

hands & feet

A monthly newsletter of the Webster United Church of Christ, Federated

The Love Edition



Mark Your Calendar

Every Tuesday
6:30pm (6pm dinner)
Bible 101
Small Group Study

Sunday, February 16 and
March 23,
after worship
Monthly brunch and
birthday celebration

Wednesday, March 5, 6pm
Ash Wednesday Service
Lent starts

Tuesday, March 11, 6:30pm
New Lent Small Group



EDITORIAL

Dear friends in Christ,

February is the Longest Shortest Month of the Year... There isn't much in February to celebrate. For most of us, by the time February rolls around we're tired of winter and ready for spring, and that makes the shortest month of the year feel all that much longer. Sports fans get the Super Bowl and Daytona 500, and baseball fans start to get excited because pitchers and catchers report to spring training. I still have basketball and the playoffs are down the road...

Outside of that, though, pretty much all there is in February to look forward to is Valentine's Day. This is a day in which we celebrate romantic love, named after a 3rd century saint who was martyred for his care of the faithful during times of persecution. How a 'holy day' commemorating him became associated with romantic love is something of a historical question, but nevertheless, that's what's happened.

As I've been thinking about Saint Valentine, and Valentine's Day, and all that's going on around us this year so far, I'm reminded of what Jesus said when asked what the greatest commandment is: "The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these." (Mark 12:29-31) Love. That's what it all boils down to for us.

(continued on page 2)

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2025 EDITION

"God's love for the world led him to take the form of Jesus, who died for humanity."

John 3:16:



EDITORIAL (conclusion)

Many of us know the hymn, “They’ll Know We Are Christians By Our Love”. Unfortunately, that doesn’t seem to be what Christians are known for these days. Mostly we seem to either be known for what we fear or what makes us angry. Maybe this Valentine’s Day (and month) we would do well to get back to the way of love.

As Paul writes in his first letter to the church in Corinth, if we don’t have love, we’re just making noise, having nothing, gaining nothing. The way to truly experience and share the love of God in our homes, neighborhoods and world is through love. Loving God (Mark 12:30), loving one another (John 15:12), loving our neighbors (Mark 12:31; “Who is my neighbor?": Luke 10:25-37), even loving our enemies (Matthew 5:44). Pretty sure that covers most everyone in our lives...at least, I can’t find any exceptions in

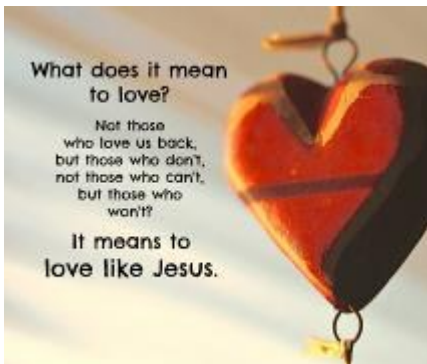
there. Loving others day in and day out is hard...but the path of love is relatively straightforward. Simply ask yourself, in each conversation and action, “Is this word or deed a way to show the love of Christ to this person?” Again, it’s an easy thing to think and ask ourselves — it’s in the doing it that becomes more difficult. But wouldn’t it be nice if we were known for our love rather than our anger and fear? That might just be enough to change the world.

And remember that March is around the corner. Ash Wednesday is on March 5, which marks the beginning of Lent. Isn’t it the perfect time to give up something meaningful? Forget about chocolate! How about hate, judgement? Or take something on! Join us for our Lent small group on forgiveness.

In Christ,
Pastor Sabina



Date	Scripture	Sermon
02/16	Luke 6:17-26	“Upside Down Gospel”
02/23	Luke 6:27-38	“A Messed-Up Story”
03/02 Transfiguration Sunday	Luke 9:28-36	“Why Now?”
03/05 Ash Wednesday	Genesis 9:8-17 and Mark 1:9-15	Start of the “Sensing God” Lent Sermon Series “Seeing”
03/09	Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16	“Listening”
03/16	Psalms 34:1-10 and John 2:1-11	“Tasting”
03/23	Mark 14:1-11	“Smelling”
03/30	Luke 8:40-56	“Touching”



