

JFPC February, 2024 Newsletter

LETTER FROM THE PASTOR:

"Let me give you a new command: Love one another. In the same way I loved you, you love one another. This is how everyone will recognize that you are my disciples—when they see the love you have for each other." --John 13:34-35

Beloved, welcome to February! This is one of those unusual years where Lent begins on Valentine's Day. And so I say to you, Lent is for lovers! No, not in the sappy, over-commercialized, materialistic, one-dimensional way that's marketed by Hallmark and the makers of candy-hearts. But in the most important commandment from our Lord.

We know that February 14th, Valentine's Day is the day set aside for romantic love and lovers on the calendar. That can leave a lot of people feeling excluded, lonely, invisible, unloved, and perhaps even unlovable --the exact opposite of what Jesus came to teach all God's children! This year I invite us to make the entire season of Lent a season of expanding our understanding, expression, and participation in Love with a capital L – God's Love – which transcends all of our best intentions and efforts on Valentine's Day.

Pastor Brian Pusateri says, *"If you think about it, Lent has always been a story of love. It has always culminated with the two greatest acts of love in human history: the death and resurrection of God's Son. What could possibly be more loving than the Son of God freely giving up His life on a cross for the salvation of all who believe in Him; and what could be possibly be more loving than Jesus rising from the dead to open wide the gates of eternal life?"*

Lent, then, is a season of a different kind of love. It's when we commit to journeying with Jesus toward Jerusalem, toward the cross. It is a season that traditionally focuses on repentance, fasting, prayer, almsgiving, and sacrifice. If we restate those words a bit differently, it's kind of like the things that make healthy relationships work – saying "I'm sorry" and changing our behavior to show it, letting go of self-centered wants to invest in the relationship, communication, giving, and making the other person a priority.

Practically speaking, Lent is the time Christians give **up** something. Some fast from candy, ice cream, chocolate, alcohol, soda, coffee (gasp!) or something else they enjoy as a form of sacrifice and a tool to focus more on God. But what if this year we also give **away** something? Specifically, giving God's Love to others. "HOW?" you might ask.

I'm attaching a printout containing 40 red hearts. Each heart has space to write something on it. What could happen if we, as a Church, commit to sharing 40 acts of random kindness or love during Lent? I'm excited to find out!

Jesus gave His life as an act of unselfish love for each of us. Now, it is our turn to give the Love of Christ to someone else. I encourage you to take a moment each evening throughout Lent to reflect back on your day. Then, write down a description of who you helped or shared an expression of Love with on that day.

Here are a few suggestions to get you thinking:

- Do something special for a neighbor.
- Pay for someone's meal that is behind you at the fast food drive up window
- Allow someone else to have the parking space you wanted
- Slow down to let someone merge in front of you on the busy highway
- Visit someone at a nursing home or hospital
- Take a meal to someone who is sick
- Write a letter to a soldier serving overseas
- Take a colleague or neighbor to lunch
- Offer a ride to someone in need
- Write an exceptionally positive review of a worker or delivery person
- Only post caring messages on social media. Avoid anything negative
- Listen to someone who just needs to talk
- Donate your time/resources to King's Cupboard
- Offer a "night out" to a couple with young children (pay for a babysitter?)
- Write your Congress/Representative to advocate for someone else
- Call the school and offer to pay a child's outstanding lunch bill
- Send a Valentine to someone who is lonely
- Invite someone to church
- Compliment 5 random strangers in a day
- Make something homemade and give it away
- Volunteer
- Invite someone who lives alone to share a meal at your home
- Tell someone why you appreciate them
- Apologize
- Pray for people without telling them
- Pray for people and let them know

