

All Things New

*He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God.
Psalm 40:3*

“New.” The word brings images of all kinds of exciting things, doesn’t it? New job, new car, new friend, new clothes, New Year, new beginnings! Back in January 2002, I began a new journey. I became a leader of First Place 4 Health in my church. It was a new program, and no one was familiar with it where I live. In October of that same year, I made the commitment to be the First Place 4 Health Networking Leader for Wisconsin. It was an exciting time, and a bit scary stepping into all that newness. I began new relationships as I met other leaders in various cities. It was a new experience planning meetings and events held in various churches around the state. I belong to a small church, so I gained a new understanding of how larger churches operate as I worked with leaders from those congregations.

All of this brought a new song in my mouth! A new adventure had begun, and it has continued all these years. Every step is new, and God has an amazing way of breathing freshness into each one of those steps. Every 12 weeks is a new session, bringing new faces. But even more than that, God is working in and through my heart each day, bringing into it new life. My eyes see new things and my mind is being made new by the power of His Word. My heart is being renewed daily by the power of His Holy Spirit.

A synonym for “new” describes things that have not existed or have not been known or seen before. God is so exciting! He breathes new life into those seeking Him. I have witnessed the “new” physical bodies of members who have embraced the Live It plan and made it their lifestyle. I have watched God break the chains of emotional bondage in individuals who have learned to trust Him, and then seen a new sparkle in their eyes and a

smile to match. I have seen First Place 4 Health members experience renewal in their marriages that were on the verge of collapse and receive a freshness in their relationships that were stagnant without the power of the risen Lord. As we begin this New Year, my personal desire is to begin each day with the same enthusiasm as the New Year celebration. I want to experience our Lord in every choice and decision I make. My mouth has a new song of praise every time I put my trust in Him. My heart has a new song as I witness others "see and fear and put their trust in Him."

Father, this new year, help me daily die to my petty desires that can never satisfy. I want to be able to truly say, along with the psalmist, "As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God" (Psalm 42:1).

Journal:What is most problematic for you? Negative self-talk, emotional overreaction to stress, unwise food choices, neglect of your relationship with God? Give your struggle to God and ask the Holy Spirit for a new beginning.