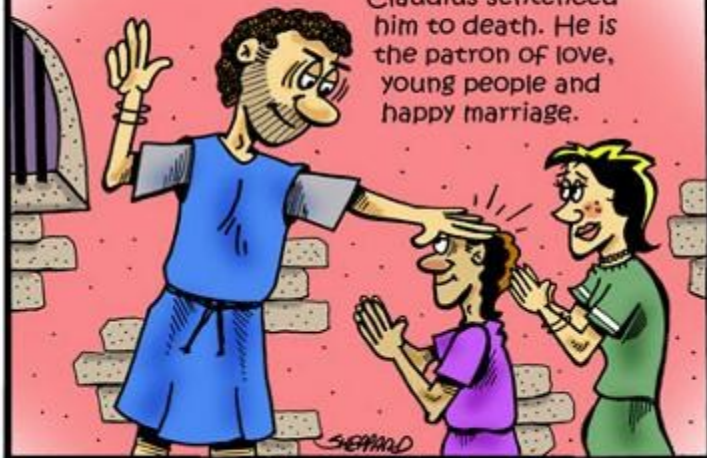
The trustees are looking to hire a company to take away a lot of “junk” that has accumulated throughout the years: furniture, tools, kitchen things, etc. If you know that some of these items are yours and you would like to take them back, please do so by April 1.

SAINTS FUN FACTS

by John Sheppard

A kind hearted Roman priest, he aided young Christians being persecuted by Claudius II and was imprisoned. While in custody, he converted 46 members of a guards family to Christianity! Upon discovering this,

Claudius sentenced him to death. He is the patron of love, young people and happy marriage.



St. Valentine

Chapter 13

The Way of Love

1 If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. **2** And if I have ^aprophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, ^bso as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. **3** ^cIf I give away all I have, and ^dif I deliver up my body to be burned, ^ebut have not love, I gain nothing.

Verse of the Month

Basic Bible 101

Bible Study Group

- 02/11: Ruth
- 02/18: 1 and 2 Samuel
- 02/25: 1 and 2 Kings
- 03/04: No Study!! Mardi Gras Pancake Supper!

Please drop by any Tuesday! 6pm dinner, 6:30pm, conversation.



Daffodil Tea

As children of God, we are in the business of resurrection. Guess what? Something is coming out of the ashes left behind by Covid: A group of fearless volunteers is bringing back the famed Daffodil Tea!! Mark your calendar: April 12! Prepare your bonnets, appetites, and volunteer to bring this church tradition back to life!!



PRAYER OF THE MONTH

Bless us with Love, O Merciful God;
That we may Love as you Love!
That we may show patience, tolerance,
Kindness, caring and love to all!
Give me knowledge; O giver of Knowledge,
That I may be one with my Universe and
Mother Earth!
O Compassionate One, grant compassion
unto us;
That we may help all fellow souls in need!
Bless us with your Love O God.
Bless us with your Love.

Author Unknown

SENSING GOD:



AN IMMENSE WORLD

LENTEN SERMON SERIES

"Sensing God" - Encountering God Through the Senses

God reveals himself to us in many ways. We can approach transformation through any of our senses; they are all doorways through which we can enter into the presence of God.

During this period of Lent and starting on Ash Wednesday, March 5th, join us to discover the presence of God using our five senses.

CELTIC BLESSING FOR THE SENSES

May your body be blessed.

May you realize that your body is a faithful and beautiful friend of your soul.

And may you be peaceful and joyful and recognize that your senses are sacred thresholds.

May you realize that holiness is mindful, gazing, feeling, hearing, and touching.

May your senses gather you and bring you home.

*May your senses always enable you to celebrate the universe
and the mystery and possibilities in your presence here.*

NEW LENT SMALL GROUP

Starting on Tuesday, March 11, at 6:30pm (6pm dinner and conversation), we will put our "Bible 101" study on hold, and start a new small group based on the book "Forgiveness" by Marjorie J. Thompson (the author of "Soul Feast", highly recommended by Pastor Sabina).

