

Ripples

Stillwater Free Lutheran Church

“Sharing Jesus Christ with Our Neighbors”

1401 Church Drive
Kalispell, MT 59901
(406) 257-4614
E-Mail Address: stillwtr@cyberport.net
www.stillwaterlutheranchurch.com

Pastor Craig Scavo
(406) 253-7003
Associate Pastor Bryce Timmerman
(701) 319-8295
Office Hours: 9:00-2:00 Tues – Fri



F E B R U A R Y

2023

**“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

I have heard it said that February is the month of Love.

Heart shaped boxes full of chocolate and the bright flower bouquets are out on display in almost every store.

People are seeking that special little token that says “I Love You”, and there is a lot of planning going on for the perfect presentation to show that special someone just how much you love them.

And all this is because of Valentine's Day. That one special day where you show that special person how much you care!

But what about the other 364 days?

I heard a story once, how one husband neglected to give his wife a card on Valentine's Day, so he wrote her a letter and explained that he loved her every day so how could he possibly remember one day over another – because they were all Valentines days to him.

Makes a good point, doesn't it?

Now, I'm definitely not opposed to Valentine's Day, but – I feel in our society today, we toss the word Love around and fill it with all kinds of nuances, and meanings that can really confuse.

For example, we say: 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!) and we know that we don't mean the same for each of those statements!

It seems to me that either the English language lacks suitable alternatives to convey our warm sentiments or maybe we have just developed an emotional addiction to the word love.

If love were a person, she must be exhausted! She should go on strike until we understand better when to call her into service.

But, no matter, because love is a versatile word.

Sadly, most people have absolutely no idea what love is, how it looks, or even how it's supposed to act.

When I mention “Love” to people, I am usually directed to one of the most popular Scripture verses in the Bible. No Not John 3:16! I’m thinking of 1 Corinthians 13. Sometimes known as the “Love Chapter.” And it is indeed a wonderful chapter describing and defining Love!

But I often wonder if people really understand the implications that Paul is presenting in this text. Every thing Paul uses to define Love is a verb, or a word that denotes action on the one giving the Love to another!

Unfortunately, over the last 50 years or so, love has lost the idea of action, and become more of a feeling. 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!

Jesus tells us in John 15:13 – Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. Then He goes on to call us His friends!

And then, probably my absolute favorite Bible verse on Love – Romans 5:8 - but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

This verse basically tells us that Jesus as our friend, gave up His life for us on the cross, while we were in the very act of sinning against Him! WOW – now that’s LOVE!!

And in 1 John 4:7-8 we learn that love comes from God because God is himself love.

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.

And if it is a choice 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 of LOVE, lets also focus on growing some Fruit, so others will see that we belong to Christ!

Happy Valentine's Day!

Pastor Craig.

Direct 2022 Choice Dollars Today - Are you or someone you know a Thrivent member? If you haven't already done so, you can still direct 2022 Choice Dollars to **Stillwater Free Lutheran Church!** Don't miss the opportunity to recommend where Thrivent gives back!

You Are Invited!



You are invited to a FUN evening out to support our Youth Group in their first fundraiser of the year. Join them in the Activity Center on Saturday, February 11, starting at 6 pm for a festive dinner that includes salade, Oriental or alternative main entre' and choice of luscious desserts.

Before dinner, you will have to opportunity to perouse the Silent Auction items and make a bid or two. Or three, or four. After dinner, Bryce will kick-off the Oral Auction that is always a fun time for all in attendance!



They are still looking for items, services, or outings for both the silent and oral auction. Call or text Bryce at (701)319-8295 to let him know that you have something for them!



Fighting “Flashy” Things

Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it. [Proverbs 22:6](#)

In the 1960s-era TV series *The Andy Griffith Show*, a man tells Andy he should let his son Opie decide how he wants to live. Andy disagrees: “You can’t let a young’un decide for himself. He’ll grab at the first flashy thing with shiny ribbons on it. Then, when he finds out there’s a hook in it, it’s too late. Wrong ideas come packaged with so much glitter that it’s hard to convince them that other things might be better in the long run.” He concludes that it’s important for parents to model right behavior and help “keep temptation away.”

Andy’s words are related to the wisdom found in Proverbs: “Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it” (22:6). Although many may read these words as a promise, they’re really a guide. All of us are called to make our own decision to believe in Jesus. But we can help lay a biblical foundation through our love for God and Scripture. And we can pray that as the little ones under our care mature, they choose to receive Christ as Savior and walk in His ways and *not* “in the paths of the wicked” (v. 5).

