

## **“New Year/New Beginning”**

January 3, 2021

It's the start of a new year. In two weeks' time we will welcome our new pastoral couple, Deane and Annette Proctor. For our church family, it's a whole new beginning.

“New and improved!” is the mantra of advertisers everywhere. But the cynic's response is “What has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun.” (Eccl. 1:9)

God places a high value on new things, new ideas, new endeavours, new beginnings. A quick scan of the Bible reveals:

- “Sing to him a new song.” (Psalm 33:3)
- “See, I am doing a new thing!” (Isaiah 43:19)
- “The time is coming,” declares the Lord, “when I will make a new covenant.” (Jeremiah 31:31)
- “... just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.” (Romans 6:4)
- “I am making everything new!” (Revelation 21:5)

Today, we are launching a new series, “Doing Something New.”

### **1. The past is past – leave it there!**

We need to accept that there is no going back.

### **2. The future is in God's hands – trust Him with it!**

We have no control over what may come our way.

We may plan, but God decides (Proverbs 16:9).

### **3. The present is all God gives us – be faithful in stewarding it!**

God has uniquely molded each one of us for work in His kingdom.

Pastor Rick Warren calls it our **SHAPE** (Purpose Driven Church):

- **Spiritual gifts** –supernatural endowments from God to His children in the faith. (Rom. 12; 1 Corin. 12; Ephesians 4:11-12)
- **Heart** – our passions, what moves us. (Matthew 12:34; Psalm 37:4; Proverbs 4:23; 1 Samuel 12:20)
- **Abilities** – natural ways God resources us: talents, time, treasure. (Matthew 25:14-30; Exodus 31:1-5)
- **Personality** – our mental and emotional make-up, often evident from birth. Think of David, Jeremiah, Peter and Paul.
- **Experiences** – what God graciously allows into our lives.

The new covenant, foretold by Jeremiah, has been brought to fruition by Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith. In partaking of the elements of Communion, we do so with solemn, joyful and loving remembrance of all that Jesus suffered for us (1 Corinthians 11:23-26).