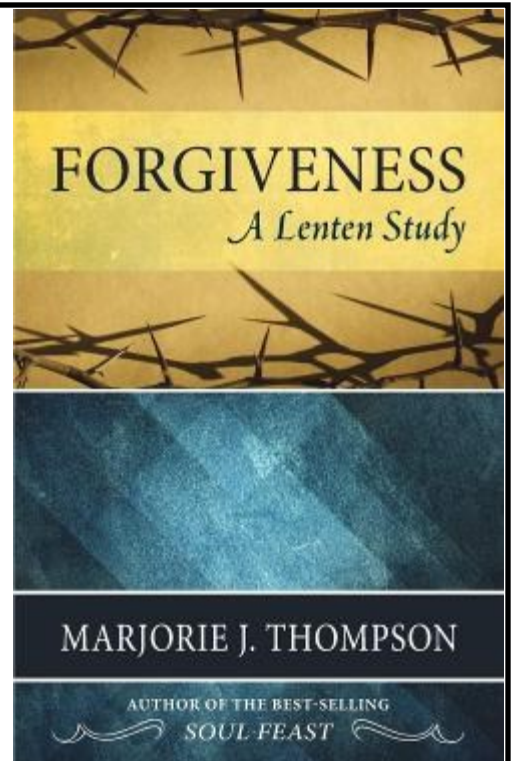
This small group will meet for the duration of Lent, with a last session on Tuesday of Holy Week. There is no cost for material or food!

Here is a short synopsis:

Forgiving others and humbly asking for forgiveness are central disciplines for all Christian believers. Lent, a time to reflect on our Christian journey, is an appropriate time to deepen our understanding and practice of forgiveness. Marjorie J. Thompson takes a close look at our understanding of forgiveness in this encouraging study.

- Is forgiveness a Christian duty under all circumstances? Or are there situations when Christians do not need to forgive?
- Is forgiveness a matter between individuals, or is it meaningful only in the context of communities?
- Is forgiving the best route to healing for the injured?
- How do we get past emotional barriers to real forgiveness?

Using biblical examples and real-life situations, Thompson illustrates each chapter's theme in an informative and engaging way.



ANNUAL REPORT MINISTRY HIGHLIGHTS



Threads of Hope

Thanks to a \$10,000 grant from the Malser Foundation, which was then matched by the Fels Foundation, volunteers opened the Threads of Hope Closet on October 24, 2024. Volunteers include Gayle and Gloria Bannister, Regina and Bob Kontoes, Rosalie Dziedzic, Cindy Denson, Chrystal Drew, Julie Dell'Anna, and Margaret Lorencykova.

The Closet has three main areas: Children, Women, and Men. There are also personal care items, as well as pet food, tents, blankets, sleeping bag, handwarmers, etc.

In order to prepare the space, eagle scout candidate Josh and his mom Helen from our congregation cleaned the space and painted the walls. Racks, cabinets, and shelves were ordered by the church office, then put together by Crystal Drew, Gayle and Gloria Bannister, and Bob Cunningham (a friend of Gloria's). Community members and Webster Dudley Food Share continued to donate clothing items, and volunteers sorted them in the church's gymnasium.

We also purchased a washer and dryer. Once operational, the washing machine and dryer will be used by qualified customers, especially those without a home, during normal operating hours.

Operating hours of the Threads Closet are Tuesdays and Thursdays 9-11am to coincide with Food Share operating hours, as well as Thursdays from 4-7pm to coincide with the Feed our Sheep ministry, which provides community members a free meal from 5-6pm. The Closet is also open after church on the first Sunday of the month from 12-3pm.

Thus far, we have serviced 157 adults and over one hundred children.

Feed My Sheep



In 2024, the Feed My Sheep Ministry continued its mission of serving those in need by providing meals every Thursday. Through the dedication and hard work of our volunteers, we were able to faithfully meet this goal week after week.

Each Thursday, our volunteers prepared and served meals consisting of two hearty soups, bread, sandwiches, desserts, and beverages. These meals not only nourished the body but also provided comfort and a sense of community to those we served.

We are grateful for our volunteers (Cindy Denson, Lenny Beatty, Julie Dell'Anna, Rosalie Dziedzic, Gloria Bannister, Jeff Vigeant, Dawn Savoie-Vigeant, Alan Beauchesne, Pastor Sabina and Dakota Smith for their commitment and enthusiasm throughout the year.

We are also grateful to the community and the congregation for their generous monetary donations. These contributions, along with donations of food from Food Share, have been instrumental in supporting our efforts and ensuring that we have the resources necessary to continue this vital ministry.

Additionally, we were blessed with generous donations of bread and pastries from the Charlton United Methodist Church and the Backpack Brigade. These contributions allowed us to distribute additional food items to those in need, further extending our ministry's reach and support.

