



Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors.

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THE PINE NEEDLE – FEBRUARY 2022

A Note from the Pastor

As we approach Valentine's Day, you can't help but be bombarded with messages about a "crazy little thing called love." We're told that "love is an open door," "love changes everything," and that "all we need is love." People spend their lives "looking for love in all the wrong places" and will even settle for a "bad romance." We're told to buy candy hearts, chocolates or roses "in the name of love." It seems that as a whole we are "addicted to love." But, "The trouble with love" is that none of us this has anything to do with love. Might I suggest that when you've had enough of "silly little love songs," you give Bernard of Clairvaux a look?

Unless you spend a lot of time scouring Church History or reading books on spiritual formation, you probably don't recognize Bernard's name. Bernard is one of the "forgotten" figures of church history. He was a French monk and one of the most influential Church leaders of his era (early 12th century). He was considered by some of his contemporaries to be "the holiest person who ever lived." He was known for his eloquent sermons and his disciplined commitment to spiritual disciplines.

In the midst of "seasons of love," Bernard offers us a needed correction. Bernard reminds us that we were created not to fall in love with each other, but rather to fall in love with God. In his book "*On the Love of God*," Bernard writes of four degrees of love.

First, we love ourselves for our own sake; since we are unspiritual and of the flesh we cannot have an interest in anything that does not relate to ourselves. When we begin to see that we cannot subsist by ourselves, we begin to seek God for our own sakes. This is the second degree of love; we love God, but only for our own interests. But if we begin to worship and come to God again and again by meditating, by reading, by prayer, and by obedience, little by little God becomes known to us through experience. We enter into a sweet familiarity with God, and by tasting how sweet the Lord is we pass into the third degree of love so that now we love God, not for our own sake, but for himself. It should be noted that in this third-degree we will stand still for a very long time.

I am not certain that the fourth degree of love in which we love ourselves only for the sake of God may be perfectly attained in this life. But, when it does happen, we will experience the joy of the Lord and be forgetful of ourselves in a wonderful way. We are, for those moments, one mind and one spirit with God.

So this Valentine's day, I invite you to set aside some time for the one who is to be your "first love." Here are a couple of reflection questions to help you.

- 1) Which of the four stages of love have you experienced in your spiritual journey?
- 2) What do you think are the factors that move someone from stage one to two? Two to three? Three to Four?
- 3) How are you progressing in your love for God?

Preparing for Lent

Lent is a “season” of the Christian year. It’s traditionally a time when Christians reflect on Jesus’ great sacrifice and prepare for the celebration of his resurrection. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday (February 14) and ends on Easter Sunday (April 4).

Many Christians chose to practice some form of spiritual discipline during Lent. Speaking for myself, the years that Lent has been most meaningful to me have been the years that I have embraced some sort of spiritual discipline for the season. But if you’re like me, somehow Lent always seems to catch me by surprise and at the last minute I am trying to come up with some sort of discipline. So, I wanted to take a moment and offer some suggested disciplines you may wish to try this Lent. (And hopefully, save you and me some last minute angst!)

As an additional note of caution: Don’t try to do many or to take too much on during Lent. Simple is usually better. Trying too many disciplines can back fire and can actually diminish the power and meaning of Lent in our lives.

During the Ash Wednesday Service, the official beginning of the Lenten season, it is traditional to read Matthew 6:1-6 and 16-21. In this passage, Jesus talks about three spiritual disciplines: Praying, giving, fasting. Through the years these verses have become a sort of handbook for Lent and people will often find a way to embrace at least one of these spiritual disciplines for the season of Lent. You’ll find below suggested disciplines that “loosely” fit into each of the categories.

Suggested Prayer Practices for Lent

- Commit to 10 minutes of Bible reading every day
- Memorize a longer passage of scripture (ie: Psalm 1, Psalm 23, 1 Corinthians 13, Ephesians 6:10-20)
- Read a book on Prayer (If needed, I can offer some suggestions)
- Sign up for a Prayer Partner
- Embrace a new Spiritual Discipline
- Participate in a Small Group. (Might I suggest the Luke Study?)

