

The Courier

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

February 2021

Court Street United Methodist Church

A Christian's View on Valentine's Day

How we can use a secular holiday to celebrate God's love

There is no right or wrong way for *Christians* to conduct themselves on Valentine's Day that is different from any other day of the year. There are, however, attitudes and actions that we should adopt in honor of the day of love. You can find the internet littered with articles and entries on the origin of Valentine's Day: who St. Valentine was, or if he inspired the holiday. Those are trivial details. As it is today, whether or not it was ever religious, Valentine's Day is a secular holiday for which Hallmark sells a lot of greeting cards, candy stores sell a lot of chocolate, and florists sell a lot of bouquets. It is not important that you support, condemn, or ignore the consumerism associated with Valentine's Day. It is important, however, that we, as Christians, consider how and why we should celebrate Valentine's Day rather than restrict our views to the romantic exploitation of the secular world.

James 1:27 says, "*Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.*" On Valentine's Day, if there is a void in someone's life where love should be, that emptiness is magnified by expectation. Think about your widowed grandmother or your divorced uncle. Seek out those who don't have a home or a family or those who are caught in a cycle of poor decisions. Take the time to express love to those who feel unlovable.

1 Thessalonians 5:18 says, "*Be thankful in all circumstances.*" Valentine's Day is a reminder of how we have been loved and who has loved us. Let your parents and grandparents know that you are grateful to have them as examples of how to love your own children and spouse. Call your friends to tell them how much you appreciate the love you've shared through laughter and the things that you have done together. A faithful source of love is precious, and whether it is familial, platonic, or romantic, it has the capacity to inspire, encourage, and heal.

Song of Solomon 3:4 says, "*I have found the one whom my soul loves.*" Celebrating Valentine's Day with your significant other is not wrong. I hope that I have not given you that impression. Romantic love is a gift from God, and he wants us to revel in the love that He shows to us by giving us another person to know and love in a holy, intimate way. Yes, Valentine's Day can be a cheesy time to celebrate your relationship. I say go ahead and cheese it up. Too often, we ignore the opportunity to share Christ's love through the simplest actions. Our faith sends us into the world to love unconditionally, but if we are not exhibiting that love, how are we going to make disciples in His name? Let Valentine's Day serve as a reminder of God's love and the command He has given us to show love to others.

~ *Pastor Bill Burleigh*

LOVE IS A VERB.

QUARANTINE

Musical Musings

QUARANTINE EDITION

Music's role in facilitating the paradox of Lent: An individual journey best achieved in community.

Excerpts from an article on [The Presbyterian Outlook](#) by Anne McNair director of music at First Presbyterian Church in Savannah, Georgia.:

As we embark on our Lenten journeys each year, we often think of those journeys as personal and private. We enter into a somewhat solitary season of reflection, prayer, fasting, reading and meditation. Indeed, the liturgical season of Lent gives us opportunities for personal reflection like no other time in the church year. The hymns that we sing have the power to strike a chord deep within that often shape our theological and spiritual approach to being a faithful child of God. So, the hymns that we choose to sing are vitally important and must be selected with care.

A new Lenten hymn, written in October 2017 by J. Barrie Shepherd, retired senior minister from First Presbyterian Church in New York City. This hymn called "Deep in the Heart of Winter" better reflects the balance between an individual Lenten journey within the context of community:

*Deep in the heart of winter, when days seem cold and bleak,
Our faith calls us to enter this space of seven weeks.
We turn to prayer and fasting, take scripture as our guide,
Prepare our souls for Easter, and joyful Eastertide.*

*A time of deep reflection, a time to search the heart.
Yet more than introspection calls us to do our part.
We turn our thoughts to others, our kin both far and near,
Our families, sisters, brothers, the ones we hold most dear.*

*Our prayers reach further out now, and think of all whose needs
Cry out for our attention, yearn for our faithful deeds.
The sick, the poor, the hungry, all those who are oppressed,
Those folk our Savior taught us to see as truly blessed.*

*So mark these days as holy, our truly Lenten time.
Let every seeking soul be restored, renewed, refined.
Till in our Savior's footsteps, beneath his cross we pray,
Then meet him in the garden, rejoice on Easter Day.*

A key phrase in that hymn (the phrase that actually made me take notice and examine my own approach to the Lenten journey) is: "*A time of deep reflection, a time to search the heart. Yet more than introspection calls us to do our part.*" As I prepare for Lent, I want to do my part to help provide the members of my congregation with opportunities for an individual journey within the context of community. It is my prayer that their collective journeys will enable them to contribute their individual gifts to a common effort to make a difference in the broad community of God's people. Singing hymns during Lent is an important way to provide opportunities for members of our congregations to engage fully as the worshipping body and to inspire them to the work of the church. In collaboration, pastors and musicians are in a unique position to guide their congregants' Lenten journeys by selecting excellent hymns for them to sing.

