

Pastor's Corner, February, 2016 Saint Valentine

Right in the middle of the month of February we celebrate Valentine's Day. Many of us send cards, poems, chocolates, and flowers to loved ones on this day. I remember that we used to make Valentine's Day cards at home and bring them to school where time was set aside by elementary school teachers to hand them out to classmates.

So, what is this day all about? There are several legends surrounding Valentine. It seems he may have been a priest in the third century in Rome. At this time, the Emperor Claudius II decided that rather than get married, men should become soldiers. In order to accomplish this, he outlawed marriage. It is believed that Valentine saw the injustice of this decree and continued to marry people in secret until he was finally caught and martyred.

The legend continues that while Valentine was in prison he fell in love. The woman of his love may have even been the jailor's daughter! One story has it that while she visited him, he cured her blindness. It is believed that before he was executed he sent her a love note and signed it "From your Valentine." The Roman Catholic Church named Valentine a saint for his martyrdom and February the 14th was named Valentine's Day by Pope Gelasius sometime around 498 AD. In Great Britain, "valentines" began to be sent around the seventeenth century. In the United States, we have been sending them since around the eighteenth century. Today, about one billion Valentine's Day cards are sent each year, second only to the number of cards sent at Christmas.

So, why do we invest so much into this holiday, culturally? I think our fascination with this holiday stems from our own sense that the world is a broken place. Too often we find ourselves isolated from other people and we long for meaningful human connection. As our lives have gotten busier, we have neglected important human relationships that God created us to live in. Genesis tells us that having created one human being, God said, "It is not good that the human should be alone" and so God created a partner (Gen 2.18). God created us to live in relationship with one another. This need to create human connections is deep in our bones and when it is missing, our being cries out for another.

Marriage, romantic love, is not the only way these connections are formed. Some of us have

wonderful, grace-filled, life-giving relationships with many people. Some of us choose to get married and others choose to remain single. Yet, all of our relationships are to witness to the love of God for us. Because God first loves us, we love one another. Jesus is the full expression of God's love for each and every one of us in flesh and bones. Jesus' ministry of healings, exorcisms, and table fellowship, are a witness to God's love and faithfulness to and for all people. This month, take some time to let each other know how important their relationship is to us. And, as we write and send Valentine's Day cards, let us all say a prayer of thanks to God for God's love for us in Jesus Christ and for all the life-giving relationships God has given to us.

Happy Valentine's Day,

Pr. JonPaul

Pleasant Valley Lutheran Church Council Minutes January 3, 2016

The meeting was called to order at 10:37 by Vice President John Poore. Pastor JonPaul led us in devotion and prayer from Romans 12: 1-8, and a prayer.

NON-AGENDA

Sadie would like to use the church's dining room to set up a quilt-making project. She has made 50 quilt tops for LWR. They need to be tied. She will leave the quilt project set up until Easter unless the dining area is needed. If it is needed she will pack the quilts away. People are invited to come and help on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons and Saturdays from 9 to noon. Sadie would also like the names of any graduates so she can get the quilts started. She will give a temple talk on the quilting project on Sunday, January 10.

REPORTS

The secretary's report was read. The treasurer's report was read. The total mission offering for Marty Knutson's family was \$780. The Pastor's report was presented orally. Pastor JonPaul and Kim Vlcek went to 4 nursing homes during Christmas vacation to meet and visit with our shut-ins. Confirmation class is going well. A

First Communion class will meet on 3 Sundays after church; January 10, 17, and 24. There will possibly be two attendees. First Communion is planned for January 31. Roxie will get a cake for fellowship time on that day.

It was brought up that we have at least one person that needs a gluten-free option during fellowship and coffee. We will try to get the word out on that.

There was no Ambassadors report.

All reports were approved with a motion from Randy Sands. Second by Aaron Sands and Randy Winger. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

The recording and airing of the services will be put on hold until we have written permission from members of the congregation to air their pictures. The services would be recorded on an I-pad or tablet and posted on the web page. Pastor JonPaul will try recording the service and placing it on the web-site after we get the permission forms. He is also keeping the facebook page current.

Education – Sunday school is meeting twice a month, confirmation is meeting weekly, starting again in January, and First Communion classes will be starting on January 10.

Building/property – Work on the steeple will begin in the spring. We will let the congregation know the cost when we have a firm number so we can start planning for the renovation. Roxie will get the number in the bulletins and the newsletter.

