

Ripples

Stillwater Free Lutheran Church

“Sharing Jesus Christ with Our Neighbors”

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FEBRUARY

**“And now these three remain: faith, hope, and love; but
the greatest of these is love.”**

– 1 Corinthians 13:13

From the Pastor's Desk

February is a month in which a lot of attention is given to the topic of love.

Love - We toss that word around with seeming all kinds of meanings. I love my cat. I love to play the drums. I love sunny days. I love my new phone. I love your outfit. I love my job (well, maybe only some of us!).

Does the English language lack suitable alternatives to convey our warm sentiments or do we have an emotional addiction to the word love? If love were a person, she ought to go on strike until we understand better when to call her into service. She must be exhausted!

The Merriam-Webster dictionary lists five primary definitions for the verb love:

To hold dear;

To feel a lover's passion, devotion or tenderness;

To like or desire actively;

To thrive in;

To feel affection or experience desire.

As you can see, love is a versatile word. The sad thing is, most people have absolutely no idea what love is, how it looks, or even how it's supposed to act. And really, it's no wonder.

Over the last 50 years or so, thanks to an increasingly amoral entertainment industry, love has become synonymous with sex. Sad to say, most people don't know the difference.

With that as today's worldview, a lot of people are operating on the assumption that love is some mysterious, nebulous thing that just happens and will just magically manifest itself over your life and your emotions, and you will have no control in the matter!

Did you know that the number one reason cited for divorce today is "I just don't love him/her anymore." This statement is often accompanied by a sigh and a shake of the head as though the speaker can't understand how it could have happened. That mystical feeling must have just evaporated!

God, on the other hand, gives a very different picture of love. He brings love alive for us. He puts it into action - in the form of sacrifice.

The Bible puts it this way: For one will scarcely die for a righteous person - though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die - but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:7-8).

In 1 Corinthians 13 we read, Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud."

And in 1 John 4:7-8 we learn that love comes from God because God is Himself love. No mystery here. Love is clearly defined by God's word.

Oddly enough, even Christians have somehow bought into the idea that love is only a warm fuzzy feeling. But love is not just a feeling. It's a choice.

Sherri and I watch the Lifetime series "Married at First Sight" where experts pair up strangers willing to get married. They actually meet at the altar.

It makes for a good T.V. show, but it shows today's society's misunderstanding at what Love really is. Last season, one of the couples repeated over and over that there were just no "Feelings" for their partner, and there was NO attempt to try and make them!!!

If Love is a choice - and it is - then you must choose to do something, and sometimes even NOT do something.

Looking at probably the greatest verse on Love in all the Bible - John 3:16 - For God So LOVED the World that He GAVE His only Begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.

God shows that Love is a choice! And, by understanding the nature of love and then choosing to operate in it we declare ourselves as followers of Christ.

It isn't the t-shirt we wear or the little fish on our cars. They'll know us by our love. Jesus said, "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." (John 13:35)

From a distance, we might look like anyone else. But upon closer inspection, we should find the fruit of the Spirit as evidence of our experience.

In Galatians 5:22 we read, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

The fact the scriptures likens these attributes to fruit indicates they can be cultivated or grown. So, as we grow in Christ, the fruit of the Spirit grows in us. Or at least it should.

So, as we focus on Love this month, let's also focus on growing some Fruit, so others will see that we belong to Christ!

Happy Valentine's Day!
Pastor Craig.

Feeding the Flathead

We served 52 cheerful and thankful guests on Monday January 31.

They enjoyed roasted chicken drumsticks and potatoes, buttered green beans, a homemade roll, and mandarin oranges. The hot chocolate was much appreciated too!

Thank you very much to Sherri for organizing the food donations.

The group liked the food donated by Gerry Banzet, Gayle L., Ed V. Sr., Lusha, and The Stantons.

I also very much thank Shelby for carrying all the heavy food downstairs and making up the trays. He kept up well!

Our next service date is Monday, February 28. I hear the Timmermans are cooking! (Make sure the vent fans are working)!

I'm glad we can continue this ministry!

God is so good to us!
Hugs from Lori



Christian Ed Report

Kids Club!

As we explore God's word each Wednesday evening at Kids Club, the children will learn about Josiah, Jesus and the money changers, Jesus in the temple, Solomon becoming King, Daniel in the lion's den and Cain and Abel. Come on out on Wednesdays, 5:30 pm dinner is provided with Opening and Bible Time beginning at 6:00 pm

Please continue to pray for each child that comes to our Wednesday evening Kids Club and the leaders that show how Jesus is central to every lesson.

