

St. James United Church of Christ

9008 Meisner Road, Casco, MI 48064 / www.ourstjameschurch.org/

News from Pastor Ken

Newsletter
February 2018
Volume 3, Issue 2

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Ahhhh... February, it's a funny little short month. The Christmas and New Year celebrations are over, spring and Easter are yet to arrive. It has its challenges for some of us with too little sun and too much cold. In spite of that, I have come to appreciate this as a quite time of reflection.

Lent begins a little early this year starting on Ash Wednesday, February 14. It happens this early every few years. The wonderful part of that is Lent provides us a wonderful opportunity to consider and pray about how we can get closer to being the person God would have us to be and to consider what it is God would have us to do.

Unfortunately, like many church/religious (not sure if that should be a little "c" or a big "C") practices, Lent seems to have become just another church season. I feel that this is MOST unfortunate. Equally unfortunate is that many of those that do practice often consider Lent simply a time of giving up something we like for a few days. I think that just as Jesus spent time in the wilderness contemplating his ministry, we too are called during Lent to spend time considering our own ministry. Let us use this time for planning and preparing. Lent is a time of spiritual preparation. I invite you not to simply give up something but to take time to prepare your spirit for an exciting new journey. Here are a couple suggestions. Spend an extra few minutes each day in prayer and meditation. Read a book on spirituality, commit to reading the upper room every morning with your coffee (it's only a small page), read one proverb everyday from the bible (there are 31), commit a daily and intentional act of kindness, join me in a day of fasting, you get the idea. Prepare yourself for what God has planned for you.

Upcoming Events

- ◆ February 4 - Communion Sunday, Discretionary Fund
- ◆ February 13 - Council Meeting
- ◆ February 14 - Soup & Salad Dinner
Ash Wednesday Service
- ◆ February 14 - Valentine's Day
- ◆ February 17 - Euchre
- ◆ February 18 - Communion Sunday

The Discretionary Fund February 4, 2018

Did you know this fund is utilized to aid with rent, utilities, medical supplies, food and transportation to doctors, etc.?

This is generated from the loose change collected the first Sunday of each month. Please empty your pockets and change purses that day to meet the needs of our church and community.

However, as excited as I may sound about Lent, I am still very much enjoying this time in Epiphany. The whole idea of Epiphany keeps revealing itself to me every time I notice some little thing like driving home from a late afternoon appointment and realizing it is staying light outside later and later. Ahhh... Epiphany. Epiphany that moment when things are revealed to us. I love experiencing those ah-ha moments. Those are the moments when something becomes clear to me that was not clear to me before. I have been told and it has been proven to me that if we continue to maintain a working relationship with God we WILL have spiritual experiences. This is not a maybe statement but an absolute statement. We just need to be aware enough to notice them. Isn't that what Epiphany is all about. Learning to trust God enough to let God guide us and teach us, in spite of what we think is a better way. Allowing ourselves to learn how to grow and live more spirit filled lives. Then doing so! When we do that, we allow ourselves to be present to and experience a never-ending number of miracles that occur in us and around us.

For those who are anxious about whether you are ready to do what it is that God may call you to do, remember that God does not call the prepared but prepares the called.

During this Epiphany season, it is my hope that you allow God the opportunity to shine more brightly in you and through you. May each of us bring a little more light to the world that so desperately needs it as we prepare ourselves for Lent.

Remember that whoever you are and wherever you are on life's journey, you are held in God's unconditional love, boundless mercy, and unending grace. And there is a place for you here in at St James.

Take care and be well, Peace
Ken

Prayers for....



Karen Marie
Sue
Scott
Mimi
Dan
Rich
Maraleen
Dale
Irene
Clark Russell
Tony

George
David
Deborah
Lynn
Johnnie
Paul
Peggy
Marion
Roslynn
Joanne

Outreach Ministry

Kids in Distress

Current needs are as follows:

Diapers Size 5, Bath Towels, Twin Sheets
Pots Pans/ Dishes/ Silverware, Fabric
Softener Sheets, HE Laundry Soap

St. Augustine Richmond Food Pantry

In need of... assorted jams and jellies,
saltine crackers, canned tomatoes
(sauce, stewed, diced, etc.), pancake
syrup, Campbell's chunky soup or
Progresso soup, Chef Boyardee
spaghetti-O's, mini ravioli, ABC's etc.