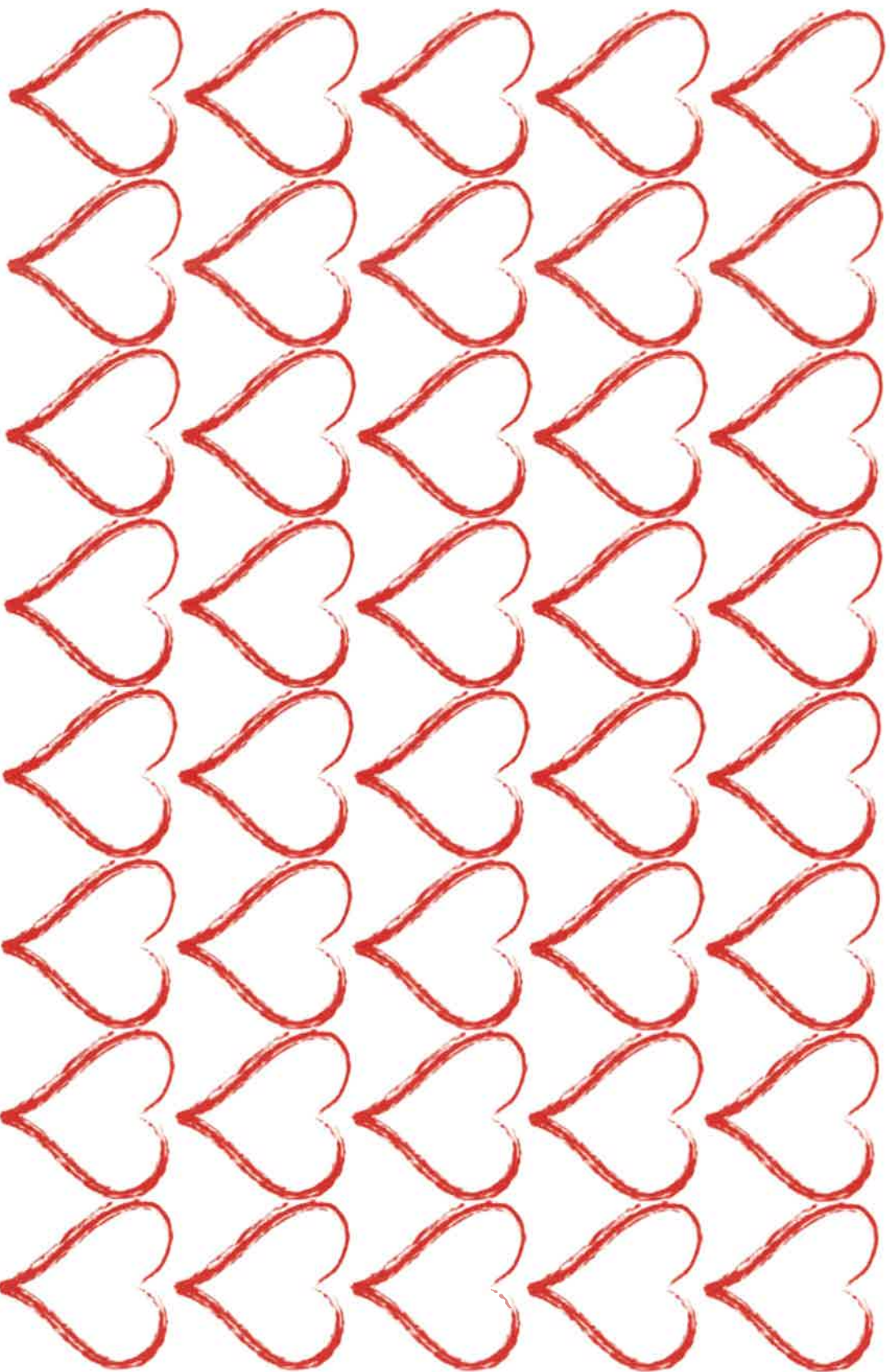
***This list of kind and loving gestures could go on and on.
Maybe you have an even better idea of your own. Go for it.***

Lent is For Lovers

40 Acts of Kindness

40 Acts of Kindness

Each day just write a little note over a heart to remind you of the kind act or love gesture you did throughout Lent.



Lent at JFPC 2024: Here's What's Happening

Ash Wednesday: *Coffee, Prayer and Ashes to Go* – offered by Pastor Lynne (JFPC), Pastor Tina (JUMC), and Pastor Kara (Trinity Lutheran) at various coffee shops in the community. Exact times will be shared the week before Lent.

Community Ash Wednesday Service Trinity Lutheran Church in Hillsdale, 6:30pm
(A collaborative service with JFPC, JUMC, and Trinity Lutheran Churches)

Weekly Community Lenten Luncheons at noon AND Dinners at 5:30

THEME: Healing

*All weekly Dinners will be held at Trinity Lutheran Church of Hillsdale at 5:30 with a program to follow at 6:30pm. (Same theme as lunches)

Lunches at Jonesville First Presbyterian Church (12 noon)

February 21: Healing the Body

February 28: Healing the Mind

March 6: Healing the Spirit

Lunches at Jonesville United Methodist Church (12 noon)

March 13: Healing Grief/Loss

March 20: Healing the Community

March 27: Healing toward Unity

Lent on the Big Screen – Join us for The Chosen (Season 4)

