

THE CHURCH FAMILY

Presenting Everyone Complete in Christ

FROM YOUR PASTOR'S DESK

Valentine's Day is just around the corner, the day where love takes center stage! The Greeting Card Association reports that **145 million** Valentine's Day cards are given in the USA! That's a whole lotta love being shared!

The holiday is named after a 3rd Century priest who ministered to the persecuted Christians in Rome and then was martyred himself for his Christian faith. In the days since Valentine's death his name has become synonymous with love and romance.

Did you know the Bible celebrates romantic love? In Genesis 29 we find an epic love story. In this account of love, deception and betrayal we meet a man named Jacob who falls in love with a girl named Rachel. He asks for her hand in marriage and then offers to work for her father to earn the right to have her as his wife. Listen to this beautiful summary of the power of love: "*So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed to him but a few days because of the love he had for her.*" Genesis 29:20.

The truth of the matter is that love costs something. For Jacob, his love for Rachel cost him seven years of time and labor. For Valentine, his love for Jesus and for fellow believers cost him his life. This reminds us that love can be freely given, but it is not free.

Jesus is the ultimate example of the costly nature of love. John describes this when he writes: "*This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters.*" I John 3:16 (NIV) For Jesus, love came at the cost of bearing our sins in his body on the cross. (I Peter 2:24)

Romance is wonderful, feelings are important, but ultimately love is about sacrifice. If you truly love someone it will cost you something- yourself. True love is looking past your needs to the needs of others. Philippians 2:3-4 gives us this challenge: "*Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.*"

This may not make it into a Valentine's Card, but here is the secret of love: true love is costly, true love is work, true love requires sacrifice and effort, but true love "bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things." I Corinthians 13:7 (ESV)

Because of His sacrifice, know you are loved on February 14 and every other day of the year!

Steve

THEY'RE STILL NEW...

by Pastor Thad

If you're like me, then it is about this time of year that the newness of those resolutions has worn off, and the habit has yet to stick. This is a perfect time to remember that God's "mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning." (Lamentations 3:22-23) And so is the aptly titled devotion from Paul Tripp, "New Morning Mercies" that has been such a source of daily encouragement and renewal in His grace. Another format that has worked well in the past is from "The Bible Project" (thebibleproject.com) and their Read Scripture App. With integrated video and flexible reading schedules, this app helps keep readers on track. And if you need more of a personal touch, please reach out with questions. Or just email me (thad@fpcstanley.org) and we can keep each other accountable until its time to start anew, with new mercies for each new day...

YOU ARE INVITED...

MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THESE 2 SPECIAL EVENTS!



On **Sunday, February 17**, the **Installation Service for Pastor Thad Davis** will be included as part of our morning worship. Following the worship service, we will have a **covered dish lunch** to celebrate! Bring food to Founders Hall kitchen before worship. Make plans to be here in support of Pastor Thad and his new journey at FPC.

Have you heard the news? **Jimmie Mitchell is retiring!** We will have a **Celebration Lunch** on **Sunday, March 17**, following the morning worship service. We hope you can join us as we celebrate Jimmie and what he has meant to FPC all these years! The **lunch will be catered** so we must have an accurate headcount. You will be receiving an invitation letter along with an RSVP card in the next couple of days. Please place your completed RSVP card in the designated box at the new information center in the main hallway. **If you want to attend, we must have your RSVP no later than Sunday, March 3!**



PICTORIAL DIRECTORY SIGN-UPS

Sign-ups are underway for photo sittings for our new pictorial directory. We want to be sure all of our families are included in the directory. Stop by the bulletin board in the church office hallway and pick a time for your family to be photographed. We have times available during the week of February 18 - 23. Although you will have the option to purchase pictures, there will NOT be any pressure to make a purchase.



YOUTH NEWS



Even when it's cold, being ready to bless those in our community is one way of loving our neighbor. So please consider helping out with a Winter Blessing Bag, either by donating the requested items, packing the bags, or handing them out to someone in need. Stop by the youth bulletin board (across from Thad's office) on Sunday for more information. You will find tags for specific quantities and items. You can take a tag and purchase the item as described. Then return your item(s) to the designated bin just inside of Pastor Thad's office. The deadline to turn in your donations will be Sunday, February 24.

CHALLENGE TO MEN!

During the 40 days of Lent we are issuing to the men of our church a 40 DAY CHALLENGE TO BIBLICAL MANHOOD. This commitment will include a daily reading and meeting together for breakfast, discussion and prayer every other Wednesday morning at 6:30am starting March 6. Details on how to sign up will be coming soon. Please pray about taking this step of growth in your Christian walk.