Blue Water Area Rescue Mission - B-WARM

B-WARM NEEDS

Cleaning supplies: Toilet bowl cleaner, bleach,
laundry soap, dish washing detergent,
bathroom cleansers.

Men's clothing: sweatshirts, coats, and
jackets.

Paper supplies: paper towels, napkins, toilet
tissue, kleenex.

Miscellaneous: deodorants, shaving cream,
shampoo, disposable razors.

B-WARM still has a need for volunteers to
cook part time, make phone calls, and do
some sewing. They are also looking for
someone who specializes in writing grants. If
anyone is especially generous and has a van
they don't drive anymore, they could use one
of those too.

Happy Birthdays in February

4 – John Beattie
5 – Chris Brogan
11 - Fred Teltow
13 – Gordie Kulman
14 – Chad Robbins
16 – Kim Lindke
17 – Paula Beattie
19 – Christie Bandlow
19 - Bernard Teltow
23 – Art Wagner
23 – Dale Bandlow
25 – Chad Czenkus
29 – Ronald Fisher

Anniversaries in February

28 - Julie & Hunter Wendt

Spiritual Growth Ministry

Ash Wednesday, February 14th Soup and Salad dinner starts at 6:00pm. Ash Wednesday service will begin at 7:00pm. Sign-up sheet in the basement.

We need volunteers to assist with Sunday School, please let Sue Tews know if you can assist.

Worship Ministry

Volunteers Needed Please sign-up

Please consider signing up for the ministries of Usher/Greeter, Liturgists and Altar Care. Sign-up sheets for each are provided in the basement.