As we reflect on the past year, we celebrate the teamwork, kindness, and faithfulness that have sustained this ministry. Thank you to all who have played a part in the Feed My Sheep Ministry. Together, we are making a difference in our community.

Outreach

Another good year in Outreach. Volunteers take care of the food cabinet in the courtyard on a weekly basis, making sure it is stocked with food and a sleeping bag.

We gave out more than two hundred and twenty-five (225) toys through our Christmas Giving Tree this year.

We had our Mother's Day baby shower again this year to benefit teen Moms, and we are so appreciative of the many people who donate and make such beautiful items.



Annual Report Ministry Update

2024 was a wonderful year for this 26-year-old ministry. The volunteers made and gave out 515 sleeping bags and health kits. Each bag comes with a

small pillow, hat, scarf and mittens or gloves, along with a throw for extra warmth.

They would like to thank everyone who donated their time, talents, items and finances to our ministry.

Members of this Ministry are: Avis Brady, Alice LeBoeuf, Regina Kontoes, Sandy Snider, Betty Esposito, Susan Schade, Donna Plummer, Marcine Byczku, Richard Byczku, Charlene LaChapelle, Patti Davis, Jan Palazini, Sylvia Gamache, Kay Lanciault, Arlene Gaudette, Cindy Denson, Mary Chabot, Carol Beauchesne, Lorraine Ferrai, Theresa Smith, Jeannie Nawrocki, Judy Ziemski, Carolyn Duffy, and Edna Patri.

MONTHLY DEVOTION

February — A Devotion by Billy Graham

And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men . . .

—1 Thessalonians 3:12

One of the growing psychological problems facing people today is loneliness. One of the greatest ministries that a person can have today is just being a good listener. Many people are longing not only to be loved but to have someone who will listen to them. When we love God with all our hearts, then we have the capacity to love our neighbor. The greatest need in the world today is not more science, not more social engineering, not more teaching, not more knowledge, not more power, not even more preaching—the greatest need we have today is for love. And the only way that love can be supplied is by a supernatural act of the Holy Spirit that transforms lives.

The love that God gives is not the ordinary love that we find in the world today. When we love our neighbors, it is not our loving with natural love, it is God loving through us. If you are willing to do this, God will give you His love.

March — A Lenten Devotion

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

John 14:27

For this is what the Lord says: "Do not enter a house where there is a funeral meal; do not go to mourn or show sympathy, because I have withdrawn my blessing, my love and my pity from this people," declares the Lord.

Jeremiah 16:5

One of the most hopeful passages of Scripture is found in John 14:27. And one of the most tragic passages of Scripture is found in Jeremiah 16:5. Both passages deal with the peace of God and our search for it. What might we learn from them this Lenten season if we meditate upon them and the text around them?

Jeremiah was ordained to be a prophet even before he was born. Like all other prophets, he spoke for God and tried to bring his people back into a right relationship with the One who pulled them out of slavery and called them to be a nation of priests. But Jeremiah was ignored and attacked by the very people he hoped to save. And, in the end, God proclaims that "I have taken away My peace from this people." And along with it, "lovingkindness and mercies." No one pays attention to God's law anymore. They follow other gods. And they think only of themselves and their wants. How can they expect God to live with them?

Centuries later, the promised savior of the world is born and he builds around himself the foundation for a new people. A people made up of all nations and all races who will be called Christians. As Jesus prepares to fulfill his mission on a cross at Calvary, he promises his followers that he will not leave them without support. Even as they struggle to make sense out his actions, our Lord says to them, "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." Jesus tells them on several occasions that if they love him, they will keep his commandments. Because true peace, lasting peace, comes from being in a right relationship with God and His creation. It comes from accepting that the world is not ours. We are but stewards. God's love, His grace, and His mercy are not for us to keep, but to give away. When we accept that our lives belong to him and not to us, fear falls away and peace blossoms. Ponder what it means to follow His lead. Then pass it on.