We have had 3 positive comments on the new format of the bulletins. The only suggestion was to us a heavier paper. It was suggested that the bulletin can still be folded and therefore, sturdier.

The Pastor's chair needs to be reupholstered. Roxie will ask Greg to take it to Eleva and get an estimate from Wright Way Upholstery.

We will not consecrate the sacraments used during visitation, since they are considered an extension of the sacraments we are given during communion at church. We will offer a prayer on the first Sunday on the month to all that go out visiting.

NEW BUSINESS

The Annual Meeting will be on January 24 after church. We reviewed the Ministry Plan (budget) to present to the congregation at the meeting. The 2 members going off the council at the next Annual Meeting – Randy Sands and Randy Winger - are on the nominating committee and have two prospective new members-at-large to be elected to the council.

The Christmas Eve service, at 5:30 p.m., was well attended. We will try to have the words for "Silent Night" on the screen next year.

We received the post card requesting the annual fire extinguisher check be done. I will handle that.

The season of lent will begin with Ash Wednesday on February 10. We will discuss Lenten services and planning the soup-and-sandwich-suppers at the next council meeting.

Mission offering – January – Barnabas House in Chippewa Falls – now providing all night services for those in need of food and shelter.

February – Joe Knutson family

Next meeting – February 7, 2016

Motion to adjourn was made by Ruth Poore. Second by Randy Sands and Randy Winger. Motion carried. The meeting closed at 11:37 with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Poore, Council Secretary

Members present: Pastor JonPaul Dragseth, Roxie Ulness, Randy Sands, Randy Winger, John Poore, Aaron Sands, Sadie Odegard, Ruth Poore

Treasurers' Report

Summary of Offering and Expenses

Y-T-D	October	November	December
Offering			
\$57,691.37	\$3,073.00	\$4,346.00	\$7,113.53
Misc. Income			
\$4,080.20	\$4,142.74	\$10.42	\$69.02
Expenses			
\$43,059.29	\$3,259.19	\$4,863.75	\$3,506.20

Year to date the offering has exceeded expenses by \$18,712.28

November mission offering collected for the Ludwingson family of Eleva was \$329.00
December mission offering collected for Marty Knutson family was \$780.00

No memorials to report.

Respectfully submitted:
Roxie Ulness, Treasurer

This month's Mission Offering

February - Joe Knutson family, to help with medical expenses

Men's Ministry

February 13th.

Sunday school

Sunday school will be held February 14 and 21 after worship. Thanks to Roxie for teaching this month!

Choir

The Pleasant Valley choir will rehearse after worship on February 14. On February 21, we will sing, "Near the Cross".

Parish Nurse

Ruthann attended the area parish nurse gathering on January 22 at Trinity Lutheran in Eau Claire. The topic presented was, "Joy, Play and Healing". Some of the area parish nurses are planning on attending the 30th annual symposium in Chicago April 7 - 10.

Ruthann will be available to take blood pressures after worship on February 21.

Stories of Faith

In December, when the Praise Team led worship at CVCTF*, I gave a message about fear and how it seems to show up when God is missing from my life. I shared this story as part of that message.

In September of 2006, my oldest son Jeremy was deployed to Ramadi, Iraq for a

year. I think I lived in fear that entire 12 months... afraid that he wouldn't come home in one piece, or that he wouldn't come home at all. I hated that war. I couldn't stand the thought of Jeremy being injured or killed serving in a conflict I hated. His company was charged with clearing IEDs from roads...the only solace I took was that his job was meant to save lives, instead of taking them. I remember one night after band practice, Ruthann Knutson, Art Syth and I were having a Bible study together and I told them I was afraid to pray to God about Jeremy. I was afraid to pray because I was terrified that God might not answer my prayer--that he might not keep Jeremy safe. If I prayed to God and Jeremy was harmed, how could I trust God? They both encouraged me to pray. A few days later my husband, Dave, gave me a phone message that read: "Art called. To those who pray, nothing happens by chance." You see, I had it backwards. By not praying to God, I was saying, God, I don't trust you. I had already taken God out of the picture. I was truly living in fear, without hope. So I started praying to God. I pictured Jeremy and fellow soldiers riding in one of their army vehicles, surrounded by angels armed with flaming swords, keeping them safe from any kind of enemy attack.

Long story short, Jeremy came home in September of 2007, safe and well. Six men from his task force were killed in Iraq, and several others were injured. I thank God frequently that Jeremy returned home safely, and I pray for those who did not.

