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# THE HERALD

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*Listening to God's Heart From the Heart of the City*

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**What new thing does God have in store for you in 2016? How do we transition from what has been to what will be? Find hope in the stories inside, as well as ways that God can do a new thing in you this year.**

## From the Pastor's Desk

We're in the midst of the twelve days of Christmas. We have been celebrating the birth of Christ. The carol's sweet text, "where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in," (O Little Town of Bethlehem, UMH #230, v. 4) rings resoundingly in my soul. Many of our carols suggest that we make a home for Christ within us, or that we give our hearts to him.

Couple this season of Christmas with the fact that the calendar year begins in the midst of it, and you can only imagine what's on my mind. Actually, the verse from Paul's second letter to the Corinthians has been echoing in me. "So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation; everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!" (2 Corinthians 5:17). What I've been considering is this: if the carols I've sung are really my prayers, and Christ has been born in me, then I am in Christ.

If I am in Christ, then I am also a new creation. And, if Paul's words are true – that the old has passed away, and I am becoming new, then I'm thinking that I have some work to do. The transition from what has been to what will be requires me to do some hard work. I'm fairly certain that I need to allow some bitterness and disappointment to pass away. I have some attitudes that I need to discard. Simultaneously, I have some new things I need to take on, like better self-care; working on forging new ways to be in relationship with my kids from a distance; and being better about saying "no."

I'll admit that it's not always easy to live in Christ. It's not always easy to be a new creation. And yet, as God reminds us through the prophet Isaiah, God will make a way for that new creation to exist, because God is doing new things (Isaiah 43:19). Our role is to perceive what new things God is doing in our lives, and to embrace them....to let go of the old, the past, the destructive habits...and to take on the new life we gain in the Spirit.

What might you need to let go of to receive God's new thing? What new attitude could you adopt so that people will know Christ is in you? Spend some time praying, listening, and seeking God's guidance about how you might become part of God's new creation in 2016.

Grace and peace,



Pastor Jay

P.S. Thank you for your generous Christmas gift!



## Grief and Friendship

ISAIAH 43:19 *Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the deserts.*

Unless you have lost a spouse, you cannot know the deep sense of grief that is always present. One day you are part of a couple and suddenly, with the blink of an eye, you are alone.

We were in school together, but went our separate ways as we grew up, got married, started families, and had careers. Who would have imagined that within a three year period, each of us would have lost a husband.

We had been blessed with wonderful marriages; our husbands were our best friends and we could not imagine our lives without them. Suddenly we found ourselves swimming in tears and worrying about an uncertain future. Making decisions without our soul mates would become a constant drain on our stability.

As we struggled to make a semblance of a new life, God intervened and brought us together after forty plus years. He reunited three grief-stricken women and gave us the strength to start over.

We have friends and family, but no one completely understands our loneliness. We know that when unexpected sadness and tears happen, we can call one of the others who truly understands what we are going through. We laugh and cry together and feel free to share precious memories and secrets. Hardly a day goes by that we do not communicate with one another.

Becoming a widow and beginning a new life is a daily challenge, but through the commonality of grief, we have developed a friendship based on faith and love and have a renewed sense of balance. Praise God!

**- Sharon Miller, Janey Branson, and Connie Carter**

## Looking Forward to New Beginnings in 2016

By the time you reach retirement age the opportunities for new beginnings start to dwindle and it is both easy and comfortable to “live your routine”!! Though I am comfortable with this approach it doesn’t excite me like the fun of trying something new, traveling to new places, and stretching to reach new goals. When Pastor Jay asked me to write something for the newsletter I began to realize just how many great new beginnings are facing our family in 2016!!

The home we have lived in since Tyler was a baby (40+ years) is on the market with a plan to “downsize” and move to our Lake Walton property, north of Hutsonsville. A new addition to “our cabin” has started and after some remodeling we will be moving to our favorite place! The cabin has been our get away for more than 16 years and it has provided us with so much fun, relaxation, and WORK - we hope that having only one home will “simplify” everything! Moving will also give us a great reason to add a dog to our family and I look forward to having my ”FIRST” pet. We have loved living on W. Chestnut St. near the heart of Robinson and will miss this beautiful old home, but we look forward to seeing a new family fill these rooms with love and laughter.

