

# NEW DOVER HERALD

February 2018

Holiness unto the Lord

Vol. 142

## Highlights

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## CHUCK'S CHURCH CHAT

Saints,

Grace to you, peace.

I have two words- **TONY CAMPOLO**. If you were among those attending "Thy Kingdom Come- Jesus & Justice," you experienced what Robin Christian called "*the most inspiring service in my 25 years at New Dover!*" Proposed and planned by the Social Justice Task Force, the January 20<sup>th</sup> event was a stirring vortex of praise and worship, call to commitment and communion, and sending forth. In short it was a good old fashion **REVIVAL!** At both the morning and afternoon sessions Tony held us spellbound with sermons that were biblically on-target, intensely personal, and a vibrant challenge for us to make greater commitment to Christ's call on our lives. And it worked...big time! Our lunchtime panel discussion included a number of ministries and nonprofits who work for justice globally and locally, and there Jim Naugle of World Vision invited each of us to sponsor a young child in Bangladesh for less than the cost of a cup of coffee per day. With Tony's passionate support ringing out **22 kids** were adopted that day- the most Jim had ever had adopted at any event! Wow. Wow. Wow.

Now the most important question- what else will we do with all the inspiration, all the positive energy, and all the commitment we pledged on that day? Saints, *if Tony's time with us eventually fades into nothing more than a pleasant memory we have lost a tremendous opportunity to radically transform ourselves, our church, and world around us!* When on such a day God's Spirit is so obviously present with us, is it any different than Jesus passing by the Sea of Galilee and calling out for the fishermen to follow him? They left their nets behind and became his disciples, but how will we respond?

The church can offer opportunities for us to cultivate our spirit, increase our level of commitment, and become better disciples, but each one of us must decide whether to go boldly forth to build the Kingdom of God or remain idle on the sidelines. Sadly, far too many church goers choose the later. But it doesn't have to be that way does it?! Check out what's being offered at NDUMC...

⇒ Tony mentioned that Biblical illiteracy is rampant these days. Hey, how can we be obedient to God's Word if we don't know what the heck it says? Well, we have a brand new Bible Study on the Ten Commandments. Talk about getting back to basics! Class meets on Monday mornings at 10:30 and Tuesday nights at 7:00 and it parallels and provides depth to a concurrent sermon series I'm preaching on the Commandments.

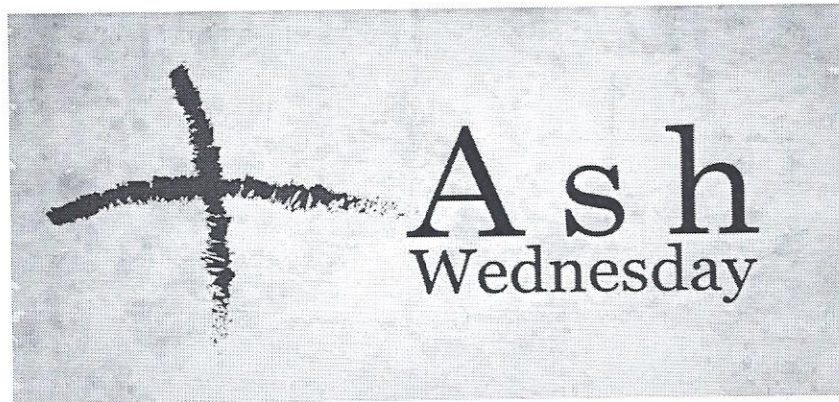
- ⇒ Did you adopt a child through World Vision? You are going to invited to participate in a support group that will gather regularly to share our common experience. We also plan to put up a bulletin board in the church with photographs of all of our “kids!” Even if you didn’t want to commit to adoption, you’ll be able to support those who have and we’ll make this a whole church mission.
- ⇒ And don’t forget, New Dover offers *numerous* other chances to live out our faith through fellowships like the United Methodist Women and through our very active Outreach Committee. Between FISH Hospitality, the Food Bank, our Dominican Republic mission, etc., there’s no shortage of challenges to make a difference locally and globally. And stay tuned because the Social Justice Task Force is just getting started!