There are many time-tested hymns appropriate for Lent in "Glory to God." Some of Court Street's favorites that were sung for our Lenten services are:

Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days ~ No.269
Take My Life and Let It Be Consecrated ~ No. 399
Love Divine, All Loves Excelling ~ No. 384
Take Up Thy Cross ~ No. 415

O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee ~ No. 430
Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing ~ No. 400
For the Beauty of the Earth ~ No. 92
My Jesus, I Love Thee ~ No. 172

During our individual and corporate journeys as God's faithful people, may we be inspired by the hymns that we sing during Lent, listening for God's voice in the music that surrounds us. May we sing with gratitude for individual insights received during our Lenten journey, as well as for the opportunity to worship in community. May we carry God's light into the world around us, ever widening that community of love and faith.

FEBRUARY'S ADULT BIBLE STUDY CLASS

CONTINUE TO READ LESSONS WEEKLY

February 7: **"Dealing with One Another"**

February 14: **"Faith and Actions"**

February 21: **"Godly Fasting"**

February 28: **"Jesus Clears the Temple"**

"VIRTUAL SUNDAY SCHOOL" is now available on our [WEBSITE](#)

SPRING ADULT BIBLE STUDY BOOKS ARE IN! call or email the church office to get your book delivered to you or you can drop by the office to pick up. Don't forget to tune in each week for Richard's virtual Sunday school lesson online. They are posted to the website and our YouTube Channel. A big THANK YOU to Richard and Debbie Chaffin for preparing these each week so we can stay connected and continue our lessons while we are apart. If you missed any of the 32 lessons Richard has done; please follow this link to:

[SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS](#)

MISSIONS AT COURT STREET



In years past Court Street would decorate for the Souper Bowl of Caring with a table outside of the Sanctuary and take up a collection to go to our area organizations that help end hunger in Lynchburg and the surrounding areas. This year our worship services are virtual, but the need for a warm meal remains the same. Please consider making a donation to Meals on Wheels and the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank. You can send a check or donate online through the Souper Bowl of Caring's website: [TACKLE HUNGER](#)

Birthdays and Anniversaries

| February Birthdays | February Anniversaries | March Birthdays |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|
| Lauren Hudnall Knapp February 02 | Kathy & Robert Draper Feb 09 | Sharon Brooks March 04 |
| Mary Tyree February 02 | Robin & Irby Hudson Feb 12 | Randy Speer March 05 |
| Kenneth Bagshaw February 13 | GiGi and John Sweeney Feb 21 | Lori Letchford March 12 |
| Lewis Averett February 15 | March Anniversaries | Susan Angus March 14 |
| Dottie Diuguid February 17 | Amy & Rick Pillow Mar 15 | Amy Pillow March 15 |
| Deanna Hester February 17 | Karen & David Hudnall Mar 20 | Rick Pillow March 18 |
| Sarah Leazer Johnson February 18 | Eva & Reiman Shober Mar 30 | David Petty March 19 |
| Reiman Shober February 22 |  | Bill Puckett March 22 |
| Brenda Whitehead February 22 | | Marty Diuguid March 27 |
| James Blankenship February 23 | | Shanda Horner March 31 |
| Bill Burleigh February 24 | | |
| Bobbi Hurst February 24 | | |
| John Spencer February 24 | | |

PRAYER CONCERNS

All Men and Women serving in the Military

Travis Dean Burleigh – 7425 Snowy Owl St., N. Las Vegas, NV 89084
son of Shelley and Rev. Bill Burleigh

SICK (Church members*)

*Noel Draper - 501 VES Road Drinkard 619, Lynchburg, VA 24503

Susan Dwyer – sister of Rev. Bill Burleigh

*Christopher Lilly – 1705 Rivermont Ave. Apt 8, Lynchburg, VA 24503

*Chis Logan - 5325 Hickory Hill Drive, Lynchburg, VA 24503

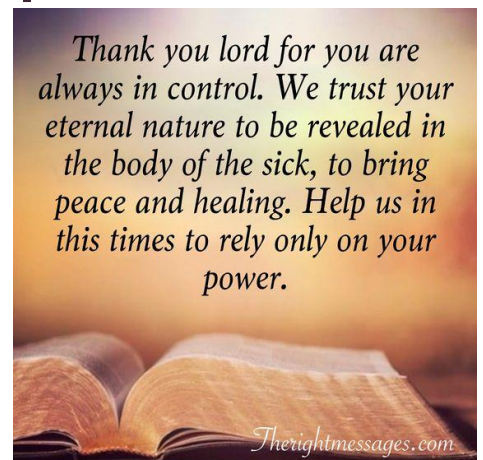
*Phil Ripley – 60 Jill Alison Circle, Ormond Beach, FL 32176

