

February is a month when "Love" is traditionally celebrated by all, but the love that is touted is romantic love. When we talk about love at FUMC, we're talking about the love that Jesus mentioned when asked what was the greatest commandment. *Matthew 22:37-39* 37 *Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind."* 38 *This is the first and greatest commandment.* 39 *And the second is like it: "Love your neighbor as yourself."*

I had a friend who didn't want a pet in her family because she didn't want to waste love on it, as if a person had a finite amount of love to give. But love is like a magic penny, as the song goes, or as I like to put it, a magic bowl of *m&m's*, filled to the brim, that never emptied no matter how much you shared them and gave them away. As the song

## Love at FUMC

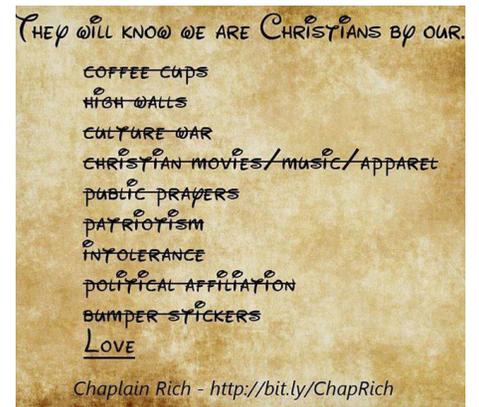
in *The Sound of Music* states, love isn't love until you give it away.

Love that we see at church is an action verb. Many in our congregation send cards – thank you, get well and condolence – which is an act of love. Those of you who pray on Tuesday morning as a group, or pray daily for individual congregation members and their families and friends who have special needs and cares are acting in love. Some visit the sick and bring a ray of sunshine into a dreary day of illness or hospitalization. Some do unseen tasks in the church that are done in love for the benefit of all who attend. When someone new comes to a church service, the welcome and inclusion in the coffee hour and introductions to other church family members, show unconditional love to the newcomer. To show love does not require a 'loving' feeling. Many acts of love

are hard to do, take time and physical labor and perhaps frustrating circumstances. Those helping with the community food bank or clothing closet spend hours of hard work, but a reward is found in seeing a teenager or child who has found a special blouse or shirt, or a mother who

finds some special item for her infant or the beauty of fresh and perhaps unusual fruits and vegetables available to Porterville residents in the Community Food Bank. If you are asked to help with the elements of communion some Sunday morning, you will find a great love for each 'family' member that comes forward.

Don't hoard your love, give it away!



Elizabeth Carper preparing the Communion Table

## Mark Your Calendar

### February

- Feb 10 - Ash Wednesday
- Feb 11 - UMW meeting
- Feb 13 - Training GAUMC
- Feb 14 - Valentine Lunch
- Feb 18 - Community Food Bank
- Feb 25 - Clothes Closet

### March

- Mar 5 - Breakfast/Workday



### Pastor's Corner

The season of Lent will soon be upon us. You might be asking, "What is Lent?" or "How is it observed?"

Even for early Christians, it became the custom that before the Easter celebration there should be a forty-day season of spiritual preparation while focusing on Christ's sacrifice on the cross for all who believe in him. I invite you, therefore, to observe a holy Lent: by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's Holy Word.

Below are some ideas for restrictions/sacrifices, and beneficial additions to your Lenten disciplines. Remember that Lent is about spiritual transformation, and is basically a spiritual training period. Through our Lenten disciplines and prayer, we become more like Jesus and grow closer to God. One way we focus on Christ, and not on the world, is to make sacrifices

during Lent. For instance, watching television is not sinful in itself, but since most people enjoy it, giving it up for 40 days is a sacrifice.

Suggestions you could choose from:

Restrictions and Sacrifices (i.e. "giving up" or limiting)

Caffeine

Computer Use

Drinking Alcohol

Eating Out

Energy Use (less gasoline, electricity, etc.)

