

St. Paul's Lutheran Family

February 2024
NEWSLETTER

There's a Place for You at St. Paul's!



From Pastor Mary Lou

Since my retirement, I have heard one thing from every church: "We want young people." But when young people (child-bearing age, 45 and under) happen to find their way into the church, members, by their actions/words, make it clear, "We want young people as long as they conform to our way of doing church. Don't ask us to change our worship to make it more relevant for you or use more modern hymns and songs that will inspire you. Don't expect to sit in my favorite seat. Don't expect us to allow your children to act like children when they are in church. Don't expect us to make teenagers feel they are valued here and are one of us. Don't expect us to actually have a conversation with a child or teen to find out who they really are."

St. Paul's, you have young people. More than the average church. In confirmation two weeks ago, we asked the confirmands if they felt like they were part of the church community, and they gave us a resounding "no!" Last week we continued the conversation and asked why. They are a little bit shy and reticent and have a hard time expressing their feelings, but this is what I heard through all the noise: We don't know the people in the church. We don't feel they care about us. We're kind of scared of some of them and afraid to talk to them.

St. Paul's, that's on you! How is St. Paul's when it comes to mixing the generations together? Mixing the generations can be a blockage for many churches, as it seems that we are trying to fulfill the impossible dream. Instead, churches create specific ministries for different age groups, with the hope that as long as everyone is engaged somewhere in the life of the church, everyone, especially young people, will stay connected to the church.

The reality, and the research, show that this is not working. Young people want to feel connected. They stay if they feel a sense of belonging, and they leave as soon as this feeling breaks down. The good news is that having a genuine, cross-generation, integrated church is not impossible or particularly difficult. It does require intentionality, however, as integration won't just happen. I want to suggest five simple ways to achieve this. Each idea will take some imagination and thought, but none of them requires a huge amount of extra work. Be creative!

Involve young people in Sunday services

Young people love interaction. They are not used to sitting quietly for a long period of time and merely listening. So what can you do to involve them in the course of a service? The good news is there is nothing that goes on in a typical Sunday worship service that you could not ask a teenager to help with. Think through and explore where a young person could help. Ask some to welcome

1201 Saliman Rd.
Carson City, NV 89701

PO Box 20876
Carson City, NV 89721

Church Office Hours
Monday, Wednesday, and Friday: 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

stpaulcarson@gmail.com www.stpaulslutheranfamily.com 775 882-3020

people at the door. Involve them in the music and audio/visual provision. Ask them to read the prayers or to read the Bible aloud. The key to all these is not to ask them to do it alone but to get them serving alongside the adults already in these roles. As they serve together, they make connections with one another and grow in mutual respect. However, the adult has to treat the teenager as an equal, not as a child who we need to protect or give simpler tasks to. Where there is mutual respect, appreciation and love can grow.

Serve together in mission

Taking this a step further, involve young people in whatever ways the church is trying to reach out to the community. Involve young people in planning, preparation and running events. If you want genuine generational interaction, don't get the youth group to run one part of the project, but mix them all up so they are all working with adults. We get to know each other much more quickly when we do something together. It also creates shared memories and a shared history.

Share meals together

Food is a real relationship builder so use it at every opportunity to help the generations mix. Get some young people involved with some adults to prepare the meal and to serve. Arrange the seating so that people don't just sit with people they know.

Create purposeful connections

You do need to be purposeful in helping people who wouldn't naturally mix, to get to know each other. Have an evening where a group of young people can get to know the older members of your fellowship. Plan activities that will help all generations realize that everyone has needs and it builds mutual reliance on each other and God.

The truth is that being intentional about integrating young people into our wider church family is not an optional extra. Research shows that they will walk away from the church, and possibly their faith, if they don't make genuine connections with different age groups. The great hope is that young people can inspire us to be more alive in our own faith, as they set the example to us of how to give our all to following Jesus. We just need to heed Paul's warning to Timothy (1 Timothy 4:12) that we must not join others in looking down on young people, of thinking we have all the answers, but rather that we are sharing a journey of faith together and building Jesus's church together.

