



St John Lutheran February Newsletter

Pastor's Page

Love One Another

I always think of February as a month filled with hearts. Maybe that is because I always liked Valentine's Day, and receiving Valentine's cards. Although the origins of the celebration are rather shrouded in history, the idea for the day may go back to the 3rd century when a saint by the name of Valentine was beheaded by the Roman Emperor Claudius II. One thought suggest that the idea for the day was really started by Chaucer. "The medieval English poet Geoffrey Chaucer often took liberties with history, placing his poetic characters into fictitious historical contexts that he represented as real. No record exists of romantic celebrations on Valentine's Day prior to a poem Chaucer wrote around 1375. In his work "Parliament of Foules," he links a tradition of courtly love with the celebration of St. Valentine's feast day—an association that didn't exist until after his poem received widespread attention. The poem refers to February 14 as the day birds (and humans) come together to find a mate. When Chaucer wrote, "For this was sent on Seynt Valentyne's day / Whan every foul cometh ther to choose his mate," he may have invented the holiday we know today."

(<http://www.history.com>) Maybe I am just a romantic; however, a day given to express affection and love for one another; whether it be friendship or passion is not such a bad thing.

I believe that God is a big fan of this thing we call love. God's kind of love is the type that changes our world for the better and changes the human soul for the greater. In real love there is truth. The Apostle Paul tried his best to express this love in 1 Corinthians 13. Just before this chapter he defined this love as a more excellent way. Often enough his writings are like love letters to those he communicated with. Sometimes within all the theology and difficult understandings that Paul created, I don't think we always give him enough credit in that his greatest motivation was his love for others.

Often enough we read about Jesus and get lost in the gospel sayings. We speak of Jesus love for us as expressed through his death on the cross, but can we also hear his laughter and the joy that he often shared with the people of his day or the children that came to greet him. Sometimes I think we miss the deep friendships that existed between him and those closest to him.

I think that in this life we can often be right, and we often can get ahead or take charge, but if we fail to love another in such a way that we are the instrument for building them up, then perhaps we have not accomplished as much as we may think. We do well to ask ourselves, what is really important about life? When the book is closed on all that we have to say and do, what is really going to count? How will our actions and accomplishments look upon the shores of God's eternal realm? If you bring your wealth, you will be in poverty. If you bring your position and authority, you will be dismissed. If you bring pride or anger you will find yourself humbled and mistaken. If you bring your earthly accomplishments, perhaps God will be amused. If you bring your love and sacrifice, you will be rewarded.

Life isn't meant to be that difficult. Maybe all it is about is the opportunity to learn to love one another. There is a church tradition, which says, that when the Apostle John was evidently an old man in Ephesus, he had to be carried to the church in the arms of his disciples. At these meetings, he was accustomed to say no more than, "Little children, love one another!" After a time, the disciples wearied at always hearing the same words, asked, "Master, why do you always say this?" "It is the Lord's command," was his reply. "And if this alone be done, it is enough!"

Rev. Russell Logston



A VIEW FROM THE PARSONAGE

February has always been one of my favorite months of the year. There were the heart shaped Valentine cards we exchanged at elementary school every year. There were those tasty chocolates that were in heart shaped boxes and also little heart candies with cute sayings. February seems to be the month when we celebrate life and love. February is designated as Black History month. February 9th is designated as Boy Scout Sunday. February was also my late father-in-law's birthday (14th) and also is my husband Russell's birthday (15th). February is a month of celebrating the significance of life and relationships, birthday cakes and cards, not to mention, perhaps buying an occasional birthday gift or two, and all of this falls right on, or near Valentine's Day. A day which celebrates the meaning of love and care for one another and with people giving Valentine cards to each other. Valentine's Day started during the time of the Roman Empire. Under the rule of Emperor Claudius II, (Claudius the Cruel) was having a difficult time getting soldiers to join his military. He believed that the reason was that Roman men did not want to leave their loves or their families. As a result, Claudius cancelled all marriages and engagements in Rome. The good Saint Valentine was believed to be a priest at Rome in the days of Claudius II. This priest secretly married couples, and for this kind deed Saint Valentine was apprehended and condemned to death. Many young people came to the jail to visit. They threw flowers and notes up to his window. One of these young people was the daughter of the prison guard. Her father allowed her to visit. Sometimes they would sit and talk for hours. She helped the priest to keep his spirits up. On the day he was to die, the priest left her a little note thanking her for her friendship and loyalty. He signed it, "Love from your Valentine." It is believed that note started the custom of exchanging love messages on Valentine's Day. It was written on the day he died, February 14, 269 A.D. Now, every year on this day, people think about love and friendship. It is also believed that the pastors of the early Christian Church in Rome worked to do away with the pagan element in their feasts by substituting the names of saints. And as one feast began about the middle of February, the pastors appeared to have chosen Saint Valentine's Day for the celebration of this new feast. So it seems that the custom of young men choosing maidens for valentines, or saints as patrons arose in this way also.

