



“THE MESSENGER”

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HAPPY VALENTINE’S DAYS !

Yes, February is highlighted by the 14th – Valentine’s Day, when people buy flowers and candy and dinner for their loved ones. Ever wonder what gift Jesus would and does give for this day?

Well, instead of flowers, he gives us the fragrance of forgiveness of sins that we have committed and that is in contrast to the odor of disobedience and betrayal by not doing what God expects of us as his children.

Instead of candy, he gives us the sweetness of his love and compassion. We especially recognize this when are saddened, confused, conflicted as often happens throughout our lives.

Dinner – instead of the usual fine dining we take our loved ones out to on this day, He provides us with his body and blood – to be nourishment for our souls that we may never thirst for righteousness or hunger for acceptance. He provides this kind of meal to provide the energy we need to fight the good fight and not be afraid to go forth as His disciples and help make a positive difference in the world.

You see, what Jesus brings on this day is something we can enjoy and embrace all year round – not just on the 14th of February. So, He gives us the best Valentine’s present we could ever hope for – the present of new life in Him. Now that’s a Valentine’s gift to take hold!

Shalom,

Pastor Rich

THIS MONTH'S SPECIAL OFFERING

For February we celebrate **HOPE HOUSE OF MIDDLETOWN**, which is a center of hope for women and children in need. We ask that you give serious consideration to donating whatever you can for this worthy cause in our community. We appreciate your support for this ministry.

BIBLE STUDY NEWS

We meet every Tuesday from 1-2pm in the Church Parlor and cordially invite any who are interested to join with us. Currently we are studying the Book of Luke.

THE CLOTHES CLOSET

This vital ministry is going strong, thanks to the dedicated volunteers and people who have donated clothing. They operate every Tuesday from 10-1pm.

OUR WORSHIP SCHEDULE

5 – “Restoring Beauty”	Liturgist – Marsha Minge
12 – “From the Heart”	Liturgist – Austin Schultz
19 – “Euphoria vs Reality”	Liturgist – Carl Batliner
22 – “Ash Wednesday” – “Be Remorseful and Grateful”	
26 – “Abundant Grace”	Liturgist – Cindy Burnett

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

Come and join with us for the start of the Lenten Season with this Ash Wednesday Service with Communion and distribution of ashes on February 22nd in the Chapel at 1pm.

SPECIAL BIRTHDAY FOR A SPECIAL LADY

February 3rd marks the 100th Birthday of Frances Stoutenborough and we wish her a special greeting for her remarkable achievement! You can send her a special greeting or bring it to the church and we will see that it gets to her.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU!

1 – Anne Turner

3 – Daniel Kishler, Frances Stoutenborough

15 – Suzy Canter

22 – Jennifer Edwards

ASPIRE

This group has been around since 2014. They strive to create an event that can be a tool for a church and women's ministry. Through the powerful teaching of God's word by gifted teachers and authors, comedy by comedians that use laughter to break down walls, and music that encourages and lifts up the name of Jesus.

Anyway, this group is coming to Hamilton and Lebanon March 4 and April 28, respectively. If interested in getting tickets for this three-hour event, let the church office know.

PRESIDENTS' DAY

February 20th marks Presidents' Day, when we celebrate the birthdays of two of the greatest Presidents this country ever had – George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. They embodied what leadership is all about and love of country. Let us lift up their qualities and hold them as examples to follow in our own lives. We will be enriched by that for sure!

DINNER TO GO...

Remember, keep February 26th open for that's when we go out to a local establishment to eat a meal together. This month we are going to Carlisle and eat at The Village Station. Come join us for food and fellowship. Please let the Church Office know by February 22nd.

“While the word is yet unspoken, you are master of it; when once it is spoken, it is a master of you.” Arab proverb

“AMID THE RUSH AND ROAR”

We are hungry for the old simplicities.
For the friendliness on which our parents fed,
For the long, unhurried hours of quiet peace,
For neighborliness that was their daily bread,
For sympathy welling us at some heart's brink,
And for wayside pools of love at which to drink.
Let us find amid the rush and roar, somewhere,
The old simplicities that should be there.

COMING UP IN MARCH.....

This Lenten Season there will be a Lenten Soup and Sandwich gathering at the following churches, together with a meditation from their pastor:

March 1 – First Baptist Church

March 8 – First Christian Church

March 15 – First United Methodist Church

March 22 – St. Paul's UCC

March 29 – First Baptist Church

I will be looking for volunteers to help Sue and I put together sandwiches and soup for our turn on the 22nd of March. This is a great way to meet people from our neighboring churches and enjoy fellowship and worship together.

Thanks,

Pastor Rich