

A New Year!

“See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland” Isaiah 43:19 New International Version

As we begin a New Year, we know we are in transition. Things have changed and will continue to change. It's life. On the internet, I found the following quote wondering where the months names come from:

"Here we are in a month named after the Roman god Janus, an appropriate personification of the start of the New Year. This particular Roman god had two faces so that he could look ahead toward the future and back at the past at the same time. As we get rid of an old year and look forward to a new one, we all try to be a little like Janus. We know through experience what we did wrong and what we did right, and hope to do better this year. Some people make ambitious New Year's resolutions; others just take a deep breath and hope for the best...." (What's in a Name? Complete Speaker's Almanac, p. 22)

Hoping for the best. If we pause, we became aware of God's presences, we will see the new things bubbling from within. I am still discovering that the hardest part of change is not change itself, but the transition that moves us toward that change. How you "handle change" is the challenge.

During transitions we have to be proactive, flexible, even adaptive, assessing our current circumstances, and see where God is leading us. For the first six months of this New Year, we will be in a series called "Walking with God." There will be moments when we will feel we are walking in deserts, the wilderness, moment of resting in the cool steams, and even watching spring bring forth its bountiful beauty. In all of these, and more that we can imagine or perceive, God will lead us through.

Productive changes involve re-investing and prioritizing our ministries. Two critical components need to be comprehended and practiced: collaboration and communication. Collaboration is critical in the refining any process, whether it's defining a document to forming a vision or mission. Collaboration is all about working together! Collaboration isn't easy, yet vital in determining who we are and where we are going.

The other element is communication. Communication is essential in perfecting any process. As Christians, we are encouraged to speak the truth in love. Effective communication is not easily obtained. Often times we make assumptions or embrace our own perceptions without making allowances for other views or opinions. Effective communication involves developing new skill sets, in particular-listening. Effective communication takes practice and building our skills of knowing when and when not to speak.

The good news is a new year is unfolding, must like a blossom with petals curled tightly, concealing its beauty within waiting to be revealed.

As we make look ahead, let us go forward with great hope that all things can be possible as we seek God's help and guidance."

New Year Prayer

May the Spirit of the Risen Christ, be with us today and always.

Be our Light, our Guide, and our Comforter.

Be our Strength, our Courage, and our Perfector.

May this new year be a time of deep spiritual growth inward and outward for us,

A time of welcoming.

A time for forgiving,

A time for growing,

Jesus, be with us today and in the days ahead. Amen