We also embrace other “New Beginnings” for 2016 - Tim, our oldest son who lives in Chicago, recently began a new job after 20+ years working for the Chicago Housing Authority. The first of February will bring us a new granddaughter, as Chad and Sunny welcome a baby girl. Later in February we will celebrate the new beginning of our granddaughter, Katie turning 16 and beginning to “hit the streets” of Robinson as a teen driver. (Lord Help Us!)

I am so excited for these “New Beginnings” and I know that God has richly blessed our family and I know that he has more for us to do! We plan to stay active at FUMC as we travel to and from the cabin for church, Bible Study, and more!! Ron and I have committed to joining the Youth Mission Trip this summer for another new beginning - we pray for strength to “keep up” with everyone. God is extremely good and we are so very grateful for the many new beginnings he has in store for us in 2016!! What new beginnings will you and your family experience in the New Year??

- **Becky Veenstra**

## New Opportunities...

### ...for Youth:

Youth will have no regular Sunday night meetings in January, but will be taking a couple of fun outings. On Monday, January 4 (weather permitting), we will travel to Paoli for skiing. We will depart at 8:00 am, ski for the day, and return in the late evening. We'll watch the weather forecast and make a determination by January 3 about our trip.

Our second outing of the month will be to Winter Jam on Saturday, January 23. We will depart at 2:00 pm and return by 11:30 pm. The concert is in St. Louis, and features a number of Christian bands. Cost for admission is \$10, plus the cost of food.

### ...for our 2nd Wednesday Dinner:

Our second Wednesday dinner will be January 13 at 5:30 pm. It will be a carry-in dinner, so bring your favorite dishes to share!

### ...for our "Just One" collection:

Our "Just One" item for January's collection is a toothbrush. Bring your donations (and please purchase single toothbrushes, rather than packs) and place them in the collection box outside the church office. Our goal is 120!

### ...for Altar Flowers/ Radio Broadcasts:

Sign-ups for 2016 altar flowers and radio broadcast sponsorships have been available the past few months outside the church office. Please feel free to sign up for either. The cost to sponsor flowers is \$20, and the cost to sponsor a radio broadcast is \$100.



### ...for Learning and growth:

We will have a Lenten study again in 2016, called "A Disciple's Heart." This six-week class will take place on Sunday nights from 4:00-5:00 pm. Childcare will be available. Books are \$10 each. Please sign up by January 31 to ensure that materials are available for you.

### ...for sharing your story:

Lent begins February 10, and we are seeking people to write a short devotion (like the ones in the Upper Room devotional books) for each day during Lent. There is a listing of dates and Scriptures available at the welcome center. Simply sign up, write a short one or two paragraph devotional on the Scripture, and a short prayer. These devotions will be published in a booklet for each family to use during Lent, and will also be sent out daily via e-mail and social media. The deadline to receive them in the office is January 8, so please sign up and provide them soon.

### ...to hear the passion story:

We are looking at doing a day trip to Bloomington-Normal, Illinois on Saturday, March 5 or March 19, to attend the American Passion Play. Cost for tickets is \$20, and the buffet lunch at the facility prior to the play is \$15. Please sign up at the welcome center if you are interested. By late January or early February, we will choose a date and order tickets for those who wish to go.

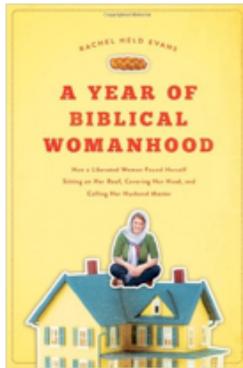
## Prayer Requests

Charlie Clark; Donita Holmes; Jerry Phillippe; Vicki Lewis; Bernie Limper; Margie Moore McNamara; Sam Mitchell; Jim Currie; Greta Rich; Eleanor Laswell; Debbie Doom; Peg, John, Jeremy, and Greg Markello; Ruth Rice; Nora Busby; Ashley Reed; Tom Carrow, Carolyn Enlow Nickum; Jay Holtzhouser; Ken Martin; Jennifer Null; Tom Willey; Carol Wolf; Bea Brinkman; Brenda Graham; Wilma Johnson; Charlie Young; Betty Boyd Hippler; Neema Mutayaba, Kay Bonnell; Heather Johnson; Lynn Ewin; Alan Sebens; Gary Albin; Debbie Hayden; Samantha Brown, Jim Eckert and his family; Don Trout; The ladies attending the jail ministry; Don Jensen

If you have any prayer requests, please contact Shirley Treadway at [gwtsea@hotmail.com](mailto:gwtsea@hotmail.com), so that the request can be shared with the prayer chain.

