

New Year's Day 2017

New Year's Resolutions

Did anyone succeed in keeping to your 2016 resolutions?
Anybody want to share resolutions for this year?

High Points for 2016

Would anyone like to share briefly on a high point for 2016?

The Year in Review

The year goes by so fast – it's good to stop and reflect.

Celebrity Deaths

The following lost their lives:

- Carrie Fisher / Debbie Reynolds
- George Michael
- Max Walker
- Ronnie Corbett
- David Bowie
- Leonard Cohen
- Prince
- Glenn Frey
- Harper Lee
- Gene Wilder (Willy Wonka)
- Alan Rickman
- Zsa Zsa Gabor

Football – Year of the Underdog

- Bulldogs
- Cronulla Sharks

Olympics

- Zeka Virus emergency

- Fiji won the Rugby sevens and then sang praises to Jesus on the field

Politics

- Fidel Castro
- Shimon Peres (PM Israel)
- Brexit won – the departure of Britain from the EU (against all polls)
- Trump won - Clinton lost (against all the polls)
- Rise of nationalist political parties
- Pauline Hanson back into the Senate

Religion

- Pope met Russian Orthodox leader – first time in 1000yrs

Some Good 2016 News

- Ozone hole over Antarctica started healing and closing
- India planted 50M trees in 1 day
- West Africa is Ebola free
- Tiger population rose for the first time
- Pandas are no longer endangered
- There were 126 Kakapo parrots - now 154

Some Bad 2016 News

Unfortunately lots of bad news stories – which typically dominated our news.

- Wars in Syria, Yemen
- Nice Islamist truck attack – 80+ dead, hundreds injured
- Berlin Islamist truck attack – 12 dead, 50 injured
- Istanbul Airport blast – 44 killed
- Brussels Bombing – 32 killed
- Orlando Gay nightclub – 49 killed
- 5 police officers killed in Dallas by sniper fire
- 2.5M refugees flooded into Europe

Newness of God

There are some fascinating images presented to us in scripture that present the 'newness' of God – that **He is a God of new beginnings.**

Year of Jubilee

Consider the idea of the 'Jubilee'. Seven years x 7 times = 49 years. The next year 50th is the year of Jubilee – a year where everything gets reset.

- slaves are freed
- contracts dissolved
- property is returned to original owners

It's a year of complete celebration – complete freedom!

All things are made new. God resets everything.

And He does this with people like you and me

Consider the 2nd chances given to:

- Moses the murderer
- David the adulterer / murderer
- Paul the Persecutor
- Peter the Denier
- Thomas the Doubter

Our Christian Walk

Our walk is a series of new beginnings!

Falling down / getting up again.

Sometimes we feel like giving up – or pride stops us coming back to God.

But our God is the God of New Beginnings!

Look at what he says about our sins:

 **1 John 1:9 (NKJV)**

If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

And look what happens to our sins

 **Psalm 103:12 (NKJV)**

As far as the east is from the west, So far has he removed our transgressions (sins) from us.

He will use our failings to help us grow in wisdom.

 **2 Cor 5:17 (NKJV)**

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new!

He is transforming God – he takes you and me and he transform us, the scriptures in Romans tell us “be transformed by the renewing of your minds...”

This Year & Our Church

As you're thinking about 'newness' this morning what are your plans for 2017?

What would you ask God to do in you this year?

What adventures would you be prepared to embark on –

- Plan a sky-dive?
- Scuba course?
- Learn an instrument?
- Take a volunteering role?
- Enter a counselling course?
- God on a mission trip?
- Share your testimony in public?
- Do some street ministry & share your faith with stranger?
- Take someone under your wing and disciple them?
- Start a bible-study in your home?

What are the plans for Carnegie Church of Christ for 2017?

- Can you believe for growth?
- Can you see CCoC bursting out of the se walls and influencing the nation?
- Alpha courses, evangelistic outreaches, community picnics
- A children's ministry
- A youth group ministry
- A young adults ministry
- Students, families, young and old

Let's ask God to do something new here in us and in our church – and let's believe that He will do just that!

Summary

So if you're feeling a bit battered by 2016 – and it's time to leave it behind, remember that we serve a God who loves new beginnings!

Communion represents the ultimate new beginning – where our lives are transformed by the blood of Christ, our sins are washed away and we are reconciled to God.