

## A NEW BEGINNING

A new beginning, the start of a new year. A time to let go of the past and begin anew. Many people make New Year's resolutions. I gave up on that a long time ago. I just end up failing, disappointed in myself, and feeling like a loser. Why is it so difficult to keep those resolutions? I have made other commitments and kept them. I have dieted and kept weight off for many years before, until temptation and lack of exercise overcame my resolve. I have joined a fitness club and attended faithfully until fate intervened, I have budgeted money and saved for something special or paid off a debt with no problem. But New Year's resolutions have always failed me, or I have failed them. Perhaps it should not be something for myself. Perhaps it should be about others. A time to heal that relationship, a time to reach out to others, a time to renew friendships, a time to apologize. I have a friend that has been a friend since Nurses training, over 60 some years but we have communicated by letters once a year and have not seen each other for over 50 years and have not talked on the phone for over 35 years. She called me a week ago because I had written about the death of my husband. It was like there had been no time that had passed. Like picking up a conversation that you had just had, and it was so good. I regretted that we had not talked more often. We talked about old times, her love of egg white and my love of yolk and how we now eat the whole egg. In Nurses Training we would split our eggs. We laughed and talked about those times and about now being Grandmothers. I thought of all the time wasted and what if one of us had been the one that died. We would have missed this chance to reconnect, to recall a friendship that had sustained us both. We had once laughed together, cried together, and worked toward a common goal together. It is a friendship that has withstood time, distance, and life. I am ashamed that I was not the one to reach out. How many others have I let slide away? A New Year should be a new beginning, a time to reach out to someone who has hurt us, or we have hurt, a time to let go of family squabbles, a time to let go of arguments and estrangement, and a time to reconnect with those who have touched our lives.

Lamentations 3:22-23 Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

Lord, we thank you that every day is a new beginning, that you give us another chance to get it right. We ask your blessing on those we love, be with our Pastor and bless his ministry and keep his family safe. We ask your mercy on those that are suffering from this pandemic that engulfs us. Be with those that have suffered loss and those that are ill. Be with our staff and leaders, grant them your guidance and protection. Our country is in turmoil, people are suffering, many are hungry, and some are facing loss of homes. Help us Lord to set aside the politics and focus on the need and how we can each help others. Be with us and guide us and teach us your lessons. In Jesus name we pray. Amen

Grace Epperson