So while we celebrate the meaning of life, the world celebrates the meaning of love. Perhaps these two celebrations always belong together: for what is life without love, and love can only be held, it seems, in the context of a living relationship. As our Lord Jesus walked upon this earth, Jesus taught us that we should love one another, and his life was love perfected. It was this type of love that death could not kill, and that continues to live on in us and in our world today. Let us therefore especially dedicate February to life and love.

By the time you read this in February, I will be recovering from surgery. I will be homebound for at least 4 weeks. Please pray for healing and for lesser pain than expected. God Bless

May the Peace of God shine upon you. May the Love of God enfold you. May the Grace of God restore you. May the Spirit of God lead you. God Blessings to you.

Rev. Jane Logston

A VIEW FROM THE PARSONAGE (CONT)

A Thought to Ponder

Do not withhold good from those who deserve it, when it is in your power to act. Proverbs 3:27

“I just want you to know that your child was delightful in the nursery this morning.” “You have a wonderful way with people, and I admire that.” “Your house is so warm and welcoming.” “You told that guy the truth on that deal, and I respect you for it.”

Wouldn't it be great to hear things like that all the time? How many times do we think about saying something encouraging or uplifting to someone else, but you do not feel comfortable? It is a risk; what if they think you are just trying to butter them up? You could come off sounding insincere. So you keep it to yourself, instead, and the encouraging words never get said. Oh, maybe you think about it later and have every good intention of writing a note, but you never get it written. Time goes by and you lost that moment forever. It is not just words, of course. There are times when you might see a situation that could use something---your time, or your money, or your skills---that you possess and could share. It might be as simple as offering to drive an older neighbor to the store or washing a friend's car when they cannot do it themselves. Or it might be a case where you have extra money and know of someone who is struggling financially. What a joy to send an anonymous gift! Think of the times that someone has given you something right when you needed it---an encouraging note or a phone call, a helping hand with a project or a few bucks when you were strapped for cash. It meant a lot to you, didn't it? Do not miss the opportunity to give to someone else.

“Never believe that a few caring people cannot change the world. For, indeed, that is who always have.” Margaret Mead

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Highlights from Catechism



Our Confirmation kids were treated to a guest speaker, Jeanene Brandt. She led the kids in prayer, talked about her history with St. John Lutheran Church, roles and activities that she has been involved. It was impressive and inspiring. Thank you Jeanne!!! Having church members come, pray and speak to our kids gives them a chance to know one more church member, roles of service and helps connect Our Church Family. Always stressing that this is their home church and they are always welcome here.

Pastor Russell gave a talk on Christian Denominations. An overview of faith, history, differences and similarities.

Our confirmation kids and some of our High School church members are planning a Youth Sunday Service, April 19, 2020. They will be serving us in all duties of our service except for the sermon. You won't want to miss this church service!!!

Respectfully submitted, Gretchen Whitmer

**St John Lutheran
Church Council
January 15, 2002**

Meeting called to order at 6:00 pm

Opened with prayer by Pastor Russell.

Present: Pastor Russell, Jeanene Brandt, Marcia Rackov, Jim Bartholomew, Gloria Foster, Brenda Pylkas and Laurel Bradley. Excused absence: Marcia Martinez.

Secretary's Report: Review of minutes for December. Motion to accept minutes by Jeanene Brandt, second by Gloria Foster. Council approved.

Treasurers report: Brenda Pylkas informed Council we are down \$4000 in building fund and \$1100 in General fund from last year. Motion to pay for plowing by Gloria Foster and second by Jim Bartholomew. Council approved. Monday, January 20th 2020, Brenda Pylkas, Colleen Metiva and Greg Brandt will do the audit. Motion to accept Treasurer's report by Jeanene Brandt and second by Jim Bartholomew. Council approved.

Mutual Ministry Report by Jeanene Brandt

1. Action in place to update membership and shut-in list.
2. Trying to plan some outside music to play every couple of months in church.
3. Combined services will be: March 29 at UMC 11:00 am;
May 31st at St. John – Confirmation at 9:30 am;
August 30th Outside in the Park at 10:00 am;
November 9th at UMC at 11:00 am.