Our own victory over “flashy things” through the Holy Spirit’s enabling is also powerful testimony. Jesus’ Spirit helps us to withstand temptation and molds our lives into examples worth imitating.

By **Alyson Kieda**

SCRIPTURE INSIGHT

The book of Proverbs frequently emphasizes the importance of adults providing wise guidance and discipline for children. In Proverbs 29, parents are warned that “a child left undisciplined disgraces its mother” (v. 15), but if they discipline their children, “they will give you peace; they will bring you the delights you desire” (v. 17). But these general principles on the wisdom and necessity of adults providing children guidance don’t imply that parents carry all the responsibility for their children’s choices. Other sections of the book nuance the picture. Proverbs is addressed to the young (1:4–7), emphasizing the importance of every person choosing to humbly listen to the voice of wisdom (v. 20; 2:2–5) and to rely on God for the wisdom only found in Him (2:5–6). Ironically, the man who wrote those words, Solomon, would stray from the paths of wisdom as an adult (1 Kings 11:9–11).

After-School Program

For the month of January, the kids memorized Luke 6:13. The kids were excited about this verse as it is part of “the Warrior Way” at school!! Of all the verses we’ve memorized this year this is the verse they love to quote to one another during free time!! We continue to cover a Bible story every day. We have gone through this specific story book almost twice now so I’m on the lookout for a new Bible stories book!!

We continue to battle sickness so we continue to covet your prayers for health for the kiddos, my volunteers and myself!

As always, a huge thank you to those who bless with their time and for those who provided snacks (we are now up to 20 growing and active kiddos so we go through those snacks fast)!! The time and food are very appreciated!!

Thank you all and God's blessing! ~Ashley

Stillwater Book Club

Our next book discussion will be on Nefertiti by Michelle Moran on Friday, Feb. 3, at 10:30 AM in the Kid's Club Room in the Activity Center following Coffee and Conversation. After our discussion we will have time for fellowship, enjoy our own sack lunches and eat



a yummy dessert provided by Ashley this month. Anyone who has read the book is welcome to join us, or just come to hear about it to see if you would like to read it in the future. Please join us!

We have had a schedule change. The Beautiful World (our March book pick), has been traded with our Dec. book, Women of the Silk, due to few copies being available. So our March 3 discussion will be about Chinese historical fiction, Women of the Silk.

The following is a list of the books we have scheduled for the rest of the year.

March 3	<u>Women of the Silk</u>	by Gail Tsukiyama
April 7	<u>The Wedding Dress Sewing Circle</u>	by Jennifer Ryan
May 5	<u>Orphan Train</u>	by Christina Baker Cline
June 2	<u>The Lady's Mine</u>	by Francine Rivers
July 7	<u>Trash</u>	by Andy Mulligan
August 4	<u>Julia's Hope</u>	by Liesha Kelly
Sept. 8	<u>The Lincoln Conspiracy</u>	by Brad Meltzer
Oct. 6	<u>One Thousand White Women</u>	by Jim Fergus
Nov. 3	<u>The Boys in the Boat</u>	by Daniel James Brown
Dec.1	<u>The Beautiful World</u>	by Susan Rohrer

Building Project Report

The construction of the patio cover is progressing nicely and should be completed within about a month. The metal roofing has been ordered and Kalispell Electric will install the lights on Monday, January 30. When the weather warms in the spring or early summer Hagestad will seal the laminated beams and logs and do the painting as they did at the east and north entrances and north drive-thru.

Respectfully submitted by Ed Van Scoten



Women's Missionary Federation

Our January meeting brought 12 women, one of whom was a visitor, Susan, together for our Bible study about Eve. No one is beyond forgiveness, no one is beyond redemption! When we think of Eve, sometimes all we can see is her fall. But God sees her redemption. Elaine Lessor led us through our lesson, and we were reminded that sin always leads to death. But God provides redemption through Jesus Christ on the cross. You are never beyond redemption.

During the business meeting, Sherri shared with us about WMF at Atonement Free Lutheran Church in Arlington, WA. They asked for prayers to lead women to their monthly meetings, give vision on their parking problems, and prayers for a woman who has a daughter with mental illness that prevents her from attending meetings regularly.

Our next Bible study, business meeting and luncheon will be on Thursday, February 16, at 10 am being held in the Activity Center. Sherri Scavo and Linda McGrew will be our hosts, with Sherri Scavo as our Bible study leader and Lori Switzer will have a devotion.