Pastor Mary Lou



Servants Serving

Altar Guild for February

Vicki Hamilton, Joan Schultz, and Traci Angel

Greeters

February 4th Judy McPhail
February 11th Deanna Fine
February 18th Jay Olshen
February 25th Vera Logie

Readers

February 4th Marla Johnson
February 11th Ruth Fitzgerald
February 18th Dorothea Phelan
February 25th Ken Beaton

Live-streaming Team

Holly McPhail and Nick Cotsonis

Musicians

Dave Lingsjo, Principle Musician
Vicki Hamilton, Organist
Carol Arneson, Choir Director

Ministry Leaders

Altar Guild: Vicki Hamilton
Greeters: Ruth Fitzgerald
Readers: Judy McPhail
Counters: Mary DeFelice
Communion Assistants: Judy McPhail
Youth Acolytes: Traci Angel

Ushers are Still Needed!

The Usher Ministry is in desperate need of ushers for Sunday services.

If you are interested in volunteering for this important position, please call Dave Harrell at 775 315-4661 or email him at davidharrell93@yahoo.com.

Communion Assistants

February 4th Charlotte LaCombe
February 11th Louise Griffith
February 18th Nick Cotsonis
February 25th Jean Opperman

Counters

February 4th Judy McPhail and Nikki Rohrs
February 11th Deanna Fine and Jay Olshen
February 18th Judy McPhail and Jeanne Russell
February 25th Mary DeFelice and Greg Griffith

Acolytes

Clay Woslum and Greg Griffith

Youth Acolytes – TBA

Ushers – TBA

Coffee Guru

Jean Opperman

Ministry Leaders' E-mail

Altar Guild and Card Ministry: Vicki Hamilton
victoriahamilton9@gmail.com

Greeters: Ruth Fitzgerald
mrsrfitz17@gmail.com

Counters: Mary DeFelice
Marenang@hotmail.com

Readers: Judy McPhail
ROMAC1945@outlook.com

Ushers: Dave Harrell
davidharrell93@yahoo.com

Communion Assistants: Judy McPhail
stpaulcarson@gmail.com

Stewardship: Deanna Fine
deannajofine@gmail.com



Many thanks to Jean Opperman who stepped up to be St. Paul's Coffee Guru. She will be making coffee for us each Sunday morning.





Confirmation

Lutheran Confirmation: A Milestone in Faith

Lutheran Confirmation is a significant milestone in the life of a young Lutheran

believer. It is a rite of passage that marks the transition from childhood to adulthood within the Lutheran Church. This sacrament holds great importance as it signifies a personal commitment to the Christian faith and a deeper understanding of Lutheran teachings.

Meaning and Purpose

Confirmation is rooted in the Lutheran tradition and is often celebrated during adolescence, typically between the ages of 13 and 16. It is a time when young individuals affirm their baptismal vows and publicly declare their faith in Jesus Christ. The process involves a period of instruction, reflection, and spiritual growth, allowing confirmands to develop a personal relationship with God and the Lutheran community.

Preparation and Instruction

Before the confirmation ceremony, confirmands undergo a period of preparation and instruction. This typically involves attending confirmation classes or catechism, where they learn about the core beliefs, practices, and values of the Lutheran Church. These classes provide a comprehensive understanding of the Bible, the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, and the Apostle's Creed, among other essential teachings.

Affirmation of Faith

During the confirmation ceremony, confirmands publicly affirm their faith and commitment to the Lutheran Church. This often takes place during a special worship service, where the confirmands stand before the congregation and recite their baptismal vows. They may also participate in the sacrament of Holy Communion for the first time, symbolizing their deeper connection with Christ and the Lutheran community.

Role of Mentors and Sponsors

Throughout the confirmation process, confirmands are supported by mentors and sponsors. These individuals, often chosen from within the congregation, guide and encourage the confirmands on their faith journey. Mentors provide spiritual guidance, answer questions, and offer support during the preparation period. Sponsors, on the other hand, serve as witnesses during the confirmation ceremony, affirming the confirmand's readiness to take this important step in their faith.