Before I close, a big thanks to everyone who made “Jesus & Justice” possible. Although it sprang from the Social Justice Task Force it was truly a total church effort. Tony was very impressed with the spirit of our congregation and even put in a great plug for “Acts of Praise” calling them “*one of the best praise bands I’ve heard!*” And guess what? We can sing praises with them every Saturday night at 5! What a church! **WHAT A CHURCH!**

Your servant in Christ,

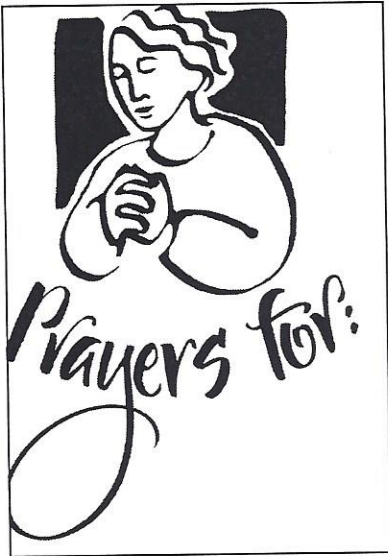
*Chuck*

Rev. Chuck Coblenz



***Together with Centenary UMC and Wesley UMC-Edison  
We will prepare for Lent with  
Our Annual Ash Wednesday Service  
February 14, 2018  
7:30pm  
At New Dover United Methodist Church***

# KEEP US IN YOUR PRAYERS



Bob Meckler & Family	America	Judy Tymitz
Manny DeLaPaz & Family	Christians of India	Wally Curtis
Spencer Kolb	Marion Jones	Joe Aiello
Christine Rowland	LuLu Kamenas	Kyle Sanders
David Santos & Parents	Hedy & Tony	Preston Family
Nayan Vyas & Family	Calvin Christian	Boyce Family
Robert Rozmus	Doug Sargent	Jeff & Karen Rowland
Shirley Heidersberger	NDUMC Missionaries	
Christine & Judy Tymitz	Katie Carpenter	

**Pray for all those seeking employment, those affected by Natural Disasters, those suffering with addictions, those suffering from depression, those affected by acts of terrorism, all national leaders and troops, and all those serving at New Dover UMC.**

Any names that may have been left off are not intentional. We trust in God to know all our needs.

To activate the prayer chain contact Nancy Preston @ 732-381-1205  
or Anita Davis @ 732-815-0597

## SHROVE TUESDAY

**SHROVE TUESDAY  
PANCAKE & SAUSAGE DINNER!**

**@ NEW DOVER UMC**

**Come Celebrate the Eve of Lent,  
New Orleans Style!**

**Featuring the Cool Saxophone of  
Brian Chesney!**

**Tuesday, February 13, 6:00-7:30**

**Sign Up on the board in Fellowship Hall**

**No Charge (A Free-Will Offering Will  
be Taken)**

### SAVE THE DATES

Feb 13	Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner
Feb 14	Ash Wednesday Service
Mar 25	Palm Sunday
Mar 29	Maundy Thursday
Mar 30	Good Friday
Apr 1	Easter Sunday



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# SERMON OF THE MONTH

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## Tough Enough to Love

Sermon preached January 14, 2018

*I Corinthians 13  
Lamentations 3:22-30*

Question- What is *the* scariest thing out there? What makes us weak in the knees? Keeps us awake nights? For an answer to that question, I direct your attention to the patron saint of New Jersey, of course I'm referring to Mr. Bruce Springsteen who sings...

*I ain't afraid of no lions; I ain't afraid of no grizzly bear  
Got in a wrestlin' match with old King Kong; he didn't even muss my hair  
There's just one thing in the whole wide world that makes me doubt my stuff  
I'm a coward when it comes to love; I'm a coward when it comes to love;  
I'm a coward, baby when it comes to love*

Those lyrics ring so true do they not?! Hey, if you've never had that knot in your stomach, if your hands have been trembling so hard you couldn't make 'em stop, if you've never been shakin' all over- my friend *YOU* have never been in love.

Why is that? Why is fear so much a part of true love? Well, because in order to love we have to make ourselves vulnerable, have to let our guard down. Hey, if the door's locked love cannot either enter or exit our hearts. If there's a brick wall around our heart, love just bounces off. It's like trying to fill your gas tank without popping the gas cap. Can't be done!

Now the love Bruce is singing about here is romantic in nature- the desire of one human being for another. The Greek word for such love is *eros*, named after the god of love in Greek mythology. Love based on desire requires a target for its affection. We all know *eros*-type love.