Suggested Giving practices for Lent

- Increase your giving through the Lenten season. (If you’re not tithing (giving 10% of your income) this is a great time to try it out)
- Do something kind for someone at least once a week during Lent.
- Volunteer an hour or more each week.

Suggested Fasts for Lent

- Set aside one day a week and give up all food. (There are a variety of ways to do this. Please ask me, if you need some ideas. Please check with your doctor to make sure you are healthy enough for this sort of fast)
- Give up a specific food item during the season of Lent. You might want to give up coffee or maybe you will chose to be a vegetarian during Lent. Some people give up drinking anything but water for Lent.
- Give up television, the internet, or some other activity.

How will you use the season of Lent to grow closer to God? If you need more ideas or aren’t sure where to begin, I’d be happy to sit down with you and brainstorm some ideas.

Lenten Prayer Partners

How does it work?

- 1) Fill out the form below and return it to the office by February 20th. You can drop it off in person, mail it in, or place it in the “Prayer Partner” box in the Narthex on Sunday morning. Be sure to note if you have any preferences concerning who you are matched with. (These will be kept confidential). We’ll do our best to honor those preferences, but there are no guarantees.
- 2) By February 27th, you and a prayer partner will be assigned to each other. We’re doing this as a Lenten discipline, so things “officially” begin on March 2nd (Ash Wednesday), but you and your partner can begin communicating and praying as soon as you wish.
- 3) Make contact with your prayer partner at least once a week other than Sunday mornings. Share your prayer requests with each other. It is best if this happens face to face or over the phone, please don’t count email as a contact.
- 4) We recommend praying out loud together, but, we understand that not everyone is comfortable at that level. For some, simply sharing prayer requests with someone else is a big step. We encourage you and your prayer partner to work this out between the two of you.
- 5) When praying be sure to pray about the specific things your partner mentioned. You can also feel free to branch out and pray as you feel led. When we give you your prayer partner’s information, we’ll also give you some suggested prayers.
- 6) What you and your prayer partner share with each other should stay between the two of you. Do ***not*** share your prayer partner’s information, requests, etc. without their permission.
- 7) Pray for your prayer partner every day between February March 2nd (Ash Wednesday) and April 17th (Easter Sunday). However, you can begin sooner and you can continue to pray for one another after April 17th.

I want a Prayer Partner. . . .

Please complete and return by **February 20th**. Place completed forms in the offering plate or hand to Pastor James after services.

The following information will be provided to your prayer partner:

Name: _____

Best Phone to reach you: _____

Best times to call: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

For “Office” use only: These will help in matching people to prayer partners with whom they feel comfortable. We will do our best to honor any preferences you list, but we cannot guarantee a prayer partner that matches your preferences.

- I would prefer a prayer partner that:

_____)

- I would like to have _____ as my prayer partner.

- I am open to anyone as a prayer partner. I would be open to more than one prayer partner.

Church Wide Reads

If you know anything about me (Pastor James), you know that I am an avid reader. Walk into my office and you'll find four bookshelves full of books. (I have read many of them, but, not all.) Often, after reading a book, my mind will be turning over lots of new ideas and trying to figure out how what I read applies to the church. I often wish someone else would read the book with me. And now you can!

The Church Wide read is an opportunity for us to read four books together this year (roughly one each quarter). My hope is that if we all read the same book, it will help direct our minds in the same direction. It will spark unity. It will lead to some new and (hopefully) interesting conversations. It will raise our knowledge level as a church.

I'll pick a book each quarter that we'll read together. It might be a book that speaks to a specific issue we are facing. It might be a book that our Bishops or consultants recommend. It might be a book that is generating a lot of conversation in other churches. There's a lot of books that I could choose! You are invited to read the book at your own pace over the quarter. I'll schedule a few book "chats" for those who wish to talk about what we've read.