Continuing the Faith Journey

Lutheran Confirmation is not the end of the faith journey but rather a significant step in a lifelong commitment to Christ. Confirmands are encouraged to continue their spiritual growth, deepen their understanding of Lutheran teachings, and actively participate in the life of the church. They are welcomed into the adult community of believers, where they can serve, worship, and contribute to the mission of the Lutheran Church.

Conclusion

Lutheran Confirmation is a meaningful and transformative experience for young Lutherans. It represents a personal commitment to the Christian faith, a deeper understanding of Lutheran teachings, and an entry into the adult community of believers. Through this sacrament, confirmands embark on a lifelong journey of faith, guided by the principles and values of the Lutheran Church.

– Anonymous

*On the Third Sunday after Epiphany,
January 21st, Corbin Boggs,
Shaylee Coleman, Destiny Wilson,
Steven Wilson, Alana Saunders,
Mya Wilson, and Kellsey Saunders were
confirmed at St. Paul's
in a ceremony officiated by
Pastor Mary Lou Petitjean.*



Photos courtesy of Steve Ranson

ASH WEDNESDAY: A LUTHERAN PERSPECTIVE

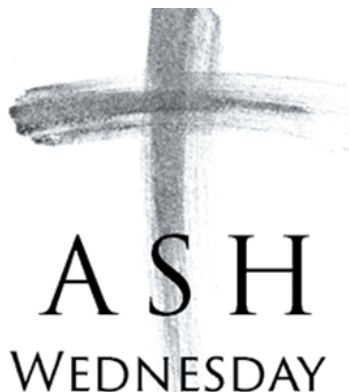
Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the season of Lent, a period of reflection and preparation for Christians leading up to Easter. While commonly associated with Roman Catholicism, Ash Wednesday holds significance for Lutherans as well. Ash Wednesday from a Lutheran perspective, considers the historical context, theological significance, and practical implications of the day.

Ash Wednesday finds its roots in the ancient Christian practice of penance and repentance. The use of ashes as a symbol of mourning and repentance can be traced back to the Old Testament, where individuals would cover themselves in ashes as a sign of sorrow and contrition. In the early church, ashes were used as a visible reminder of human mortality and the need for repentance.

From a Lutheran perspective, Ash Wednesday serves as a reminder of our human brokenness and the need for God's grace. Lutherans believe that all people are sinners in need of forgiveness, and Ash Wednesday provides an opportunity to acknowledge our sins and turn to God in repentance. The imposition of ashes on the forehead in the shape of a cross is a powerful symbol. It reminds us of our mortality, as the minister says, "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return." This reminder prompts us to reflect on the brevity of life and the importance of living in accordance with God's will. Furthermore, the cross-shaped ashes also point to the central message of the Christian faith: the redemptive work of Jesus Christ on the cross. Lutherans believe that through Christ's sacrifice, our sins are forgiven, and we are reconciled with God. Ash Wednesday, therefore, serves as a call to repentance and a reminder of the hope we have in Christ's redeeming love.

Ash Wednesday is a time for personal reflection, prayer, and self-examination. Lutherans are encouraged to examine their lives, confess their sins, and seek God's forgiveness. This introspective period allows individuals to identify areas of their lives that need transformation and renewal. During Lent, Lutherans often engage in spiritual disciplines such as fasting, prayer, and acts of service. These practices help believers draw closer to God, deepen their faith, and cultivate a spirit of humility and selflessness. Additionally, Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the Lenten season, during which Lutherans may choose to give up certain indulgences or habits as a form of self-discipline and sacrifice. This act of self-denial serves as a reminder of Christ's sacrifice and helps individuals focus on their spiritual journey.

Ash Wednesday holds a significant place in the Lutheran tradition, providing a time for reflection, repentance, and renewal. It reminds us of our mortality, our need for God's grace, and the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. As Lutherans embark on the Lenten season, they are encouraged to engage in personal reflection, spiritual disciplines, and acts of service, all with the aim of drawing closer to God and living in accordance with His will. – Anonymous





Worship services are held each Sunday at 9:00 a.m.

Our worship service is live-streamed via YouTube.