Pastor's Report: Third Sunday of the month we will be doing noisy offering. January 25th funeral at 11:00 am, Ash Wednesday is February 26th at Presbyterian Church.

Committee Reports:

Fellowship/Events:

Confirmation cake and punch.

April 19th Youth will be in charge of church service.

New Business:

1. Motion for St. John Church to be emergency evacuation site for local school by Jeanene Brandt and second by Gloria Foster. Council approved.

2. Marcia Rackov will take over water sampling quarterly for church. Motion by Jeanene Brandt second by Jim Bartholomew. Council approved.

Other business:

1. Council terms:

Year one (expires June 2022)

Jeanene Brandt

Jim Bartholomew

Year two (expires 2021)

Gloria Foster

Laurel Bradley

Marcia Rackov

Year three (expires June 2020)

Marcia Martinez

Doug Gensler

Motion by Gloria Foster and second by Jim Bartholomew to accept council member terms as presented. Council approved.

2. Motion by Jeanene Brandt and second by Jim Bartholomew to accept bid from Atkins electric and use memorial Fund to improve projector system. Council approved.

Upcoming events: Brunch Jan 19, 2020

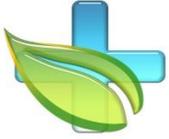
St. Patrick's Day, March 17th

Next meeting: February 12, 2020 6 pm

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm.

Closed with the Lord's Prayer by Pastor Russell.

Respectfully submitted by Secretary Laurel Bradley



DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO NEEDS A VISIT?

Pastor Russell would like to keep an updated list of members who are not able to come to worship service or who are in the hospital, etc. If you know of someone who would like a pastoral visit or a visit from an Evangelism Committee member, please put a note on Pastor Russell's desk, text him or give him a call (269-425-2008).

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UPDATING OUR

CHURCH MEMBER DIRECTORY



Your Church Council is trying to keep our membership information accurate.

Please fill out the form that is in your mailbox and put it in the basket in the Narthex.

The most recent St. John member directory will be in the Narthex after worship
And you may check it and initial that your information is correct to avoid having
to fill out another form.

Thank you!



PRAYERS FOR STEWARDSHIP

Please keep our church in your prayers as we try to maintain and grow our ministry. We are all working together to honor our Lord and Savior.

At the January Church Council meeting, our church treasurer reported that we are about \$5000 behind our giving last year at this time. (down \$4300 in the Building Fund and \$1100 in General) This is just to make you aware of the situation.

We have some additional expenses that will soon require attention:

Our cleaning service fund will be depleted in two months. If you donated to that fund in the past and if you are able, please consider a gift to help us continue to keep our building looking its best. (We are currently having cleaning done twice a month with one of the monthly cleanings being covered by a member. Won't you help with the other?)

Also, to improve the visual quality of our projection system, we are working on new wiring, a ceiling mounted projector and screen and have gotten bids for those expenses. We are grateful that part of this expense is being covered by a member gift.

Please prayerfully consider your gifts to the needs of our church in the months ahead.

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FOOTPRINTS IN TIME - a new day!

Footprints will be offering their services on Wednesday beginning in March. This will bring service days to: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday! They are growing in love and service to our challenged adults. Presently they serve 26 participants no doubt with that number increasing with the additional day of service. Not everyone comes every day. The staff and caregivers (and participants) appreciate the use of our facilities, and the cooperation of our congregation.

St John Lutheran Church



February 2020						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 9:30 Worship & Communion Coffee & Fellowship 3:00 - 4:40 pm Confirmation Class	3	4	5	6 H.B. Gretchen Whitmer	7	8
9 9:00 Class 9:30 Worship of the Word Coffee & Fellowship	10 H.B. Jill Geeseman H.B. Amy Wilson	11	12	13 H.B. Tim Miller	14 St Valentines Day H.A. Jim & Judy Booms	15 H.B. Pastor Russell H.B. Nick Trolz
16 9:30 Worship & Communion Coffee & Fellowship H.B. Rick Weigold	17	18 5:00 FIT Board Meeting	19 6:00 Council Meeting	20 H.B. Susan Nees H.B. Tony Walenjuss	21	22
23 9:30 Worship of the Word 10:00 Confirmation Brunch Fundraiser	24	25	26 ASH WEDNESDAY	27	28 H.B. Walt Whitmer	29