



FUMC Loveland

January 2025

Senior Newsletter



Let's Keep Christmas Going

By Rev. Lee Anderson-Harris

Darlene Lowe shared with me an article from the *Loveland Reporter-Herald*, written by Bill Myers, a realtor from Berthoud and a regular contributor. I know I will not be able to properly cite this source, as I received a newspaper clipping and don't have access to the online source! I am asking your forgiveness in advance. It is worth sharing. While we are now in the season of Epiphany, I do not think I am alone in asking the question "How do we continue the Christmas spirit even when the season is over?". I have read this question in some form or another in various places, so it seems to be on people's minds right now. We can answer that question in part from Myers's article. It is titled "The season of kindness: Love in every glance". Myers writes:

Love is the thread that connects us all. It is not tangible, yet it has the power to shape our hearts, our actions and our very existence. Many search for it as though it's something distant or elusive, while others may struggle to believe in its power because it cannot be seen or measured. Yet, if you pause and reflect, you'll find that love is everywhere....Even if you don't feel like love surrounds you today, it can still grow within you. Love isn't always something we receive first; sometimes, we give it, trusting that it will return in unexpected ways. As the season unfolds and the year draws to a close, remember this: Love is not confined to the holidays nor reserved for the grand moments of life. It lives in the small, quiet acts of kindness and care that ripple outwards in ways we may never fully see. If you let this truth settle in your heart, even for a moment, you might find your day shifts....That baby that was born over 2000 years ago is and represents Love itself. Take time to look, to find stillness in a baby's face or the warmth of the sun as it warms you a little when the blustering wind subsides for a brief moment. Take a deep breath. Look around. Let love find you in the small, sacred moments of your day. And when it does, you might find that it changes more than your day—it changes you and those you touch.

Preaching and teaching in the Christian faith often emphasize giving love through our actions and prayers and relationships. These are beautiful words that remind us of the importance of receiving love, and not just from others but from the Source of Love itself. Receive that love in moments like he describes. Let it sink into you and take root. I can confirm that it does indeed change you. When Love takes root, it will more naturally flow from you. And in this way we continue the true spirit of Christmas all year long.

A New Year's Reminder...

From *Guidepost* daily devotional, December 30, 2023

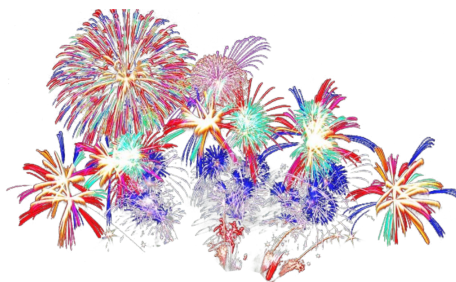
Fear not, for I am with you...—Isaiah 41:10 (ESV)

“Ten, nine, eight...” We counted aloud from the deck one brisk evening during New Year’s Eve weekend, watching the silhouettes of my husband and my brother against the moonlit snow in the back pasture. “...Three, two, one!” The fuse twinkled. A glowing dot thumped aloft...boom!

But that boom was far bigger than I’d anticipated. Innocently labeled “for backyard use,” the fireworks proved to be professional-grade pyrotechnics! As the snow radiated the brilliant explosions of color, horses squealed and cattle bellowed around the valley. Hooves pounded in the semi-darkness as my horse, Jack, quit the country at full gallop. The dazzling and thunderous display went on for another twenty minutes to the whoops of delight from my family, but I was nearly sick with worry. *Please be okay*, I prayed for all the animals. My stomach knotted to think one of them had been injured in the stampede.

I sought out Jack, but he shied and bolted. My heart wrenched. Although unhurt, he didn’t trust me. Hours later, I found him, a shadow merged among the pine trees in the snow. Still frothy and eyes rolling, he finally let me put a hand on his shoulder. I whispered, “It’s okay. I’m here. There’s no need to fear.” Minutes went by. Slowly I felt the heat go out of him. His neck softened.

How often do I need that same reassurance that God is here, that I have no need to fear? Why did I let fear ruin the fireworks? I put my forehead against Jack’s and we stood together for the longest time: *Everything is okay*. “Praise God,” I breathed aloud. Together, Jack and I left our fears in the shadows and stepped out into the moonlight.



But what about a different kind of fear?...

From *The Gift of Years: Growing Older Gracefully* by Joan Chittister. Excerpts from the chapter *Fear*.

“When we count age as nothing but a series of losses, we lose sight of its gains. Then, a natural kind of fear invades the soul of a person. It is always there. It shadows us. It lies inside us like the tick of a clock in the heart...

Too often, we fail to realize that this very fear in us may be the best sign of life we have. It means, ironically, that we are very much alive....The major task of life in this period may simply be not to fear the fear. Every sign of change in me, the very things I fear to lose, are a call for new beginnings. If I have lost the energy, the ability, to walk long distances, for example, then I must find something to do that I will love just as passionately, learn from just as deeply....One thing this period is *not* about is diminishment, though physical diminishment is surely a natural part of it. It is, instead, about giving ourselves over to a new kind of development, to the kinds of change that began in us at the time of conception and continue in us still. The truth is that we are a great deal more than our bodies, have always been more than our bodies, but it can take us most of a lifetime to learn that....

The task of every separate stage of life is to confront its fears so that it can become more than it was. For the young, it is overcoming the fear of functioning alone. For the middle-aged, it is dealing with the fear of failure. For those of us who have moved beyond the middle years, it is learning to cope with the fear of weakness.

A burden of these years is the possibility of giving in to the fear of invisibility, of uselessness, of losing our sense of self and human obligation. Fear tempts us to believe that life is over—rather than simply changing.

A blessing of fear in these years is that it invites us to become the fullness of ourselves. It comes to us in the nighttime of the soul to tell us to rise to new selves in fresh and exciting ways—for our sake, of course, but for the sake of the rest of the world, as well.” (Chittister, 2008, pp 15-19).

Reference:

Chittister, J. (2008). *The gift of years: Growing older gracefully*. BlueBridge.

January/Early February Birthdays

January 1

Nancy Weber

January 7

Larry Jones

January 12

Georgia Chenoweth

January 13

Nancy Westbrook

January 14

Mary Kelman

January 18

Diana Anderson

Bob Bostwick

Nola Marrs

January 21

Sally Allen

January 23

Steve Farnham

January 26

Lynnette Mannering

January 27

Betty Balderson

Lester Marcinowski

January 29

Doug Burns

January 30

MJ Willard

February 1

Steve Tungesvick

February 3

Linda Schilling

February 5

Terry Gindlesparger

February 7

Ginny Angelovic

Richard Zelenka

February 8

Penny Kindred

February 9

Melinda Bart

Jo Anne Woodward

Resource for Aging Well

Larimer County Office on Aging provides **Chore Vouchers** to anyone age 60 and over to provide financial assistance with household chores you are unable to do on your own. You find the provider, but the county will help with the cost. Contact the Larimer County Office on Aging at the contact information below for details and to begin the process, or visit

www.larimer.gov/humanservices/aging/ooa

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