Bible Word Search

Y H P E S O J T G Q O E Z B W S E S O M E M V I JOHN THE BAPTIST
 M P M Y D Z C V U L E A Z G A O P N X Y G F D C CHRISTMAS
 E J R E C U D S Z W Z S V E E T S O Q R K N E N DISCIPLES
 E C Y X C M J D D N Q T G K K J J Z H E G W M G MATTHEW
 S U J O V G F N T R B E G C S P Q L V T U M Z V
 O K D T W S U Z I S Y R Z M R F C W F E A U D L
 B E F I Z A O Q J U D O M A S Y C I Z P H M Y B ADVENT
 T Y O K R M X A E T N E V D A G B J N S O I X N
 B N J R Y U U C H R I S T M A S C G P G L P K D EASTER
 G N B F K E A X O H B R U A F I J P F C J F R H ESTHER
 H X R N V L A K Z K G X A T F W L M A R Y E A X JOSEPH
 L E A Y Y Q G W P M C U G Q O W C W Q I D C M K
 U J S S N H Z G M W E H T T A M Z D O D J R J N SAMUEL
 K V Y T T S I T P A B E H T N H O J B C T Q I W
 E N D R W Q W H S U V Q Y Q V N N H K G Z C A J JESUS
 X D K J O H N Y I T B J U S R E E H X V M Y R V LYDIA
 S E L P I C S I D N G G J O I R S B X X Z H H K
 S Q V M K O S W D E H P N I A V G E W I L P D V MOSES
 K V G A C K O V I L E S T H E R U I V I N K S K PETER
 Q I K H Q G K W R J A H P F I G A I D Y L C B G JOHN
 Y Z P W I B N N X I F I O C X L F R B S A I O A LENT
 Y A Z T D M G F J E S U S K Y Q X C G L F C Q T LUKE
 Q R Z X K H A O N U F U G P A U L N P Q G M E Z MARK
 M K T X J L Y V Z B S O T O L N Y L E A O B F F MAARY
 NOAH
 PAUL

The Bible in 50 words

God made
 Adam bit
 Noah arked
 Abraham split
 Jacob fooled
 Joseph ruled
 Bush talked
 Pharaoh plagued
 Sea divided
 Tablets guided
 Promise landed
 Judges led
 Saul freaked
 David peeked
 Kingdom divided
 Prophets warned
 People exiled
 Hope rose
 Jesus born
 God walked
 Anger crucified
 Love rose
 Spirit flamed
 Word spread
 God remained.

BIBLE Q&A

(last month's answers)

1. True.
2. Genesis
3. 6
4. Adam
5. Eve
6. Garden of Eden
7. Cain, Abel, Seth
8. Noah
9. 40
10. A rainbow
11. 11
12. A coat of many colors.
13. The dreams said he would become greater and rule over them.
14. Put him in a basket in the river.
15. A burning bush.
16. Let his people go.
17. 10

BIBLE Q&A

(answers next month)

1. What was the final plague that convinced Pharaoh to let the slaves go?
2. When Pharaoh changed his mind and sent his army after the slaves, where did they meet?
3. Where did God give Moses the Ten Commandments?
4. Who was the first king of Israel?
5. When Daniel prayed to God after it was not allowed, where was he thrown into?
6. Who baptized Jesus?
7. Name the place where Jesus walked on water?
8. What is the shortest verse in the Bible?
9. True or False: Jesus' said washing hands is never important.
10. What did the woman pour on Jesus' feet at the home of Simon the Leper?
11. How many books have the name John in them?
12. What is the 1st commandment?
13. What is the 2nd commandment?
14. What is the last book in the Bible?
15. Which book did Jesus directly write?
16. What were men trying to do at the Tower of Babel?
17. How did the 12 brothers get rid of Joseph?
18. What was the giant's name that David killed?
19. True or False: Jesus was an only child.

United Church of Christ, Federated

"Come as you are, we mean it!"

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hands & feet



A monthly newsletter of the Webster United Church of Christ Federated

OFFICE HOURS: Tuesday through Friday, 9:30-1, or by appointment

WORSHIP: Sundays at 10, in person and live on Facebook

BIBLE STUDY / SMALL GROUPS: Tuesdays at 6:30 (free dinner at 6)

THREADS OF HOPE (free clothing, hygiene products,...): Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9-11,
Thursdays 4-7, 1st Sunday of the month, 12-3

FEED MY SHEEP FREE MEAL MINISTRY: Thursdays, 5

GOLDEN BEES SLEEPING BAG MINISTRY: Mondays, 9-12

OUTDOOR FOOD PANTRY: Ongoing