

Dear Theophilus,

New Year's resolutions. In the past I have tried losing weight, getting back in shape, eating better, and cleaning up clutter. There must be more but I can't remember them now.

What is it about a new year that produces lofty goals and brings hope close to our dreams? I think it is the sense that the past year could have been better and all we have to do is work harder and make sure we do things better and have more things under control and then all will be right. Trouble is, real life gets in the way and by late January all those resolutions are a bit tarnished.

That's why I like Epiphany so much. It doesn't require any work for us to do, no hype or advertising campaigns are involved, and it is wonderfully simple. The darkest days are over. Light is returning and as Christians we know that light is Jesus Christ.

How do we share the light of Jesus Christ with our community?

For the past year we have been exploring the idea of creating community not only within our walls but outside of them as well. It is a dark world for many people who are isolated, lonely, depressed, and not connected in any way to a larger community such as the church. In fact, the church is probably as equipped as any institution to create community.

This could be the year when community is created. This could be the year when we renovate the remainder of our property, inside and out. This could be the year when we reach out to our local community.

Instead of talking about doing all of these great things this could be the year when we actually do them.

But there is one hesitation. 2006 saw a disproportionate number of wonderful people pass away or move on to new places and they have left a hole in our hearts . . . and in our budget. At the time of this writing we are about \$50,000 short of our goal that enables our ministry to continue and expand. We are still hoping that those of you who have not yet pledged will do so and that will close the gap. We have always operated on a lean budget which makes it even more difficult to cut back when something like this happens.

So here we are. So many exciting plans but not sure we will be able to follow through with them. Like resolutions we can let life get in the way. But I hope we will let Jesus' life get in our way this time and witness light shining in the darkness of unresolved budgets and the pursuit of some lofty dreams.

I hope an epiphany will happen. Every year we are reminded that it does.

Many blessings to you!

Harry