Directions for YouTube:

Copy and paste this link into your web browser:

<https://www.youtube.com/@st.paulslutheranfamily7828>



The link will take you to St. Paul's YouTube channel where you can watch the live service.

To watch recorded services, click on "Playlist" and then choose the Sunday service/video you want to watch.



WELCA Bible Study meets on the first Tuesday of the month at 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. There will be no meeting on February 6th. Instead, please join us for a special Bible Study and brunch on February 3rd.



WELCA NEWS

We are pleased to announce that Pastor Mary Lou has agreed to lead our WELCA Bible Study for Women during a brunch meeting on Saturday, February 3rd at 10:30 a.m. The meeting will be at St. Paul's.

Please join us and sign up to bring a breakfast item to share. A sign-up sheet will be posted on the WELCA bulletin board.



FIREFIGHTERS/PEACE OFFICERS

Andy Steyn, Brian Hillenbrand, Tina Sherman, Mark Dickens, John Gould, Michael Gould, and Jason Wildblood.

SERVING IN THE ARMED FORCES

Raelynn Norman (niece of Judy McPhail), Matthew Russell (nephew of Judy McPhail), Brandon Luterick, Heather Joyner (Johnson), Peter Elverum, Sarah McGee, Bryce Stimka, Olivia Lesperance, John Duffy (nephew of Sharon and Tom Gesick), and Justin Snowden.



Whoever heard of a church not having a Prayer Chain Leader? St. Paul's doesn't have one.

Why not step up and become a leader today? Please call or email the church office. Thanks!

STITCHERS meet in Friendship Hall the second and fourth Tuesday of each month from 9:00 a.m. to noon. *No experience is necessary!*



Put your love into action.

Give to a charity today!



St. Paul's Choir Rehearsal is held each Wednesday at 6:00 p.m. We usually rehearse for about an hour. So, if you like to sing and can spare some time on a Wednesday evening, please come join us. Any change in schedule will be announced. Thank you!
Carol Arneson



Many thanks to all those who donated toward the purchase of bibles for the Confirmation class. Because of your generosity, there was enough money to pay for all the bibles.



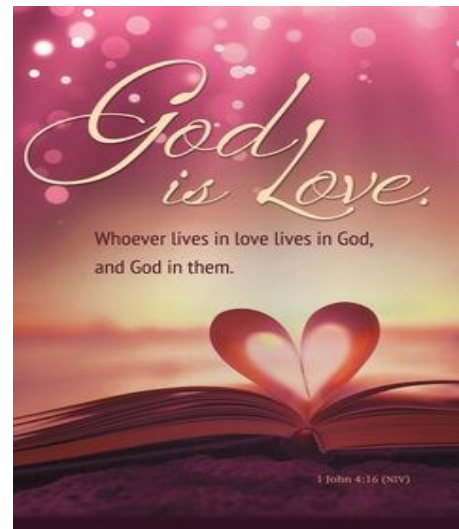
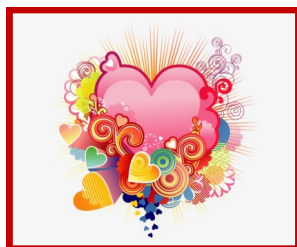
Celebrate February Birthdays

- 1 Denise Muller
- 2 Steve Danforth
- 6 Gloria Hamilton
- 6 Isabella Hamilton
- 8 Mia Hamilton
- 11 Brita Steyn
- 14 Sean Jones
- 14 Dana Luterick
- 20 Gail McComb
- 24 Jason Henkle
- 28 Lauryn Bailey
- 28 Katheryn Opperman

A February Anniversary

February 14th

Dave and Ellen Harrell



Love is friendship that has caught fire. It is quiet understanding, mutual confidence, sharing and forgiving. It is loyalty through good and bad times. It settles for less than perfection and makes allowances for human weaknesses. Ann Landers

Faith makes all things possible...love makes all things easy. Dwight L. Moody

Love has no age, no limit; and no death. John Galsworthy

Love and compassion are necessities, not luxuries. Without them humanity cannot survive. Dalai Lama

You can't blame gravity for falling in love. Albert Einstein

Unveiling the Essence of Love: A Christian Perspective

Love, a concept revered across cultures and religions, holds a unique and profound significance within the Christian faith. Rooted in biblical teachings, the Christian perspective on love transcends mere affection, extending to a divine and selfless connection that mirrors the love of God for humanity.

