



## Jonesville First Presbyterian Church

### A Letter From the Pastor

*“Love is patient, love is kind, it isn’t jealous, it doesn’t brag, it isn’t arrogant or rude, it doesn’t seek its own advantage, it isn’t irritable, it doesn’t keep a record of complaints, it isn’t happy with injustice, but is happy with the truth. Love puts up with all things, trusts in all things, hopes for all things, endures all things. Love never fails... Now faith, hope, and love remain—these three things—and the greatest of these is love.” (1 Corinthians 13:4-8)*

Ah, Love. Is there anything more wonderful, more fulfilling, more demanding? It’s February, and like it or not, this month we’ll be surrounded by images of Valentines, hearts, flowers, stuffed animals, jewelry, and chocolates all reminding us to celebrate love. And while there’s nothing inherently wrong with that, I think it misses the mark.

It reduces “LOVE” to a one-dimensional expression of something which is so much bigger, so much more amazing, and available to all – regardless of romantic relationship status.

In the Church we proclaim that God IS Love. But sometimes that’s hard to comprehend. We can understand what it feels like to love and to be loved by someone. But as humans, it’s challenging to grasp what an entire BEING that IS love might be like. Which is why we need Jesus. God’s love embodied. “For God so loved the WORLD, that God sent God’s only Son that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save

the world through Him.”

Jesus showed us what love looks like, acts like, forgives like. Jesus came so that we might know that we are loved and not condemned. Jesus came to invite us to share that love. And Jesus showed us that love is not always easy. It often demands that we put aside our own wants and wishes for the good of others.

Which brings us to our Scripture – the most famous “love passage” found in the Bible, which, believe it or not, was NOT written about romantic love. It helps to remember that Paul wrote these words to a church that was acting in exact opposition to these ideals. He wrote in a time of great conflict and drama. He wasn’t romanticizing love – he was demanding *agapè* (God’s unconditional, grace-infused, merciful love), telling the church – those who knew the love of God firsthand—to grow up and start acting as if God’s love makes a difference.

Friends, we live in a time that in many ways is similar to that of the Corinthian church. There are so many folks who are impatient, who are unkind, who are jealous, arrogant, rude, and braggarts. We see so many who are selfish, irritable, who keep score. Our world is filled with folks who couldn’t care less about justice or facts or Truth. And, we know people who don’t put up with much, who don’t trust in much, who have lost hope, who have checked out. It may be tempting to give in and join them.

God’s word implores us to not let ourselves fall into that way of being. God’s love

reminds us that how we live, speak, act, believe matters. Our attitudes matter. Our way of being has the ability to communicate God’s love to a world that needs it now more than ever.

Next month we’ll begin the journey of Lent once again, and we’ll see what real love – perfect love – looks like. In Jesus, we’ll witness passion and affection. We’ll see pity for people in need. We’ll behold the kind of love Paul talks about embodied. And in the end, we’ll experience love in the form of stunning self-sacrifice, even for His enemies.

Embraced by that kind of love, we are free to love one another (and even our enemies) in genuine, costly, meaningful ways. God bless you this month as we give thanks for the gifts of love all around us – most of all, the gift of love that is ours forever in Jesus!

So, this Valentine’s Day remember: God is Crazy About You! And God wants you to live in such a way that shows you believe it – for yourself and for the wider world around us. (Even and especially when none of us deserve it.)

God loves you and so do I,  
Pastor Lynne



### JFPC’S ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING HAS BEEN RE-SCHEDULED:

Please plan to join us for our meeting on Sunday, March 6<sup>th</sup> following worship. We need 25 members to make a quorum. It is our prayer that we will be through the worst of winter weather and Omicron numbers by that date. We look forward to celebrating the GOoD (yes, that was intentional) work that was accomplished in 2021.

Prayer is  
the key  
to  
heaven  
but Faith  
unlocks  
the  
door.

