My 2022 Star words: Perseverance and Holiness

Tara Whitfield

I love the tradition of choosing a star in January. A tradition Pastor Jana Creighton introduced to our SOPC congregation in January of 2018. The word on our star is to be pondered throughout the year to see what meaning it has in our lives.

This past year in 2022, we all were invited to come to the table during church service to choose our star. At the table all the stars white, blue and yellow were spread out and a blue paper star caught my attention, but it was some distance away, so I chose a yellow paper star close to me. The word revealed was Holiness. I returned to my pew but remembered the blue star that first caught my eye and was curious as to what word it may have hidden. After the church service, I returned to the table to see the blue star was still available. I picked it up and as I turned it over the word Perseverance was revealed. I keep my star words taped to a kitchen cabinet, so I see them each day. Little did I know the meaning my words Perseverance and Holiness would reveal during the year of 2022.

On January 19, 2022, I had a mastectomy due to breast cancer - Perseverance. I had a year of chemo - Perseverance. Mental health concerns- perseverance. In one year, our lives were totally changed - Perseverance. As I learn to live with my new normal, I'm learning to live with his new normal as well - Perseverance.

You may be wondering where the star word Holiness comes in... For me it's learning to be patient when he struggles with everyday things such as where to find things or put things, depending on me more to make everyday decisions and being available more. Most importantly doing everything with patience, love, and kindness - Holiness.

This past year we are both grateful for all the prayers from our church family. Without a doubt, you have seen us through some really tough times. Your faithfulness has been a true blessing - Holiness.

God continues to walk beside me every step of the way and I know I'm not alone - Holiness. To God be the glory as we both continue to live our new normal lives with Perseverance and Holiness.

My Star Word – Friendship

Ed Keelen

My Star Word for 2022 was "Friendship". First, it reminded me to reflect on all of the friendships I had formed over the years. Some, I had to rekindle, because it takes some effort to maintain a friendship. I also realized all of the help my friends have provided me, especially during my series of illnesses that I have experienced over the past three years. Sometimes it is difficult to admit to your limitations and reach out for help, but my good friends recognized this and offered to help me before I even had to ask. I am blessed with many good friends at church. Church provides the opportunity to grow your friendships through all of the fellowship opportunities, and comforting opportunities and joyful opportunities it offers. Finally, I would be remiss if I didn't mention my brothers at the Lanterns Men's Prayer group--a diverse set of guys with whom I can share my confidences and grow in Christ.

My Star Word – COMPANIONSHIP

Submitted by Kathy Morganelli

What would I have done without you? These words themselves are not profound but, I believe lie in the heart of the word companionship.

Com . pan . ion. ship

“Noun a feeling of fellowship or friendship ; the love and companionship of marriage.”

2022 began for me only a few weeks after loosing my husband, my dearest earthly companion .

Reflecting on this year, I see that companionship lies at the heart of what the church is about and what it has meant to me this year. The church offered places for me to fit in and share with others in small art groups, Bible study groups, Mission related groups and Women of the Church groups. We walked together through Saluda Shoals and around the St. Andrews park, we read books together in book club. We got to know each other a little better as we baked cookies for the Presbyterian Community and visited at valentines to sing “Let me Call you Sweetheart I’m in love with you”. I am not the only one in our church community that has experienced loss of some kind, we all have , we all carry burdens.

Jesus says :”Come to me all who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest.”

As we come alongside of one another, listen to one another, laugh with one another I recognize that

Together the Christ in me sees the Christ in you, we companion together.

As we step into 2023 I am reminded to not let go of the Joy that we sing came to the world in Christ for

What would I do without you for the Joy of the Lord is my strength!

Christ is my dearest and eternal companion that will never leave or forsake me.