Stillwater Library News

Have any of you read a book from the library? Please write a short paragraph about the book and send it to Susan Shea (yesshecanbake@gmail.com) or Meri Putzler (mputzler13@gmail.com). We'd love to hear about the books being borrowed from our library.



New donations to the library are being made. Be sure to check out the new (to us) books. Thanks to Elaine Lessor we now have copies of the following books:

Girlfriends, Invisible Bonds, Enduring Ties, by Carmen Berry and Tamara Traeder , “tells the stories of old friends, new friends, best friends, and lost friends, soulmates and confidants. Inspiring and enlightening, with generous doses of humor. This book explores acceptance, strength, resilience, loyalty and many other facets of these invaluable relationships.”

The Five People You Meet in Heaven, by Mitch Albom

Tuesdays with Morrie, by Mitch Albom

The Christmas Blessings, by Donna Van Liere

An Invisible Thread, by Laura Schroff and Ales Tresniowski, “a true story of an 11 yr. old panhandler, a busy sales executive and an unlikely meeting with destiny.”

Dear John, by Nicholas Sparks

Heart and Soul by Maeve Binchy

Stillwater Youth Groupies

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

This winter so far has made me realize the true loves of my life. I love Jesus, my family, Stillwater congregation, the Pittsburgh Steelers, and four wheel drive vehicles. Jesus is a constant in my life and the reason I have everything I do, including eternal hope. I love my family because they are my non-stop support system and I'm terrible at doing laundry by myself. My love for Stillwater continues to grow throughout these years I've been here, and now that I'm almost 15 I'm understanding so much more about these amazing people that the Lord has called to this church. I love the Pittsburgh Steelers, especially in January and February because that's when the playoffs are and they need love more than ever while their sitting on their couches watching all the other teams play. Lastly, I love having a vehicle that I can drive straight out of the ditch, considering that's pretty much where my full-time residence is during the winter. When I say the word love, where do you think most people's minds go? Some of the examples I just gave, such as the pickup or the Steelers (please don't tell them) are truly just strong feelings of affection and "like" for lack of a better term. The first three things I mentioned I do truly love, and I can tell that all those things truly love me back as well. Knowing that someone loves you back is a truly wonderful feeling, and to expound more on that, who do you think people really want to love them back? I can't answer for everyone else, but people as a whole, crave attention and care, and are so comforted by the fact that there is someone out there who loves us. So why do so many people turn away from God, the one who can love everybody more than anyone else could even imagine? If that is truly what we crave, and I think we can all subconsciously agree that it is, then who is a better person to seek it from? Nobody can love us and care for us as perfectly as our Savior, and He already loves us, so why is it so hard for some to accept His free gift of life. When I discuss this with the youth I always bring up the crucifixion, and not in the Sunday school way if you catch my drift. I tell them what kind of whip they used and why they whipped Him as many times as they did. I tell them about the crown of thorns, the King of the Jews sign, all the gruesome details, and not to scare them or be a "know-it-all", but to truly inform them how much that Jesus loves them. He did that for you and you and you, and whoever else in the world would read this, there is not a person He did not put His sacrificial love on display for. Romans 5:8 is the perfect sum up of this eternal love, "but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Whether you're looking for a love like that, or maybe thinking of a new way to witness, or whatever situation of life you're in at the moment, this always applies – God loves you!

Since I went extra "preachy" this time with the first paragraph, I only have about five sentences to fill everyone in on the youth, but I'm pretty gifted at caveman talk, so I'm confident me can make fast time. It has been such a blessing to get back into the flow of things! December was an awesome month, but every week was busy with cookie baking or Christmas parties for the youth, and then two weeks off (which was actually three because my stomach started a civil war and we

