

JANUARY
2019



CONNECTING POINTS



Pastor Mike's Paper Pulpit

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Someone once observed that a wasted life is really nothing more than a collection of wasted days. As God gives us life, each one of us starts the new year with the same number of opportunities—365—that we can choose to either use and invest in eternal things or allow to drift by without taking advantage of the gift we have been given. The difference between those who succeed and those who fail is not found primarily in talent but in diligence and effort.

This explains why Jonathon Edwards penned a series of resolutions for his new year in the early 1700's.

Resolved, That I will do whatsoever I think to be most to the glory of God.

Resolved, Never to lose one moment of time, but to improve it in the most profitable way I possibly can.

Resolved, to live with all my might, while I do live.

Resolved, Never to do anything, which I should be afraid to do if it were the last hour of my life.

His resolutions seem more substantial than our usual "I want to

lose weight or be more loving."

Let me finish with this anonymous poem

I AM THE NEW YEAR

I am the New Year. I am an unspoiled page in your book of time.

I am your next chance at the art of living. I am your opportunity to practice what you have learned about life during the last twelve months.

All that you sought and didn't find is hidden in me, waiting for you to search for it but with more determination.

All the good that you tried for and didn't achieve is mine to grant if you will have fewer conflicting desires.

All that you dreamed but did not dare to do, all that you hoped but did not will, all the faith that you claimed but did not have—these slumber lightly, waiting to be awakened by the touch of a strong purpose.

I am your opportunity to renew your allegiance to Him who said, "Behold, I make all things new."

Happy New Year and I will see you Sunday!

2019

First Christian Church Elder & Contact Information

Elders

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Brett LeTourneau—706-2192
Michael Piersol—559-363-5050
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Secretary

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Connecting People To God - To Each Other & To The World

THE BACK PAGE . . .

And just like that... Happy New Year, Family! As we stare 2019 in its beautiful face, we are getting flooded with "New Year New Me" statuses. According to statistics, most New Year resolutions fail before February because of the unrealistic goals we, as humans, put on ourselves. I feel like almost all of us can at one point said we had this very unrealistic goal and then got disappointed very quickly because we did not live up to the said goal that we could never live up to. Even though we set these kinds of goals over and over again we just never learn! Luckily for us, God does not rate us on how we do at the beginning of the year- we are continually given chances to be transformed by His love. So, regardless if you use the new year, or later on, let's make a conscious effort to not make unrealistic goals for ourselves- but let's strive to follow the example Jesus has given us to act and behave like him, instead of doing what WE want to do.

xoxo Katie

PRAY FOR OUR MISSIONARIES

Greg & Vicki Syverson
CMF International – Mexico

Vince & Gretta Payne
Panama Mission Foundation

Matt & Shelley Actis
Hope58 – Uganda

Dr. & Mrs. Yoon Kwon Chae
Korea Gospel Mission

Champions For Tomorrow
Clovis, CA

American Indian Christian Missions
Doors of Hope

Madera Community Food Bank

Madera Rescue Mission

Madera Love INC

Discover more information on the missions we support on our website: www.maderafcc.org



Jacques and Maisey understand fairness and justice. When I am eating popcorn, they know that each of them must take turns to get a piece of popcorn, and they keep track of whose turn it is. Jacques will not accept his morning Greenie until he sees that Maisey has received hers. They know that if they stand still for me to apply their monthly flea medication, they will each get a treat. If Jacques gets a treat but Maisey doesn't, Jacques drops his treat and waits for me to give Maisey hers. This sense of justice is not trained; it is innate. Multiple scientific studies have shown a natural sense of justice in dogs. Most recently, a study suggested that this sense of fairness is an ancestral trait rather than a result of domestication. In partner sets of wolves and domesticated dogs, the wolves were quicker to refuse participation in an activity when they realized that pressing a buzzer was not being rewarded equally among the partners. It was suggested that interaction with humans had eroded the sense of

justice in the domesticated dogs.




What does this tell us? If God has placed a sense of justice in wild dogs, I must believe that he has placed an even greater sense of justice in His children. We are reminded in the book of Micah to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk with our God. Our God is a God of justice AND mercy. As we walk with Him, we are able to clearly see justice from His perspective. Outside of relationship with God, our sense of justice can be quickly eroded to the point where a person will only recognize injustice if it is committed against them personally. As believers, we are called to a great responsibility of finding spiritual balance between doing justice and showing mercy. The only way this happens is through our walk with God.

