

## **Pastor's Letter for the January, 2018 edition of Trinity Tidings**

### ***PARSON TO PERSON***

Dear Friends:

The thought of a brand new year fills me with some feelings of discomfort. There are several reasons for this. First, and foremost, are the resolutions I made for the previous New Year. I resolved to lose weight. Did I? (Yes!) I resolved to exercise more. (ummmm, not so much). I resolved to not be as much of a procrastinator as I have been for much of my life. (Remind me NOT to make that resolution again this year!) The rest of the resolutions I made last year I cannot remember today. I am certain they were worthy resolutions and I am somewhat convinced I made a perfectly reasonable effort to achieve them.....but since I can't remember them, I can't really say that I was successful in the effort.

It strikes me that the practice of making New Year's resolutions is a pointless effort. I think that most of us have the very best of intentions when we make them, but for many of us they tend to be the same resolutions year in, and year out. Many resolutions we try to accomplish we give great effort to in the first few weeks, but then they tend to fall by the wayside. Failing to achieve what we have resolved leaves us feeling embarrassed and/or guilty, and who needs that?

So this year I refuse to make a single New Year's resolution.

Instead, I am taking a page from my effort in 2008. As the New Year approached, I decided to make a promise and a mission. I promised the Lord that I wanted to be His servant each day of the year. I took it as a mission that I would find a way each day to be alert to the opportunities that He would place before me to be a servant to someone. The results were surprising to me. I discovered that I was more aware of God's call to me. I wanted to serve someone, so I became much more conscious of the needs of people around me. Promising the Lord that I wanted to be used in this way meant that I had to view the little "interruptions" in life in a completely different attitude than I had before. I became excited with anticipation as I wondered who or what the Lord was going to put on my plate each day. I felt a sense of fulfillment when I discovered how I might help someone. Hearing a word of gratitude filled me with a sense of joy, and gave me the opportunity to tell that person to remember to offer thanks to God, because God was the One who placed me in their path.

So, this year I am repeating that effort. I am remembering the Old Testament scripture from Genesis 12, where God tells Abraham that God will offer blessing to Abraham so that he can be a blessing to others. That will be my request to the Lord for 2018. I am a servant. God has blessed me richly. I want to be a blessing to others. So my mission will be to seek the opportunities, to find the person that God wants me to bless each day. I want to be a voice and a witness to the God who has offered such great blessing to me! Throughout 2017, I have become aware of the ways that God has already been working through Chris and I to offer witness to the God who has called us to be a voice:

- In our community dealing with the Marijuana issue.
- Participating with the Brady Campaign to end gun violence.
- Becoming more aware of, and speaking about, the issue of Human Trafficking.
- Helping to teach our high school students to live their faith everyday.
- Helping to feed the hungry, both body and soul.
- Shining the Light of God's love to people who need that Light.

I am sensing some excitement in my spirit as I reflect on the ways that God may use Chris and I to serve you and our community in 2018. A promise and a mission strikes me as a far better way to approach a New Year than through a simple resolution. Will you accept my challenge to make your own promise and a mission for 2018? Tell me about it so we can tell the story to God's people right here in Chesaning!

Happy New Year!

Shalom,

Pastor Tim

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#### HELP ME TO REMEMBER

Listening God, who hears my conversations with friends,  
And not-so-friends each day, help me to remember  
To speak with love, even when I'm frustrated, to listen  
With interest when the other is speaking, to risk being  
Who I am each moment, so that my talk is both honest  
And kind. I ask this in Your name, God, for I hear You  
Whispering in my ear: pay attention to words and to the  
Value of silent spaces. Amen.

(This poem is from Ann Freeman Price, "[Alive Now](#)", Jan. 2017)