

# Missionary Messenger

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## Something New

*Do not call to mind the former things; pay no attention to the things of old. Behold, I am about to do something new; even now it is coming. Do you not see it? Indeed, I will make a way in the wilderness and streams in the desert. ~ Isaiah 43:18-19 (BSB)*

Every year I seek God for a theme for the new year. This theme helps me in selecting the passages and themes that I will preach on. 2024 was the year of reconciliation. This year's theme will be the Year of Something New. I will be emphasizing that it is never too late to get on the same page as Jesus Christ regarding what His will is for us. His perfect will and His permissive will is not always the same. This is why The Lord's Prayer includes the line, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven". Praying and seeking His perfect will here on earth will be my main emphasis during the year of 2025.

It is starting out very different than in the near past. For many years now, I have not been excited about heading into the new year. This year something special seems to be on the horizon. I have no idea what God is planning on doing, but there is a growing positivity in me that it will be fantastic. The recent past years have seemed to me that I was in wilderness, a desert so to speak. I believe that this passage that is listed above is prophetic in the sense that God is about to bring streams of refreshing water to my desert. Do you feel it? Join me in joyful expectations of something new. This includes putting away past disappointments and seeing the Lord's perfect will, right here, right now.

In Christ, Pastor Ken



## Memory Verse of the Month!

**And the One seated on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new."  
Then He said, "Write this down, for these words are faithful and true."**

**~ Revelation 21:5 (BSB) ~**



# I Make All Things New . . .



**CONNECTION NOTES:**

**“And the God of Love and Peace be with You.”**

When we write a letter, our salutation is normally much simpler than the above quote! Sincerely yours, Love you, Hope to see you soon; things like that. But that was not how Paul ended his letter in 2 Corinthians.

His wish followed his final instructions to the church. Those instructions, if followed, were so that the church would resolve current problems and/or present themselves in a good light upon his arrival—whenever that happened. I would say we are in the same waiting stance as they. Only we are waiting for Jesus’ return. Maybe we can look at those instructions, apply them, and be better ready for the day Christ comes back.

Read 2 Corinthians 13:11-14. Paul ended his letter by giving them five things to do; things that we can apply to ourselves.

**Rejoice:** after all Christ gives us new and everlasting life. Life which can not be taken from us.

**Strive** for full restoration of all within our community. The evil one wants to destroy connection and relationships. We do not have to allow him to do so. We can work hard and strive to restore and/or maintain them.

**Encourage** one another.

**Be** of one mind. Who’s mind? Certainly not mine. I have too many hard, rocky, and shallow places. The truth is, so does everyone. It is one mind, the mind of Christ, that should be our goal and our measurement each day!

**Live** in peace. Sometimes this is a struggle. I think I just realized that the times it is a struggle are the times my mind is not “being of one mind” (Christ’s mind). But

So, as we start another year, let’s consider how we, individually and collectively, can better present ourselves to Christ. May we be His influence in this coming year!

“And the God of love and peace be with you.” 2 Corinthians 13:14

Sincerely yours,

*Sue*

**CONNECTION ACTIVITIES:**

**January 21: MES/MIS Teacher Outreach**

We want to give a platter of treats to the staff at both schools to help kick off the new semester. Please bring in, purchased or homemade snacks, cookies or treats by Sunday 1/19. The trays will be put together the following day and taken to school on Tuesday. Thank you for helping us share our love for these two schools. (FYI. Together the schools have a little over 100 staff members)

**February 8: Lunch n Craft, Saturday @ noon**

(We are rescheduling this event which was originally planned for January.) We will be stenciling Welcome signs. Supplies like paint, brushes, stencils, hangers, some ribbons and some floral picks will be provided. If you desire specific ribbons or flowers please bring your own supplies. Check the bulletin board for sample. (Hope to have it up by 1/5/25.)

Main course for meal is soup, and will be provided. Please bring a side to go with it.

**Also,**

We want to use this/these events as an opportunity to build connections within and outside the church. Please plan to come and invite others! Let Sue Howard know if you are coming and how many guests by January 26th (so that we have enough supplies).

