, my friends. Always.

Be kind to yourselves, or you will have nothing left to give others. Take care of yourselves, friends, that is the first step to loving others as yourself.

Pastor Teresa

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## Content Due

Do you have items you would like included in next month's newsletter? If so, please have them into the church office no later than Jan 23.





There is still time to choose when you would like to serve as an Usher & Greeter. Ideally, we would have 4 people scheduled each week. The sign up sheet is in the office, and will be passed in worship. Here are the next few weeks of the Usher schedule:

**Jan 1, 8, 15—Mike, Shelley, Erin, & Margaret Moncur**

**Jan 22 & 29—Still available**

**Feb 5 & 12—Doug & JoAnn Testerman**

**Feb 19, 22 (Ash Wed) & 26—Royce & Linda Blackburn**

If you need to miss a week in which you are scheduled to usher, it is your responsibility to find someone to fill in for you.

Please remember also, there are other ways in which you can help serve the church. We are always looking for folks to serve coffee fellowship, to be communion stewards, and lead small groups.

## Financial Update from Administrative Council

### Financial Update as of November 30, 2022:

2022 General Fund Income Year to Date: \$189,536.91

2022 General Fund Expenses Year to Date: \$158,270.61

General Fund Difference: **\$31,266.30**



Pastor Teresa and Virgil would like to thank all of you who blessed us with holiday cards, gifts, good wishes, etc. You each are such a blessing to us, and we are so thankful that we are in ministry with you.

Also, many thanks go out to all who contributed to make our Advent and Christmas services so meaningful. From those who helped decorate the sanctuary, to all those who participated in the Advent candle readings, or Scripture readings, or providing special music, or helping the children prepare their Christmas program. You all help make the season so very special!

### **Birthdays:**

Jan 1 Bonnie Hall

Jan 3 Roger Zens

Jan 7 Jerry Cotton

Jan 8 Connie Fawcett

Jan 9 Gloria Porter

Jan 9 Kade Whetsel

Jan 11 Andrew Canham

Jan 11 Abby Hasart

Jan 12 Marlys Aune

Jan 13 Bryan Breitling

Jan 13 Kay Lynn Burnham

Jan 13 Preslie Russell

Jan 15 Shannon Becker

Jan 19 Hagen Fritzsche

Jan 20 Scott Bowar

Jan 22 Marshall Conkey

Jan 22 Karen Steptoe

Jan 23 Jim Henson

Jan 23 Doris Slunecka

Jan 24 Myles Deuter

Jan 24 Dwight Greenough

Jan 24 Eric Hasart

Jan 25 Larry Ames

Jan 28 Kelly Fernholz

Jan 30 Rita Ellsworth

### **Anniversaries:**

Jan 4 Bill & Ellen Canham

Jan 7 Joe & Lisa Fritzsche

Jan 9 Colton & Amber VanDerWerff

Jan 27 Lee & Beverly Cain



**JANUARY BIRTHDAYS  
& ANNIVERSARIES**

# January 2023

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8 POTLUCK DINNER 	9	10  United Women in Faith Ranch Café 1:30pm	11  United Women in Faith	12	13	14
15	16 Leadership Team Meeting 4pm 	17	18 Work Day 10-2 Trinity Lutheran 	19  FEEDING SOUTH DAKOTA Food Truck Noon-1pm	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

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## Pursue Jesus — and your passions



If you struggle with making and keeping resolutions, you're not alone. It can be discouraging to focus on what you're doing "wrong" and all the difficult changes in store. Yet January offers great opportunities to listen to God's direction. After all, Jesus came to give us abundant life and wants us to pursue him.

As you review the previous year, ask: What brought me joy? How did I grow? How did I help others? What did I do that no one else could have done? Whether your list includes spending time outside, mentoring or coaching young people or making crafts to give away or sell, continue doing what brings you joy. God gives us each unique gifts and circumstances, so live passionately for him this year!

—Janna Firestone