Outreach Center Network News Letter

February 2016

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### A Valentine Devotion

Do you remember giving and getting Valentine cards? Do you still give them?

On February 14 many people will go out of their way to show and express their love. This is nice, but is love just cards, candy and flowers? Is love just an emotion or romance?

In fact many people do not like Valentine’s Day because it brings to mind and heart the hurt and pain of a broken relationship or marriage. Others don’t like the day because they never have been married and feel pushed out as though Valentine’s Day is only a day for couples.

Here is a twist everyone can get. Whether married or divorced, single with friends or alone everyone knows what a good friendship is or should be. Now with this in mind, isn’t this a perfect picture of what our God wants to have with us; a great friendship? And here is another twist. Pretty much everyone can think of a married couple who have or had the most wonderful, perfect friendship, a loving relationship, right? Now with this in mind, did you know that the Bible speaks of Jesus as the husband and the church, followers of him, are the wife?

In Ephesians 5:25-27 it states that a husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. It then mentions three ways Christ loved the church:

 1. He gave himself for her.

 2. He made her holy and complete, or whole.

 3. He presents her proudly as his bride.

This type of love is not based in the emotions but in the will. God chose to help us. God determined to save us. On the basis of this resolve of his will, God planned our salvation. He thought through, worked out, developed how he would carry out his purpose. I doubt emotions entered in at all. In fact, because of our sin, the emotion God had toward us was anger. But he loved us. He loved us with a love that started with his will, his purpose, his determination. His love then moved into action, in that his intellect developed a plan and carried it out.

Now that we are forgiven in Christ, God is joyful and happy over our being in his family.

 This is the love God presents and provides to us in Christ Jesus. This is the love God wants us to have in our marriages and friendships. It is a love that begins with a decision to help, support and better the other. It then moves to the intellect, bringing forth the ideas of how this can be carried out.

Lastly, the emotion or feeling of love is there. If the feeling is not there, all is not lost. Love is not gone. The emotion may not be there, but love‑‑Godly love‑‑continues to give, even as Jesus gave himself for the Church.

On February 14, do something nice for your sweetheart or for a friend. Just remember that romance is not the beginning or ending of love, real love, God's kind of love.

### This Month’s Focus

The past few months we have considered how a center was established with five core values. A core value is something absolutely necessary to survive. For human life some core values are to eat food, drink water and breathe.

We have looked at the first two core values: “show human care and compassion” and

“Keep every promise you make”.

This month we will look at the third core value:

“Develop leaders who develop leaders”.

At first this core value might seem out of place or off the subject. In actuality however, it is necessary for a center to maintain and/or grow. Why? There are several reasons.

First, you may be blind and be a leader at your center, or your center does have a good leader who is blind. If so, great. Thank the Lord! What will the center do if the blind leader becomes sick, or dies, or moves away, or simply needs a break? Who will step in and lead?

Second, Blind people know where other blind people are. They also know many skills, resources and adaptive methods to live with confidence while being blind. To reach others we must enlist and involve many at the centers.

Last, there are not many leaders among people who are blind. Leadership doesn’t just come about. It is taught and developed. Schooling can be a challenge when one has sight but even harder when blind. So why shouldn’t a center develop leaders? No reason at all.

Don’t know where to start, what to do? This ministry will be glad to help.

### Notes from Centers

Annette wrote about their Blind ministry at Resurrection Lutheran Church in Cary North Carolina

It has become a very active ministry. We usually have between 30 and 40 guests and lots of volunteers since most of them need transportation. Everyone who is involved loves this ministry and gives of their time so generously.
Each month, when I know how many will be attending I at first panic and wonder if we have enough drivers. But God is good and always provides! I never had to turn anyone away.

About the Wausau Wisconsin outreach center;

It was in 2001 that Wausau's Josh Swatosh, blind and wheelchair bound, contacted Dave Andrus at Lutheran Blind Missions in Missouri.

Later that year, aided with the help of additional church volunteers, the Wausau Christian Ministry to the Blind held its first gathering.