Our first Church Wide Read will be *Worship on Earth as it is Heaven* by Rory Noland. *Worship on Earth as It Is in Heaven* is a book that speaks to us as we re-learn what it means for us to worship together. In it, Rory Noland helps us think beyond our preferred styles of worship as individuals and helps us focus instead on the God we worship. Noland's book helps us grow both as individual and as corporate worshippers. It contains practical suggestions for incorporating worship into our personal lives, as well as tips for how to worship more fully as part of the congregation.

We'll tentatively plan on book chats:

Tuesday February 22nd at 6:30pm

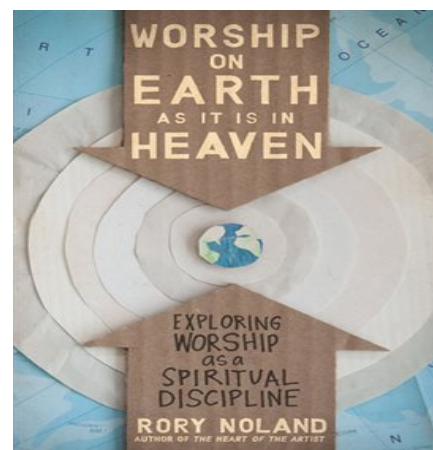
Saturday March 26th at 9:00am

Feel free to attend whichever chat best fits your schedule. And don't be afraid to read the book even if you can't attend one of the chats. It will still benefit both you and our church.

The book can be purchased from Amazon or Christian Book. A digital version can be obtained through the Hoopla app available through the JVB library. I have also purchased several copies that will be available for the congregation to share. Simply sign one out when they are available and return it when finished.

I look forward to our conversation!

~ Pastor James



OFFICE HOURS –

Monday - Friday – 8 AM – 2PM

See us on the web and on Facebook <http://www.pinestreetumc.org>

Worship Schedule

10AM

STAYING CONNECTED

RADIO SERVICE You can tune in at **9AM** on WWPA 1340AM and 101.7 FM

Not able to make it to in-house worship? You will now be able to join us by "**Live Stream.**" The links will be found each week on our Facebook page or go to www.pinestreetumc.org

February Worship Calendar

February 6- Communion Sunday- John 6:1-15- The Feeding of 5,000

February 13- John 9:1-38- The Healing of a Blind Man

February 20- John 10:1-12- I am the Good Shepherd

February 27– John 11:1-44- The Raising of Lazarus

NEW EMAIL: The Office has a new email: office@pinestreetumc.org. Please make any necessary changes and begin using this email now.

WELCOME

We have a new office manager at Pine Street UMC. Lisa McGinniss has joined our team effective January 17th. Lisa is married to Richard. They have 3 adult sons, Jonathan, Kurtis and Colt and 2 granddaughters, Arlaina and Arya. Lisa grew up in the Church of the Nazarene (formerly on Green Street) and accepted Jesus as her Savior at 12 and has been a work-in-progress ever since. Her family moved to Faith Tabernacle in her teen years. She and Rich are members at Christian Church at Cogan Station.

Lisa has many years administrative and supervisory experience having held positions with Lycoming Child Care, Susquehanna Health Medical Group and Gas Well services to name a few. She could eat pizza or mashed potatoes 5 days a week and meals at Texas Roadhouse, Cracker Barrel or Don Patron is always a treat. She enjoys sharing her life with others and hanging out with her group of lady friends.

God has given her a special place in her heart for children. She has spent many years serving the nursery ministry. Her family says you can't let her too close to a baby or she will end up holding them. Many a little ones have been spoiled with loads of love from her. She would say she is a pretty good grandmother but she is a great aunt! And her nieces and nephews would agree.

Lisa and Rich like to camp, fish and travel. Hosting a good picnic with family and friends is a must a few times a year. Myrtle Beach may be a vacation destination for many it is not so much for them as their middle son lives there and they visit a few times a year. Exploring different places is exciting for them and someday they hope to visit Alaska.

Please stop by the office or call and welcome Lisa. She is looking forward to meeting you!