MAN DAY will be SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 16!



All men are encouraged to come out and help. After our workday is complete, we will return to the church for lunch!

Contact Pastor Steve if you are available to volunteer or have a potential project!



SOAR NEWS

Are you interested in playing **Co-ed softball**? As we check out the options in the local area, we want to know if we have enough interested participants to fill a team. Players must be at least age 15 to play. If you would like to play, please sign up as soon as possible on the SOAR bulletin board in the main hallway. This does not commit you to playing. It just means once we have additional information, we will contact you to advise if we will have a team or not along with any other details we have. If you have any questions, you may contact our SOAR Director Lisa Revels at lisa@fpctanley.org.



Did you know we have an **Adult Recreational volleyball** night? Anyone age 16 and up is invited to come out and play! The games are played in our gym on Thursdays from 7:00 - 9:00 pm. You don't have to make any type of commitment. Just show up when it works in your schedule. You can come early or come late to get in on a pick-up game or two.

WITH LOVING THANKS

The Abernathy family would like to thank you, our church family, for your loving support during these trying last few months. Your prayers, many messages, and acts of service for us have truly humbled our hearts. You have shown us so much love, and we will always treasure these memories forever. Pop was very special to us, and we will miss him. Thank you again for helping us through this difficult time in our lives. We love you.

Brian, Anne, Josh, Becca, Seth, Chelsea, and the kids

We want to thank all of you for the cards, calls and prayers for us when my sister passed away and for the calls, cards and especially the prayers when we had our heart episodes. It is great to have so many people that care for you.

*With love,
Tom and Jerry Barton*

P.S. Tell my Sunday School Class to calm down...I will be back soon with cakes and cookies.

WITH OUR CHURCH FAMILY

Christian sympathies are extended to **Jerry and Janet Ratchford** in the death of Janet's brother. **Terry Trotter**, from Cherryville, lost his battle with liver cancer on January 28 at the age of 66.

Lynn Holcomb is under Hospice care at Caromont Regional. Please keep Ann and their family in your prayers during this difficult time.

Heather Ormsby is home recovering following outpatient surgery on February 5.

Congratulations to **Chris and Sallie McAllister** on the birth of their 2nd child. **Leith Davis** was born February 5. Leith's big brother is **Rhys**. Proud grandparents are **Tommy and Janice Barton** and **Tracy and Phyllis Withers**. **Tom and Jerry Barton** and **Ann R. Smith** are the equally proud great-grandparents.



Our church family **mailboxes** have now been updated for the new year. If you are a Sunday School teacher, Care Group leader, elder, deacon, committee chair, circle leader or staff member you should have a mailbox. If you are supposed to have a mailbox and do not, contact Sandra in the office. Please be sure to check your mailbox each week to collect your correspondence.

Reminders:

- ◇ The staffs' mailboxes are located on the top 2 rows.
- ◇ Names are listed below the mailboxes. Be sure to place mail in the box **ABOVE** the name.



WITH OUR MISSIONARY FAMILY

Kevin and Alisa Bentley serve with **Cru** in the **Raleigh** area. They ask for prayer as Alisa is involved in starting a Women's Leadership Initiative. She says it has been one of the highlights of her ministry to date. The Bentleys are talking about helping Cru City expand to other parts of the world as they have done in Prague, Czech Republic. Please pray for Kevin as he seeks the Lord for next steps in mobilizing people from the USA to go!

Steve and Rita Williams serve with **Mission to the World** in **New Zealand**. They have a trip this month to the North Island of New Zealand. Please pray that they will have the ability to listen and offer encouragement to the Grace Church pastors and wives. In March, Steve travels to Australia, Austria and Spain to minister to missionaries as he participates in the MTW Global Care Summit.

Birthdays to Celebrate in February

16 Jeremy Burrell
Lee Henderson
Brooklynn Stewart
Jake Teague

17 Will Robinson

18 Andrew Deese

19 Clairra Childers
Alice Jessen
Max Rust

20 Jared Hamrick
Matt Ormsby

21 Tamara Burrell
Alana Gibson
Kaitlyn Mesimer



23 Julie Black

24 Anita Chambers

25 Madeline Drenth
Janet Redding

26 Steve Jessen

27 Mike Kelly

28 Kelsey Smith

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E-mail: info@fpcstanley.org • Website: www.fpcstanley.org
Pastor Steve Jessen • Assistant Pastor Thad Davis
Sunday School 9:00 AM • Worship 10:15 AM



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