



January 3, 2025  
A Note from Deb Mitchell

**Dear Friends,**

**Happy New Year!**

What comes to mind when you hear those words? For an awful lot of folks, it's the notion of New Year's resolutions.

What comes to mind for me are a LOT of memories tied to various resolutions across the years, typically made at the start of January and unrealized or broken by February at the latest.

Do you make New Year's resolutions? Research shows that about 40% of Americans make them (and this statistic is surprisingly steady, across many years of data).<sup>1</sup>



**What's even more surprising is that many of us keep making resolutions, year after year, even though the odds that they will result in real change are very, very low.**

For example, Columbia University reports that on average less than 25% of people who make them stay committed to their resolutions for even a month, and less than 10% ultimately achieve their goals.<sup>2</sup> (One 2023 Forbes Health study reported that only 1% of those making resolutions stayed committed for 11 or 12 months!<sup>3</sup>)

Many have offered explanations for why New Year's resolutions fail so often. These "experts" also provide suggestions for how to improve one's chances of achieving one's resolutions.

Nonetheless, come January each year a large percentage of us continue to resolve to change something about our lives.

Why do so many of us yearn for change, *particularly* at this time of year? I know for me there is something about the start of a new calendar year that calls out for making something new on other fronts as well.

There's nothing wrong with wanting to make a fresh start or make a big change. But the trap is when the odds win out and one can't stick with a resolution. The tendency for many of us is to think "I failed" and give up on making the change a reality. It's like the more general "I'll start (my new diet, my new exercise program, my new whatever) on Monday" trap, where Monday comes, but shortly after, change fizzles out... only on steroids! Certainly for many years this has been what happened with my New Year's resolutions and my attempts to make change a reality.

As they say, "Change is hard." And that is doubly true when it comes to sticking with New Year's resolutions. **I am writing today, though, to share a surprising "a-ha" I've discovered since becoming active at HUMC, attending worship and participating in various opportunities to learn, serve, and grow.**



Until I joined this community and embraced its "God Loves You, No Matter What" values, I approached life — including change — with a singular emphasis on willpower, effort, and "making things happen."

**I believed deep down that I had to prove my worth, and that the only way I could succeed or be happy was to constantly try to "be better" through my efforts and will.**

I wasn't even aware of how much this core belief affected my behavior, relationships, and outlook on life. But it was there, and it kicked into high gear when times like New Year's came around. No wonder I judged myself so harshly if (or when) I "broke" a New Year's resolution. And no wonder that making the real change that I wanted — to achieve lasting peace in relationship with others — seemed so difficult and out of reach.

A funny thing happened when I started becoming involved with HUMC, though. **Spiritually, I discovered that God was not distant but alive and very much present in my life.** And very much related to this, **I discovered that I could give up being the Lone Ranger and accept not only God's love, but the love of other people in community.**

**The biggest a-ha for me:** I didn't have to resolve to make change happen, and then "give up" or figure "well, I guess it's never going to happen for me" if my efforts didn't produce some external, measurable outcome that signaled "success" to me within a particular time frame!

**Instead, and consistent with what God teaches us in scripture, change is about ongoing renewal, transformation, self-acceptance, and growth in community with others.**

Yes, as **2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV)** says, “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!”

But also, and as we have learned about “kin-dom” over the last few years of our HUMC study of The Great Story, **we experience a sense of ongoing renewal through collective growth and transformation.**



As I have served, studied, and worshipped with folks at HUMC, I’ve seen and experienced that this community supports and lifts up each other in shared growth.

This kind of change can start and continue any time, not just in January. And it is powerful, transformational change that affects everything in one’s life, from relationships to physical health to financial well-being: all areas that we tend to tie to New Year’s resolutions.



**As I consider 2025, I am resolved to continue and deepen my involvement in our HUMC “God Loves You, No Matter What” community. This doesn’t reflect a New Year’s resolution, but rather a recognition that I don’t want to step away from such a powerful source of change.**

God is great, and HUMC is all about creating kin-dom! In fact, I will be one of HUMC’s two lay leaders beginning this month, and I am looking forward to connecting even more with everyone here at HMC as well as beyond.

**How about you?** Are you looking for, even yearning for, change? More peace, more meaning, more growth? Do you want to avoid the “New Year’s Resolution” trap?