MARCH PINE NEEDLE

Please have any material for the **MARCH Pine Needle** in the church office no later than Monday, February 21st. **If possible, please send all articles to the church via email or provide a typed copy.**



A very Happy Jubilee Birthday to those who are age 85 and above.

Alfred Knecht	February 3
Ruth Engel	February 8
Nancy Lady	February 12
Lou Robbins	February 12

INFORMATIONAL UPDATES

Our heartfelt sympathy to the family and friends on the recent death of:

Beatrice Park

ALTAR FLOWERS

Would you like to provide altar flowers in memory of or in honor of someone? Cost for flowers is \$25 and we order them from Janet's Florist. If so, please contact Cathy Marr (570) 971-8173.

Prayer Chain: Thank you for your continued participation in our prayer circle. Those for whom you pray, are appreciative of your efforts on their behalf. If you or someone you know are interested in joining our prayer circle, please contact Carol Fulmer or Marilyn Kern. Prayer requests may be submitted directly to these ladies, the church office (office@pinestreetumc.org) or in the offering box on Sunday.

Food Pantry: For the month of February we will be collecting items to replenish our food pantry. A grocery cart is in the Narthex for you to place your items. Here are some items of need: canned vegetables (no green beans), canned tuna or chicken, ramen noodles, canned fruit, canned pasta soups (ie. Ravioli, spaghetti O's), chicken noodle and tomato soup, mac & cheese. Any donations are appreciated.

SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY: Sunday, February 13th. Soup will be available in the Narthex after the church service. Chef Mike is making his famous Chili and Chicken Noodle soup. A free-will offering will be accepted; all proceeds will benefit West End Christian Community Center's F.O.C.U.S.E.D. program. FOCUSED stands for Feeding Our Children United Serving Each with Dignity. This program provides food for school students to take home who otherwise might receive their only meal each day at school.

FOOD BANK: The next day is Monday, February 14, 1-3 PM. Contact Karen Cook if you are able to volunteer.

Bloodmobile: Thursday, February 17th, 1pm-6pm. Sign up with the Red Cross at 1-800-733-2767 or visit RedCrossBlood.org and enter: Williamsport to schedule an appointment.

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

Call to Prayer & Self-Denial 2022: "Love, Justice and Service: Answering the Call

Objective: to highlight the lay Order of Deaconess and Home Missioner, administered by United Methodist Women.

Women are encouraged to give thoughtfully to support the education and training of deaconesses and home missionaries who work in ministries of love, justice and service. As well as retired deaconesses and home missionaries who continue to make a difference in the lives of women, children and youth.

Next meeting: Wednesday, February 16th @ 1:30 p.m. in the Narthex. All women of the church are invited.

*Thank
you*



Thank you for the cards and continuing prayers ~ Bob & Jennifer Norton

Thank you for the Christmas card and gift ~ Mark Bielski

SojournerTruth sends thanks for our recent donation to help with their ministry. "We are committed to valuing each person who comes in our doors and to offer nourishment for body and soul".

"You are making a difference!" Because of your generous donation, together we are breaking the cycle of homelessness, eradicating food insecurity for children, and keeping families housed. ~ Family Promise

"Your support of our United Churches ministry both financially and through your prayers makes it possible for us to provide ministries that reach out to our neighbors touching them with God's love, grace and hope ~ Tammey, United Churches of Lycoming County

"The dear people you just helped with your gift to UMCOR may never have the opportunity to meet you, but if they did, I am certain their response would be – Thank You!" ~ UMCOR, Global Ministries, The United Methodist Church

Thank you for your donation. "With our Ministry Partners, our 38 HUBS and YOU, we are actively "Connecting God's Resources with Human Need" through disaster response, mission outreach and mission education." ~ Hope Harrison, Mission Central

Sunday Morning Refreshments

The Sunday Morning Hospitality team is looking for individuals or families that would like to provide refreshments on Sunday mornings. Homemade items are acceptable. If interested in providing refreshments some Sunday, please contact Gail Maurer at 570-419-4781.

