

## JANUARY 2023 NEWSLETTER

### Letter from the Pastor

<sup>3</sup> I thank my God for you every time I think of you; <sup>4</sup> and every time I pray for you all, I pray with joy <sup>5</sup> because of the way in which you have helped me in the work of the gospel from the very first day until now. <sup>6</sup> And so I am sure that God, who began this good work in you, will carry it on until it is finished on the Day of Christ Jesus. <sup>7</sup> You are always in my heart! And so it is only right for me to feel as I do about you. For you have all shared with me in this calling. <sup>8</sup> God is my witness that I tell the truth when I say that my deep feeling for you all comes from the heart of Christ Jesus himself.

<sup>9</sup> I pray that your love will keep on growing more and more, together with true knowledge and perfect judgment, <sup>10</sup> so that you will be able to choose what is best. Then you will be free from all impurity and blame on the Day of Christ. <sup>11</sup> Your lives will be filled with the truly good qualities which only Jesus Christ can produce, for the glory and praise of God. **-Phil 1:3-11**

Dear JFPC Family and Friends,

Let me begin this letter with a high note of gratitude. I am truly grateful for the calling to be your pastor for another year. I am profoundly thankful for the amazing work we have done together throughout these past years, which have been tough! I am grateful for the ways you care for one another, for our community, for the world. And I am so appreciative for all the ways you have blessed me and our church staff with your generous gift this Christmas.

I am deeply humbled, forever grateful, and most of all, I bless God's holy name for calling me to Jonesville First Presbyterian Church almost 7 years ago. Thank you, thank you, thank you for being God's people in a day and age when the world needs Christ's witness more than ever. May we all continue to run with all we have to the finish line where we will be embraced by Christ, and hear those words, "Well done, my good and faithful servant."

At the beginning of 2023, I pray that we may all enter this New Year with an overwhelming sense of gratitude-- for all the things and people we've been blessed with, (even when we so often take them for granted). Let us be grateful for each other, for health, warmth, silence, beauty, creativity, friendship, family, fellowship, and those who help us through so many difficult times—the list is endless, what would you add?

I've been thinking about the opportunities that New Years present us with – fresh starts, another chance, motivation to try new things...or try again. Perhaps you are approaching the new year with a resolution.

Here is the list of the 10 most common New Years' Resolutions:

- Exercise more
- Lose weight
- Get organized
- Learn a new skill or hobby

- Live life to the fullest
- Save more money / spend less money
- Quit smoking
- Spend more time with family and friends
- Travel more
- Read more

Recognize any of them? I know I have tried a few, more than once! Sadly, most of these resolutions will be broken or abandoned within the first weeks of the new year.

But what if we did things a little differently this year? What if we choose to center all of it by getting into shape spiritually? What if we make our spiritual life a priority—exercise hospitality everyday, immerse ourselves in reading and studying scripture, be intentional about new ways of service personally and communally, blocking off time to pray with and for one another. In addition, purpose to say some uplifting word to someone everyday. Say thank you to those we share our lives with daily. Forgive those who you haven't. Forgive yourself. Re-focus our perspective to try to see God at work in the world every day.

Some suggest that the best way to do this involves setting spiritual goals for ourselves. Goal setting, according to experts, helps us to change our behavior, guides our focus, helps us sustain momentum, and promotes a sense of self mastery.

Have you ever thought about setting specific spiritual goals?

- Read the Bible every day (1 chapter? 15 minutes? What is your goal?)
- Pray every day (10 minutes? 20 minutes? Morning and bedtime? For certain people – especially those who challenge you?)
- Give thanks every day (keep a gratitude journal? List your blessings)
- Serve, Give (donate time/energy/resources to charity)
- Connect (reach out to someone who needs encouragement each week)

In this world where it's easy to give in to cynicism, apathy, or despair, it could be as simple as resolving to make worship a part of our daily lives, to live with hearts overwhelmed by wonder and awe, to wake up every morning dazzled by grace.

Whatever your spiritual goals (and I hope you make some!) may 2023 be a year of growth and maturity for our faith and our congregation. Let us all be diligent in living out the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the world in every way open to us, personally and communally.

Gratefully Yours,

Pastor Lynne

## Membership/Seeker Class Forming –

We will be offering a 3 week class (with additional field trips) to learn more about what membership in our church means. This is open to folks of all ages and interest levels. Joining the church is not required. We will explore what it means to be a person of faith (with a visit to a Jewish Shabbat service). We'll explore what it means to be a Christian (with a visit to an Orthodox service with ancient liturgies). And we'll explore what it means to be a Presbyterian and specifically a Jonesville Presbyterian. Dates to be announced.

## Take-A-Break Lunches Return!

Would you like to enjoy some time of fun and fellowship with other church members for no other reason than the fact that we like each other, we like good food, and we like spending time together? Join us on the THIRD THURSDAY of each month at NOON. We'll give it a trial run for 3 months to see if there is enough interest to keep going.

January 19 – Olivia's

February 16 – Saucy Dog

March 16 – El Cerrito's Hillsdale

## Congregational Meeting

Please join us for our annual congregational meeting on Sunday, January 22, to hear committee reports, the 2023 budget, and to celebrate the good work that was done in our church in 2022!

## JANUARY BIBLE STUDY ON ZOOM

Since many of our regular attendees will be spending January in other locations, our Wednesday morning Bible Study (10:30 am) will be meeting via zoom. The link will be sent each week.

## Mark Your Calendars:

Jan 1 – 10:30 am Worship

Jan 5 – 5:15 Worship Committee Zoom

Jan 8 – 10:30 Worship with Communion

Jan 15 – 10:30 Worship

Jan 19 – Noon Take-A-Break Lunch at Olivia's

Jan 22 – 10:30 am Worship followed by CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Jan 25 – 6:30pm Session

Jan 29 – 10:30 Worship