

The Messenger

N. Ft. Myers Church of the Nazarene

A loving, caring, serving community of believers in Jesus

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Maybe Today

I spent the hour before midnight ushered in the new year going through the pictures I took in 2021. I had seen so many posts on Facebook sharing how bad the entire year had been, with a few sprinkled in here and there who shared some positive events that had taken place in their lives. Wanting to enter into the Lord's Presence as a way to bring in the new year, my goal was to be reminded of the year I had. Among those photos were reminders of seeing snow for the first time in about 18 years, time spent with family, sharing Ft. Myers with visiting friends, seeing the mountains of East Tennessee for the first time in nearly 20 years, joyous time spent with our church family, beautiful sunsets and rainbows that begged to be captured, and some gifts that were so special I had taken pictures of them to stay reminded, as well as reminders of the privilege of beginning a masters' degree program. Among those pictures, however, were also scattered reminders of some very difficult times as well. Photos of beloved friends who graduated from this earth to glory – too many, family who suffered challenges, including separations, hospitalizations, chemotherapy and treatment for ongoing health issues, and photos of an ulcer that was the harshest reminder of my own difficulty dealing with the painful and heartbreaking parts of the year.

I took it all to the Lord in the waning moments of 2021. I thanked Him for the beautiful and cherished moments and the painful ones as well. I also confessed the sins that were perhaps previously unconfessed, and asked Him to grant me help in conquering negative emotions and wrong attitudes and hold me to His standards of holiness in 2022. Mostly, I asked Jesus to help me live each day of the year with His goals in mind.

One of the books required for a class I took last year recorded the author's habit of choosing – together with his wife – a phrase or word for each year that would help define how they approach their days and the challenges that will rise throughout a new year. It helped guide his family as pastors to stay focused on what is most important.

Deciding that was a worthwhile project, I spent some time at the end of the year praying and trying to carefully choose what I would like to define my life and time in 2022. The phrase on which I settled is "Maybe Today." The idea is to treat each day as though it will be the day Christ will return to call me home – whether it be through my death or His second coming.

What would change about my behavior if I knew this day would be my final day in this lifeform? How would I treat others? How would I treat the lost? What would change about how I view my neighbors or the people amongst whom I drive, shop, walk, worship, etc.? How would I approach my relationship with my Creator and Savior? What needs to be transformed in my thinking if I am going to make a difference in the lives of people living without the same hope I have anticipating eternity with my Lord?

I know I am not alone in having been strongly and painfully reminded in the past year of how fragile life is and the loss of hope by so many in our world. Although I was only a child as the Vietnam War played out in our world, I distinctly recall the same country-wide feeling of negative emotions that seemed to pervade every square inch of America. People seemed lost and without hope. I also recall that in the midst of that time we experienced what was termed the "Jesus Movement." It reminds me that no matter how bad circumstances may get or how hopeless situations may seem, God will make "*all things work together for good for those who love the Lord and are called according to His purposes.*"

My purpose in sharing these words is to offer encouragement to you as you begin 2022, to choose to live each day with the knowledge that the circumstances in which we walk must not be what determines our attitudes, emotions, actions or the level of our hope. Regardless of what the year holds, we are still children of glorious hope. Becky

January Birthdays & Anniversaries

2 – Wanda VandeLinde
 3 – Carl Baxter
 7 – Betty Predko
 19 – Grace Bolling
 20 – Laurel & Dorothy Chapman
 Susi Friedman
 23 – Dan & Diane Bowker
 26 – Dave Peck
 27 – Jerry Pickett



January Calendar

1 – **HAPPY NEW YEAR!**
 6 – **Epiphany**
 16 – **The LeFevre Quartet in Concert**
 17 – **Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday**
 18 – **Church Board Meeting**
 27-29 – **Church Yard Sale**

2021 Memorial Roll

Phoebe Barr	Ben Bergman
Janet Bowersox	Ida Chaplow
Jane Clark	Dorothy Dryer
Tom Humm	Mitchell Irvin
James Spear	Janet Van Skiver

Prayer Needs

Betty Jean Willie	Tammy Joslin
Patrick Lindsey	Darlene Roach
June Carsey	Drew Baker
Shelby Pickett	Elis Lodge
Eileen Massett	Ernie Rybold
Paul Jones	Tom Blakeman
Dorothy & Laurel Chapman	Paul & Grace Boling
Louis Perez	The Monroe Family
Kenny & Gail Goodman	Eileen Jennings
Unsaved Loved Ones	Tom & Marjean Cunningham

Those with Covid
 Jeffrey Hailey
 Greg Atkins
 Lisa Koch
 Misty Burris
 Joseph Groves
 Lorraine Jungles
 The Garner Family
 Doug Keuther

Wendy & Emily Horvath
 Dave Smith
 Anna Marie Anderson
 Cindy Jones' son
 Perry Souzis
 Regina Williams & Fam
 Youth & Children Min.
 Our District Family
 The Church Roof



Sunday, January 16, 10:45 The LeFevre Quartet in Concert

This is a perfect opportunity to invite your friends, neighbors, family, co-workers and those searching for a church home to join us for this very special concert.



Sunday, February 5, 10:45 The Burchfield Brothers in Concert

Join us as we welcome two of our favorite musicians, and invite everyone you know to share this special time as well.