It's that googly-eyed love. That Hallmark moment love. That Valentine's Day, send the roses, don't forget the date of our first date, don't forget the date of our engagement, or for heaven's sake don't forget the date of our anniversary..... love. Talk about fear, right fellas?

Anyway, that's *eros* love. But this isn't the kind of love Paul is writing about in the passage I just read. I Corinthians 13 actually has nothing to do with romantic love! But many of you will say, wait a minute Rev, I heard that passage read at so many weddings, in fact we had it read at our wedding! And certainly a marriage is all about romantic love isn't it? Isn't it???? Well yeah, of course it is. And I have to admit, in most of the weddings I've officiated, I Corinthians 13 is a big part of the liturgy. But when we delve into what Paul is teaching us in this well-known passage we discover that romantic love, *eros*, is not what he's instructing us on at all. So what *kind* of love *is* he talking about?

Well it turns out because Paul wrote in Greek we know precisely which Greek word for love Paul employed throughout this passage. The word is *agape*. Most of you have heard that word before. In the New Testament, including the gospels and the letters of Paul, *agape* is the unconditional, all-encompassing love that God has for us. For Paul, this love was made manifest in the life and sacrificial death of Jesus, who taught love based on his knowledge of the Torah, the Hebrew books of the God's law.

In fact, Jesus brought together two of the cornerstone Jewish teachings on love when he proclaimed: "*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and you shall love your neighbor as yourself.*" In this passage, the word for love was, you guessed it, *agape*.

Okay, so what exactly is *agape*? First of all, unlike *eros*, it is not relational, it's not about desire. It actually doesn't require an object of affection. In the words of the great Christian writer, C.S. Lewis, *agape* is "a selfless love, a love that is passionately committed to the well-being of the other," no matter who that other may be. *True agape* can exist on its own, within us, even if there's no one around to receive it. Rather than desire based love, *agape* is an indwelling force that governs all of our ethics, emotions, decisions, and lifestyle. According to the scriptures that indwelling force is none other than God, because according to I John "God is love," and the word John uses here is, you guessed it, *agape*." **God IS agape!** Because *agape* is God within us, and because God loves us completely, it is love with no conditions, no qualifications, no stipulations, a love independent of whether a person loves us back or even treats us decently. *Agape* is a God consciousness, a love-based philosophy. The ultimate blending of compassion, wisdom, and knowledge. Such love produces the highest form of morality.

So what's it like when this *agape* is present within us? Paul spends the central part of I Corinthians 13 describing what *agape* looks like in life. What's interesting is that even though we translate his Greek words as nouns in the English translation, in the original Greek **Paul doesn't use nouns but rather verbs in describing this type love!** And that's intense, is it not? Think about it... it means that *this kind of love* is dynamic and active, never static, never lazy.

It's not a creed we recite or some stale dogma we cling to. It's an active, engaging force. It's always out there looking to do some good in the world.

Paul starts off by describing two of *agape*'s positive attributes: First of all ***agape exercises patience***. A patient attitude is one of the indicators that *agape* is present in one's heart. A patient, caring person realizes that some things simply take time, that everything in the world doesn't pace itself according to **our** time-table. In contrast, if one displays an impatient attitude in life, it probably means that *agape* is weak or not even present at all.

Next Paul states that ***love radiates kindness***. This ought to go without saying- being kind to one another sounds like an obvious characteristic of a loving person, but we've all seen plenty of "religious" people who are anything but kind. I mean, *come on man!* how can a person have unconditional love in his or her heart and not be kind?

Next Paul presents us with eight descriptions of ***what agape is not***. In other words, if we have one or more of these characteristics it's time for a spiritual check-up from the neck-up!

First of all, he says a person filled with love ***has no need to be envious of others***. A person filled with *agape* doesn't compare him or herself to others. If we have God's unconditional love in our hearts, what else could we possibly need?

***Neither does a loving person feel the need to boast***. Why do people brag or boast? One reason- they want desperately to look good before others. Boasting is a sure sign of low self-esteem. "Look at me everybody! Lookee what I done! Aren't I great??? Aren't I? Please tell me I'm great..." By contrast a person who has *agape* indwelling their heart has no urge to brag about themselves or their accomplishments because *agape* brings with it a sense of self that transcends ego. Humility, not vanity, is the characteristic of a person who loves.

