

Numbers In Place: 2 - 0 - 1 - 6

The numbers rolled over Friday at 12:00 AM. It happened on TV, on our phones and computers, on our calendars. Boom! Here we are in 2016.

Each year is a precious pearl; an unrepeatable, one-of-a-kind, sequence of events. Photos freeze it but cannot retrieve it. This is how God structured his universe. For us, his creation, time moves in one direction. We can learn from the past but not return to it. We leave it behind, live in the now, and aren't yet in the future. But our Creator, unlimited by time, stands above it. Past, present, and future are the same to him, making him the only one who can fix everything. We try and fail. He doesn't try, he does!

The Bible tells us two things that seem to contradict. One is, we are all fallen, sinful, and unrighteous. The other, we can change. Here is how God fits them together:

1. For us, the key is not willpower but **surrender**.
2. God can forgive our **past** so we can start over again.
3. Our only hope for living right in the **present** is the power of the Holy Spirit living inside us.
4. God believes in happy endings and is eager to rewrite our **future**.

Notice that our part is surrender, and God provides the rest. It doesn't mean surrender is easy. It is a daily, often hourly struggle. But when we keep surrendering and let God lead, something amazing happens: we see ourselves change.

The world is screaming at you in the new year to focus on diet, exercise, romance, education, money, and social climbing. Jesus said, **"Only one thing is needed"** (Luke 10:42). 2 Corinthians 3:18 tells us, **"We, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit."** We look to the Lord and we are changed, becoming more like him.

It's not about willpower. It's Jesus' power. It's Holy Spirit power. If you got the money, the romance, the in-shape body, the social respect, and then lost your soul... what good

was it? As the old preachers used to say, I would rather die today and go to heaven than to live to a hundred and go to hell.

What do you really want in the new year? What will last? What will be the ultimate blessing? God, the master of your past, present and future is waiting to give it. But you must surrender to him, really surrender. Let him lead. Your first step? Read your Bible and pray every day. He will show you what to do next.

Mark

January 1st Started Our Month of "Prayer & Fasting"! *Our Calendar for January is up!* Sign up with an anonymous check-mark on the day you will pray and fast. This is the BEST way to start the new year. God's blessing on our lives and on this church is a huge advantage!

Attention YOUTH GROUP: The **WINTERFEST bus** is full and has a waiting list for 2016. **Registration of \$38 is due by Sunday January 10** to reserve your seat. Please see Nawana Ceraso for more information and any questions.

YOUTH GROUP Friday, January 8th, 7-9: Winterfest Ice Skating at Cooper River. **Show** starts at 7 and **skating** starts at 7:15. Skate rental is \$3. Admission covered. See Scott and Chris with questions (856-904-5364 or 5363).

FINAL on "Catch-up" Special Collection— As you may have heard, SOMEBODY anonymously stepped in last Sunday and filled the \$414 gap, so that NOW our total for our Special Collection this year *is* **\$37,500**. The GOAL was reached!

Praise God for his provision through his people!

Cathedral Kitchen: Our next date to serve is January 28, 3:30-5:30PM. See Vivian with questions.

Haircuts for Missions: THANK YOU Margaret, for your faithfulness in donating all these proceeds to our Missionary families! Margaret has been doing this for *many* years, so let her know you appreciate her devoted use of her talent for the Lord. **Next Haircut day is January 9th.**



Katherine reports on her mission in France



Nelson & Jay introduce us to our new AED

Today's Worship Leaders

Worship Leader: Dave Williams

Welcome & Scripture: Scott Schoener (Psalm 138:1-9)

Opening Prayer: Tim Jones

Lord's Supper: Lee Graves, Bill Ceraso, Chet, Hardee Perazzelli

Scripture Before Message: Tony Ceraso Sr. (Rev 2:1-7)

Announcements & Prayer: Tony Ceraso Jr.

Nursery: Tina & Hannah Next Week- Nawana & Renée

Red Cleaning Team: Jan. 6-9 Lillian Coordinates

OUTREACH/MINISTRY

Mark Finn – Preacher
Church Office- (856) 854-0197

ELDERS:

Rick Boyle (856) 986-4876
Tony Ceraso, Jr. (856) 278-6276
Bret Goen (856) 996-5267
Chet Churchill (609) 560-7179

Worship 121
Bible Class 67
Thurs. Dec. 24 85

Howard Mansdoerfer (609) 790-9969 **Contribution** \$4,234
Budget Goal \$4,260

Daily Bible Readers: 22

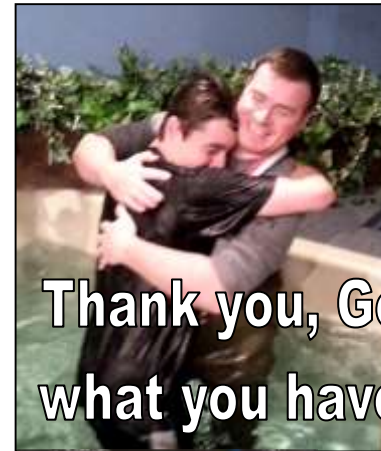
Collingswood Church of Christ

Church Website: www.ccc123.org

300 White Horse Pike
January 3, 2016

Collingswood, NJ 08107
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“Now faith is being **sure** of what we hope for and **certain** of what we do not see.” (Hebrews 11:1)



Thank you, God, for what you have done



Thank you for what you will do.