Agape Love - A Divine Model: At the core of Christian love lies the concept of agape, a selfless and unconditional love that reflects the nature of God. Derived from the Greek language, agape surpasses romantic or familial love, encompassing a sacrificial commitment to the well-being of others. This divine love, as exemplified by Jesus Christ, becomes the guiding principle for Christians seeking to emulate the essence of God's love in their relationships.

Love in Action - Service and Sacrifice: Christianity emphasizes the tangible expression of love through acts of service and sacrifice. The Bible teaches that true love is not merely expressed in words but in deeds. This resonates with the biblical injunction, "Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends" (John 15:13). Christians are called to embody this sacrificial love, mirroring the ultimate sacrifice of Jesus on the cross.

Marriage as a Sacred Covenant: Within the Christian framework, marriage is viewed as a sacred covenant, mirroring the relationship between Christ and the Church. Ephesians 5:25 encapsulates this perspective, urging husbands to love their wives as Christ loved the Church, giving Himself up for her. This understanding transforms marital love into a partnership of mutual respect, commitment, and selflessness.

Forgiveness - A Cornerstone of Love: The Christian perspective on love places a significant emphasis on forgiveness. Drawing inspiration from biblical teachings such as Matthew 6:14-15, which states, "For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you," Christians are encouraged to extend grace and forgiveness, recognizing the transformative power of love in healing wounded relationships.

Community and Fellowship: Love within Christianity extends beyond individual relationships to encompass the community. The Bible underscores the importance of believers coming together in love and fellowship. Galatians 5:13 states, "Serve one another humbly in love," emphasizing the communal aspect of expressing love through humble service to others.

Theological Reflection - God is Love: At the heart of the Christian perspective on love is the theological concept that God is love (1 John 4:8). This foundational belief shapes the understanding that love is not merely an attribute of God but is intrinsic to His nature. Consequently, Christians are called to embody this divine love in their interactions with others, reflecting the character of God.

In embracing the Christian perspective on love, individuals are invited to transcend societal norms and cultural expectations, aspiring to embody a love that mirrors the divine. Grounded in the teachings of the Bible, Christian love calls for selflessness, sacrifice, forgiveness, and a commitment to the well-being of others. Through the lens of Christianity, love becomes a transformative force that not only enriches individual relationships but also contributes to the broader tapestry of a loving and compassionate community. – Anonymous

*"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son,
so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.*

John 3:16





Valentine's Day is celebrated in various ways around the world. Here are some traditions and customs associated with Valentine's Day in different countries.

United States: Exchanging Valentine's Day cards, chocolates, flowers, and gifts is a common tradition. Many people also go out for romantic dinners or plan special dates.

United Kingdom: Sending Valentine's Day cards, often anonymously, is a popular tradition. It is also common to exchange small gifts and enjoy a romantic meal together.

Japan: Valentine's Day is celebrated differently in Japan. Women traditionally give chocolates to men, including friends and colleagues. There are two types of chocolates: "Giri-choco" (obligatory chocolates) for male friends and "Honmei-choco" (true feeling chocolates) for romantic interests.

South Korea: Valentine's Day is celebrated on two separate occasions. On February 14th, women give chocolates to men, and on March 14th (White Day), men reciprocate by giving gifts to women

Brazil: In Brazil, Valentine's Day is celebrated on June 12th, known as "Dia dos Namordos" (Lovers' Day). Couples exchange gifts, go out for romantic dinners, and enjoy music festivals and parties.

Denmark: Danish people celebrate Valentine's Day by exchanging pressed white flowers called "snowdrops." It is also common to send humorous poems or love notes called "gaekkebreve."

South Africa: Valentine's Day is celebrated with enthusiasm in South Africa. People wear red clothes and exchange flowers, chocolates, and gifts. It is also a popular day for marriage proposals.