## Book Study

Winter is a great time to dive into a good book. In 2020, our book study began reading Bishop Elias Chacour's book, "Blood Brothers," which chronicles his own life growing up as a Christian in the land where Jesus lived and moved. We got a few chapters in before the Pandemic interrupted our study. Starting on **February 10<sup>th</sup>** we will begin again. In this book, Bishop Chacour tells hauntingly

beautiful stories of his family and the ways their lives changed under Israeli occupation. He is now an internationally renowned advocate for peace in the Middle East. If you've ever wanted to learn more about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, about being a Christian in Jesus's homeland, or are just looking for a good book, this is a great option. We meet Thursdays at 10:30 (either by

zoom or in person). All are welcome. Books are available through Amazon, or by contacting Pastor Lynne.



## Prepare for Lent – A Healthier Body of Christ

As our Sunday worship scriptures have reminded us, we are the body of Christ. Many of us would like our physical bodies to be healthier. So, throughout the Season of Lent, typically a season of self-denial and repentance, we will be offering opportunities for our congregation to become a healthier body of Christ – spiritually, of course, but also physically. What does this mean or look like? That will be up to you. Let Pastor Lynne know if your goals center around healthier eating, increased exercise, weight loss, drinking more water, or something else. We'll design the program from the input we receive.

## Prepare for Lent – Spiritually

Perhaps you've heard about the special tv series "The Chosen" and wondered what it was all about. Maybe you haven't even heard of it. The Chosen is a series that tells the Gospel stories from the perspectives of the followers of Jesus. The producers have gone to great lengths to be authentic and compelling. During Lent we will offer a study to watch the episodes and discuss them together. Come and see!



### Calling for Photos of Our Church!

In 2023 Jonesville First Presbyterian Church will celebrate an anniversary (170 years since our first church building was erected, and 145? years since we have been in our current building). We would love to compile a collection of photos of our church throughout the years. If you happen to have wedding pictures, Sunday School photos, or others of our church from earlier years – different paint colors, before the Fellowship Hall wing was added, etc, we would love to make copies of them!



### CALLING OUR TEENS – TRIENNIUM IS STILL HAPPENING IN JULY 2022!



Although things will be different due to pandemic protocols and a change of venue, our church is still planning to participate in Triennium July 24-27 in Indianapolis. This is a wonderful opportunity to meet and connect with other Presbyterian youth from not only our state, but the entire country and Puerto Rico. Scholarship money is available. Please let pastor Lynne know if you'd like to go. (Open to rising high school freshmen through high school 2022 graduates).

### What About the Holy Land Trips?

You may be wondering where things stand with our planned pilgrimages. Rev. Anne Weirich (who led our last trip) will be taking a group this February. Pastor Stan, Pastor Lynne, and most of our travelers preferred to wait out Omicron and have postponed our next pilgrimage until October 30, 2022. The good news is that we'll have open spots if you are interested! ALSO – If you have always wanted to go, but just can't afford it, THERE IS NOW SCHOLARSHIP MONEY AVAILABLE. See Pastor Lynne if you are interested.

The "Women in the Bible" trip is scheduled to take place in May of 2024.



**Pub Theology** will meet for a time of faith, fellowship, and fun on Friday, February 25<sup>th</sup>. More information to come on location – in person or virtual.

# February 2022

Sun

Mon


Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

		1	2 10:30 Bible Study (Zoom) 1:00 Grief Group-Zoom	3 Presbytery Leadership Team Mtg.- Pastor Lynne Out of Office	4	5
6 10:30 Worship/ Communion	7	8 5:15 Worship Comm. Mtg. (Zoom)	9 10:30 Bible Study (Zoom) 1:00 Grief Group-Zoom 5:00 Admin./ Finance Mtg.	10 10:30 Book Study Begins (Zoom)  6:00 F&O Mtg. (Zoom)	11	12
13 10:30 Worship	14 	15 5:00 Session	16 10:30 Bible Study 1:00 Grief Group (In person)	17	18	19
20 10:30 Worship	21	22	23 10:30 Bible Study 1:00 Grief Group (Zoom)	24	25 Pub Theology Time & Place TBA	26
27 10:30 Worship	28					