

Pastor's Corner

"O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever." -- Psalm 107:1

We have come to the end of the year 2015, and I expect that most of us, if not all of us, are looking forward to 2016 being a better year. With that in mind, I went back to the Old Testament, and re-read the story of Israel crossing the Jordan to enter into the Promised Land.

The day before the people crossed over Jordan, Joshua told them to: "Sanctify yourselves; for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you." (Joshua 3: 5)

You probably know the rest of the story—of how God did do many great wonders. The journey was not an easy one; there were times when things went well, but along the way we see that the people took matters into their own hands, and turned away from God. When they did this, the people encountered difficulties and hard times; yet, when they were obedient to God, even when faced with hard times, they were able to press on towards the goal.

Even when they turned away from God, and faced the consequences of their choices; God did not abandon them. Instead, God remained with them and waited for them to turn back to him.

My point is that, while we hope that 2016 will be a much better year for us, and while we look forward to beginning the New Year right; we really do not know what the future holds for us or our families. But what we do know is that God is with us—to walk ahead of us to prepare the way, beside us to help us along the way, and behind us to protect us. And even when we stray (and we will), God is still there, waiting and ready to receive us back into his grace.

"Father, we thank you for the gift of life, family, and friends. Looking back on the year, we could not have made it except for your loving grace. Thank you for receiving those whom we have loved and see no more, and for the hope that one day we will once again be reunited with them.

As we look forward Lord, we are gazing into the unknown—a land that we have not yet traveled. Lord, I pray that we will allow you to guide us and protect us; and please forgive us when we fail you. May we love one another as you have first loved us; may we seek to do your will in all that we do; and may we walk each day with you by our side. Amen."

Happy New Year!