

## *Shepherd's Staff* We gather to worship, we go to serve our Lord.

February 2018 "You will be my witnesses...to the ends of the earth!"

*Parkersburg Christian Reformed Church*

*Sunday Worship 9:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m. ~ Church School 10:45 a.m. ~ Life Plus Wed., 6:30 p.m.*

### **Wishful Thinking**

After enduring the deep-freeze temperatures for a time, the warm air was a welcomed change. I don't know about you, but it made me start to think about Spring! Yes, I know it is only January but the warm southern breeze and the melting snow and ice were enough to have me longing for the longer days and warmer weather on a regular basis. Yes, I know that it is also only wishful thinking! Still one can hope, can't I? After all, we are creatures that have done well with our hopes and dreams in the past. Besides, whoever said that we can only hope on sure things? So I will continue to hope for an early Spring!

Look at the benefits of an early Spring. The flowers would come out earlier, filling the air with the perfume like fragrance, the lawns would return to the lush green as a display of new life, and best of all, no more snow to scoop! Wishing for Spring also allows us to see the better time that is going to come sooner or later, so why not hope for sooner!

Of course hoping for an early Spring in January is an exercise in wishful thinking. Some might even say it's an exercise in futility. But then there are many who think that being a Christian and living in the hope of being saved and becoming a child of God is a futile hope as well. I know that we cannot argue them into believing or even joining in our hope. Still we do not let the cynical people around us dissuade us out of our belief. There is simply too much evidence that we can point to.

Paul was able to tell about the great number of witnesses to the resurrection of Christ Jesus as a guarantee to the hope we can have. Many of us also have stories about things we have seen with our own eyes that make us have reason for the hope we hold to. The stories also abound for the truth of our hope in our Savior. One that I heard was that when people of other religions die, they die in terror while Christians enter into eternity at peace. We can also speak with survivors of near death events and learn from them about the sense of calm that enfolds those who have the sure hope of a future with Christ.

What we hope for does in fact make a difference. Hope for an early Spring may be foolishness no matter how much we would like for it to be true. Hope in Jesus as Savior and Lord is never an exercise in foolishness. It is the only sure hope we can have in this world. Life is fleeting at best, as we are reminded daily through the new reports of persons dying at all ages and stages of life. Even children are not immune from death as the influenza reports have shown. Still at any age, we can have the hope that Jesus gives.

Of course, this hope is only able to give the comfort if we also believe in the source of the hope. It is not that we do the hoping but that we hope in Jesus. Only Jesus can give the assurance that our hope is not misplaced or even false. He made the way for us to live in the peace that hope in him can bring. We do not even have to hope without knowing. God has given us the account of his love without limit through the life and death of Jesus in the love letter which is the Bible. Promises of grace for each and every day and hope for tomorrow can be found throughout this book of promises. Indeed, we have all we need to have the knowledge God gave as the foundation for our hope.

Sure hope is what God gives for our salvation. Wishful hope still lets us hope for an early Spring.

Pastor Rus



Jesus, please be my Valentine!

You make my life complete.

I can take my cares to You

and lay them at Your feet.

You give to me the blessings  
that I cannot live without.

This is the kind of love that  
Valentine's Day is about!

Love,

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2014

LOVE

is patient  
is kind  
it does not envy  
it does not boast  
it is not proud  
it is not rude  
it is not self-seeking  
it is not easily angered  
keeps no record of wrongs  
does not delight in evil  
rejoices with the truth  
always protects  
always trusts  
always hopes  
always perseveres

Never Fails

*1 Corinthians 13:4-8*



## February Birthdays/Anniversaries



### Happy Birthday

2/1	Andrew Haan
2/7	Pat Prier
2/7	Lacey Hay
2/8	Mackenzie Allspach
2/10	Marlyn Allspach
2/14	Nolan Prier
2/16	Trevor DeBerg
2/17	Sharon Cordes
2/20	AnnaMae Mehmen
2/24	Rodney Mulder

**Reminder:** If you have anything you'd like included in the Shepherd's Staff, please try to have it to Wendy Mulder by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month.

	<i>Greeters</i>	<i>Ushers</i>	<i>Sunday School Teachers<sup>#</sup></i>	<i>Coffee*</i>
2/4	Dennis & Lois (N)	Delbert	Ryan & Stacy	Mike & Stacy
	Kevin & Shelly (S)		Deb	
2/11	Dale & Angie (N)	Nolan	Kayla & Shelly	Ken & Nancy
	Sylvia & Herm (S)		Stacy	
2/18	Pat & Deb (N)	Ken Kramer	Amy & Kay	Larry & Mary
	John DeBerg Family (S)		JoLynne	
2/25	Larry & Mary (N)	Dale	Kamie & Nancy	Arnie & Kay
	Frank & Betty (S)		Brandy	

\*If you are unable to serve coffee on your Sunday as listed, please find your replacement. Thank you.

#The teacher schedule will be in the bulletin. You can always check the website as well- the bulletin is always on there (even before Sunday!!) [www.parkersburg-crc.org](http://www.parkersburg-crc.org) If you need to change a Sunday, please call one of the teachers.

# Valentine's Day Word Search

C U U U V A L E N T I N E S J  
F U A H U E Q J J X N Q R K P  
U T P H R Q Z P S W E E T C Q  
X J W I J A U H A A W M A R V  
Q I F R D R C D E O C X J B L  
Z M D O Z R C X L A C T G Z L  
S H P Y U O H F L M R K A S C  
S K E C N W O V F O W T X D H  
Y I P H R G C P E H V V F Y U  
G S U L D Q O M U N O E E N G  
I S Q W U U L D L V M O Q J S  
F E A L Q C A N D Y W J Z E J  
T S X R F Y T V K N S J Z G B  
A O W X G N E F C Z A Y O C H  
A O J Z K Q H P D T C O R D F



- Gift
- Hugs
- Love
- Arrow
- Candy
- Cupid
- Heart
- Sweet
- Kisses
- Flowers
- Chocolate
- Valentine