Gossiping

Meat

Smoking

Swearing

Sweets

Television

Using Credit Cards

Thing we could do more of:

Time in prayer

Being generous with our money to help others

Being generous with our time to help others (volunteering)

We could also read more scripture, which I have made easy for you by encouraging everyone to follow along on the daily reading schedule. If you keep up, you will finish

the bible in one year. We all know how New Year's resolutions go, and perhaps you started out with good intentions last month, but have already fallen behind. Don't feel bad. Despite my best efforts, I have had days where I didn't do my daily reading. However, you can do like me and double up on days in order to catch up. It's OK. I have also found that I prefer the audio versions of the Bible for my daily readings. If you feel that may help, try [www.oneyearbibleonline.com](http://www.oneyearbibleonline.com) or [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com) (the NIV version is also audible), or you can purchase (like I did) an audio bible such as the NKJV Voice Only Audio Bible at [www.audible.com](http://www.audible.com). In other words, find what works for you. If you can do this through the Lenten season until Easter, you just might find you want to stick with it through the rest of the year.

Now that you know what Lent is, I pray that God bless your spiritual journey from February 10 (Ash Wednesday) until March 24 (Holy Thursday). Do your best!

-Pastor James S. Woffinden



### Keep in touch

Like us on Facebook! Comment on the information there - [facebook.com/PortervilleFUMC](https://www.facebook.com/PortervilleFUMC)

Go to our Website to see if anything new has been added - [www.portervillefirstunitedmethodistchurch.com](http://www.portervillefirstunitedmethodistchurch.com)

Send a card each week to someone in your church family; a card to someone to whom you're thankful, a get well card, a card of appreciation, a happy birthday card or a 'thinking of you' card.

**"The mission of the church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the Porterville area, even the world."**

## Wednesday night Bible study schedule for February

Feb. 10 - Wayne & Ann White

Feb. 17 - Dave & Gayle Hammelman

Feb. 24 - Del & Joan Pharis

Mar. 2 - Marilyn Schaffer



### Valentine Party and lunch

Food, fun, family and fortune -- Sunday, February 14, right after the church service, the congregation will have a Valentine Lunch/Party in the social hall and play games, win prizes and have lots of fun. Bring a friend to church so he/she can participate in the love shared by all. There is no cost for the lunch.

### Ash Wednesday

On Wednesday, February 10, you can come to the church anytime from 9 am - 2 pm and celebrate Ash Wednesday. The pastor is available to put the ashes on your forehead, say a prayer, and administer communion also, if you so desire. The ashes are from the burning of last year's Palm Sunday palms. Pastor James took a palm branch home and burned it, saved the ashes for this year's Lenten season. The ashes are mixed with olive oil to make a paste. You may keep the ashes on for the day or as long as you want. This is an outward sign that shows who we are as Christians. See the Pastor's Corner for more information on Lent.



## The Church in action

### Ongoing weekly activities

#### Sunday

9:30 am - Adult Bible Study

11:00 am - Sunday Worship

11:15 am - Children's Sun. Sch.

#### Tuesday

10:00 am - Morning Watch

6:00 pm - Pickle Ball

#### Wednesday

9:00 am - Crafts

6:00 pm - Handbell Choir

7:00 pm - Chancel Choir

7:30 pm - Bible Study

### Vacation Bible School

Success! A date, a leader and a program has been decided on for this summer's VBS. Melody Burkhart and Pastor James will be the main leaders, but there are many additional leaders still needed: Outdoor games; Bible Story; Food; Pictures; Publicity. Plan your vacations for before or after June 27 to July 2. The exciting program will be *EGYPT, Joseph's Journey from prison to palace*. The times will be Monday through Friday, 4 pm - 7 pm. On Saturday, July 2, all the children will go to the Municipal swimming pool for a swim party, 9:30 am - 11:30 am, thanks to Bill White. Invite anyone with children to come and participate.