Faith is trusting God will hear my prayers and bear my burdens. It's about letting the people that God puts in my life walk alongside me, and pray for me, and prop up my faith when I don't have the strength. When I'm worried or afraid, I have to stop and ask myself--what's missing in my life? Or more importantly, who is missing in my life?

Kim Vlcek

*Chippewa Valley Correctional Treatment Facility

Praise Team News

The praise team will play at the Barnabas Christian Coffeehouse in Chippewa Falls on Saturday, February 20 from 7 to 9:30 p.m. On February 28, the group will lead worship at Pleasant Valley at 9 a.m. and at CVCTF at 6:30 p.m. The praise team is always looking for new places to share their music. Contact Kim Vlcek for scheduling the group.

W ELCA

Quilting Time is here again. Sadie has 50 quilts ready to be tied. Tuesday and Thursday afternoon, and Saturday morning or any time you are able, call Sadie and she will open up the church for you. There is plenty of yarn at Church for tying.

Happy Birthday to all who have a February birthday.

Lenten Worship and Soup & Sandwich Supper

5:30 pm is Soup and Sandwich time
6:30 pm is time for the Worship Service.
Please sign up to furnish soup and/or bars. The young people will be working. Thanks to Randy and Kay for making the Sandwiches.

***FROM THE CHURCH OFFICE.**

***NEWSLETTER DEADLINE IS: Sunday, February 21st for the March Newsletter.**

Call Monica Bahr - 715-287-4742,
or E-mail: dmbahr@tcc.coop. Also, E-mail the church at: plesntvalleyluth@tcc.coop with any bulletin or newsletter announcements, esp. prayer request and updates. Thanks.

Bulletin items due no later than Wednesday afternoon.

I'll be printing them on Thursday evening.

TEXTS AND READERS FOR FEBRUARY

Transfiguration of Our Lord – 7th

Exodus 24:12-18 *Sharon Anderson*
Psalm 2 or 99
2 Peter 1:16-21
Matthew 17:1-9

Ash Wednesday – 10th

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17– *Randy Sands*
or Isaiah 58:1-12
Psalm 65:1-17
2 Corinthians 5:20b—6:10
Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

First Sunday in Lent – 14th

Deuteronomy 26:1-11 *Annabelle McAleer*
Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16
Romans 10:8b-13
Luke 4:1-13

Lenten Evening Worship – 17th

To be announced *Corissa Sands*

Second Sunday in Lent – 21st

Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18 *Monica Bahr*
Psalm 27
Philippians 3:17—4:1
Luke 13:31-35

Lenten Evening Worship – 24th

To be announced *Ruthann Knutson*

Third Sunday in Lent – 28th

Isaiah 55:1-9 *Larry Sands*
Psalm 63:1-8
1 Corinthians 10:1-13
Luke 13:1-9





IN NEED OF PRAYER

Here is our Prayer Concern list:

Lucie McBride Family - friend of Kim Koser and Morgan Foss, the family is struggling with financial difficulties

Dale Erickson – Recovering at the Clairemont in Eau Claire

Kim Vlcek - Full recovery from shoulder surgery

Christine Thompson – Struggling with Lupus

Lenora Wollum – fall shattered her femur, married to a cousin of Ruthi's

Linda Ahlers – undergoing chemo for liver cancer; Lake City, MN (friend of the Poore's)

Al Ahlers - Linda's son - full recovery from surgery

Joy Glende - She is having many tests done due to the car accident.

Her son **Duane** - also having tests done

Alea Bahr – young grandniece diagnosed with CP - cerebral palsy.

Brittany Beavens - She has Myotonic Dystrophy. She is the daughter of Kim and Mark Koser and resides in MN.

Her son Jeremiah - also has Myotonic Dystrophy (Type 1).

Our service men and women, including Alex Bauer in Kuwait

The inmates at CVCTF - Chippewa Valley Correctional Treatment Facility in Chippewa Falls

This month's Mission offering - Joe Knutson family

Pleasant Valley Lutheran Church
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Eleva WI 54738

“That all May come, Serving all the People of God”
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PLEASANT VALLEY NEWSLETTER
‘That all may come, Serving all the people of God’
FEBRUARY 2016

Ash Wednesday
Lenten Evening worship begins also
Soup and Sandwich suppers
Happy Valentine’s Day!