In the same vein, Paul teaches that ***agape does not come across as arrogant or rude, irritable or resentful***. Let me ask, have ever met an arrogant, rude, irritable, resentful person who was *nice*? I don't think so! Arrogance is a behavior associated with bullying. "I'm right and you're all wrong!" Arrogance is the opposite of respecting the opinions of others. Again, it springs from the heart of a person lacking confidence, whose narcissism is a façade masking deep insecurity. ***Saints, there is no insecurity in agape***. An insecure resentful person takes every criticism personally; talking to such a person is like walking on extremely thin eggshells.

Next Paul tells us that love ***does not insist on its own way***. "Agape is not a "my way or the highway" kind of love. It listens to and respects the opinion of others, not merely paying them lip-service; it takes them seriously. *Agape* doesn't just wait to talk; *agape* actually listens.

Insisting on our own way has just about become the dominant philosophy in our culture. No matter how cruel or stupid we may look doing it! More and more, it seems we're becoming a nation of people who insist on our own way. Such a tribal attitude indicates the absence of love.

Paul then tells us that *agape does not rejoice in wrongdoing*; in other words, love is **ALWAYS** ethical. It never employs an unethical means to achieve a goal, no matter how desired the goal may be. That's because *agape* has faith in its own power to institute change. There are no shortcuts when it comes to love. Ends **never** justify ignoble means. Indeed in the living of our lives **the journey** is what's truly important. It's not what we achieve so much as **how** we achieve it. In school it's the difference between honestly earning a B or cheating to get an A.

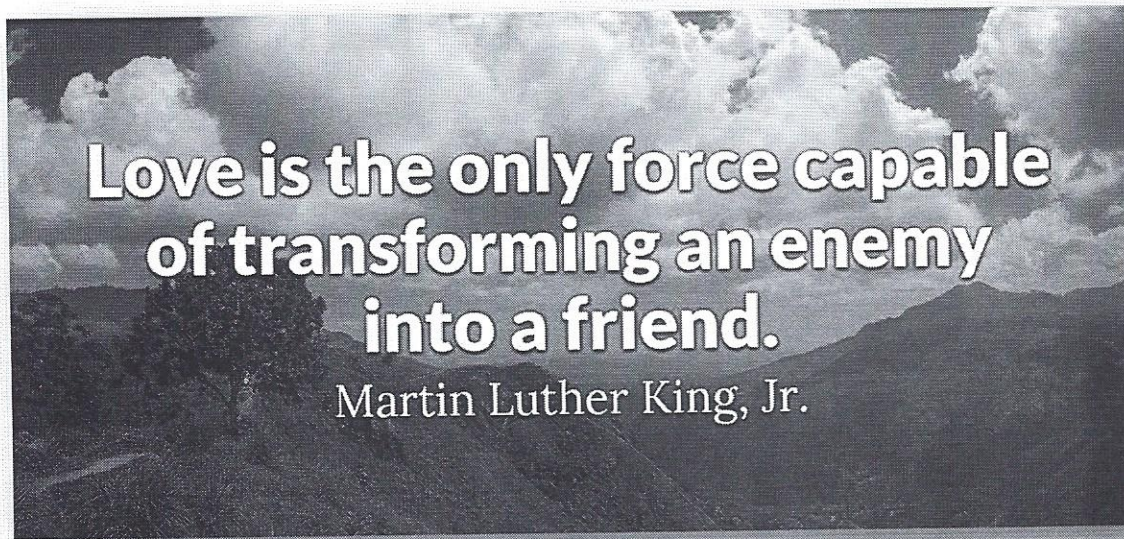
Paul next switches back to positive when he teaches that *agape rejoices in the truth*, and not just when the truth favors our opinions or ideologies. Even when the truth hurts, love rejoices, because truth alone is the path to God. We can't lie our way to a better world or a better life. Love is about openness and transparency, not deception and cover-up.

Paul closes this section by describing just how powerful such a love can be. He preaches that *agape "bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things."* In other words, when we have this kind of love in our heart, there is absolutely nothing the world can hurl at us that we cannot defeat. A person with *agape* love in his or her heart believes that things will work out, no matter how frightening they may look at a given moment. In those times in life when you feel so lost and alone, remember the power and the permanence of love.

So that's how Paul describes what *agape* looks like when it's present in an individual.

