

Dear friends,

I have never been much for making new year resolutions. Or, maybe more accurately, I have never been much for keeping them. I am still carrying the same 20 lbs I wanted to get rid of a couple of years ago. I am still not exercising regularly. How hard can it be to start walking? Apparently, pretty hard.

Throughout the year, I will set goals and work to keep them. Yet, for some reason, the ability or desire to start or stick with some new habit at the beginning of the year seems more of a problem. I don't usually make them because I don't want to set myself up for failure.

This year I am going to adopt a practice that speaks to the good in looking for a freshening up of our lives that resolutions can do but lacks the potential for failure that comes with such a concrete goal.

This year, I am going to pick up the practice of an online friend in choosing a word or phrase that captures the hope or intention I have for the new year.

Serendipitously to reading Ruth Everhardt's blog that suggests this practice, I just discovered a poet probably known to some of you, Naomi Shihab Nye. I came across her poem, Kindness, that really spoke to me.

So, this year, for myself, I will choose kindness or "be kind and gracious." We can all use more kindness and compassion. Like many of you, I sometimes find it easier to act in kindness than at other times. Yet it is often the moments I would most like to turn away or pretend that I didn't see that I need to act in love and kindness.

I have no illusion that I will always succeed, but every movement towards kindness bears fruit. The intention, and the committing to actualizing it, anchors the practice.

What about you all? What is a hope or intention that calls to you? What might be an intention for our faith community?

Wishing you all God's peace.

Pastor Lynn