



Elmslie Memorial Charge

Volume 212, January 2023

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A Resolution – With a Difference

Making New Year resolutions has always been easy – but following through for most of us is difficult. Many last, at best, a week with most having been abandoned by the end of January.

They may include things like losing weight, exercising regularly, spending more time with the kids or watching less TV.

Why do most of us fail to follow through? We have good intentions. We know they are beneficial. The simple answer is human nature! We just don't have the willpower. The desire is there but the 'wherewithal' isn't. To use biblical language, "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

I wonder whether the Apostle Paul was sitting early one morning – maybe at the start of a year - reflecting on what he wanted most in life: what would be his key 'resolution' – his greatest desire. We get a hint in the first part of Philippians 3. In writing to the church in Philippi, he is reflecting on his past life as a zealous, law-keeping Pharisee and how he came to recognize that, in his encounter with Jesus on the Damascus Road, his old life was now "a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus (his) Lord"; in fact, he regarded it as "garbage" by comparison!

But that experience was not enough. It was just the beginning. He was to go on to declare in verse 10, "I want to know Christ!"

But, Paul, you have just stated you do know him. Now you are stating you want to know him! What are you saying?

He knew the difference between knowing someone, in the sense of being acquainted with them, and knowing them in an intimate relationship as, for example, as a husband and wife know each other.

58 Years for Oswald & Myrtle

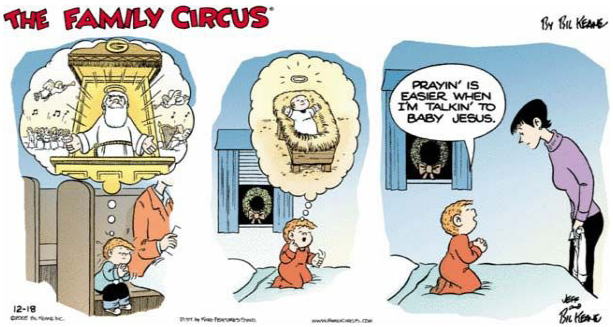


Congratulations to **Oswald & Myrtle Thomas** who will celebrate 58 years of togetherness on 5th January. In a note written by Myrtle when she submitted this photo from their wedding day, she said, "We met in 1964 and it was meant to be. We thank God for pairing us."

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Special January Birthdays
Happy Birthday to
 Bethany Ramoon-Campbell - 50 on the 7th
 Clarenton Myles - 65 on the 9th
 Hartwell McField - 50 on the 14th
 Harwell McField - 50 on the 14th
 Lucille McLean - 80 on the 21st
 Kayla Powell - 25 on the 22nd
 Leonard Ramoon - 55 on the 29th
 Shirlene Zelaya - 60 on the 30th

Special Wedding Anniversary
 Congratulations to **Olsie & Neals Godfrey** who will celebrate 55 years of marriage on 31st January.



Pantry Ministry End of Year Celebration



Photos courtesy of **Harriet Vassell**

Pantry Ministry is an outreach of Elmslie Memorial United Church. The group meets every other Wednesday at 10am in the church hall. It is a time of fellowship for varying age groups. They participate in devotions led by ministers and members of the church as well as outside speakers who speak on topics such as health and wellness. Participants are given a bag of groceries and a bowl of soup at the end of the fellowship. As is customary at Christmas time, we celebrate to end the year. This took place on 7th December 2022. Persons were given a special Christmas hamper, a cooked meal and everyone shared the Christmas cake. Pantry Ministry resumes on 11th January 2023.

Ann Marie Mason

Cuba Mission Team Reports Back

The team of seven who visited Camaguey Baptist Church in mid-November reported back at the morning service of 4th December. They had been most warmly received and had been very impressed as to how seriously the Christians there took their faith, despite the great challenges they face. One member noted that this was especially evidenced in the church's prayer life.

A "miracle" of sorts was that they were able to take 58 boxes of essentials, like food and medications, on Cayman Airways and, further, passed through Customs and the airport hoards with no problem.

Betty Ann who led the team indicated that the Mission Committee is exploring ways to make further trips to Cuba.