Philippines: Valentine's Day is a popular day for weddings in the Philippines. Many couples choose this day to get married or renew their vows. Mass weddings are also organized in public places.

Did you Know?

The English poet Geoffrey Chaucer may have invented Valentine's Day. The medieval English poet Geoffrey Chaucer often took liberties with history, placing his poetic characters into fictitious historical contexts that he represented as real. No record exists of romantic celebrations on Valentine's Day prior to a poem Chaucer wrote around 1375. In his work "Parliament of Fowles," he links a tradition of courtly love with the celebration of St. Valentine's feast day—an association that didn't exist until after his poem received widespread attention. The poem refers to February 14 as the day birds (and humans) come together to find a mate. When Chaucer wrote, "For this was sent on Seynt Valentyne's day / Whan every foul cometh there to choose his mate," he may have invented the holiday we know today.

Love is something eternal; the aspect may change, but not the essence. Vincent van Gogh

Love has nothing to do with what you are expecting to get - only with what you are expecting to give - which is everything. Katharine Hepburn

Love doesn't make the world go 'round. Love is what makes the ride worthwhile. Franklin P. Jones

Each time you love, love as deeply as if it were forever. Audre Lorde

One word frees us of all the weight and pain of life: That word is love. Sophocles



Most of us know the tradition: on February 2, our old friend the groundhog will emerge from hibernation, come out of his den, and predict whether winter will deliver more cold weather this year. If the groundhog sees his shadow, the story goes, he will return to hibernation and cold weather will persist another few weeks. If not, warm weather is around the corner.

“Groundhog” is the common vernacular name of the ground squirrel formally known as *Marmota Monax*. This animal also goes by other names; the terms “woodchuck,” “marmot,” “land beaver,” “whistler,” and even “whistle-pig” all refer to the same creature. Whatever the name, there’s a strong belief that this little burrowing mammal predicts the weather, and a specific connection to the second day of February. This Groundhog Day tradition is celebrated in many

places in the United States and Canada, with an emphasis on tongue-in-cheek humor and ceremonious proclamations. It is best known among people whose ancestors spoke German, especially the Pennsylvania Dutch.

If you like the folklore of holidays, you may be interested to know that Groundhog Day is related to two of the other holidays: Halloween and Mayday. In his 2003 book *Groundhog Day*, folklorist Don Yoder traces the roots of Groundhog Day to the same cycle of pre-Christian festivals that gave us those two celebrations. In astronomical terms, these holidays were the cross-quarter days, those days that fall midway between a solstice and an equinox. These festivals were apparently celebrated throughout Europe by the various tribes we now refer to as Celts. Yoder believes that they influenced the sense of time of all Europe and of the European colonies in America: The seasonal turning points in the Celtic year were immensely important communal festivals in prehistoric, pre-Christian times. Of these festivals, the dates have continued to be important down to the present time. The Celtic names for the four festivals were Samhain, Imbolc, Beltaine, and Lughnasa.

For the ancient Europeans, these days were so crucial and so embedded in their cultural sense of time that when the Western European peoples were Christianized, the new Church, unable to root them out, “baptized” them into Christian holidays. May 1 became May Day, originally associated with the Virgin Mary and later a secular spring festival, with maypole, May queen, and other folkloric customs. August 1 became in Britain Lammas, or “Loaf-Mass Day,” when the farmers’ wives brought the first loaves of bread baked from the new harvest of grain to the church to be blessed. Since November 1 in the Celtic year was a day devoted to the dead, the Church made it into All Saints’ Day. But the people continued to celebrate the eve of the old holiday as Halloween, with its many harmless folkloric customs that have come all the way down to our day. February 1, extended into February 2, became Candlemas, and eventually Groundhog Day.

