

GOTHENBURG FIRST UNITED
 METHODIST
 1401 LAKE AVENUE
 GOTHENBURG, NE 69138
 REV. GRACE GICHURU



January 2022– Volume 35– Issue 1

2021 IS DONE...2022 IS NEW

New Year's Morning

Only a night from old to new!
 Only a night, and so much wrought!
 The Old Year's heart all weary grew,
 But said: "The New Year rest has brought."
 The Old Year's hopes its heart laid down,
 As in a grave; but, trusting, said:
 "The blossoms of the New Year's crown
 Bloom from the ashes of the dead."
 The Old Year's heart was full of greed;
 With selfishness it longed and ached,
 And cried; "I have not half I need.
 My thirst is bitter and unslaked.
 But to the New Year's generous hand
 All gifts in plenty shall return;
 True love it shall understand;
 By all my failures it shall learn.
 I have been reckless; it shall be
 Quiet and calm and pure of life.
 I was a slave; it shall go free,
 And find sweet peace where I strife."
 Only a night from old to new!
 Never a night such changes brought.
 The Old Year had its work to do;
 No New Year miracles are wrought.
 Always a night from old to new!
 Night and the healing balm of sleep!
 Each morn in New Year's morn come true,
 Morn of a festival to keep.
 All nights are sacred nights to make
 Confession and resolve and prayer;
 All days are sacred days to wake
 New gladness in the sunny air.
 Only a night from old to new;
 Only a sleep from night to morn.
 The new is but the old come true;
 Each sunrise sees a new year born.



Poem written by Helen Hunt Jackson

FACTS AND FIGURES

General Giving Thru Dec 27
Actual: \$175,002 Budgeted: \$189,268

Percent of Budgeted: 92.5%

General Expenses Thru Dec 27

Actual \$159,970

Budgeted \$189,071

Percent of Budgeted 84.6%

Paid Apportionments Thru Dec 27

Actual: \$19,137 Budgeted: \$19,137

Percent of Budgeted: 100%

Budgeted Checking Balance \$18,496

Furnace Fund Balance \$5,979

Furnace Fund Goal \$10,000

FAMILY MATTERS HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2021

Our group had many highlights during the Fall of 2021. We average 35-40 persons each week. Many church youth have brought their friends. We are thankful for that. Delicious meals are made each week. Five junior high youth attend Confirmation class with Pastor Grace. We rode on a flatbed and went caroling to six homes of church members. We decorated trunks and gave out treats for about 130 Halloween guests for Trunk or Treat. We helped set up for the church's community service project, Gifts of the Heart. The junior and senior high attended Fields of Faith with other youth groups of Gothenburg. We are grateful for our chefs and dedicated leaders.

Fellowship Time

Fellowship Coffee following the worship service has been a great success. As a result, several people have indicated that they would like to see it continue. This is strictly done as a result of people volunteering to make coffee and furnish a light refreshment. A sign up sheet will be in the narthex if you would like to be a part of this. We will continue as long as people are willing to be a part of this event. BIG thanks to all who have generously provided the wonderful refreshments. It has been a blessing to be able to fellowship together!



JANUARY BIRTHDAY'S

1– Shelby (Loostrom) Spiegel

5– Ty Hotz

6– Josee Hotz

9– Ava Weyers

10– Joan Anderson, Brady Harrison

11– Connor McCoy

12– Margaret Vance

13– Gary Anderson

14– Shannon Sell

19– Eton Stebbins, Judy Jensen, Morgan Weaver

21– Glenn Schlichenmaier, Jordan France

23– Jamie Weyers, Sonya Gugelman

25– Steve Ostergard

27– Merrill Jane McMichael, Arissa Ackerman

28– Keela Leichleitner

29– Adam Davenport

31– Madison Weaver





From the Pastor's Desk

Happy New Year!

Have you made a New Year's resolution? Or maybe you've given up on doing that! Perhaps in past years you've been through the cycle of optimism, trying hard, faltering, getting discouraged, and giving up.

