

From Pastor Dan

February is the month of Valentine's Day and thus a time when we might find ourselves focused on love. Most of us have a notion about the romantic love about which Valentine's Day is concerned and the implied expectations therein. And even though we may not always do a good job of living up to those expectations, we still have a basic understanding of the whole "love" business.

However, despite our familiarity with romantic love, I don't think we are as certain about God's love. I know I talk about it a bunch; yet, I may not always do an effective job of articulating what God's love looks like in our daily lives. And because right now I am feeling a bit inadequate (and probably a little lazy too since I am going on vacation in a few hours), I am going to cheat and quote a famous Lutheran theologian, Paul Tillich, on the topic. I have shared this with you before, but it merits repeating. So here is an understanding of God's unconditional love for you, a.k.a. grace, from the pen of someone much more talented than I. Tillich writes,

"Grace strikes us when we are in great pain and restlessness. It strikes us when we walk through the dark valley of a meaningless and empty life. It strikes us when we feel that our separation is deeper than usual, because we have violated another life, a life which we loved, or from which we were estranged. It strikes us when our disgust for our own being, our indifference, our weakness, our hostility, and our lack of direction and composure have become intolerable to us. It strikes us when, year after year, the longed-for perfection of life does not appear, when the old compulsions reign within us as they have for decades, when despair destroys all joy and courage.

Sometimes at that moment a wave of light breaks into our darkness, and it is as though a voice were saying: "You are accepted. You are accepted, accepted by that which is greater than you, and the name of which you do not know. Do not ask for the name now; perhaps you will find it later. Do not try to do anything now; perhaps later you will do much. Do not seek for anything; do not perform anything; do not intend anything. Simply accept the fact that you are accepted!" If that happens to us, we experience grace.

And in the light of this grace we perceive the power of grace in our relation to ourselves. We experience moments in which we accept ourselves, because we feel that we have been accepted by that which is greater than we...

We cannot force ourselves to accept ourselves. We cannot compel anyone to accept himself. But sometimes it happens that we receive the power to say "yes" to ourselves, that peace enters into us and makes us whole, that self-hate and self-contempt disappear, and that our self is reunited with itself. Then we can say that grace has come upon us."

Well said. Happy Valentine's Day and remember Jesus loves you!

Pastor Dan

"Council Corner"
Heidi Teske, Worship

You may have noticed the "sign up/talent sheets" that were in the bulletins a bit ago, asking you and your children what they might like to participate in if you would like. Those have all been tracked and now you'll start getting a yellow post card in the mail if it is your week to help with that activity. We wanted to also include our younger members of the congregation so they can see what it involves to usher, greet or ring the bells.

This was also a time that if you're no longer interested in volunteering for something any longer to let us know. If you noticed you weren't taken out of the rotation, please let me know. I don't want you to feel like you can't get out of it.

Thank you to everyone that signed up on the talent sheets.

Worship Schedule

9:00 a.m. Sunday Mornings

Please join us as we worship our Lord!

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Council Members. Here is a list of Council Members. Please contact them with any concerns or issues you may have. Council meets once a month and welcomes input from the congregation.

President: Randy Trulen – 715-675-4091; rtrulen@gmail.com

Vice President: Sue Cooley – 715-675-8566; 715-571-4057l cooley1512@outlook.com

Treasurer: Curt Cooley – 715-675-8566; 715-571-4057; usfcool@gmail.com

Secretary: Tammi Smith – 715-581-3892; tammism79@gmail.com;

tammism@aspirus.org

Trustees: Lee Sillars – 715-218-5041; lsillars@aol.com

Scott Oestreich – 715-675-4360; scottsmachinellc@gmail.com

Evangelism: Erin Randall – 715-212-3720; emrandal@mtu.edu

Fellowship: John Marquardt – 715-675-3300; johnnym54401@gmail.com

Education: Connie Nowak – 715-675-1577; 715-432-3837; bcdenowak@gmail.com

Worship: Heidi Teske – 715-551-4485; heidi.teske2007@gmail.com

Mission Statement: “We are called to serve God; serve each other; serve the community; serve the wider church.”

Serve God through worship, prayer, and the dedication of our lives to His kingdom.