Cookbooks are still available!
See Rachel T to get yours
\$10.00 each and all proceeds go to the
Activity Center

February Featured Recipe:

*M*OUTH-WATERING MUSHROOMS

<i>12 Large Whole Mushrooms (very fresh)</i>	<i>¼ Cup Grated Parmesan Cheese</i>
<i>1 TBSP Vegetable Oil</i>	<i>¼ tsp Black Pepper</i>
<i>1 TBSP Minced Garlic</i>	<i>¼ tsp Onion Powder</i>
<i>8 oz. Cream Cheese, softened</i>	<i>¼ tsp Cayenne Pepper</i>

Preheat oven to 350°. Spray a baking sheet with cooking spray. Clean mushrooms with a damp paper towel, carefully breaking off stems. Mince stems, discarding ends. Heat oil in large skillet over medium heat. Add mushroom stems and sauté until moisture has disappeared. Add garlic and sauté 1 minute. Set aside and cool. Add cream cheese, Parmesan, black pepper, onion powder and cayenne pepper. Mixture will be very thick. Using a small spoon, stuff each cap generously. Arrange on prepared pan and bake for 20 minutes, or until piping hot and liquid starts to form under the caps. Serves 12.

Note: These were served at the church board dinner.

Joyce Banzet



Women's Missionary Federation

We met on January 20th at Judy Hogan's home. Sherri opened with devotions. We then went right into the Bible Study, lesson 1 on Psalm 90, titled "Behold the Eternal One." This book was written by the Snipstead sisters: Karen, Anne, Gwen, and Wendy. Congratulations on being our authors this year.

This appears to be a very interesting study book.

After our Bible Study we went over upcoming events and other business. Sunday the 30th we had a movie night at the church at 4. February 12th the youth will serve a Valentine's Dinner. If you have any questions, contact Bryce. The subject of a rummage sale was brought up. We will discuss this further at our next meeting. There was a discussion on how we will work with our new kitchen when it is finished. When we rent it out, we will need someone from the church to be there to oversee the process. More will be discussed at our next meeting. Our birthday money for this last year will go to Rhoda Jore. We have many cookbooks left yet to sell. Please purchase one if you can.

We had 10 ladies present. Judy and Marie served a very delicious lunch. Thank you, Judy, for opening your beautiful home for our meeting. Our next meeting will be on February 17th. We will meet at the church and Heather will be our host with Linda McGrew as our Co-host. Lori will have our devotions, and Sherri will have Bible study. We will be doing Lesson 2, "Behold, God our dwelling place" on Psalm 91 by Gwen Berge. Ladies, please try to attend.

Submitted by,
Elaine Lessor: Secretary

After-School Program

Since we typically think of the month of February as the month centering on LOVE with Valentines and all, what better memory verse then John 3:16 “For God so loved the world that He gave His one & only Son that whoever believes in Him should not die but have eternal life.” Pray for our kids and staff as we focus on this very special verse in scripture.

Thank you for all those who donated snacks this month of oranges, apples, cheese & crackers, cake, applesauce, milk, goldfish, kiwi & yes even mashed potatoes & gravy with meatballs; the kids devoured it all & LOVED it.

Thank you also to Judy Karboski who made beautiful bookmarks with January’s memory verse for the kids to take home & share with their families. Luke 6:31 “Do to others as you would have them do to you.” As we focused on this verse for the month of January, we read about being bullied, being mean, the good Samaritan, teasing, tattling, being bossy, gossiping, being bad sports and other scripture & life applications.

A big thank you to our volunteers, as we couldn’t be able to do it without you! Lavonne, Judy K, Linda H, Lori S, Karen B, Linda M, Debbie H, Marie H, & Susan S.

Please continue to keep the students, staff & this ministry in your prayers.

Sherri Scavo & Rachel Timmerman

Stillwater Youth Groupies

The Youth are committed to serve the community through our strength in Jesus Christ.

Welcome to 2022 everybody, happy new year to those who forgot to turn their calendar, or to those who have time management like the youth pastor and are still planning a New Year's Eve party. I was going to make a joke about one of my new year's resolutions to make my newsletters longer, but then I realized I put that in my last newsletter for December, so I guess I'll have to wait until next year to recycle that bad joke. However, I do have some actual resolutions in my walk with the Lord. One of my spiritual resolutions, which has nothing to do with New Years, it's just a want for spiritual growth, is to show people Christ's love more. We live in a society right now where love is actually really pushed and put on a pedestal, but is it really Christ-like love? It seems in our culture, love just means accepting things the way they are, and if you disagree with something, you're a hateful person, that's why I emphasized CHRIST'S LOVE. Jesus loves everybody, plain and simple, we are His creation, we are created in His Father's image, but that doesn't mean He just accepts everything. As we see in 1 Corinthians 13, Jesus explains to us what love is, it's an action! Throughout the entire Bible we see God's love for the Israelites, and all mankind, all the way up through Jesus' ministry and life on earth. We see in different passages where Jesus hands out judgement, like driving the sellers out of the temple in John 2:13-22, or when God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah in Genesis 19, but that doesn't mean He doesn't love us, it just means we serve a righteous and just God! God never forced us to sin and turn away from Him, we did that on our own, even youth pastors have sinned here and there. But even through all our sin and wickedness, Romans 5:8 shows us God's true love, "but God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." We receive consequences because He loves us, same as our parents use to hand out with the ol' spoon, but He loves us so much, He gave His only child to die the most brutal death imaginable.... for us. So, as we live our daily lives and interact with others, let's remember what true, deep Christ-like love looks like, and share it with them! As a reward for making it through my sermon there, I'll let ya read about what's going on with the youth group!

