

We've all just been handed something very special: a "brand, spanking-new" New Year with which to do some very special things. OR not. It's really up to us.

Newness is something that is very popular in our American culture. Who doesn't enjoy that "new car" smell, that fresh-out-of-the-box aroma of a new pair of leather shoes, or the feel of that nice Christmas sweater you just opened?

Even now, New Year's resolutions have that new car smell at the moment. Our resolve is high to make this year different than other years. But if the truth be told, the average time between the moment we make our resolutions and their demise is a sad three weeks. By that time all the newness has been aired out of them – and they become mere chores. It's one of the reasons I don't make resolutions.

Instead, I'd like to offer us a different focus on the year ahead. What are the most important "provisions" that you will need for the journey? When you think about the most challenging times in your life, what are the most important things that have tided you over?

Personally, I can think of some precious things that have gotten me through. The majority of these things take up little or no physical space, which make sense because Jesus always encouraged his disciples to travel light. In Mark 6:8-9, Jesus "charged them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts; but to wear sandals and not put on two tunics." His point was to focus them, not to be impoverished, but to clear their vision of material things so that they can clearly see the most precious provisions of all: other people, and the presence of God in those people.

Of the most precious things on my journey, I count the kind presence of friends in dark hours. I stockpile in my mind the sound of their voices. I also hoard up within my soul those moments when I have been transported by beauty far beyond the ordinary. The ring of truth in scripture; a perfect poem, or word of wisdom from a spiritual mentor. And those transcendent moments when I hear the voice of God through music or song. You know these moments when you experience this soul-stirring moment, as when you sing your favorite hymn, or when you hear a song which reminds you of someone very special now gone.

These are my provisions for the times the wind blows. So, at the beginning of this new journey of 2023, I ask you to contemplate this: Who and what are the real provisions of your life? Think of them, and tuck them away in that special part of your heart that you reserve for precious things.

Peace be to you all in the coming year,

Pastor Leslie

The Compass



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New Year's Day Worship

We will be having a worship service on New Year's Day via online only. This service is prerecorded and will be available for viewing at 9:30 am or any time thereafter. You can find the link to our worship service under the "Worship" tab of our church website, www.crossroadsspicer.com.

Sermon Series beginning January 22!

Beginning January 22, 2023, I will be preaching a five-week sermon series on stewardship based on Adam Hamilton's book *Enough: Discovering Joy Through Simplicity and Generosity*. I hope you will plan to attend each Sunday during this series; however, as always, if you miss a Sunday or cannot attend in person, we are available online via our YouTube channel. ~Pastor Leslie

Administrative Team Notes

Welcome to the new year! As I write this, we don't have the final 2022 financial numbers done, but it's likely that we will end the year with a deficit in our budget of about \$2,900. My plea is that you continue your regular giving whether our services are in person or on-line. By building up a reserve account over the last few years, we have the loss covered, but our goal (as always) to keep our expenses in line with our giving. The Admin Team has been very mindful that there are discretionary expenses we can control, and there are others we cannot, and we always need to keep our big mission in mind--serving God and spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ! We already had to adjust our 2023 budget to accommodate a last-minute increase to our property insurance. I wish we didn't have to focus on mundane issues like finances when so many exciting things are happening at Cross Roads, but that the necessary role played by the Admin Team!

Another activity on our docket for the upcoming months is to review church policies. Years ago, we had a number of policies and procedures in place, but with pastoral and committee member changes, we've lost track of what they were and even where they were kept!! We'll get them updated and communicated and implement a plan to review them annually.

Thanks to those who served on the 2022 Admin Team and for staying on and/or joining in 2023!

Stay warm and enjoy the holiday season!

Pat Solheid
Admin Team Chair

**The next Admin Team meeting will be Wednesday, January 11 at 6:30. Please let Pastor Leslie or Pat Solheid know if you aren't able to attend.

Potluck and Town Hall Meeting

On Sunday, January 29th, after worship, we will be having potluck and a town hall meeting. We will be giving a year end update, and talk about plans for the upcoming year. All are welcome!

White Bucket Offering for January

According to Google, on a single night in January of 2022, there were 7,917 people facing homelessness in Minnesota.

This comes from the Minnesota Homeless Management Information System.

