**January 2022**

**Happy New Year!**

**Matters of Faith**

**Faith United Church of Christ**

**1001 5th Street, PO Box 1113**

 **International Falls, MN 56649**

**218-283-2486**

**Sunday Worship 1:00 p.m.**

**Pastor’s Ponderings**

I am trying to get used to writing 2022. Sometimes that’s the only “new” thing we have to get used to as the year changes. One year melds into the next without anything really new happening. But I think 2022 will be another year of many changes, as 2021 has been. New things are hard. Old things are ingrained, particularly old things of religion. Routine, which we can call “tradition” in the religious realm, gives us a steady base, solid foundation, a sense of knowledge and comfort. And yet new things must come about; just as surely as the changing of the years.

My favorite Bible verses are from Matthew 9:16-17

“No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, for the patch will pull away from the garment, making the tear worse. Neither do men pour new wine into old wineskins. If they do, the skins will burst, the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved.”

Jesus was responding to other religious elite asking why he was doing things differently. I love how it talks about the reality of change and if we are not mindful of how we do it, things can be “ruined”. And I love the last 4 words of this passage the most! “and both are preserved”. The church is facing this very situation; how to transition from old to new. Jesus created a situation of sudden change within the church community in his time and place. **And** we must remember God was guiding it!

Let us be joyful, not fearful, of living in a time when God is again ready

to guide us through great (and necessary) change. The church today cannot speak to modern people as it did to ancient people. The world has changed. New wine cannot be poured into old wineskins, or both will be ruined. Let us keep our minds sharply focused this year on change. Let’s ask for God’s guidance as we keep tradition AND start something new. There’s no guarantees, change is hard work. But if we look to scripture, talk to each other with love and patience as we do this important work of change, we will succeed. With Jesus’ life message as our guide, let us begin.

Blessings in the New Year,

 Pastor Kris

**A Few Notes**

**Men’s Club -- Next Meeting will be 10th March, 2022**

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**Reminder: Readers can pick up scripture at noon on Wednesdays**

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**February’s Newsletter Deadline:**

**Please have info in by Wednesday, January 26th (or sooner, if possible)**

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**If you are receiving our Newsletter via mail (USPS), and would like to receive it through your email account instead, let the office know your email address. Call the office at 283-2486 (and leave a message if no one is working that day), drop a note on the secretary’s desk or drop a note in the mail to:**

**Faith United Church at:**

**PO Box 1113 International Falls, MN 56649**



**Winter Reading**

**This is the perfect time of year to curl up beside the fire with a good book. Here are some favorites, the ones that delight with a first read and then deserve a second look (and perhaps a third) sometime down the road.**

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**The Lacuna by Barbara Kingsolver**

**Travels With Charley by John Steinbeck**

**The Ladies of Missalonghi by Colleen McCullough**

**The Wright Brothers by**  **David McCullough**

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**Three Men In A Boat by Jerome K. Jerome**

**The Bushbabies by William Stevenson**

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**The Inimitable Jeeves by PG Wodehouse.**

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**If anyone out there has their own favorites to share, please email the titles and authors to the church. We’d love to include them here!**

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**Happy New Year!**

**Christmas Presents**

 **Found Under the Tree**

**Thank you, everyone**

**who contributed!**

**200 Postage Stamps**

**3 Books of Post-It Notes**

**2 x 6 inch Paper Plates**

**2 x Kitchen Paper Towels**

**6 x Bags of Cough Drops**

**6 x Bottles of Hand Sanitizer**

**1 Large Bottle of Soft Soap**

**3 Small Bottles of Soft Soap**

**8 x Boxes of Kleenex**

**44 x 45 Gallon Trash Bags**

**25 x Rolls of Toilet Paper**

**1 x Bag of Ice-Melt**

**Faith United Church**  **We’re on the Web!**

 **1001 5th Street Visit us at:**

 **PO Box 1113 www.faithuccifalls.org**

 **International Falls, MN**

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*Matters of Faith is published by Faith United Church, UCC for its members and friends*