*Alicia Speer – 1815 Rivermont Ave #68, Lynchburg, VA 24503

*Robert Tyree – 1404 Brookville Lane, Lynchburg, VA 24502

son of *Mary Tyree, brother of *Debbie Chaffin

* Church members



~ We send our love and sympathy to Lewis James and family
in the passing of his daughter, Lynette on Monday January 18th.

~ We send our love and Sympathy to Martha Ann Moorman and family in the passing of her aunt,
Katherine Moorman Gafford on Saturday January 16th.

Gifts to the church

To the General Fund in Memory of:

Hallie Dodson by:

Rayford Clark

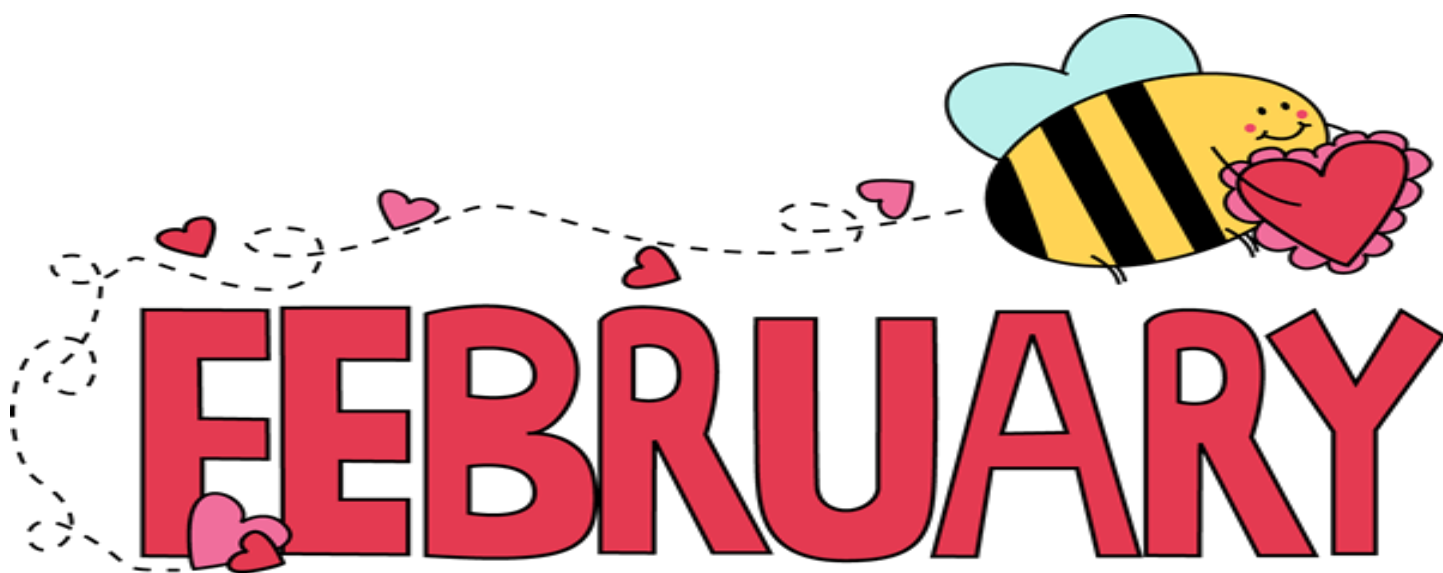
June Clark by:

Rayford Clark

Update on Capital Campaign:

| | |
|------------------------------|-----------------|
| Campaign Goal | \$300,000 |
| Promised as of 1/30/21 | \$248,981 |
| Balance needed to reach goal | \$51,019 |
| Received to Date | \$211,116 |
| Received since last update | \$50.00 |
| Elevator fund | \$10,328 |

Court Street UMC
621 Court Street
Lynchburg Va. 24504



In worship, praise and ministry, we respond to God's call by reaching out to all people with light, hope, and a vision of God's love.

COURT STREET UMC WEBSITE: www.courtstreetmethodist.com

EMAIL: 621courtstumc@gmail.com

PHONE: 434-845-3427

Please contact the church office at:

621courtstumc@gmail.com or (434) 845-3427 on or before Wednesdays to have events and notices posted on the church website.

