

Dear Friends,
Happy New Year!

It's the same as last year, but hopefully with less calories (for some of us at least) and more care for the planet. In our church, we will have a new budget to consider with inflation costs, we will have a new mission statement to center us and guide our business and worship, and maybe a new plan for updating and improving our church building. We also have our Rooted and Rising Group which continues to transform our grounds and community into a more sustainable place for all life. In our community, we have our Cook County Climate Team (MNIPL) which seeks to work on a more sustainable economy and community for people, the lakes, the trees, the wildlife, and the planet. In our state of Minnesota, we have a budget surplus which may help us invest in things like education and the environment to build a better future for all. In our nation, we have the funds through the Inflation Reduction Act that will make big investments in infrastructure and buildings like our church to reduce our carbon footprint.

It's the same as last year, but hopefully with less violence and more care for the displaced people. It doesn't look like the war in Ukraine is slowing down any time soon, but I am encouraged that Ukraine seems to be getting its land back. I also hope that the jump in violence in our country this past year was a blip and not a trend. We do have a lot of stressors in our country right now that are often exacerbated by news and social media. As hurricanes, floods, and other climate related disasters continue to rise, more and more people will be displaced as homes and communities are destroyed.

It's the same as last year because the calendar really is arbitrary in nature and things don't change because we now write 2023 on our checks (but most of us don't write checks anymore either). We are connected to our history and planting the seeds for the future. I read somewhere that people talk about a time machine to go back so that they may change history, but often don't talk about how they may affect the future with their actions today. May we learn from our past, do our best in the present, and try to find good seeds to plant in our communities, nation, and especially the people. May what we do and say this year continue to bring out good things seven generations from now.

Peace,
Pastor Enno