## UM Women

United Methodist Women are having an information sharing, brain storming and problem solving meeting on Thursday, February 1, at noon in the Ken Miller Room. Future direction of the group is the topic of the day, and if you have any ideas please come that day to share them, or tell one of the women in the group.

In January, UMW gave donations of \$500 to the following organizations: PADS (Porterville Adult Care), Helping Hands of Porterville, PACC (Porterville Area Coordinating Council), Family Crisis Center, Boys and Girls Club of Porterville, Red Bird Mission and the First United Methodist Church. They also gave a bonus to Gary, Melissa, Donita, Paulette and Pastor James, the church staff. These donations were the result of the success of the Christmas Bazaar held in December and they would like to thank the congregation for their generous help and support for this event.

The church family is invited to work on crafts for the next year's bazaar in their homes, as the Wednesday morning craft activity has been suspended for a month or two.

### Powering the business of MINISTRY

An opportunity is coming for support training for members of Finance, Trustee, SPRC committees as well as Lay Leaders and members of MAC. Central Valley District DCOM is presenting this training on Saturday, February 13, at Grand Ave. UMC from 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM. Save this date, and plan to get some new information and help regarding your ministry. Check with Pastor James about registering.



### Lenten Breakfast/Workday

On Saturday, March 5, a great breakfast will be served: pancakes, egg casserole (Ann White specialty,) sausages, fruit, coffee and tea. Makes you hungry just reading this. After devotions, the group will choose different tasks to work on for general clean up, indoors and outdoors. There is sure to be a task just right for you, as you choose what you are capable of doing.

### Church Humor

One Sunday in a Midwest City, a young child was "acting up" during the morning worship hour. The parents did their best to maintain some sense of order in the pew but were losing the battle. Finally, the father picked the little fellow up and walked sternly up the aisle on his way out. Just before reaching the safety of the foyer, the little one called loudly to the congregation, "Pray for me! Pray for me!"

### Church Humor

One particular four-year old prayed, "And forgive us our trash baskets as we forgive those who put trash in our baskets."

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A Sunday School teacher asked her little children, as they were on the way to church service, "And why is it necessary to be quiet in church?" One bright little girl replied, "Because people are sleeping."

### Did you know....

... there were more than 40 in the choir for Dean Semple's Celebration of Life? The chancel choir was joined by SVAE members and musicians in Porterville to honor the Semple family and in remembrance of Dean's musical gift to Porterville, the valley and FUMC.

... Paul Young's cello concert was dedicated to the memory of Melba Rauber and Dean Semple? It was a terrific, well attended concert with additional musicians; a violinist, double bassist and pianist for duets with Paul.

... there is a leak in the sanctuary? We were so thankful for the rain on Sunday, that we accepted the gift of water in the center aisle by placing a container to catch the errant drops.

### February Birthdays

- 1 - Emma Burkhart  
Wyatt Burkhart
- 4 - Jennifer Tarin
- 14 - Jonathon Collins
- 17 - Sharon Fisk
- 18 - Barbetta Nairn
- 19 - Susana Leach
- 23 - Samuel Ho
- 26 - Gloria Macomber  
Marilyn Schaffer  
Beverly Farquharson
- 28 - Deborah Hutchinson

### Pickleball? Sweet sport with a sour name!

Come play Pickleball with your church friends on Tuesday nights at 6 pm and get in shape. What is Pickleball you ask? It is a fun sport that combines many elements of tennis, badminton and ping-pong, played indoors or outdoors on a badminton-sized court and a slightly modified tennis net. The ball is not green or pickle shaped, but the game is played with a paddle and a plastic ball (not unlike a wiffleball). To find out more, go to <http://www.usapa.org/what-is-pickleball/> on the internet, or better yet, come to the Fellowship Hall on Tuesday nights.



