

The Challenger

Ministerial Staff

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Reaching people, touching lives, and growing together in Christ's love.

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NO. 2

It being February with Valentine's Day rolling around, I'm reminded of a well-known story: One day a wife complained to her husband of five years, "Honey, don't you love me?"

"Sure I do!" replied the husband.

"Well then, why don't you ever tell me?"

"Look," the husband quipped. "I told you five years ago at the altar that I loved you. If anything changes, I'll let you know!"

Of course that answer wouldn't have satisfied the wife. Why? Because we all inherently know that real love, true love is an active word. It's not passive. It must express itself somehow; it's shown. Hide it under a bushel? No! It *must* let its little light shine! This is why, in 1 Corinthians 13 – what's commonly referred to as the "love chapter", Paul doesn't stop with the things that love doesn't do. He also included seven things that love does do.

How quickly we forget this principle when we consider our obedience towards Jesus' second greatest command, "Love your neighbor as yourself." Many of us gauge whether or not we're following that command by how we *don't* treat our neighbor. "Jesus can tell that I'm loving my neighbor; after all, I'm not mean to him! I never say anything bad about him or harm him or get in his way." Wait a minute. Is not sinning against our neighbor the same thing as actively loving him? What if God defined love that way? "I love Fred. I mean, I never pursue him with My grace, give him My salvation, or provide for his needs, but at least I'm not striking his house with lightning, riddling his body with disease, or terrorizing his family!"

Thankfully, God's love goes far beyond that. When I was still God's enemy, spiritually dead in my sin, God decided to love me by actively sacrificing His own Son so that He could bring me into His home to live as His child. But He didn't stop there. When I didn't respond to His kindness because of my rebellious condition, He actively opened up my eyes to the truth of Who He was and what He did and He gave me a genuine faith so that I would believe it. But He didn't stop there. Today, He actively provides for all of my needs, all the way down to my daily bread. He even provides for many of my wants, just to show that He can and because He enjoys me being overwhelmed with how much He loves me.

Many of us understand a little about God's love for us, we're grateful for it, we sing praises about it, we might even put a little bit of money into the offering plate because of it. But do we apply our knowledge of it in the way that God instructs? Jesus was pretty clear: "Love in the same way that I've loved you (John 15:9)." Unfortunately for our comfort level, that goes way beyond the code that we follow in this cocoonish society that we've created, doesn't it? "Live and let live" just doesn't seem to cover the love that God had for us. So how can it so easily cover the supposed love that we have for our neighbor?

In His Grip,

Pastor Fred



YOUTH NEWS

Youth will be going ice skating on Saturday, February 10th. If you are interested in going, please call the office or see Pastor Ted to reserve your spot.

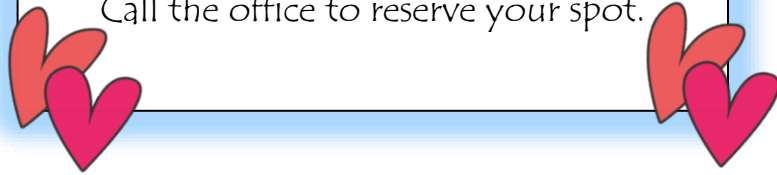
Valentine Dinner / Date Night Challenge

Youth Fundraiser

Friday, February 16th – 6:00 PM

Dinner Tickets \$20 per couple

Call the office to reserve your spot.



SENIOR ADULT LUNCHEON

Friday February 23rd @

11:30am - Falcon Restaurant.

Friday March 23rd in the Fellowship Hall - potluck lunch.

Seniors Luncheon



If we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

- 1 John 4:12

Curious about how to enter into a personal relationship with Jesus or how to join our church? A New Believers/New Members class led by Pastor Fred will be starting Sunday, February 4th at 9:15 AM in the sanctuary. The class will run for five weeks. Hope you can attend!



Birthdays

- 1 - Danielle Baker
- 2 - Sandy Light
- 2 - Myrtle Stell
- 4 - Michael Johnson
- 5 - Madisyn Baca
- 6 - Tia Dunham
- 6 - Mary Ann Smith
- 8 - Rickey Jackson
- 10 - Tescue Kenna
- 12 - James Gardner
- 14 - Jimmy Atha
- 14 - Kelly Baxter
- 14 - Patty Pate
- 14 - John Stephenson
- 15 - Laryn Nez
- 16 - Kara Hunt
- 19 - Maggie Chatterley
- 19 - Lewis Renfro
- 19 - Sam Pogue
- 19 - Bob Schlesinger
- 20 - Darren Fowler
- 20 - Jackie Landis
- 21 - Tanya Young
- 22 - Ignacio Agoodie
- 25 - Charlotte Baker
- 25 - Juana Brown
- 25 - Rachel Cole
- 25 - Dolores Renfro



Anniversaries

- 14 - Michael & Carla Beeson
- 16 - Ron & Ruby Harris
- 21 - Ron & Kathi Chisholm



Birthdays

- 1 - Ian Autry
- 1 - Katrina Cole
- 3 - Steve Sandoval
- 5 - Samara Wilson
- 6 - Derek Knight
- 7 - Richard Ashburn
- 8 - Shannon Baxter
- 8 - Andrea Harings
- 8 - Kathy Patton
- 9 - Jermaine Agoodie
- 9 - Stephanie Bridegam
- 9 - Mathieu Gomez
- 11 - Toby Martinez
- 13 - Brody Knight
- 13 - Gary Sanderlin
- 15 - John Maine
- 21 - Dante Thomas
- 22 - Jim MacLean
- 24 - Janie Sandoval
- 25 - Robert Metzger
- 26 - Pamela Gerton
- 27 - Midajah Nelson
- 29 - Nicholas Curnutte
- 29 - Walter Greer



Anniversaries

- 6 - Afton & Lisa Foster
- 8 - Bob & Kathy Schlesinger
- 25 - Rickey & Molly Jackson

Sunday March 11th at 5:30 pm the youth will be having their dessert auction, beginning with a spaghetti dinner. They are asking for donations of edible items to be auctioned off. They are also asking for your support of this longstanding event and great fundraiser for our youth. Money earned helps them pay for Glorietta.



Oh, that we might know the Lord! Let us press on to know him. He will respond to us as surely as the arrival of dawn or the coming of rains in early spring. ~Hosea 6:3