As you know, our congregation assists Family Promise with a meal 4x per year. We have been blessed with an opportunity to do more!! When you know better.....do better!

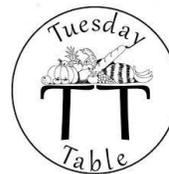
Family Promise has an opportunity to transition from their former church rotational model to a new hybrid static site. This opportunity will DOUBLE the capacity with a 10 room leased building to better serve the Willmar Area.

Housing insecurity is at an all time high and we need your help to meet the needs of families that approach Family Promise for help.

For the month of January, all white bucket offerings will be given to Family Promise to help them secure this new facility. Their goal is to raise \$225,000 by the end of February. Please mark your offering with Family Promise in the note. We are small; but we are MIGHTY!



Tuesday's Table



The next Tuesday's Table at Cross Roads is scheduled for January 31, 2023 at 6:00 pm. This is a FREE community meal.

We still need greeters, people to help "plate" the meal, and folks to assist with serving and clean up.

We also need ONE more person to make bars.

If you are interested in volunteering or providing dessert, please contact Jenny Daby or Pat Evermann.

Coffee Corner

Coffee Corner will not be meeting in January. Please watch for details for the February gathering.



YOUTH GROUP MEALS NEEDED FOR 2023!

Cross Roads Youth Group will be taking a short hiatus for the holidays, but will resume our regular scheduling on January 4, 2023.

Therefore we are in need of folks to help with the following dates for dinners (lunch on Sunday):

Sunday, January 22
Wednesday, February 1
Wednesday, February 15
Sunday, February 19
Wednesday, March 1
Wednesday, March 15
Sunday, March 19
Wednesday, April 5
Sunday, April 16
Wednesday, April 19
Wednesday, May 3
Wednesday, May 17



All Wednesday evenings meals begin at 6:30 pm and Sunday lunches are immediately after worship service.

If you are interested in providing a meal for the Youth Group for any of these dates, please contact either Donna Smith (our Youth Group Team Leader) or Pastor Leslie. This is a great way to meet the youth of our congregation and get to know them!

Bless A Home Update



THANK YOU Cross Roads congregation! Thanks to your generosity, we were able to provide food totes for 10 families that will have all the ingredients for a lovely ham dinner along with a snowflake decoration that Robbie Johnson made and donated. Additionally, we included a \$25 gift card to Teals for food or gas purchase. In addition, we were able to purchase Christmas gifts for 18 people plus something for a Grandma who is head of household but didn't ask for anything.

Thank you to Bonnie Triplett and Kendra Pflipsen for shopping, and to Kendra Pflipsen who helped deliver all these items to The Link.

These are folks who might not otherwise receive gifts for Christmas. YOU are a blessing to the community!

Remember to Save Your Teals Receipts!

Cross Roads UMC is continuing to be part of the Teals' Market 1% Receipt Rebate Program. When you shop at Teals, save your receipts, bring them to church, and put them in the special Teals Receipts box located just outside the sanctuary in the narthex area. Teals will donate 1% of our receipt totals to Cross Roads to put towards our many missions and outreach projects. All receipts will be accepted, even those from previous years. Please note that gas receipts ARE a part of the program! This is a great opportunity to take part in a local business giving back to our community!



January Birthdays

Sheryl Nelson 4th
Jeanette Fixsen 9th
LuMae Erickson 10th
Scott Doty 13th
Pat Solheid 14th
Eric Bjonfald 15th
Brian Nelson 15th
Patricia Smith 20th
Bud Ruhl 21st
Jodi Evenson 22nd
Judy Zachariason 22nd
Jordan Baker 26th
Kendra Pflipsen 27th
Leann Navratil 30th
Troy Rohloff 30th



If we have missed your special day, please let the office know.



**Cross Roads Community
United Methodist Church**

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Spicer, MN 56288

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www.crossroadsspicer.com

January 2023

Christian radio stations in the area:

K-Love 90.9

KTIS 92.7 & 98.5

Spirit 92.9

The Cross Roads Mission

To help everyone find joy in their journey by:

Inviting everyone to walk with Jesus,

Growing together as His disciples,

Serving others we meet along the way

And Joyfully Celebrating the Journey