*Guess Who? Adam Garrett helps with last month's Community Food Bank*

# February Daily Scriptures

## February 3

Exodus 17:8-19:15  
Matthew 22:34-23:12  
Psalm 27:7-14  
Proverbs 6:27-35

## February 4

Exodus 19:16-21:21  
Matthew 23:13-39  
Psalm 28:1-9  
Proverbs 7:1-5

## February 5

Exodus 21:22-23:13  
Matthew 24:1-28  
Psalm 29:1-11  
Proverbs 7:6-23

## February 6

Exodus 23:14-25:40  
Matthew 24:29-51  
Psalm 30:1-12  
Proverbs 7:24-27

## February 7

Exodus 26:1-27:21  
Matthew 25:1-30  
Psalm 31:1-8  
Proverbs 8:1-11

## February 8

Exodus 28:1-43  
Matthew 25:31-26:13  
Psalm 31:9-18  
Proverbs 8:12-13

## February 9

Exodus 29:1-30:10  
Matthew 26:14-46  
Psalm 31:19-24  
Proverbs 8:14-26

## February 10

Exodus 30:11-31:18  
Matthew 26:47-68  
Psalm 32:1-11  
Proverbs 8:27-32

## February 11

Exodus 32:1-33:23  
Matthew 26:69-27:14  
Psalm 33:1-11  
Proverbs 8:33-36

## February 12

Exodus 34:1-35:9  
Matthew 27:15-31  
Psalm 33:12-22  
Proverbs 9:1-6

## February 13

Exodus 35:10-36:38  
Matthew 27:32-66  
Psalm 34:1-10  
Proverbs 9:7-8

## February 14

Exodus 37:1-38:31  
Matthew 28:1-20  
Psalm 34:11-22  
Proverbs 9:9-10

## February 15

Exodus 39:1-40:38  
Mark 1:1-28  
Psalm 35:1-16  
Proverbs 9:11-12

## February 16

Leviticus 1:1-3:17  
Mark 1:29-2:12  
Psalm 35:17-28  
Proverbs 9:13-18

## February 17

Leviticus 4:1-5:19  
Mark 2:13-3:6  
Psalm 36:1-12  
Proverbs 10:1-2

## February 18

Leviticus 6:1-7:27  
Mark 3:7-30  
Psalm 37:1-11  
Proverbs 10:3-4

## February 19

Leviticus 7:28-9:6  
Mark 3:31-4:25  
Psalm 37:12-29  
Proverbs 10:5

## February 20

Leviticus 9:7-10:20  
Mark 4:26-5:20  
Psalm 37:30-40  
Proverbs 10:6-7

## February 21

Leviticus 11:1-12:8  
Mark 5:21-43  
Psalm 38:1-22  
Proverbs 10:8-9

## February 22

Leviticus 13:1-59  
Mark 6:1-29  
Psalm 39:1-13  
Proverbs 10:10

## February 23

Leviticus 14:1-57  
Mark 6:30-56  
Psalm 40:1-10  
Proverbs 10:11-12

## February 24

Leviticus 15:1-16:28  
Mark 7:1-23  
Psalm 40:11-17  
Proverbs 10:13-14

## February 25

Leviticus 16:29-18:30  
Mark 7:24-8:10  
Psalm 41:1-13  
Proverbs 10:15-16

## February 26

Leviticus 19:1-20:21  
Mark 8:11-38  
Psalm 42:1-11  
Proverbs 10:17

## February 27

Leviticus 20:22-22:16  
Mark 9:1-29  
Psalm 43:1-5  
Proverbs 10:18

## February 28

Leviticus 22:17-23:44  
Mark 9:30-10:12  
Psalm 44:1-8  
Proverbs 10:19

## February 29

Your choice today!

## March 1

Leviticus 24:1-25:46  
Mark 10:13-31  
Psalm 44:9-26  
Proverbs 10:20-21

## March 2

Leviticus 25:47-27:13  
Mark 10:32-52  
Psalm 45:1-17  
Proverbs 10:22

## March 3

Leviticus 27:14-  
Numbers 1:54  
Mark 11:1-26  
Psalm 46:1-11  
Proverbs 10:23