

Welcome to September. It's time to gear up again. Today we had our first LWML meeting of the new year. What a joy to gather with my purple peeps all in the same room at the same time! We discussed our plans for the year and shared our summers with one another. Like-minded women are a gift from God.

Mental Health and My Temple

Do you have a Word of the Year? You know, a word you try to learn about and improve upon in your life. This year I was prompted (by the Holy Spirit) to choose **temple**. Now, I know a temple is a building used for worship, but that is not my word. My temple is me! 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 says, "*Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.*" As a Christian, I am God's temple. Therefore, how I care for my body and mind, how I act, listen, speak, and care for myself, are all parts of my temple.

How was I to know, back in January, how much I could learn and how much I could change over the year? I did not know that in June a family issue would raise my anxiety level so high I gained 10 unwanted pounds! I did not know that when I looked at my actions, I would be so disappointed in myself. I did know that my mouth needed help, but not how to fix it.

I knew I would need God's strength to make changes. I have slowly lost some of my extra weight (thank you, God!) and learned to be more gentle in some of my interactions. But the mouth, that mouth, kept getting me into trouble. I constantly lost patience and then yelled at my poor, undeserving husband. Then I came upon the book, *Martin Luther on Mental Health; Practical Advice for Christians Today* by Stephen M Saunders. In Chapter 2, Saunders says, "**Behaviors are a choice**. Do not let anyone convince you otherwise. Sometimes anger or sadness gets the better of someone and leads them to do something they should not do (sin). Generally, though, people act how they choose to act, whether they insist that their emotions are to blame or not. When Donald gets angry at his wife, he curses at her. When Donald gets angry after the police officer pulled him over for speeding, he does not curse him or her. Donald likewise does not curse at his boss, despite being angry about his work schedule. When Donald says to you that he cannot control his anger, do not believe him. He may think that, but it is not true. **Behaviors are a choice.**" (Bolding, underline, and parenthesis are mine.)

Behaviors are a choice. It literally slapped me in the face! I took a breath and everything changed! It just never occurred to me that God would change my actions so easily. He, Who sent His son, Jesus, into the world to redeem me, accepted my confession and repentance and made me whole. Scripture says, in Colossians 1:13-14, "*He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.*" Praise God!

I would invite any of you who might have issues similar to mine to pray to our Heavenly Father about them. When you pray, you know He hears you and will answer your prayer according to His time and not yours. He will lead you just where you need to go!

Before I finish this newsletter, I want to share some exciting news about the 2025 Retreat! Come one, come all!

- **Retreat Date:** August 1-3, 2025.
- **Retreat Location:** St Francis Retreat Center, San Juan Bautista.
- **Speaker:** Lindsey Hausch from Rocklin CA, and her topic is JUST AS I AM.
- **Music:** By Tyler (Asst. Director) and a Brother from St Francis Retreat Center
- **Cost:** An increase from last year (about 50% more) due to the economic climate and the new location.
- **Activities:** New and interesting activities at this retreat!

I love you all,

Cathey