

Canyon Creek Touchpoints

January 2019

Same old new

By Liz Rasley

So, here we are. January again. A fresh new promise and a whole new year, full of blank pages and hopes and dreams and heavy expectations for ourselves. And perhaps, for people like me, a nice excuse to buy one of those gorgeous, thick life planners that just ache for goals and things to do.

A whole new year. So much fun and so much weight comes at us all at once in January, all sorts of excitement and exhilaration and perhaps, a slight sense of overwhelm. Especially when that beautiful planner is abandoned halfway through March. Not that I, of course, would know anything about that. I've just heard things.

Can I say it? The new year is at once a blessing and a curse. We make such a big deal out of it that we're determined, come January, we will be anything, just anything but our normal, boring, same old selves.

In January (maybe the whole month, if we're an ambitious sort) we will look so much better, we tell ourselves. This will be the year, we determine, that we will behave like an actual adult, be more responsible. And considerate also. Maybe come this year, we will not eat

the last chip from the bag, and also, wear better socks. In our little sweet, simple minds, come end of January, had we planned it correctly and kept tabs on ourselves, we will have purged and worked out all of *our* embarrassing habits and kinks from our personality and be as good as can be.

This will be the year, we chant to ourselves, after a lifetime of couch sitting and slow walks around the block with the dog, that we will be the most consistent person at the gym, on all sorts of leaderboards for fitness and good attendance. We will have goals that involve a complex series of routines for getting rid of those love handles. And depending upon the complex routine and/or eating plan for getting rid of those love handles, we'll be potentially getting rid of friends too, as who wants to hang around with someone full of rigidity that eats only air?

The good news within all this (potential) crazymaking is that God is not any more or less impressed with us if we hit our goals or not. Thank goodness. We can exhale, and perhaps take it easier on ourselves than our elaborate ambitious daydreams called "resolutions" will.

If we see fit, we can make the changes we need to (and want to) over the long haul as op-

posed to one insane month. Thank goodness.

We can also not abandon our whole personality in order to be good. Thank goodness. Yes, perhaps there are some things we do need to work on. But we don't have to be an entirely different person to be loved by God. Thank goodness.

He loves us anyway, even as we try so hard to be good. He loves us perfectly, in the way we love our own children in that same moment of goodness that every small child tries to be when dressed up, but highly irritated by collars and itchy things, so much so that they can't help but be anything but their adorable, imperfect selves that dislike fancy clothes.

The good news for this new year (and every day) is that He loves us anyways. And loves us just the same even when we're right back at square one, exactly as we were a year before. I've long held the belief that God loves us best when we are authentic to our own natures and selves, as opposed to when we are trying so hard to be good and perfect. Also, have you ever been friends with someone like that, good all the time? A head's up: It's not boring, but it's also not fun.

Here's a reminder to our runaway, ambitious selves this year: With this new year, let us be

moved and changed into who we authentically are: the ones God deeply loves.

Maybe now we can finally lay down the measuring tape, the spreadsheets that track our progress, put down the pen that keeps a count on our errors. Because of God and His vast mercy, we can lay down the constraints that tell us who we are to be. Even if we are known in our house for eating that last slice of pie.

The reminder we all need this time of year in a haze of goal setting, is that perhaps the best way to grow and mature is to let ourselves be loved. Exactly, fully, and as weird as we are. Even despite, or because of, our questionable sock choices.





CANYON CREEK TOUCHPOINTS

December at CCPC—

Canyon Creek
Presbyterian
Church



“Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.”

Philippians 3:12

Touchpoints is brought to you by the Connections Ministry of Canyon Creek Presbyterian Church



*All Church
Advent
Celebration*



*High School
Christmas Party
and Lock-In,
volunteering on
behalf of hungry
children*



*Christmas
Eve
Service*



*Family
Christmas
Eve
Service*



*Remembrance
Tree*



*Longest
Night*

Alzheimer's Angels

For many years, Jo Bryan and Betty Langfitt have been easing the lot of Alzheimer patients and their caretakers. On the third Wednesday of each month, Betty facilitates the *Alzheimer's Support Group* for caretakers and family members of Alzheimer's sufferers, while Jo conducts *Memories in the Making* for the patients themselves, typically art projects that evoke experiences and stimulate new memories.

Both Betty and Jo are well aware of how Alzheimer's can affect whole families, having experienced it in their own families.

“I find my time with these individuals so rewarding,” says Jo. “Even when they don't really know who I am, they do recognize me in their own ways and are excited to see me. It's a privilege to do this, as it was to care for my own parents.”