In the beginning I mentioned that this type of love is the most powerful force on earth. What happens when such a love is brought to bear upon the world? What happens when we, the church, march forth with such love ringing in our heart? Well, on this weekend when we honor the memory of Martin Luther King, we know what that looks like do we not? This is a love that marches boldly forth. This is the kind of love that does not stand idle while injustice and oppression have their way. This is the kind of love that emulates the sacrificial life of Jesus the Christ. New Dover United Methodist Church, ***if we want to see change, we need to make the change, we need to be the change!*** If we want to follow Jesus and build a Kingdom of God where love reigns and fear is defeated, we ourselves have to make it a reality.

So, all you Saints... are we tough enough to love?



# FINANCE

The Finance Committee is continuing to provide financial information. The following provides the income and expenses as of December 2017. The church income includes what is provided to the church in pledge envelopes to current expense and other income sources such as building rentals, flea market and various fundraising activities. Church expenses are shown which include salaries, utilities, conference obligations and other costs to keep the church operating.

New Dover United Methodist Church Operating Fund		
	2017	
	<u>December</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
Income	\$ 33,196.71	\$ 279,932.85
Expenses	\$ (29,948.43)	\$ (267,758.70)
Difference	\$ 3,248.28	\$ 12,174.15

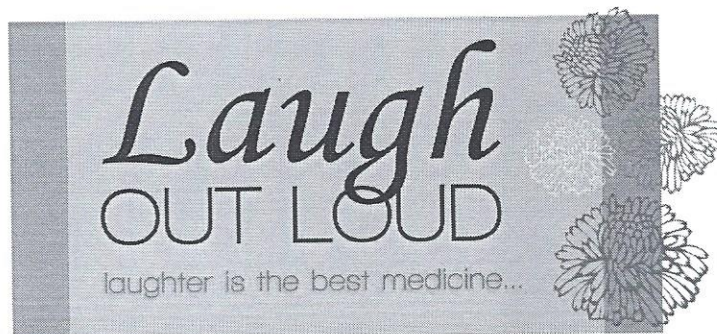
There was a Scottish painter named Smokey MacGregor who was very interested in making a penny where he could, so he often thinned down his paint to make it go a wee bit further. As it happened, he got away with this for some time, but eventually the local church decided to do a big restoration job on the outside of one of their biggest buildings. Smokey put in a bid and, because his price was so low, he got the job. So he set about erecting the scaffolding and setting up the planks, and buying the paint and yes, I am sorry to say, thinning it down with turpentine.....

Well, Smokey was up on the scaffolding, painting away, the job nearly completed, when suddenly there was a horrendous clap of thunder, the sky opened and the rain poured down washing the thinned paint from all over the church and knocking Smokey clear off the scaffold to land on the lawn among the grave-stones, surrounded by telltale puddles of the thinned and useless paint.

Smokey was no fool. He knew this was a judgment from the Almighty, so he got down on his knees and cried: "Oh God, Oh God, forgive me; what should I do?" And from the thunder, a mighty voice spoke.

"Repaint! Repaint! And thin no more!"

...Anonymous



## MEMBERSHIP BLOG

We begin near the end—of December, that is. On the 17<sup>th</sup> of that month, we celebrated the third Sunday in Advent with a robust congregation. The bell choir was in full attendance, playing several pieces during the service. A moment for youth was held by Pastor Chuck, who talked with an attentive group about preparing their hearts for Jesus. The sermon was preempted by the annual Christmas Cantata, a selection of four favorites performed by 22 hard-working volunteers. Following the service, all were invited to the parsonage for fellowship at the pastor's annual open house. Thank you to all the musicians and singers who dedicated their time to making the day memorable! The next weekend was double duty; during the single morning service, the congregation celebrated the last Sunday in Advent. Our cantata crew performed a redux of "O Holy Night". The Scriptures for the day were Zephaniah 1:1-14 and Luke 3:15-17. Rev. discussed how Advent is a season of contradiction: taking stock of our lives in light of God's judgment versus accepting his love and loving others in turn. As with the Israelites, we often put faith in ourselves rather than in God. But God's love is unconditional, and if we come to him in repentance, he is always there waiting. That night was Christmas Eve and the traditional two candlelight services were held at 7 and 11 pm. At the 7 pm service, the bell and youth choirs were present, as well as the Praise Band, all joyfully acknowledged by those in an overflowing sanctuary. The service of lessons and carols was highlighted by Rev's sermon discussing the world view of Christmas versus its true meaning and focus, using the Grinch and a little Peanuts as illustrations. The singing of "Silent Night" and the candle lighting made God's presence palpable in the sanctuary. Thanks to everyone who worked so hard to make this a wonderful celebration, and to all those who came out to join in worship and fellowship! The last Sunday in December was a single morning service due to New Year's Eve service at 11 pm. It began with a carol sing by request, followed by regular worship. Emma P. and Kyle S. gave an instrumental performance for the anthem and also for the offering. The Scriptures for the day were Jonah 2:1-10 and Mark 4:35-41. Our pastor talked about the storms of life and our preparation for them, highlighted with a story by Garrison Keillor. Who do we turn to in times of difficulty; do we believe that God is with us in those times even when we do not receive our hoped for answer to prayer? It is during times of trial that it is most important to maintain our faith and not give in to fear.