It is believed that most people who make a New Year's Resolution give up on their project by mid-February. Many people discard the whole idea and say, "I don't make New Year's Resolutions!" But there is another way to approach the start of a New Year: Pray for God to lead you in a "New Year's Renewal." Maybe we need some inspiration to begin a new year's renewal. "inspiration" literally means 'drawing in of breath'. It refers to divine influence when we understand that the breath of God is needed for us to live, and to be creative. To be inspired is to be energized, and encouraged. Maybe what we need is an inspiration more than another list of resolutions.

This year, maybe we can learn from gamers. Any gamers out there? I know I am not one of them. But I know people often get addicted to gaming. They can play into the wee hours of the night playing over and over again. Here's one thing that makes gaming so addictive: You get to start over, every time. Whether you've played the level once or repeatedly, you start again and again with a clean slate. Maybe this time I'll be perfect.

It's that performance desire that drives our New Year's list-making- resolutions. "Yeah, I know I did not achieve the ideal last year. I was not the person I wanted to be morally or financially or socially or

spiritually. But I'm about to start a new level. Maybe this time will be different. Maybe I'll be perfect."

I like new beginnings. Really, I like that feeling of newness - I am starting all over again! Every new year feels like a second chance.

I like how Paul puts it - If we are in Christ, he says, He (Christ) has already fixed us. We are already made perfect. "The new is here!" The game has been won. All the levels have been beat. Instead of trying to life-hack ourselves into perfection, God calls us to live in the new us he has already made.

Ask God to help you to live as the new creation he is making you into this new year. Ask God to help you to grow in your resolve to live for the "one who died for you and was raised again." Ask God to help you make this year less about serving yourself—even by making yourself a "better you."

One way to live as a new creation in the new year is to learn from our past and not allow ourselves not to be defined by it. Remember every day is a new beginning. stay away from what might have been and look at what can be. To honor God with our commitments; and resolve to do all for the glory of God. Allow Christ to lead you along the way.

Happy New Year 2022!





Retired Persons Lunch Bunch

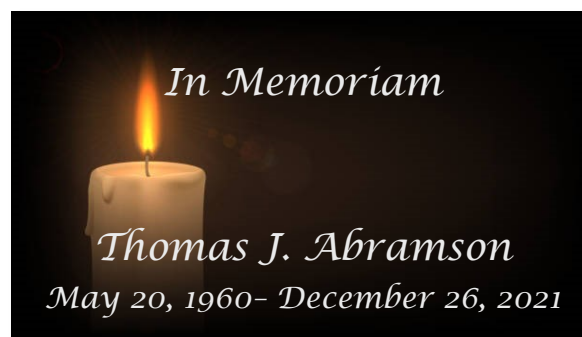
After a year of COVID the Lunch Bunch Retirement Group eagerly looked forward to resuming our fellowship and lunch time together. However, that was not to be. As the New Year dawned COVID reared its ugly head more ferociously and we held off meeting until May. We started with only 12 in attendance but we did start! From then on we finished the year gathering every month with a few more people attending. Each month those in attendance contribute to a free will offering. When we reach \$100 or more we choose a recipient for the money. Because of COVID we did not give as much this past year. We did contribute to the furnace fund and gave a double plus donation to the Thanksgiving Box fund. We are hoping for a good start as we begin 2022 on Wednesday, January 5 at 11:30 am in the Fellowship Hall. We will be having potluck as we celebrate the New Year. If you are a 55 year old retiree we look forward to seeing you. Come and enjoy the fellowship.



United Methodist Church,

Thank you so much for the goodie box! It was very thoughtful and kind of you to send that to us! It was very exciting to receive this package during finals week! Again, thank you so much and Happy New Year!

~Devyn and Sidnee Ostendorf



MORE OF
WHAT WE
WERE UP TO
IN 2021!!