After our nice little two week break over Christmas, we all had time to learn how to repair sheetrock and vacuum a floor, so we were ready to get back into the youth room. January 5th was our first Wednesday back, and unlike a Ford, we have been going strong and steady. We've continued with an average of 11 in the new year and are still studying the

book of John through the curriculum *Studies on the Go* by Laurie Polich-Short. The youth have some very exciting events coming up such as, skiing in the dark, January 28th (night skiing at Whitefish), cooking in the light, February 12th (cooking Valentine's dinner, although my cooking does look better with the lights off), and finally, hosting a lock-in at the church in the light and dark, March 4th! For the Valentine's dinner fundraiser this year, the youth will be serving Italian, and there will be a silent and live auction again as well! So please bring your families, your loved ones, and whoever else got in your vehicle, and join us for a great night of fellowship and fun! In other youth news, The Hartle twins and I have also dived headfirst (I more belly flopped) back into confirmation, and are just finishing up the meanings of the seven petitions throughout the Lord's prayer, so if you don't know the meanings, go ahead and ask them, they'll tell ya! To wrap this up (four sweetest words in a newsletter), I was able to attend the AFLC's Youth Workers Weekend at the ARC, which stands for Association Retreat Center, not the big boat Noah was on, that's in Tennessee, from January 14th-16th, and was extremely refreshed! The Holy Spirit really used that conference to speak to me, and I also learned quite a few things from fellow youth leaders and brothers and sisters in Christ, a huge blessing! So thank you to the congregation for allowing me to go to these retreats and really have a time of restoration and learning, all of you are a giant blessing as well!

Ministry can be one of the most fun and most difficult things that someone can do. In the Spiritual battlefield, we see many souls saved and lives turned around for the better, but we also see evil around us, and the devil at work as well. There's a reason that the Lord compares Christian living to war and tells us to put on the armor of God, because this world is riddled with sin and pitfalls. The good thing is, the God we serve has already defeated the prince of sin, and though being in ministry can take its toll, we truly have nothing to fear or worry about, we're on the winning side! So, as we pray, let's simply keep all ministries in your prayers, our own here at Stillwater, our sister church Faith, all the AFLC churches, and all the churches globally. Pray that all of them would put their trust and decision making in our righteous God. Thank you for all your continued prayer support and thank you for loving us the way Jesus does, enjoy February!

God Bless,
Bryce Timmerman

Building Committee Report

The kitchen is almost finished and ready for the County Health Inspector. My plan is to schedule the inspection in the next week or two depending on their availability. Matt and his crew completed the stainless-steel work and moved the two ranges into position. The dishwasher has been operationally checked by technicians from Advanced Restaurant Supply and J2 Office Supply and is ready for use. The roll-up doors are now installed, and the remaining electrical work is to be completed soon. My goal is to have the kitchen inspection completed by mid-February and building inspection soon thereafter. If all goes well, we should then receive a Full Occupancy Permit. As you might recall we have been operating under a Partial Occupancy Permit for over a year now.

Ken West has finished laying the carpet tile in the classrooms, and he hopes to begin installing the wall carpet in the gymnasium the week of February 6. Thanks to Rick and Judy Karboski for installing the window blinds in the classrooms and offices. Our general contractor Matt Lee and his assistant Sean Rodarte designed and installed a laminated cross at the north entrance to the activity center. It also has a walnut overlay. I hope the congregation will take time to see this beautiful addition which Matt has donated to the church for our activity center.

Respectfully submitted by Ed Van Scoten

Prayers for February

Please take this home and use it all week long.

"Whatever you ask in prayer with faith, you will receive." Matt 21:22

Church Work & Ministry

Sharing Jesus Christ with our Neighbors
Building Project
Church Leaders, Staff & Worship Team
Stillwater Youth Group
Stillwater & National WMF
Feeding the Flathead
After School Program
Intervarsity Christian Fellowship
Child Bridge Ministry & Foster Families



General Prayers

Marriages and Families
Our Country and Leaders
Workers in the Harvest Field
Switzer Family at the passing of Lori's Mom
Military and First Responders

- Andrew West
- Isaac Saenz
- David Bruyer (Askvig)
- Thomas Tow
- Aaron Burns

Health Concerns

Sylvan Herset
Joyce Banzet
Jeremy Hartle
Deb & Jonny (Timmerman)
Leo Gallis
Mike Horn
Stan Stroisch
Stephanie Reynolds: cancer (WGM Engineer)
Elaine: cancer (Meyer's neighbor)
Pastor Swanson
Shirley Poe
Michael Poston (Linda McGrew)
Margaret Triplett (Hersets)
Angie Krickeberg (John's Mom)