**Consider an alternative path, one that doesn’t rely on your willpower but rather the power of kin-dom!**

This coming year is so full of promise here at HUMC, and it includes many, many opportunities for volunteering, study, worship, stewardship, and/or other activities. Consider joining with others who are actively connecting with each other in the collective joy of mutual support while making change happen — changes in ourselves, our broader community, our world. At the bottom of this letter, you will find a sample of upcoming

opportunities to connect. I hope to see you at one or more as we begin together this great new year of change.

In Christ,

Deb



Deb Mitchell  
Incoming Lay Leader  
deborah@cypresstree.com



---

## Sample Opportunities to Connect in the New Year

---

### Connect and Discover

Discover Hilliard UMC: Sunday January 12, 4:30 - 6 online on Zoom. *For guests and newer attendees to meet the pastors and some staff, and learn more about the church and how to connect*

### Connect and Serve

Feeding Hilliard Students (*weekend food packs*)  
Hilliard Food Pantry Plus (*now located at HUMC*) and their Share Closet (*Cemetery Road*)  
Quilting & Sewing Groups (*create homemade quilts for new moms, foster children, the ill, and other persons in need*)  
Wednesday Community Supper (*prep, cook, serve, clean up, or deliver*)  
Within HUMC (*welcome, media, sound, livestream, hospitality, Godly Play, nursery teams, Sanctuary Choir, Warehouse 839 band, etc.*)

## Connect and Worship

Three unique worship services...all reflect our commitment to embody inclusiveness and welcome for all people--come as you are! You will hear an engaging and relevant message from one of our pastors or church leaders intended to connect to your life. Children are always welcome in worship, and nursery care is available for children up to age 3. All services are livestreamed:

9:00 am Traditional in the Sanctuary

10:30 am Family Worship in the Sanctuary

11:15 am Nontraditional Worship in the Warehouse 839 (includes ASL)

## Connect and Learn

### **Children's Ministry (Sundays)**

Nursery (newborn - age 3) available during all Sunday services

Godly Play (age 4 - grade 6), 10:30 am Sanctuary building (*and coming soon in Warehouse 839*)

### **Children's Ministry (Wednesdays, 6:30 - 7:30 pm)**

Faith Kids (age 4 - 2nd grade), drop off & pick up in the social hall

Faith Finders (grades 3 - 6), Warehouse 839

### **Children's Ministry Staff Contacts:**

Lindsay Robinson, Director of Children's Ministry, [lrobinson@hilliardumc.org](mailto:lrobinson@hilliardumc.org)

Nikki Buskirk, Director of Middle Grades Ministry, [nikki@hilliardumc.org](mailto:nikki@hilliardumc.org)

### **Youth Ministry**

Weekly Small Group (Sundays, 10:30 am, room 303 in main building)

Youth Group (Sundays, 6:30 - 8:00 pm, Warehouse 839)

### **Youth Ministry Staff Contact:**

April Andrick, Director of Youth Ministry, [humc\\_youth@yahoo.com](mailto:humc_youth@yahoo.com)

### **Groups & Classes for Adults**

Sacred Earth Group (*2nd & 4th Wednesdays, 6:30 pm*)

Young Adult Group (*2nd Sundays 10:00 am, Coffee Connections, Main St, Hilliard*)

Prayer & Meditation Boot Camp (*6 Wed's 6:30-7:30 pm starting Jan 15 at church*)

Intro to the Enneagram (*4 Sundays 1:00 - 3:00 pm, starting Jan 19 at church*)

Midday Bible Study (*noon, 1st & 3rd Weds each month*)

Centering Prayer Reboot (*2nd Mondays, 6:30 pm*)

Men's Group (*3rd Monday of each month, 7:00 pm*)

Deeper Waters (*inquire any time for more info, cohort begins in Fall 2025*)

### **Staff Contact:**

Beth Palmer, Director of Adult Discipleship, [bpalmer@hilliardumc.org](mailto:bpalmer@hilliardumc.org)

<sup>1</sup> [Insideoutmastery.com](https://www.insideoutmastery.com); November 15, 2022/updated 2024

<sup>2</sup> Commissioned by Forbes Advisor and conducted by market research company OnePoll (<https://www.forbes.com/health/mind/new-year-resolutions-survey-2024/>)

<sup>3</sup> Columbia study referenced in <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/new-years-resolutions-tips-why-they-fail/>