Sun 2/11: Episodes 1-3. 6:30pm @ GQT Jackson 10

Fri 2/23: Episodes 4-6 6:30pm @ GQT Jackson 10

Sun 3/3: Episodes 7 &8 6:30pm @ GQT Jackson 10

(Ticket prices are around \$11 per person)

Community Maundy Thursday Prayer Stations and Worship

6:30pm at Jonesville United Methodist Church, March 28th

(A collaborative service with JFPC, JUMC, and Trinity Lutheran Churches)

Community Good Friday Service Stations of the Cross and Worship at 6:30 at Trinity Lutheran Church of Hillsdale. March 29th.

Community Easter Sunrise Service at Jonesville First Presbyterian Church 7am

CALLING ALL MEMBERS: Please attend *our Annual Congregational Meeting* – Sunday, Feb 25th following worship! We will reflect upon all the good work our church did in 2023 to glorify God.

Other Important Dates:

Sunday Feb 4 – Communion

Sunday Feb 11 – The Chosen (6:30pm in Jackson)

Weds. Feb 14 – Ash Wednesday

Thurs. Feb 15 – Worship Committee 5:15pm

Thurs Feb. 15 – Take-A-Break will be at Olivia's at noon

Fri Feb. 23 – The Chosen (6:30pm in Jackson)

Sun Feb. 25 – Annual Congregational Meeting

CHURCH FINANCES

PER CAPITA – what is that?

Presbyterians have used per capita—an annual per member apportionment assessed by the General Assembly (Book of Order, G-3.0106; see also Standing Rule F.4.b.), and by many synods and presbyteries, to enable Presbyterians mutually and equitably to share the ecclesiastical and administrative costs of sustaining our witness to Christ—as a sign of the covenant that binds us together.

The Presbytery of Lake Michigan reports that \$40.05 is the per capita rate, or the amount JFPC is charged for each member, for 2024. Within the Presbytery of Lake Michigan, this includes:

- • \$ 9.80 per person for the Office of the General Assembly
- • \$ 3.25 per person for the Synod of the Covenant
- • \$27.00 per person for the Presbytery of Lake Michigan.

Per capita is NOT optional. Last year, our church's per capita bill was over \$4,000. It is greatly appreciated, and goes a long way to helping our budget, when members can cover the annual per capita fee for their own membership. Checks should be made out to: Jonesville First Presbyterian Church with "per capita" written in the Memo line. Thank you for your help!

Meet JFPC new Sunday School Teacher and Youth Group Leader

Hello All! My name is Emerson Sigtryggsson and I am a sophomore at Hillsdale College studying Physics and Computer Science. I grew up in Stamford, Connecticut and helped to teach Sunday School and lead a Youth Group at Our Lady Star of the Sea Parish. I have also spent the past few summers working as a Swim Coach for a youth summer league team and this past summer ran a synchronized swimming program. I love the ocean and water and spend a lot of my time at Baw Beese Lake when the weather is nice. If I could, I would eat breakfast for every meal. Egg sandwiches are my favorite, my dad used to make them every Sunday after church! If I could have any super power, I would chose to be able to control time, so I had more time to spend with my friends and get my school work done (and maybe 15 more minutes of sleep in the morning). I am so excited to be here and can't wait to meet you all!

Emerson Sigtryggsson, Hillsdale College "26

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Take-A-Break lunches are on the 3rd Thursday of every month. Please use the following schedule and mark your calendars so you don't miss out!

February 15	Olivia's
March 21	El Cerito
April 18	Hillside Lanes
May 16	Cavoni's
June 20	Hunt Club
July 18	Johnny T's
August 15	Rosalie's
September 19	Outpost Grill
October 17	TBA
November 21	Spanglers
December 19	Olivia's

2024 CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

Many of you have noticed the deterioration of the walls and ceiling in our beautiful sanctuary. This year we will begin a capital campaign to fund the necessary repairs inside our building. If you've ever been blessed with the opportunity to change the lettering on our outdoor sign, you are also aware that it is a potentially life-threatening task as the glass and hinges may come crashing down at any moment. We are investigating quotes on solving this problem. More information to come soon!

AUDITS

In our commitment to full financial transparency, JFPC Administration/Finance Committee and Session are pleased to announce that we have passed an outside independent audit of all our finances, as well as an internal audit of our Memorial Committee Funds, without exceptions. After a few software/categorical labeling corrections, our books are reconciled and fairly stated.