The New Year began with services on the 7<sup>th</sup> of January, a bone-chilling morning outside. Due to the extreme weather, the early service was cancelled. The single Communion service was led by the Praise Band, who played a variety of selections and kept the moderate-sized congregation lively. Grace played a lovely rendition of "Coventry Carol". The Scripture for the day was Matthew 2:1-13; the sermon reviewed the role of Herod and the Magi, and the intersection of their motivations and goals during the turbulent time of Jesus' birth. There are questions we need to ask ourselves in light of their actions: Where do we find ourselves in this story? What is our prime motivator for our actions—fear or love—and to what lengths will each take us? We are God's children and thus can perceive the divine truth, unlike those who live in fear of the world. Let's remember that for every 'Herod' there are 'Magi'. This month's blog closes with services on January 14. At our regular service, the Youth Choir sang the anthem and Chris S. provided music on the cello for the offertory. The Scriptures for the day were Lamentations 3:22-30 and 1 Corinthians 13:1-13. Rev Chuck began by performing a Bruce Springsteen song, then asked the congregation why fear is a part of love—because we need to make ourselves vulnerable to be open to love. Paul spoke in the NT passage about "agape" love, an indwelling love that influences our entire lifestyle; it is not qualified, conditional or influenced by others' actions. Change/transformation is achieved through agape love and embracing the truth. In the afternoon, our pastor and 6 members of our congregation gathered with others at the New Hope Baptist Church in Metuchen for the annual Metuchen-Edison Interfaith MLK service. For two hours the congregation was uplifted through song, poem, dance and sermon, and reminded that as God's servants we must continue to work toward freedom and equality for everyone. We must help each other for we are all in the same boat! Also sung in our regular morning service, this one ended—with hands joined and voices raised—with "We Shall Overcome". What an inspiration to everyone to continue the fight for social justice!





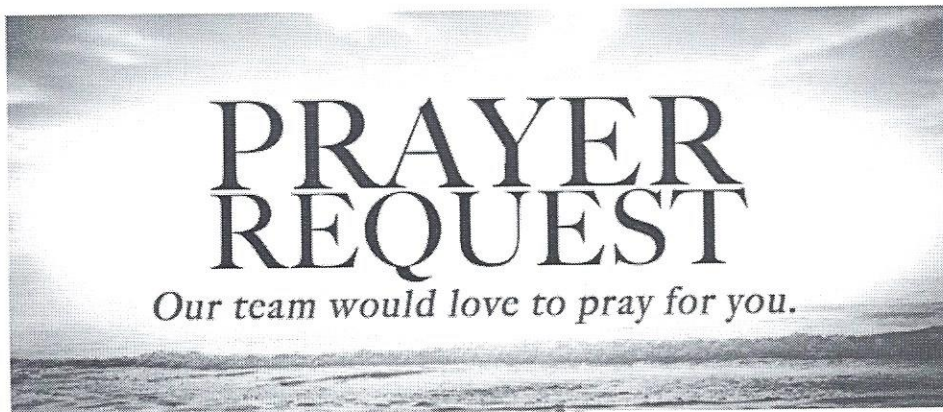
# SUNDAY SCHOOL

## Pre-K, 1st and 2nd Grade

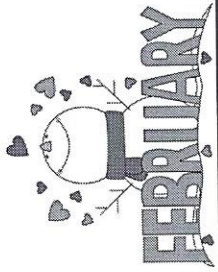
The winter season started with the stories on David and his life. The children loved hearing about David's childhood which included David's battle with Goliath. As David grew up and his life centered around King Saul and King Saul's son Jonathan. The children related to the strong bond of friendship between David and Jonathan since they had their own "best friends" in school.

