



The Messenger

Trinity Lutheran Church



Sharing the Love of Jesus with our community, Kim and Jim delivered blankets to Hope Village for Children as well as other community service organizations. Thank you to all the loving hands that made them.

From Pastor's Desk

I hope everyone is enjoying the season of epiphany. During the season of epiphany, we celebrate and remember the revealing of the Son of God in the flesh of the Incarnation of Jesus of Nazareth, Mary's Son for all people.

Epiphany is a great time of year as we see the color green in

the church when so much around us in the world is brown and bare. The color green represents life and that is exactly what we have in Jesus, life and even life everlasting. For us epiphany becomes a reminder of what we anticipate as Christians in this temporary life looking forward to the life to come that lasts forever.

Sometimes in the midst of the various circumstances and situations we find ourselves

in during this life it is nice to not only hear this reminder, but to see it as well. When we see and hear something they say you learn it twice. So, in this situation you and I are reminded of the reality we await, twice as we see the color of the paraments and hear the promises of God that are spoken to us from His Word.

The season of epiphany culminates with the celebration and remembrance of the transfiguration of Jesus on the mountaintop in the presence of Peter, James, and John. Here we see epiphany bookended by hearing the voice of God the Father again revealing Jesus as His beloved Son to the world. Sure, when it took place first to 3 people until the resurrection and then the account is shared with all the world. Jesus is shown to be exactly what those eyewitnesses wrote that He is the Son of the Living God in human flesh.

In other words enjoy the green in church and what it represents as you hear of the life of the world to come!

Greater Love

John 15: 9-17 - "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you keep my commands, you will remain

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Share
His Love
This
Valentines

Remember to
pray for
those who
are suffering
loss
during this



Thank you to everyone who stayed on helped take down the Christmas decorations. Lots of helping hands made quick work of the job.

in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. This is my command: Love each other." Jesus' command sounds simple,

love one another – each God's creation, each loved by God, each a recipient of Christ's sacrifice on the cross, a part of the world he died to save. But sin is still here picking away at that Love. Love the different and love the distant. Some are even labeled "unlovable." Love you enemies and those who hurt you. Not so simple a command.

Some think of February as the love month. St. Valentine's Day is often associated with romantic love, with gifts of flowers, and chocolates. However, the story of Saint Valentine is the story of a priest who showed love for his neighbors and became a martyr for love.

He was a Christian priest in 3rd century Rome under the rule of Emperor Claudius II, who came after Nero. He banned marriages for sol-

diers, so that the single men who be focused on being warriors. Valentine defied the Emperor and secretly performed weddings.

Despite the risks, Valentine continued to minister to persecuted Christians and perform marriages. His acts of love toward those who wished to marry, ultimately led to his imprisonment and martyrdom. Before his death legend has it that Valentine healed the jailer's blind daughter and sent her a note signed "From your Valentine," inspiring the tradition of sending Valentine's Day cards.

Valentine's Day can give us an opportunity to celebrate love— not just romantic, but platonic, and divine as well. 1 Corinthians 13 is often called the love chapter in the Bible. It defines what God means by Loving each other. His love is patient, kind, and selfless, as described in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7: "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is



not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres." This may be the most used verse in the Bible to be used at weddings. But it is not limited to those we romantically love or even family love. C.S. Lewis write in *The Four Loves*, God's gift of love is so large, the Greek language takes more than one word to unwrap these gifts, Lewis says that using the four Greek words for love: *Storge*, *Philia*, *Eros*, and *Agape*, or as he translates them, Affection, Friendship, Romantic Love, and Charity. (others also define it as unconditional love, doing what is best of others and expecting nothing in return). With English having just 1 word for love, it is good to remember that in both John and 1 Corinthians it is *Agape* love that is used.

Valentine's Day is an excellent time to reflect on the other types of love too and how we can show love to those around us.

—Linda Abel—Editor