**Who Are We?**

**Pastor:** Ken Sistrunk 260-229-5949 (cell)

PastorKenNMMC@gmail.com

**Elders:** Dave Jackson (vice-chairman),

Tim Baker, Jon Gnagy

**Directors:**

Outreach: Sue Howard

Stewardship: Tim Baker

Worship: Jon Gnagy

**Secretary:** Joanne Sistrunk

manchestermismissionary@gmail.com



## From Our Missionaries

Jon has been encouraging us to bring others to get to know our blessed Savior, Jesus Christ. (He really wants to ring that bell.) In a letter from one of our missionaries they talk about ways to share with others. Their names are changed for protection purposes.

A missionary (*Cindy*) has been having some health issues and has started working out at a gym at 8am 4 times a week. Since *Cindy* is not a morning person, this is early for her. Meanwhile *Cindy* has gotten to know *Julie* who has been attending their church, although they do not know as of yet "where she stands in her walk with the Lord. *Cindy* was talking with *Julie* on Sunday about the gym and has invited *Julie* to come work out with her. In some ways this is a classic example of 'misery enjoys company', but the reality is that *Cindy* is being intentional about this relationship. She saw a way to connect and took advantage of the opportunity.

"Through this shared experience, *Cindy* is praying for ways to open up discussions with *Julie*. These will be simple conversations at first, 'I hate working out', for instance. Then, we trust they will move into deeper, significant conversations until eventually, they will lead into spiritual conversations. It is a very simple process to follow. Be purposeful and intentional about using everyday experiences to help formulate the conversations then just trust the Holy Spirit to lead the conversation in the way it should go.

"Who are you working out with? Who are you playing golf with? Who are you going shopping with? Who are you . . ."

We often think of missionaries (or pastors for that matter) as being these super spiritual Christians and that we can never do that. But we can. We need to be intentional in our relationships. Pray for those relationships and listen to the Holy Spirit for when it is time to move conversations to spiritual ones. This is not going up to strangers and preaching at them. It is developing relationships so that they will be open to hearing about Jesus. Not every conversation will end up being a spiritual one, but just be open to it. Likewise, not every spiritual conversation will turn into that person accepting Christ as their Savior. Just keep planting those seeds.

I am reminded of a song called *Fifteen* by Greg Long that talks about this. Here is the chorus and the bridge.

*"If it takes fifteen times  
To hear about Jesus  
For someone to believe  
Wherever I stand in line  
I've got to make a difference  
In case it comes down to me  
'Cause I may be the third  
I may be the seventh  
There may be years in between  
But what if I'm fifteen  
What if I'm fifteen  
What if I'm fifteen, oh, yeah*

*God, I don't want to miss the chances  
When you open up the door  
What may seem so insignificant  
You see so much more "*

Let's try to be intentional in our relationships. Let's all be "missionaries" in our communities. Even if you are not "fifteen", you are bringing them one step closer to being a true Christ follower.

~ Joanne

Aha!!! Aha!!! Aha!!!  
I Get It!!!

We have been asking people to share their "Aha" moments. Here are a few.

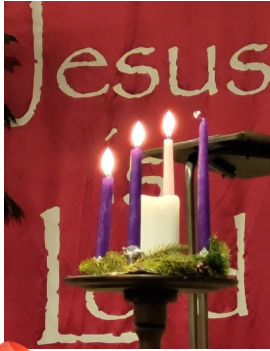
In the 3rd verse of O Come, All Ye Faithful, it says "Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing!" This isn't just a word of the Father, it is The Word which is one of Jesus' names/titles. "In the beginning was The Word. . . ." (John 1:1)

We can thank and worship God even in the little everyday things like a beautiful sunset.

James 5:17 says "Elijah was a man just like us. . . ." When I think of the prophets I guess I always thought of them as being special, as having a special gift. But they were just normal people like you and me. It's just God gave them an ability that others don't have. They were just ordinary men called to do extraordinary things. . . That's all.



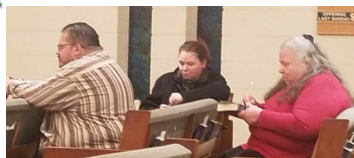
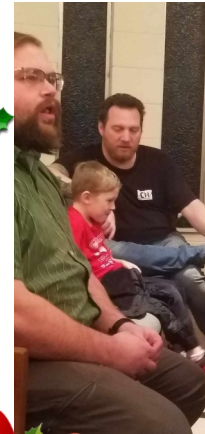
DECEMBER IN REVIEW



DECORATIONS



CHRISTMAS EVE



**CHRISTMAS PARTY**



**WHAT DID YOU GET IN THE BAG?**