If you would like to help, but are unable to do so in person, donations are being accepted towards purchasing "pre-packaged" snacks to be provided alongside Homemade items. Checks or cash may be noted "refreshment fund" and placed in the offering box in the narthex/lobby.

We look forward to our time of fellowship before and after the service.



SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS

Scholarship help is available from funds given to the church. A gift is designated for music students. If you are going to study music in college, you may be eligible for tuition assistance or help with lesson fees. If you are going to attend one of our United Methodist Colleges, you may be eligible for tuition assistance from the R. Andrew Lady Scholarship Fund. The Scholarship Committee will receive the applications due June 5th and determine the recipients. Applications are available from the church office. ~ *Nancy Lady*

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP OR BAPTISM

Anyone interested in Baptism or Church Membership should contact the church office in person or by email: office@pinestreetumc.org

WAYS TO SUPPORT PSUMC FINANCIALLY

Updates from Gail Maurer, Financial Secretary:

For those who requested information to start **e-giving**, go to WWW.pinestreetumc.org (our website) and click the GIVE button near the top.

Here on our website you can setup a one-time gift or a recurring gift using your bank account or by debit card.

The first time you go to our online giving page, you need to create **Your Online Profile**. This only needs to be done once. During this process, you will enter your email address and create a unique password. Record your password in a secure place for your records. You will also enter your bank information including the type of account, your routing number and account number. If you create a recurring donation, you won't need to log in unless you desire to change the amount or schedule of your donation. You may then use the password you created to log in to your account.

You will have the option of giving to the General Fund (which is Current Ministries), the Capital Campaign Legacy Fund, Memorial Gifts or Special Gifts. This is a secure site where you control everything, but if you have any questions, please call me at (570) 419-4781.

Weekly offering Envelopes

2022 Offering Envelopes are here! Pick yours up on the table outside the church office.

Offering envelopes are available from the church office.

Also, green offering envelopes are available for those who wish to use them. And as always, cash or checks may be given. Due to Covid we have a locked box in the Narthex for you to drop in your offering as you enter or leave. Some also wish to mail in their offering to the church office.

Pine Street UMC

February 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 BLaST	2 BLaST 10:30 am Weight Watchers 6:00 pm Weight Watchers	3 BLaST 10:30 am Praise Team 7:00 pm Sanctuary Choir	4 BLaST	5
6 10:00 am Worship	7 BLaST 5:00 pm BSF 6:00 pm AA Meeting WH 6:30 pm Foundation Mtg.	8 BLaST	9 BLaST 10:30 am Weight Watchers 6:00 pm Weight Watchers	10 BLaST 10:30 am Praise Team 7:00 pm Sanctuary Choir	11 BLaST	12
13 10:00 am Souper Bowl Sunday Worship	14 BLaST Social Service 1:00 pm Food Pantry Vol. 5:00 pm BSF 6:00 pm AA Meeting WH	15 BLaST	16 BLaST 10:30 am Weight Watchers 1:30 pm UMW 6:00 pm Weight Watchers	17 BLaST 10:30 am Praise Team 1:00 pm Bloodmobile 7:00 pm Sanctuary Choir	18 BLaST	19
20 10:00 am Worship	21 Newsletter Article Due 5:00 pm BSF 6:00 pm AA Meeting WH	22 BLaST	23 BLaST 10:30 am Weight Watchers 6:00 pm Weight Watchers	24 BLaST 10:30 am Praise Team 7:00 pm Sanctuary Choir	25 BLaST	26
27 10:00 am Worship	28 BLaST Social Service 5:00 pm BSF 6:00 pm AA Meeting WH					

*Happy
Valentine's
Day*



**Pine Street United Methodist Church
441 Pine Street
Williamsport PA 17701**



February 2022



Pine Street United Methodist Church

Our Vision

Show Christ's Love

Teach God's Truth

Share the Gospel

How is God calling you to fulfill our vision?

Have you checked out the website for Pine Street? www.pinestreetumc.org

Check out Pine Street UMC Facebook page

Witnessing to our faith and serving Christ in our Community