From left: **Antonio Sanchez, Enmanuel & Dayana Gonzalez, Betty Ann Mobley, Louis Sully and Evelyn Rocket.** Missing from picture: **Chuck Mobley**



Maggie Clarke and Shirlene Zelaya display Christmas colours at the Sunday service on 18th December.

Musical Sunday

On Sunday, 18th December, the congregation and many visitors were treated to a morning of delightful Christmas music at Elmslie which included songs and traditional hymns sung and led by the choir and praise team, plus items by the youth band and Elmslie dancers, with a special duet by **Arek Nicholson** and **Rochelle Pryce**.



My Cup Runneth Over - a Tea Party in Celebration of 100 Years



On Saturday, 3rd December, as celebrations commemorating Elmslie's 100th year neared an end, a tea party entitled *My Cup Runneth Over*, hosted by **Lisa Arch Scott**, was held. There was a good turn-out of current and former congregants who enjoyed being served delightful pastries, scones, sandwiches, teacakes and tea in the beautifully decorated church hall. Many thanks to Lisa Scott and **Karen Ryan** for planning and setting up this lovely event and to the many volunteer servers.

Youth Christmas Production



The Youth Ministry's Annual Christmas Production was held on Sunday, 11th December. "A Night in Bethlehem" featured our very own children, from the youngest to the oldest, giving the welcome, singing carols, dancing and, most of all, telling the story of Baby Jesus' birth in Bethlehem from the point of view of the characters they portrayed. The production was a BIG success (as can be seen from the pictures provided by **Karen Coles**). All of the children and teens worked hard, along with the leaders and others who took part. Special thanks to all who participated, and may God bless you in the Advent Season as we continue to reflect on why Christ came. God *must* get the glory. **Roy McGregor**

A Resolution (Cont'd from Pg. 1)

Paul was a serious Christian. He longed to please God, be a godly man and he was passionate about evangelism. What motivated these? It was his overwhelming desire – his resolution - to “know Christ”. His priority in life was to cultivate his relationship with Jesus. Everything else was secondary.

Should not this be our new year's resolution? An essential thing to help make this possible would be determining to spend more time in prayer. This is key. Not just 'praying' but in prayer. Deliberately putting aside time to do so, in a disciplined way.

A comment by **Philip Yancey** in answer to a common question recently caught my attention: What good does it do to pray if God already knows everything? He responded that “Jesus silences such questions: he prayed, and so should we.” If Jesus, despite his eternal relationship with his Father, would spend so much time while on earth in prayer, how much more do we need to.

That is the bottom line. In addition, determine to join others in prayer. Go to the church prayer meetings.

Further, be more committed to reading and meditating on Scripture. There is no replacement for a regular 'quiet time.' In addition, join with others to study Scripture. Make a commitment to be part of a home group and determine that the Bible study will be your priority that evening - other commitments and demands will be secondary.

A new opportunity to get to know Christ and our faith better is being offered before Sunday service each week with a short Bible study. Come out a little earlier in the morning and be a part of that. I mentioned earlier that most of us are not good at following through on our resolutions because “the flesh is weak.” However, as Christians we have a promise from God that “our strength is made perfect in weakness.” In context, it means that if we are serious about knowing Christ better, and we ask his Holy Spirit to help us and to keep us faithful in our endeavour, he will give us the strength - the commitment - to stay on track. He will help us to follow through on our resolution.

It's what God wants. Do you? **Michael Bowerman**

Sunday Morning Bible Study to Begin 8th January

We have been advertising a new initiative of a Sunday morning Bible study over the last three months. For a number of reasons, it made a checkered start. However, with Christmas behind us and at the start of a new year, the class will begin again on January 8th. The study will start at 9.30 sharp to enable us to be in church well in time for the morning service, so will be just 45 minutes.

Mike will be teaching a series on the first half of Paul's letter to the Romans.

Why don't you decide to commit to joining? Those who are unable to hear the sermon because you teach Sunday school might especially benefit but it is designed for everyone who is serious about learning more about their faith and growing in their relationship with Christ.