David's life as a King was another group stories that the children learned about. David loved music and they made a lyre which King David played. The lyre was made with a plastic plate on which the picture of the lyre was pasted and the "strings" were rubber bands. It was the first time the children learned about the musical instrument called the "lyre". David's son Solomon was the next bible character they heard about. The stories concluded with how King Solomon made decisions with his God given wisdom and building the temple in Jerusalem for God.

Sandra de Alwis / Karissa Tuason



The Wednesday Prayer Warriors are updating the permanent prayer for 2018. There will be forms available in Fellowship Hall on the table with the nametags on Sunday morning. Please take one home and return by Sunday, February 18, 2018, so we can start praying for them.



# February 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p><b>4</b></p> <p>8:30 Worship 10:00 Worship &amp; Church School 11:15 Choir Practice 11:30 Confirmation Class 11:45 Bell Choir Practices 11:30-1:00 ADC Bible Study 5:00-6:30 Telugu Service</p>	<p><b>5</b></p> <p>10:30 Hot Topics 7:00 Social Justice</p>	<p><b>6</b></p> <p>7:00 Hot Topics 7:30 Scout Troop 44 (WH)</p>	<p><b>7</b></p> <p>10:00 Prayer Fellowship 6:00 Karate</p>	<p><b>1</b></p> <p>7:30 AA</p>	<p><b>2</b></p>	<p><b>3</b></p> <p>10:00-11:00am Karate (W) 1:00-4:00pm Kids for Christ (W) 5:00 Praise Service 6:30-8 Telugu Service 7:30 AA &amp; AI Anon</p>
<p><b>11</b></p> <p>8:30 Worship 10:00 Worship &amp; Church School 11:15 Choir Practice 11:30 Confirmation Class 11:45 Bell Choir Practices 11:30-1:00 ADC Bible Study 4:00 youth Group 5:00-6:30 Telugu Service 6:30 Girl Scouts</p>	<p><b>12</b></p> <p>Herald Articles Due 10:30 Hot Topics 7:30 Nurture</p>	<p><b>13</b> Shrove Tuesday 6:00 Pancake Dinner 7:30 Scout Troop 44 (WH)</p>	<p><b>14</b> Ash Wednesday 10:00 Prayer Fellowship 6:00 Karate</p>	<p><b>15</b></p> <p>7:30 AA</p>	<p><b>16</b></p>	<p><b>17</b></p> <p>10:00-11:00am Karate (W) 1:00-4:00pm Kids for Christ (W) 5:00 Praise Service 6:30-8 Telugu Service 7:30 AA &amp; AI Anon</p>
<p><b>18</b></p> <p>8:30 Worship 10:00 Worship &amp; Church School 11:15 Choir Practice 11:30 Confirmation Class 11:45 Bell Choir Practices 11:30-1:00 ADC Bible Study 4:00 Youth Group 5:00-6:30 Telugu Service 6:30 Girl Scouts</p>	<p><b>19</b></p> <p>President's Day Office Closed</p>	<p><b>20</b></p> <p>10 am Herald Team 7:00 Hot Topics 7:30 Scout Troop 44 (WH)</p>	<p><b>21</b></p> <p>10:00 Prayer Fellowship 7:00 Worship</p>	<p><b>22</b></p> <p>7:30 AA</p>	<p><b>23</b></p> <p>7pm CS #318</p>	<p><b>24</b></p> <p>10:00-11:00am Karate (W) 1:00-4:00pm Kids for Christ (W) 5:00 Praise Service 6:30-8 Telugu Service 7:30 AA &amp; AI Anon</p>
<p><b>25</b></p> <p>8:30 Worship 10:00 Worship &amp; Church School 11:15 Choir Practice 11:30 Confirmation Class 11:45 Bell Choir Practices 11:30-1:00 ADC Bible Study 4:00 Youth Group 5:00-6:30 Telugu Service 6:30 Girl Scouts</p>	<p><b>26</b></p> <p>10:30 Hot Topics 7:00pm Ad Council</p>	<p><b>27</b></p> <p>7:00 Hot Topics 7:30 Scout Troop 44 (WH)</p>	<p><b>28</b></p> <p>10:00 Prayer Fellowship 7:00 Worship</p>			