Now in its 14th year, the outreach ministry continues providing regular luncheon meals, musical entertainment, guest speakers, an inspirational message and various other support to the visually impaired in the area.

"Blind and visually impaired people generally have a limited means of transportation which can leave them feeling isolated, lonely and disconnected from society," said Pastor Pegorsch, who continues as the group's spiritual adviser. "Our ministry brings them together, connecting them with one another and addressing their various needs, including spiritual. Our guest speakers provide valuable information or resources to help them."

Although blind from birth, Sharon enjoys bringing her enthusiasm, laughter, and knitting to the gatherings. "I don't get out as much as I used to," she admitted. "But I feel like I shine when I'm at the Trinity luncheons. I always enjoy spending time with friends I've made there."

Virginia, herself visually impaired, serves as director of the blind ministry. "Being involved with the ministry at Trinity keeps me connected with other people who face the same challenges I do," said Virginia. "It's helpful knowing others have similar struggles."

According to government statistics, there are over 14 million blind or visually impaired people in the U.S. On average about 4 percent of a city's population has some degree of sight loss. "I wish we could reach more of the visually impaired in our community," said Pegorsch. "I know we could help them in some way."

Sadonna wrote from Flint MI

a member of our SMTW group has been calling Prestine (who was near death) every few days to give uplifting messages from the Scriptures & I know this has been a real plus for them. She sends cards as well as calling on all of us with Bible verses. Denise is herself a person with diminishing sight, but she is dedicated to call not only our group, but the people of our congregation with words of cheer & greetings on birthdays & anniversaries. For a tiny gal as she is of not even 5' feet in height, she sends a great note of God's love with each call.

### Trivia Part Two

Last month and this month we are providing two trivia questionnaires of ten questions. You might want to use this at the outreach center gathering. This month are Presidents and the Bible.

20th Century Presidents

1. Which president graduated from the Naval Academy?

Jimmy Carter

2. Who was the first Baby Boomer president?

Bill Clinton, who was born August 19, 1946.

3. Which president was born and lived in Independence, MO?

Harry Truman

4. Which president was married, divorced, and remarried?

Ronald Reagan

5. Which president had a son who from playing tennis got an infected blister and died from the infection?

Calvin Coolidge

6. Which president had a pet in the Whitehouse by the name of “Checkers?”

Richard Nixon

7. Which president graduated from Yale with a masters’ in business?

George W. Bush

8. Which president upon graduating from college in Michigan was drafted by the Green Bay Packers to play center?

Gerald Ford

9. Which president had a wife who planted wildflowers, including the blue bonnet throughout their home state?

Lyndon Baines Johnson

10. Which president had a bad back and wore a back brace?

John F. Kennedy

From The Bible

1. How many humans were on the ark with all the animals?

Eight people: Noah, his wife, his three sons and their wives

Genesis 7:13

2. How many children did Abraham have?

Two boys: Ishmael and Isaac Genesis 21:8-9

3. To whom did God give the tablets of stone with the Ten Commandments written on them?

Moses Exodus 24:12

4. How many stones did David take with him when he faced Goliath?

Five smooth stones 1 Samuel 17:40

5. What type of wood was used to line the inside of the temple Solomon built?

Cedar from Lebanon 1 Kings 6:14-15

6. Who was the king of Babylon when Daniel was thrown in the lion’s den?

King Darius Daniel 6:25

7. To what city did God want Jonah to go and preach, and when he refused led to his being swallowed by a great fish?

Nineveh Jonah 1:2

8. In what town did Jesus grow up?

Nazareth Luke 2:39-40

9. When Jesus was walking on the water, which disciple got out of the boat and started walking to him?

Peter Matthew 14:29

10. In Revelation 2:10, what does Jesus promise that he will give us if we are faithful even to the point of death?

A crown of life

### Final Thoughts

In upcoming issues we can and will look at many of the same topics as well as others. If you have questions, thoughts or suggestions, please post them on the blind ministry email list.

Pastor Dave