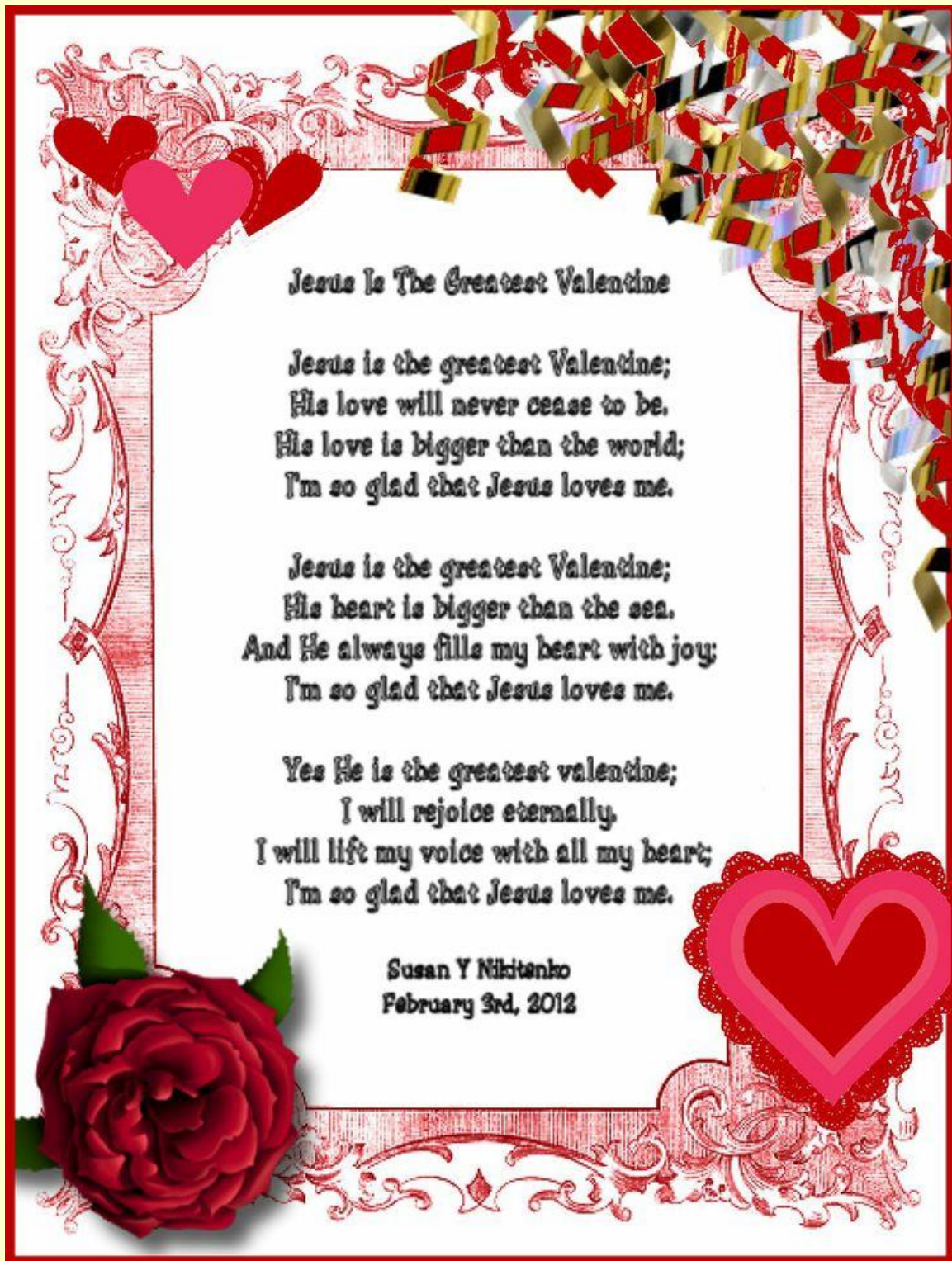


Military Prayer List

I will be including a list in the newsletter of our men and women in the military, to acknowledge those who serve and to pray for their safety. Please submit your love one's, family member or friend's name, rank and branch of service to Roberta Fisher to be placed on the list.

Council Members Needed!!!!

St. James will need five members of the church to volunteer by January 1st for three years to be a member of the church council. Please notify Pastor Ken or one of the council members if you are interested in the rewarding service.



Christmas Shoeboxes

We collect the below items for boys and girls from the age of 2 to 14 years old. Our goal is to fill 100 boxes by November 2018 without running out of items. February 2018 collection is for hats, gloves or mittens (all sizes) and dental hygiene items (no toothpaste). Items accepted anytime are: socks, toys, school supplies (pens, pencils, erasers, pencil sharpeners, small note books, glue, crayons), hygiene items (soap, washcloths, combs, toothbrushes, floss), headbands, barrettes and bows.

We can no longer provide toothpaste, toy guns or army men, paint sets and glue bottles.

If you are not a shopper, you can still donate to this worthy cause by providing a cash donation or monies to cover the **\$9.00 mailing costs.**










Roof Collection



Total received for the roof fund is now \$7,221.05. Contributions can be made by using your regular envelope and marking how much goes to the roof or use the pew envelope with your name or envelope number.

Kid's Page

What do the hearts say?
Unscramble the words to find out!

 SKIS EM	 ERAHT	 VOEL OYU
 RTEU ELVO	 EB NMEI	 LOCO EDDU
 TEWSE	 ECTIU IPE	 EVOL UGB

Altar Care

February - Open

Communion Servers

Preparer: Ralph Ski

Communion Servers: Ralph Ski & Mark Tews

Ushers & Greeters

February 4 - Open
February 11 - Dave, Becky & Mark Pittman
February 18 - Open
February 25 - Open

Liturgists

February 4 - Gordon Kulman
February 11 - Becky Pittman
February 18 - Open
February 25 - Open

Scripture Readings for February

Sunday, February 4
Fifth Sunday after Epiphany
Isa 40: 21-31
Ps 147: 1-11, 20c
1 Cor 9: 16-23
Mk 1: 29-39
Source of Strength

Sunday, February 18
First Sunday in Lent
Gen 9: 8-17
Ps 25: 1-10
1 Peter 3: 18-22
Mk 1: 9-15
God's Loving Paths

Sunday, February 11
Sixth Sunday after Epiphany
Transfiguration
2 Kings 2: 1-12
Ps 50: 1-6
2 Cor 4: 3-6
MK 9: 2-9
Compassionate Community

Sunday, February 25
Second Sunday in Lent
Gen 17: 1-7, 15-16
Ps 22: 23-31
Rom 4: 13-25
Mk 8: 31-38 or Mk 9: 2-9
Always Close



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FEBRUARY
NEWSLETTER