

Happy New Year!

January 2026

First, I want to say **Thank YOU!** to everyone who helped me celebrate Pastor Appreciation Month, my birthday, and Christmas. Your words, gifts, and treats really made the last few months of the year so special. I cannot thank everyone individually, but know that your gestures are appreciated.

Second, the New Year offers a reset each year, a chance to start over, a reboot. It's like unplugging our electronics and restarting them. Even if we don't make official resolutions, we often think about what we could do better in the future.

"Our lives last seventy years or, if we are strong, eighty years. Even the best of them are struggle and sorrow; indeed, they pass quickly and we fly away... Teach us to number our days carefully so that we may develop wisdom in our hearts." Psalm 90:10-12 (CSB)

My personal goal for this year is to make every day count. I've had too many days when I haven't accomplished what I had hoped to. Certainly, we don't always have to be busy, but in the lives of two churches, there is always something to do, someone to call or visit, planning that needs to take place. I also hope to be more intentional about my own Sabbath. I usually take Mondays off, but it can easily become laundry, cleaning, and errands instead of focusing on God. I pray that you are more successful at being quiet with the Lord than I am.

A.W. Tozer said, *"Faith is not a conclusion you reach...it is a journey you live."* As I continue to grow in my faith, I find that my focus shifts more to living out my faith. There are monks who cloister themselves from the world in order to deepen their spiritual relationship with God. I wouldn't be a good monk; I want my faith to shine before others so that they want the relationship with God that I have. Trust me, I know I'm not perfect. I am probably my harshest critic, and there are a few people who like to remind me of my shortcomings. But I pray that my faith shows in the way I live, the words I speak, and the way I treat others.

That is why the gospel lyric stenciled in the Narthex is so meaningful to me – Our walk talks louder than our talk talks. Another quote, this time from Hudson Taylor, says, *"You do not need a great faith, but faith in a great God."* The same sentiment is in the Parable of the Mustard Seed.

Finally, I pray that you are fulfilling Jesus' command to make disciples—every day that God wakes you up in the morning! The world needs the hope, peace, joy, and love that we just celebrated at Christmas. Perhaps even more, the world needs a Savior—one to pay for our sins and lead us to eternity with Him. There is only one way to heaven, and it is through faith in Jesus Christ.

Live your faith, and don't forget to **Bee A Disciple!**

Pastor Barre

