

Crystal Congregational Church

January 2021 Newsletter

Pastor's Desk

Quoting T. S. Eliot, January is "the cruelest month - mixing memory and desire....."

The stars of Christmas are still shining on to the portals of the New Year. As we get to our feet after worshipping the Babe of Bethlehem, the New Year arrives. It seems highly symbolic that the New Year and order get inaugurated at the worship of the Incarnated Son of God.

But for the ideational and imaginative charm of the New Year, there is actually nothing new about the Day! It is just like any other day. The newness is in the minds and thoughts of those who welcome it - the wait with the "past tense, present perfect" kind of feeling.

What are we celebrating at the face of the New Year? Do we have yet something left to celebrate?

The world has greatly lost the culture of innocence and selflessness. Everyone wants to be happy, at the expense of anyone or anything. The Bible tells us that novelty of all hues come from God only. Along with nature, we too are challenged to be new every day, shedding the evils and frustrations of yesterday. And that seems possible only and only if we are mentally prepared to hand over not only our anxieties, but the actual bridle of our lives in to the willing hands of the Babe of Bethlehem, "in whom we live, move and have our being". The moment we are mentally equipped and actually hand over the control buttons of our hearts and lives to Him, then comes the feeling of relief, a great burden off our back!

Newness is about convictions and the selfless human relationships. It is the company of those you mind in your life and the tenderness with which you care for the less fortunate around you! The New Year is for becoming new at heart and doing new things to bring hope in the life of someone around you to tell somebody in all earnestness, "Yes, I care...."

In theological parlance it is the time to restart our endeavor to regain the lost innocence, holiness and wisdom with which God entrusted us in the beginning. We need to build and rebuild structures of justice and innocence all around, where the human person can live in dignity, without fear and true to one's convictions. The culture of violence and exploitation and flexing of muscles by the mighty.....the show goes on, but there is still hope, so says the rays of Light emanating from the Manger!

Bethlehem tells us "still there is hope". Let us hold on to it. The Chinese do it literally, by throwing out all old things out of their houses at the time of the Chinese New Year. It is time for us to ponder and attempt to effect changes in our lives, and do things to make change for the better in someone else's life!

"Behold, I make all things new, says the Lord".

Our Journey Through the Christian Year

We are in the Season of **Proclamation**. The January (Epiphany) visit of the Magi to the house where the Christ-child, Mary and Joseph resided begins **PROCLAMATION** to all the world of God's upward call and eagerness to forgive.
Pastor Toliver

WISHING YOU ALL A BLESSED AND
FRUITFUL NEW YEAR!



From the Prudential Board

During a special meeting of the Prudential Board in November, we decided to take a "Pause" and not have in person services. Our hope is that the spread of COVID-19 will subside so that we can come back feeling safer than before. We will be having service on Facebook Live for everyone to see. If you do not have access to Facebook and would like to watch a DVD copy of the Sunday service, please contact the office on Tuesday's or anyone of the Prudential board members and we will get you the DVD and a DVD player if needed.

Also, please remember that even though we are not in person on Sundays, we still have a need for offerings to keep our church running smoothly. To date you have been generous and we will pray that with winter coming you will continue to tithe regularly. You can mail in your offering to the church or you can donate directly by downloading the App "Givelify", finding Crystal Congregational Church, Crystal, MI and donating (there is a Crystal Congregational Church in Illinois, so make sure you have the correct one). Thank you in advance for your support.

Happy New Year

Here are **January** Birthdays and Anniversaries for people of our church. If yours is missing or wrong, please inform the church office, so that we are up to date.



Birthdays

- 5 Caleb Duflo
- 7 Anthony Whitford
- 8 Barb Duflo
- 8 Marcia Seiter
- 10 Peggy Holland
- 10 Betty Steere
- 14 Shelly Weaver
- 20 Tim Bohan
- 23 Walt Ledin
- 29 Ben Merchant
- 30 Shannon Steere
- 30 Maria Schnepf
- 30 Victor Finch





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