

# *Pastor's Greeting*

Greetings!

January 2019

It is time to begin anew. A new year has begun, and many resolutions have already gone by the wayside. Hope for improvement is fresh every day, and even more so when we begin a new year. 2019 is a clean book with 365 pages just waiting for you to write your story. Make it a good one!

We all know that resolutions alone will not make our lives better. Every improvement we seek requires hard work, diligence, and perseverance. We will be discouraged at times; we will often need the support of others. God is our greatest help. Philippians 4:13 tells us, "I can do all this through him who gives me strength." The Psalmist (28:7) says, "The Lord is my strength and my shield. My heart trusts him. I was helped, my heart rejoiced, and I thank him with my song."

I pray that you will sense God's very real presence during this period of the Christian year, the season after Epiphany. The Lectionary readings take us through some of Jesus' early teachings from the Gospel of Luke. We will have baptisms, hear about Jesus' first miracle, and learn to love our enemies.

One final thought--I heard excuses through Advent and Christmas from people who couldn't be in worship because they had family coming. I understand how important family is, believe me, I do! BUT--isn't worship meant to be a family activity? What could be more important than sharing a time of worship with our biological family and our church family? I pray for our church, its importance in each of our lives, and for the larger church. Please be in prayer with me as we approach the special session of General Conference (see separate note about January 20 information meeting), and as we continue to work on our own Strategic Plan. May we be amazed at God's work drawing each of us closer to himself. May our community, our nation, and the whole world become active disciples of Jesus Christ! How's that for a New Year's resolution?

Praying that God will continue to bless our work,

*Pastor Barre*