## Church Library

The Church Library would like to highlight its January addition. *A Year of Biblical Womanhood: How a Liberated Woman Found Herself Sitting on Her Roof, Covering Her Head, and Calling Her Husband 'Master'*



"A Year of Biblical Womanhood will instruct as it delights, and delight as it instructs. Of course it's about womanhood, an incredibly important subject for 100% of the population. But it's about a lot more too - how we read and interpret the Bible, for starters, and how we - both men and women - grapple with issues like justice, charity, silence, and grace in today's frenetic world. On top of that, Rachel is such a gifted writer ... you'll be warmed by her good sense, good humor, and keen eye for beauty and insight on every page." -Brian D. McLaren



## January Birthdays

- 1/6 Shelby Koester
- 1/7 Pat Campbell, Bill Thomas
- 1/8 Larry Quick
- 1/10 John Rankin, Mary St. John
- 1/13 Willie Legg
- 1/14 Karen Catt
- 1/15 Kaye Damron, Sallay Jones
- 1/16 Fred Finkbiner
- 1/18 Sharon Freeland, Jesse Newbold
- 1/22 Paul Roales
- 1/24 Penni Mefford, Kristin Wallace
- 1/25 Cindy Crawford
- 1/28 Susan Carver
- 1/29 Kurtis Goebel
- 1/30 Barbara Bradt

new year  
new beginnings

## 2016 Praise Fest

If you would like to assist with the planning of the 2016 Praise Fest, please sign up in the welcome center. There will be a sign up sheet later for volunteers once the event is organized.

JANUARY 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>	2
3 <b>8 am</b> Handbells <b>9:00 am</b> Worship <b>10:15 am</b> Sunday School <b>11 am</b> Chancel Choir <b>6 pm</b> Staff Parish & Staff at Janis Daugherty's home	4 <b>8 am</b> Youth ski trip to Paoli Peaks (weather permitting)	5 <b>6:00 pm</b> Disciple II	6 <b>3:00 pm</b> Kids' Club	7 <b>9:30 am</b> Disciple II <b>4:00 pm</b> NOW bagging <b>6:00 pm</b> Jail Ministry <b>6:00 pm</b> Church Council <b>7:00 pm</b> Handbell choir	8	9
10 <b>8 &amp; 11 am</b> Chancel Choir <b>9:00 am</b> Worship <b>10:15 am</b> Sunday School <b>2:30 pm</b> Heritage Health	11	12 <b>6:00 pm</b> Disciple II	13 <b>3:00 pm</b> Kids' Club <b>5:30 pm</b> 2nd Wednesday Dinner <b>6:30 pm</b> Worship committee	14 <b>9:30 am</b> Disciple II <b>4:30 pm</b> NOW bagging <b>6:00 pm</b> Jail Ministry <b>7:00 pm</b> Handbell choir	15	16
17 <b>8 &amp; 11 am</b> Chancel Choir <b>9:00 am</b> Worship <b>10:15 am</b> Sunday School	18	19 <b>6:00 pm</b> Disciple II	20 <b>3:00 pm</b> Kids' Club <b>6:00 pm</b> Lay Leadership committee	21 <b>9:30 am</b> Disciple II <b>4:30 pm</b> NOW bagging <b>5:15 pm</b> Outreach <b>6:00 pm</b> Jail Ministry <b>7:00 pm</b> Handbell choir	22	23 <b>2 pm</b> Departure for Winter Jam
24 <b>8 &amp; 11 am</b> Chancel Choir <b>9:00 am</b> Worship <b>10:15 am</b> Sunday School	25	26 <b>6:00 pm</b> Disciple II	27 <b>3:00 pm</b> Kids' Club <b>5:00 pm</b> Trustees	28 New Year's Eve <b>Office Closed</b>	29	30
31 <b>9:00 am</b> Worship <b>10:15 am</b> Sunday School <b>11 am</b> Chancel Choir						

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