

Westview Chimes January/February 2025



A Fresh Start for the New Year

Many people look at January 1 as a chance for a new beginning. If the previous year was difficult or they made significant mistakes, they imagine wiping the slate clean and starting over. In Christ we know that new starts are available anytime, and are not dictated by the calendar. “The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning!” (Lamentations 3:22-23). God, The Good Shepherd who is our Father/Mother, is always ready with open arms to help us, heal us, or forgive us. A New Year, is a great time to reflect, get a new start, confess, and seek healing if needed.

1. New Resolution: Reflection, Confession, New Starts & Healing!

The New Year often turns into making resolutions, but quitting smoking, starting a diet, or purchasing a gym membership is only the beginning of a “fresh start.” The deeper issue is how are we doing in loving others, God and ourselves? Sin is anything that we do that is not love.

In fact, peace awaits the one who is quick to confess and repent of sin (unlove). “Many are the sorrows of the wicked, but steadfast love surrounds the one who trusts in the LORD” (Psalms 32:10). Bad habits and addictions are symptomatic of deeper issues. Rather than making a resolution to quit doing something or start doing something else, take advantage of this renewed impetus to face sin (unlove) in your life and find freedom from its effects through the Father’s loving direction. For example, you might be the kind of person who seeks attention by causing drama. You might run from conflict/difficulties by exercising too much and trying to control a painful situation by regulating calories carefully or escaping in your computer/phone. Fear could be driving you to drink or abuse drugs. These habits or addictions enslave a person; they rob peace and love from our lives. Whole-hearted repentance leads to life and peace (2 Corinthians 7:10). Jesus wants freedom for us!

You may even need to reach out to someone else: a counselor, therapist, friend, church member, or pastor to help you get healing. A responsible and discerning counselor will also suggest medical attention where necessary: certain habits and behaviors can be the result of a clinical issue or trauma and could require medication, at least for a time. When one faces the turmoil of personal sin in response to sins (unlove) committed against him or her, the New Year could be a time when both parties reflect and make changes. Part of learning to overcome addictive behaviors is, potentially, finding the courage to walk away from an abusive marriage, friendship, or job. A counselor can help.

2. Gratitude: Remember All the Lord Has Done!

“Take care lest you forget the Lord, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery” (Deuteronomy 6:12). We are encouraged to never forget what our Lord has done for us. January 1 is a time to remember the goodness of God as it has unfolded across the past year. Sometimes the details of God’s intervention are only obvious when one surveys God’s goodness over time. I enjoy looking over my prayer journal of the last year. I am often surprised by all the answered prayers and healing from God that occurred in situations and loved one’s lives!

Also, at the start of a New Year, one might reassess which direction to go with regard to career/retirement or a relationship, and to either change course or stick with the established one.

If this is a difficult season, possibly pray through Psalm 23. The Good Shepherd is always ready to guide and help heal!

3. Celebrate the New Year!

“This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it” ([Psalm 118:24](#)). This is the Psalmist’s exhortation for every day, not only on good days, like holidays. Every day is the Lord’s Day. Rejoice that God has walked with you in the past year and will continue to walk with you into the new one, for we have the Holy Spirit living inside of us and we ARE God’s beloved children!

“For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!” ([Romans 8:14-15](#)). We have so many reasons to celebrate!

On New Year’s Day the very idea of throwing out an old calendar and starting with 12 clean pages is a poignant reminder that the pages, like our lives, are new every morning. Every day we get a fresh start to live in God’s love and spread this sweet fragrance in all the world.

Parts are adapted from: <https://www.christianity.com/wiki/holidays/how-should-christians-approach-the-new-year.html>

Happy New Year beloved Westview Family!

I am delighted we are together, and we know we have each other as we start a New Year, ready to offer support no matter what we are facing in our lives!

Much love, peace and joy to you,
Pastor Dan

Recurso de Fuerza Village

“Resource of Strength,” village for the unhoused will be built by Monterey and Santa Cruz Counties behind the church gym hopefully by April 2025. Counselors coordinated by CAB will be on site 24/7 to help the residents heal, plan and then move on to permanent housing. Please be in prayer for the transformation of the lives of those who will get to live and heal at Recurso de Fuerza! **Consider Sponsoring a Room:** Please pray about if you, a club, a classroom, or workplace colleagues would like to sponsor the decoration of one of these 34 rooms with things like a welcome mat, pictures, a flowering plant, bedside lamp, etc, so we can welcome with loving arms these people who have felt like unloved outcasts for far too long. Bless you! (contact Pastor Dan)

Luncheons: We have Social Hour with a light lunch the **1st Sunday of each month** along with cake for Birthdays! Come enjoy!

Live and Zoom Worship Services at Westview!!

Live and Zoom Online Worship Services are being held at Westview Presbyterian Church Sunday at 10 am.!!
Masks are now optional for those attending the Live Worship Service.

To join Westview for **Live Zoom Sunday Online Worship Service** please send **Westview an email** at westviewpc@gmail.com so you **can be added/accepted to our Zoom live recordings and can receive an automatic email** reminding you of our upcoming live services. **If you are in need of any assistance with Zoom call Westview** at (831) 724-6222 and **leave a message**. Someone will call you back as soon as possible.

Guest Speaker: Pastor Mick Erickson – January 5th, February 16th

Wednesday Zoom Scripture Reflection & Mid-Week Check-In

Wednesdays at 4 pm. The link is emailed out weekly. Please **send Westview an email at westviewpc@gmail.com** if you would like **to automatically be sent a link/reminder on a weekly basis about our Wednesday Mid-Week Check-Ins.**

Photos



Photos: (from left to right): Rev. Hoffman & Mary Lou delivering Xmas Stockings to the Pajaro Valley Women's Shelter, Serving Thanksgiving lunch to the unhoused, Margo handing out coats to those who need them.

SonRise Kitchen

Experience the joy! We need volunteers to help with serving breakfast by River Park M-F 7:30-8:15am & making snack bags Wednesdays 9:15am. We also need donations of cereal, and lightly used: jackets & sweatshirts, sleeping bags, blankets, shoes, & socks. Thank you!
Contact Margo or Pastor Dan.
