

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

February 2017 "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.

A Nostalgic Moment

The return of the snow this week got me thinking about a story my dad told me. When he was young the communities did not have all the conveniences we often take for granted. The houses were heated with coal in the old gravity feed furnaces that required a coal storage room in everyone's house. When the time came to replenish the supply, the entire block would order so that everyone could take advantage of the preparation needed. That preparation began with opening the street from the fallen snow that had accumulated. Everyone worked together to clear the snow from in front of their homes until the street would be passable for the all-important delivery truck.

What I like about this story is the real community aspect seen in the cooperation of all the neighbors. Ordering together, working together, and enjoying the benefits of community came so naturally. It was a different day. After all, everyone knew their neighbor. Working together was how everyone was able to live well and flourish in the land. Neighbor looking out for neighbor was the normal way. But it seems that our advancements in technology have changed us. Now with fuel being piped right to our houses and our streets cleared by the municipal agency we simply need not give it a thought, at least until the bill comes.

Other forms of technology also have changed us. Today it is not unheard of for our younger generation to be sitting across from one another at a table and instead of talking will text each other for communication. The ability to even have a conversation appears to be in trouble in our nation unless we include tweets and text messaging. While these modes of communication can be beneficial, we lose an important skill when we stop talking face to face.

Maybe this is why our society is struggling so much lately. The personal contact that comes with face to face conversation also reminds us of our humanity. The interaction we have instills a value to individuals that in many ways is lacking today. Community involvement and even church involvement is noticeably diminished because we no longer have the sense of community that was needed to enable life to be enjoyed to the fullest.

Maybe I am only being nostalgic for a time that is long past. Still I wonder if we can regain some of the blessings that have gone away. Imagine a church setting where we really know the others in church. Where we take the time to hear the stories of children and grandchildren with an attentive ear. Sharing a meal and a conversation the way our Lord did when He walked on this earth. This might even slow us down a little so we can unwind from the stress that has everyone living on edge. If we could retrain ourselves to live as the family of God in our church, what might this mean to life in our neighborhoods?

If we really want to change our world, we must be willing to change ourselves first. Re-visiting the idea of community as it is seen in the New Testament could prove to be very inviting to those outside the faith family. It may even show our youth the value of assembling (the word used for church means assembled) as one in hope and spirit. It may even show our youth the value of assembling as one in hope and spirit. After all, God did call us to be a gathered family of believers. To be a community with a shared vision and purpose, to live for Him in all things and in all ways.

One thing I do wish to keep from today's technology though is my means of removing snow without needing to work so hard at it with a shovel. After all, nostalgia is one thing, but let's not get carried away!

Pastor Rus

Red Velvet Cake—Perfect for Valentine’s Day

1 package (18 1/4 ounces) German chocolate cake mix with pudding
1 cup sour cream
1/2 cup water
1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
1/4 cup vegetable oil
1 bottle (1 ounce) Red Food Color
3 eggs
2 teaspoons Pure Vanilla Extract



Vanilla Cream Cheese Frosting:

1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
1/4 cup (1/2 stick) butter, softened
2 tablespoons sour cream
2 teaspoons Pure Vanilla Extract
1 box (16 ounces) confectioners’ sugar

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Beat cake mix, sour cream, water, cocoa powder, oil, food color, eggs and vanilla in large bowl with electric mixer on low speed just until moistened, scraping sides of bowl frequently. Beat on medium speed 2 minutes. Pour batter into 2 greased and floured (9-inch) round cake pans.
2. Bake 30 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool in pan 10 minutes. Remove from pans; cool completely on wire rack.
3. For the Frosting, beat cream cheese, butter, sour cream and vanilla in large bowl until light and fluffy. Gradually beat in confectioners’ sugar until smooth. Fill and frost cooled cake with frosting.

FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD
THAT HE GAVE
HIS ONLY
BEGOTTEN
SON
THAT WHOSOEVER
BELIEVETH IN HIM
SHOULD NOT PERISH
BUT HAVE EVERLASTING LIFE

John 3:16



February Birthdays/Anniversaries



Happy Birthday

2/1	Andrew Haan
2/7	Pat Prier
2/7	Lacey Hay
2/8	Mackenzie Allspach
2/10	MarlynAllspach
2/14	Nolan Prier
2/16	Tyler DeBerg
2/17	Sharon Cordes
2/20	AnnaMaeMehmen
2/24	Rod 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 20th of the month.

	<i>Greeters</i>	<i>Ushers</i>	<i>Sunday School Teachers w/Lesson Topic[#]</i>		<i>Coffee*</i>
2/5	Jean Trey (N)	Dale M.	Ryan & Stacy	Wise Words to Live By	Mike & Stacy
	Ken & Tracy (S)		Jodi	My Grace is Sufficient	
2/12	Cory & Kamie(N)	Ken K.	Kayla & Shelly	Living in God's Time	Ken & Nancy
	Ken & Rhonda (S)		Stacy	Fruit of the Spirit	
2/19	Kevin & Shelly (N)	Gerald H.	Amy & Kay	LOVE	Larry & Mary
	Dennis & Lois (S)		JoLynne	LOVE	
2/26	Mike & Stacy (N)	Mark K.	Kamie & Nancy	Beautitudes	Arnie & Kay
	Sylvia & AnnaMae (S)		Brandy & Joel	Beautitudes	

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

#The teacher schedule and lessons 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 If you need to change a Sunday, please call one of the teachers.

How Many Words Can You Make Out Of:



Happy Valentine's Day



Four sets of horizontal lines for writing, each set consisting of a top line, a middle line, and a bottom line. Small red hearts are placed on the top and bottom lines of each set.

Five sets of horizontal lines for writing, each set consisting of a top line, a middle line, and a bottom line. Small red hearts are placed on the top and bottom lines of each set.

