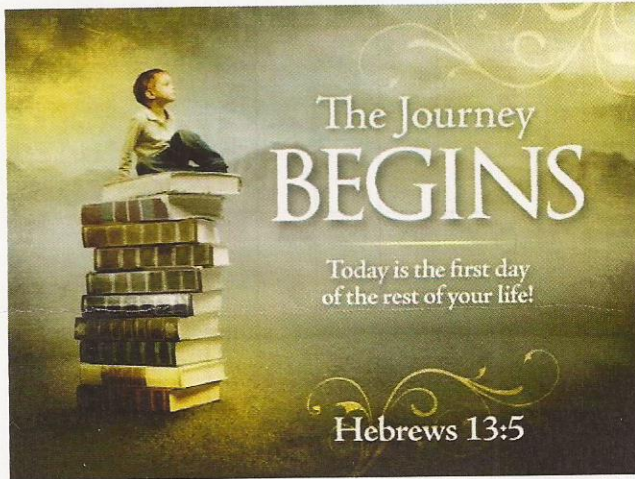


SALEM EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH SHAUNAVON

THE SOUTHWEST LUTHERAN



January 2019

New Year, New Opportunities!!!

2019 makes its entrance with fireworks and well wishes; a time to celebrate the end of 2018 and take a celebratory look forward to the next 365 days of our lives. Excitement is in the air as we anticipate a year of positives. Love, peace and joy are in the hearts of many along with a desire to live them out in grand fullness. Our enthusiastic thoughts turn toward possible highlights that are on the horizon - a birth, a vacation, improved health, a new vehicle, a new friendship, a higher than normal livestock production and price, a top quality and top yield harvest. Oh the wonders to come!

As Christians this is a time we can **look backward** and see the faithfulness of God in the recent and distant past. And we can **look forward** in peace and joyful anticipation of that same faithfulness being with us throughout 2019.

Emmanuel - God With Us, truly a gift, a most excellent gift of God to us. Our feelings at times can betray us. God may feel distant and we wonder "where are you God?" But if you don't already know it, be absolutely reassured that whether we 'feel' it or not God is most definitely with us. He delights to partner with you and lead you through whatever lies ahead for you. If it's a problem, disappointment, or tribulation - He walks with you as you **look upward** to Him. If it's a delight, encouragement, or kindness - He loves to see you being blessed. Take the time, now and throughout 2019, to **look inward** and present the 'matters of your heart' to your Lord. Everything that is coming your way, my way, our way, in 2019 is an opportunity to experience the presence of God amongst us. And that is cause for great celebration!!

"I have chosen you and not forsaken you. Do not fear for I am with you. Do not be dismayed for I am your God. I will strengthen you. Surely I will help you. Surely I will uphold you by My righteous right hand." Isaiah 41:9b&10

An 'I'll be with you through it all' memory verse for you for 2019

A Most Blessed New Year to You All,

Pastor Joy