

The Link

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The Raeford Presbyterian Church is committed to worshipping God, proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ, nurturing the faithful, and showing compassion for those in need.

Love That Your Sweetheart Really Needs

This is the month of “love!” I want to challenge you, as you prepare to celebrate with us the beginning of Lent on Ash Wednesday, also Valentine’s Day. We will have our Men of the Church Sweetheart Banquet for women that night, along with a sweets and baked goods auction that will help reduce our building debt. But, what is love?

The Scriptures, 1 John 4:7-19, tell us that “God is love.” There are three kinds of love, according the Greek understanding. God created all of these and they are good. However, I want to challenge you to focus on the greatest of these, God’s love, *agape* love.

First of all, there is *phileo* love, or *brotherly* love. This is the kind of love known within a family, like the love of a mother for her children, or of siblings for each other once they’re grown (LOL). This is the kind of love where a spouse can talk about his or her family, but the other spouse should just listen and not agree when it is negative. This leads to the euphemism, “blood is thicker than water.”

Another kind of love is *eros* love, or erotic love. This is the kind of love that God made to be known between a man and a woman which causes butterflies in the belly and sweat on the hands, and leads to us to be fruitful and multiply upon the earth. This is the kind of love that leads two adults to make a covenant pledge of everlasting love and commitment to one another.

The final kind of love is *agape* love. I would challenge that this love overwhelms all other kinds of love. This the love that God had for us in that, while we were yet sinners, God loved us so much that He gave His only begotten Son for us. This is unconditional love and is the love described by Paul in 1 Corinthians 13. This kind of love never ends (1 Cor. 13:8a). I want you to read the following text from 1 John 4 to your sweetheart as a Valentine’s Present, for it is better than chocolates and temporary sweets.

“Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us. By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because as he is so also are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love. We love because he first loved us. If anyone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.”

1 John 4:7-21 ESV

Dr. Fitzgerald

ANNUAL MEETING AND MEETING OF THE CORPORATION

The Annual Meeting of the Congregation and Meeting of the Corporation will be held on Wednesday, February 7, at 6:00 pm. A covered dish dinner will begin at 6:00 pm with the meeting to follow. Fried chicken will be furnished by the Presbyterian Women. Everyone is encouraged to attend.

SESSION MEETING

The session will have their Monthly Stated Meeting on Sunday, February 11, at 6:00 pm.

PRAYER MEETING

Elders, deacons, and members of the congregation are invited to meet each Tuesday morning at 7:30 am in the Russell Smith classroom for a time of prayer and reflection. And for those who cannot come on Tuesdays...we will meet on Sunday mornings at 9:15 am in the same classroom.

AMAZING GRACE

Plan to attend "Amazing Grace" on Tuesday, March 13, at UNC-Pembroke. It is a musical based on the inspiring true story behind the world's most beloved song. We have twenty tickets that have been donated to the church with tickets being distributed on a first come, first serve basis. There is no charge for the tickets; however, donations to the Wednesday Night catered meal account would be greatly appreciated. Please call the church office if you would like a ticket. We plan to go out to eat before the show. The show begins at 7:30 pm.



MEN OF THE CHURCH

The Men of the Church will have their annual "Ladies' Night" at 6:00 pm in John C. Ropp Hall. A steak dinner will be served. Tickets for ladies and non-season ticket holders may be purchased from Van Gibson, John Jordan, Johnny Smith or the church office for \$10.00. The deadline to purchase tickets is February 12. The Capital Campaign Committee is planning "Sweets for Your Sweetheart" (a baked goods auction) that evening. Come enjoy the meal and take home something sweet for your sweetheart! All proceeds from the auction will go to the building fund.



PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

The PW Council will meet on Sunday, February 25, following the morning worship service.

February Circle Meetings:

- Circle #1 – Sunday, February 4, at 4:00 pm at the church.
- Circle #2 – Tuesday, February 13, at 7:00 pm with Judy Davis.
- Circle #3 – Monday, February 5, at 2:00 pm at the church.

TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

Reminder! If anyone needs transportation to and from church events, please let us know. We want to provide that service for anyone who would like to be a part of the life of this church. You may call the church office (875-2101) or contact us through the website at raefordpres.org.

OFFICE HOURS

The church office is open from 8:30 am to 12:00 pm and from 1:00 pm to 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday. The office will close at noon the first and third Friday of each month. Please be reminded that the office is closed briefly on Monday mornings for the bank deposit to be made.

The church office will be closed on Monday, February 19, in observance of Presidents' Day.

FLOWER CALENDAR

The 2018 Flower Calendar is located on the bulletin board outside the church office. Please sign up if you wish to place flowers in the sanctuary on a particular Sunday.

If you are hospitalized, seriously ill, or having surgery, please notify the church office at 875-2101 or imaxwell@raefordpres.org. Your church wants to minister to you whenever you are ill. We can do that only if you or your family informs us of your needs. Thank you for your calls and e-mail.

PRAYER CONCERNS

Wayne Bartrug, Bobby Britt, Barbara Burnside, Bobby Cox, Charlie Davis, Sue Davis, Van Gibson, Savitri Jattan, Julian Johnson, Susan McColl, Virginia McColl, Jessica McGougan, Willie McNeill, Kay Norris, Butch Posey, Becky Smith, Jean Stephenson, Ralph Tindall, our missionaries: Dan and Elizabeth Turk; and members of the United States Armed Forces.

Door Duty: Frank Inman, John A. Hendrix, Lynn Hendrix, Gary Hendrix

Nursery Duty: Wayne and Jodi Willis; Glenda Lester, L.S. Brock and Lynn Brock; Kevin and Lisa Davis, Jay and Jill Johnson

February Meetings

Christian Education
Thursday, February 1, 5:00 p.m.

Music & Worship
Monday, February 5, 5:30 p.m.

Spiritual Dev. & Congregational Care
Tuesday, February 6, 5:30 p.m.

Long Range Planning
Tuesday, February 6, 5:30 p.m.

Administration & Finance
Tuesday, February 6, 7:00 p.m.

Session Meeting
Sunday, February 11, 6:00 p.m.

PW Council
Sunday, February 25, following worship

MUSIC NOTES

“For God so LOVED the world.....”

One thing many of us remember about my father was that he told just about everyone he met that he loved them. He had a way of shaking your hand....or giving you a hug or maybe a kiss on the cheek!.....looking you in the eye, and making you feel that you were the most important person in the world in that moment. What a wonderful gift he had for people! It’s a very special thing to know you are loved.

Valentine’s Day is fast approaching as I write this. We will acknowledge those we love with cards and candy and gifts and those three little words “I love you”. This can not compare with the love God shows for us, the love He showed us in the supreme gift of Jesus. There are so many songs and hymns inspired by God’s love and Jesus’ sacrificial love for us: “Love Divine, All Loves Excelling”, “What Wondrous Love Is This?”, “O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go”, and my favorite, “Jesus Loves Me”.

We love because He first loved us.....even though we don’t deserve it. Let’s make a point this month to take someone’s hand, look them in the eye, and tell them we love them. Happy Valentine’s Day! I love you!



2018 Pledges:

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|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Rec’d. in January | \$14,943.00 |
| Needed Monthly | \$21,184.00 |
| Required to date | \$21,184.00 |
| Received to date | \$14,943.00 |
| Shortage | \$6,241.00 |

The *Will of God*
will never
take you where the
Grace of God will not
protect you.