Serve Each Other by mutual care and support to encourage everyone to fulfill their God-given potential. **Serve the Community** by making known the good news about Jesus and the love of God by word and deed. **Serve the Wider Church** through prayer and practical support to help spread the good news about Jesus throughout the world.

Homebound Parishioners. The following parishioners are no longer able to consistently attend worship services. I visit them to remind them that they are loved by God and loved by their community of faith, St. John. Sometimes it is helpful to hear those reminders from someone in addition to me.

Ann Kieckhafer
1347 Crystal Avenue
Room 236-1
Naperville, IL 60563

Ellen Kruit
1821 N. 4th Avenue
Room 215
Wausau, WI 54401

Harriet Wanner
1240 Merrill Ave.
Apt. 2
Wausau, WI 54401

Cemetery Association Annual Meeting

Agenda (short form)

I would like to again encourage all stakeholders in St. John's Cemetery to attend the Annual Meeting on February 10, 2019 immediately following the Church Annual Meeting. Here is a brief outline of the agenda items for that meeting.

Treasurer's Report

Old Business

1. driveway work completed
2. East property line issue finally resolved (*no one* will lose any lot depth)
3. Waldvogel's offered 12 gravesites per 2012 agreement

New Business

1. mowing costs, damages and new contract
2. buy-back lots only at "*original lot price*"?
3. should we reduce the number of trustees due to lack of viable candidates?
4. other issues?

Election of Trustees

1. still need a minimum of one other candidate in advance or from the floor
2. need to choose one trustee as Secretary

Sisterhood Fireside Trip. St. John's Sisterhood is planning a bus trip to the Fireside Theater on Saturday, May 18th. We are going to see "Menopause: The Musical." The cost of the entire event is \$105, which includes the Lamers bus, meal, show and all gratuities. We will also provide a snack, water and a sandwich lunch. Everyone is welcome. More information is available in the narthex. Please contact Sue Harris at 715-551-6282 or Jeanne Klinger at 715-302-4331 with questions.

St. John Brotherhood Changes. After several attempts to re-ignite interest and participation in the St. John Brotherhood by changing meeting times and trying to introduce new meeting topics, we have reluctantly concluded that this means of fellowship has run its course after 73 years. Therefore, there will no longer be monthly meetings of this group. *However*, we were not yet ready to abandon *all* attempts. Our suggestion is to organize meetings on a roughly quarterly basis with special topics or activities, perhaps food, guest speakers, field trips, or other ideas as provided by St. John members of any age or gender. We have tentatively penciled in May 21st for the first such meeting, and September 21st for a second. We are seeking input from anyone regarding possible topics or activities to consider. The men will continue to be the driving force in organizing the details. So please provide any input you may have to Mike Kluetz, John Marquardt, or Pastor Dan.

Reminder! If you are in the hospital and would like Pastor Dan to visit, **PLEASE CALL** and let him know. Because of privacy issues, the hospital will not notify him or the church that you are there.

Food Pantry. The food items collected for the food pantry will be donated to Maine School. Your donations are appreciated. If you are able to help out with delivering these items to the school, please contact the church office.

Council Meeting Minutes. Copies of the minutes from the most recently held Council meeting are by the mailboxes. Please feel free to pick up a copy. If more are needed, please contact the church office.

February Birthdays

2-2 Nathan Fitzke
2-4 Dawson Nowak
2-5 Kyle Koenig
2-6 Lorie Anderson
2-6 Louie Reissman
2-8 Brian Anderson
2-8 Matthew Harris
2-9 Dylan Detert
2-9 Terry Kickbusch
2-10 David Ugoretz
2-11 Randy Graveen
2-12 Charles Zahn
2-13 Luke Harris
2-14 Paul Linzmeyer
2-15 Robert Hoff
2-15 Josie Schoepke
2-17 Ron Schuster
2-18 Donna Treu
2-19 Briella Grueneberg
2-24 Bob Rode
2-25 Paul Anderson
2-27 Tara Pasholk
2-27 Brooke Schindler
2-28 Susan Knight
2-28 Ellen Kruit

February Anniversaries

2-2 Jim & Jeanne Klinger
2-14 Keith & Karen Kolbe
2-22 Dale & Barb Nass