had to take off the first week of January also). Needless to say, it has been refreshing to have three straight youth groups with no interruptions, and get back into our rhythm and each other's lives. We have also been diving pretty deep into the book of Acts with the curriculum we're doing, connecting Old Testament prophecies that were fulfilled in that book and the gospels, discussing the impact of Pentecost. Pretty much just productively jumping all over the place, and it's been great to see the conversations and questions the students have about their faith. Our major event in January was our annual night ski at Big Mountain (that's how I prove to people that I'm officially a resident, by calling it Big Mountain instead of Whitefish Mountain), and it was a blast. A very cool, quick God story – I had been looking for chaperones for weeks and so many people were out of town or already had other engagements that I thought it was just going to be me and my eight-month pregnant wife, but I just took it to God and trusted that He would handle whatever we needed. That night we ended up having seven adult chaperones total, God works in all ways! Along with the seven chaperones, we had fourteen youth, for a total of twenty-one if you didn't want to do that math, and it went so smoothly! In terms of upcoming events, we have our regular busy monthly items, mid-week youth group, regular open gym, adult open gym, etc. but also on February 11th, if you haven't heard, the youth group is having their Valentine's dinner fundraiser! I was going to describe it here, but Karen is so good at her job that she's also good at my job, so just take a look either forward or backward (not sure of the layout), and there is a blurb with all the details you need to know, thanks Karen! We will have our youth lock-in at the beginning of March, tentatively the 10th, which means I'm going into hibernation now to get ready for it. We officially have four students and one adult chaperone (besides Rachel and myself) signed up for FLY, hallelujah! The spring time is the fun kind of busy, as is the whole year in youth ministry, but I'm so thankful for all the activities and events we're able to do with the youth coming up!

To continue from my last sentence, all this busyness coming up is awesome, but it's not just in youth group, it's a hectic time for the youth as well with winter sports, school, jobs, etc, so please join me in prayer for these young people as they are starting to navigate a more adult version of life. Pray for strength in all areas and also for strength when it comes to witnessing and personally growing in their faith as well. We are so blessed to have the active young people that we do, and let's pray that those numbers keep growing as well! The more kids we have at youth group, the more kids that get to hear about Jesus and what He has done for them! As always, thank you all for your prayerful support, and for allowing my amazing wife and I to keep serving here, happy February!

God Bless,

Bryce Timmerman

Feeding the Flathead

Our last meal service was Monday, January 30th. Our menu was Roasted Pork loin with a cranberry/apple chutney (yum!), roasted herbed potatoes, buttered green beans, a hawaiian roll, mandarin orange and a homemade cookie! We had 48 guests



with about 24 dining inside and the rest as takeaways. The guests really do appreciate a homemade hot meal especially on a chilly winter night. We serve at Bethlehem Lutheran in Kalispell.

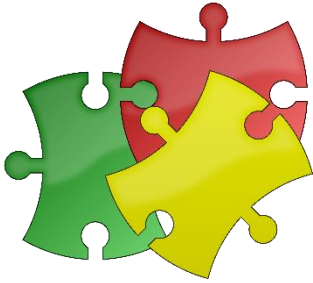
The evening went smoothly with great help from Neila E. and her lovely granddaughter, Ava, Joe Karboski and Shelby S. Thank you so much for your energetic help and I couldn't have done it without you!

Much thanks goes to Judy K. and Meri P. for baking delicious cookies! They were gobbled up! Thank you Sherri for helping with the sign-ups! You are much appreciated by us all!

The next meal served by our Church is Monday, February 27th. Please let Sherri or I know when you can help out!!

Giving thanks to God for all of you!

With appreciation,
Lori



Bits and Pieces

- POTLUCK and fellowship following Communion Worship Sunday, February 5th!
- Two ladies are taking the train to Washington for the March 11th WMF rally and others are welcome to join. Talk to Lavonne West for more information.
- We are looking for additional hands to serve on our **Alter Guild**. A small commitment can be extremely rewarding. Talk with Linda McGrew or Karen Van Scoten with questions.
- We will need a Monday helper for our After School Program starting in September.
- Also, with Lavonne spending her Mondays with her grandbaby, we will need someone to drive the bus to pick up kiddos on Mondays, starting September 11.
 - Getting a CDL and passenger endorsement takes a while. Lavonne will be happy to walk you through the process.

Please prayerfully consider how you could help with these needs.

Prayers for February

"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
The Gideons

General Prayers

Marriages and Families
Our Country and Leaders
Workers in the Harvest Field
Caregivers
Military and First Responders

- David Bruyer (Askvig)
- James Gelormino
- Jonathan Gelormino
- Gage Triplett



Health Concerns

Sherri Scavo
Sara Halverson
Maunda (friend of Dawn Platke)
Sylvan Herset
Joyce Banzet
Stan Stroisch
Michael Poston (Linda McGrew)
Justin Gronley (Joel and Cody Bartholomew's son)
Ed & Shirley Poe
Michael Bray
Bruce Hogan

- *If you have any changes or updates to this list, please let Pastor Craig or Karen Van Scoten know.*