



I've always thought that people get a little silly around New Year's—at least when it comes to making resolutions. The idea of a New Year's resolution is to take a moment at the close of one year to soberly reflect on life changes in the coming year. *I'd like to be a kinder person this year. I'd like to read more books this year. I'd like to start putting money into my savings this year.* That's the idea, anyway.

But what I've found to be the case more often than not—haven't you?— is that people tend to treat New Year's resolutions as a sort of magic spell. Say the right words at the right time with the proper amount of determination, and *voilà!* My life changes for as long as the magic lasts. You can see this especially in the way that people treat lapses in their resolutions. *"Well, I was going to go to the gym more this year, but that only lasted until the second week of February. There's always next year, I guess."*

I think it has to do with how we think about newness. We're a people perishing, aren't we? These bodies wither and age and die, and everything we touch gets a tarnish after a few years. As a result, we're always on the hunt for newness. We long to be new, to feel new—unless we've grown so tired that we despair of ever being made new. New Year's gives a sense of new purpose, of turning over a new leaf. Of course it doesn't last; it never could. It's a bit sad, don't you think, all these people rushing around looking for something to turn back the sand timers of their lives?

When Christ makes us new, he doesn't do it just for a season. Our newness doesn't wear off like the smell of a new car or the shine of a new appliance or that wonderful just-right snug feeling of brand new socks. Our newness lasts as long as Christ does. That's why Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5:17, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come." Think of it: old things have passed away! New things have come!

If you're like me, you don't always *feel* new in Christ. Perhaps it gives you cause to question your salvation, or to wonder how you managed to mess up your sanctification so badly. Paul has an answer for that in Ephesians chapter 4. He says that what we have learned in Christ is to "put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness" (Ephesians 4:22-24). How do we choose to act in the newness we have in Christ? By repenting and turning away from our sin (putting off), by allowing our minds to be confronted again and again with the message of the gospel (being renewed), and by choosing the walk in joyful obedience to the commands of the risen Christ (putting on)!

This season, don't try to feel new by dressing up the old man— rather, lean on Christ and celebrate that *he* has made you new. Hear the promise of the gospel again, and walk in the newness which Christ has prepared for you.

Have a happy, happy New Year!

Daniel Stanley



## Door Monitor Training January 8, 7:00PM

The Safety Committee is planning a Door Monitor's Class on *Tuesday, Jan. 8th, at 7pm* that should last about an hour. All Door Monitors should attend and any church member that wants to learn about what we are doing is welcome to attend.

## Church Office Closed

The church office will be closed Monday, December 31 and Tuesday, January 1. Have a wonderful New Year!

## The Rose

It is only a tiny rosebud--  
A flower of God's design,  
But I cannot unfold the petals  
With these clumsy hands of mine.

The secret of unfolding flowers  
Is not known to such as I--  
The flower God opens so sweetly  
In my hands would fade and die.

If I cannot unfold a rosebud,  
The flower of god's design,  
Then how can I think I have wisdom  
To unfold this life of mine?

So I'll trust him for his leading  
Each moment of every day,  
And I'll look to him for guidance  
Each step of the pilgrim way.

For the pathway that lies before me  
My Heavenly Father knows--  
I'll trust him to reveal the moments  
Just as he unfolds the rose.



--Author unknown

## Helpers this Month

### Deacon of the Week

Jan. 6 Brad Morgan  
Jan. 13 Kirk Kirkpatrick  
Jan. 20 John Backstrom  
Jan. 27 Leo Donovall

### Nursery/Children's Church

Jan. 6 Liza Donovall & Anita Kiener  
Jan. 13 Liza Donovall & Mardy Backstrom  
Jan. 20 Liza Donovall & Ruth Zullo  
Jan. 27 Liza Donovall & Krissy Perrin

### Greeters:

Jan. 6 JoAnn Greenawalt  
Jan. 13 Ginny Vietmeier  
Jan. 20 Leo Donovall  
Jan. 27 Todd & Debbie Meabon

**HAVE YOU  
TALKED  
TO GOD  
TODAY?**

## Upcoming Meetings

**Christian Education Board**  
Sunday, January 6, @ 11:30AM

**Finance Committee**  
Monday, January 7 @ 6:30PM

**Deacon Board**  
Monday January 7 @ 7:00PM

**Door Monitor Training**  
Tuesday, January 8 @ 7:00PM

**Deaconess Board**  
Sunday, January 13, @11:30AM