"He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?" – Micah 6:8

~Melissa

January 2019



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		<p>1</p> 	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p> <p>House of Prayer 6:00am-7:00am</p> <p>Worship Team Rehearsal 6:00pm</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Women's Breakfast—8am @Robin Walton's home</p> <p>Elder's Meeting—9am</p> <p>Board Meeting—10am</p>
<p>6</p> <p>Bible Classes 9:30</p> <p>Worship 10:45</p> <p>Youth Group 6:30-7:30</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Intercessory Prayer 6:30pm-7:30pm</p>	<p>9</p> <p>FCC Food Bank 10:00am- Noon</p>	<p>10</p> <p>House of Prayer 6:00am-7:00am</p> <p>Worship Team Rehearsal 6:00pm</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12</p>
<p>13</p> <p>Bible Classes 9:30</p> <p>Worship 10:45</p> <p>Youth Group 6:30-7:30</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>15</p> <p>Intercessory Prayer 6:30pm-7:30pm</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17</p> <p>House of Prayer 6:00am-7:00am</p> <p>Worship Team Rehearsal 6:00pm</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>19</p>
<p>20</p> <p>Bible Classes 9:30</p> <p>Worship 10:45</p> <p>Youth Group 6:30-7:30</p>	<p>21</p> 	<p>22</p> <p>Intercessory Prayer 6:30pm-7:30pm</p>	<p>23</p> <p>FCC Food Bank 10:00am- Noon</p>	<p>24</p> <p>House of Prayer 6:00am-7:00am</p> <p>Worship Team Rehearsal 6:00pm</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26</p>
<p>27</p> <p>Bible Classes 9:30</p> <p>Worship 10:45</p> <p>Youth Group 6:30-7:30</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p> <p>Intercessory Prayer 6:30pm-7:30pm</p>	<p>30</p>			<p>Birthdays</p> <p>6 Geri Eddy</p> <p>6 Helen Brown</p> <p>16 Amanda Stutsman</p> 

Calendar Connecting Points

A Brand New Year

Dear Lord, as this new year is born
I give it to Your hand.
Content to walk by faith what paths
I cannot understand.
Whatever coming days may bring
Of bitter loss, or gain,
Or every crown of happiness;
Should sorrow come, or pain,

It matters not—my hand in Yours,
Your light upon my face,
Your boundless strength when I am weak,
Your love and saving grace!

I only ask, loose not my hand,
Grip fast my soul, and be
My guiding light upon the path
And blind no more, I see!



The Psalms have been called God's Smart Phone for His followers. Do you have a question about life? The Psalms would tell you:

"Yes, we have an App for that."

We will spend January getting ourselves settled into 2019 with 4 messages from the Psalms. Join us—even if you can't work your smart phone.

CWF Breakfast—Saturday, January 5th—8am
at the home of Robin Walton
2805 Willow Drive

Team Daniel

There are FOUR emphases in prayer that Team Daniel offers to you as a part of our church family.

The **FCC Prayer Team** meets each Sunday morning in Pastor Mike's office at 8:45 to seek God and prayer walk the church facility.

Prayer Hosts are our volunteer prayer folks who are available during the service to pray specifically with you and for you.

Our **Prayer Wall** is found in the office hallway. Leave a request and it will be prayed over.

The **Intercessors** meet Tuesdays from 6:30–7:30 PM to lift up our church family.

We just need YOU!

To be a Christian without prayer is no more possible than to be alive without breathing.

Martin Luther

God's Building Project

This quote from C. S. Lewis in Mere Christianity might help you as God builds you into the person you've always wanted to be.



"Imagine yourself as a living house. God comes in to rebuild that house. At first, perhaps, you understand what He is doing. He is getting the drains right and stopping the leaks in the roof and so on; you knew those jobs needed doing and so you are not surprised. But presently He starts knocking the house about in a way that hurts abominably and doesn't make any sense. What on earth is He up to? The explanation is that He is quite a different house from the one you thought of—throwing out a new wing here, putting on an extra floor there, running up towers, making courtyards.



You thought you were being made into a decent little cottage: but He is building a palace. He intends to come and live in it Himself."