All of these transitional days looked to the future, looked ahead to the next season, the coming three-month period, and hence were weather-important days. Library of Congress Blog

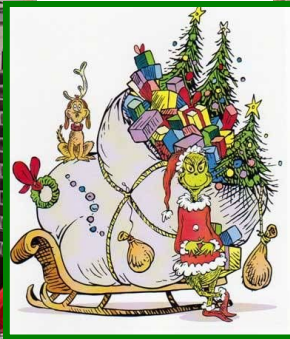
The Prognosticator of Prognosticators, Punxsutawney Phil, will once again appear at sunrise on February 2nd at Gobbler's Knob in the Pennsylvania Wilds to make his annual prediction on the 138th Groundhog Day.

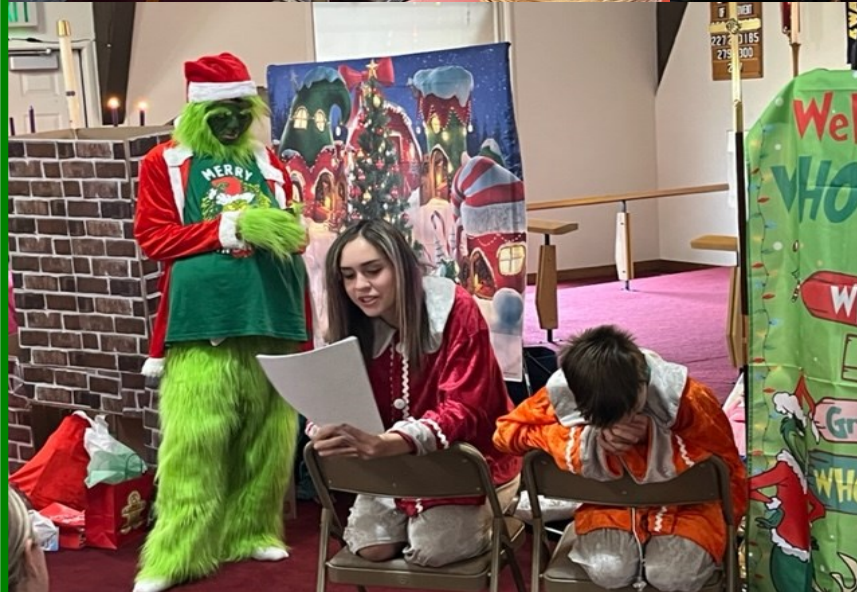


Youth NEWS AND EVENTS

All youth who are in the 6th through 12th grade are welcome to join the youth group!
 We meet the 1st and 3rd Sunday after the service.
 If you know anyone who is interested or has any questions,
 please call Traci Angel at 775 721-5495.

The Grinch finally delivered the photos from Christmas!





Every year in the middle of February, something wonderful and heartwarming happens. Tons of candy goes on clearance!



"Valentine's Day is a very important holiday. It reminds you to take down the Christmas decorations."



"These little ones are mice... These over here are hamsters... Ooh! This must be a gerbil!"



February

Sundays

Youth Group 1st and 3rd Sundays after worship
NA, 7:00 p.m.

Sunday, February 3rd

A special WELCA Bible Meeting and Brunch with
Pastor Mary Lou, 10:30 a.m.

Monday, February 19th

Presidents' Day

Church office closed

Tuesdays

Stitchers 9:00 a.m. to noon, 2nd and 4th Tuesdays
of each month

Wednesdays

Choir practice, 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday, February 14th

Ash Wednesday

Valentine's Day

Wednesday February 21st

Council Meeting, 6:00 p.m.

Thursdays

Strings Practice, 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Thursday, February, 8th

Executive Meeting, 6:00 p.m.

Friday, February 2nd

Groundhog Day



Worship services are held
every Sunday at 9:00 a.m.

This Month's Worship Schedule:

February 4th February 11th February 18th and
February 25th



Our office assistant is in the
church office
**Monday, Wednesday, and
Friday** from
9:00 a.m. to noon.

If you would like to contribute to the newsletter,
please have your submissions into the church
office by the 20th of each month unless otherwise
directed.

All worship volunteer lists, photos, and ministry
articles are due at this time as well.

Thank you!

**Are you or your group interested in booking
Friendship Hall in the coming year?
Then please come by the church office and
pick up a Facility Use Form.
Thanks!**

