



THE OAKS



Riverton First United Methodist Church

FEBRUARY 1, 2010

THOUGHTS ABOUT LOVE

February is often a bleak month, in terms of weather, but right in the middle of it we have that heart-warming event called St. Valentine's Day. It is a day set aside to express love, especially to some one special person in our lives. It gets me thinking about love and how we express it in our lives. So here are a few thoughts I want to pass on regarding a biblical perspective on love.

Many people who know hardly anything about Greek know that there are at least three words in that language that translate into English as *love*: *agape*, *eros* and *phileo* (in alphabetical order). The first, *agape*, is the one most used in the New Testament. It is used in the verse, "God is love," (1 John 4:6) for example; and in the greatest commandments from Jesus: "Love the Lord God with all your heart . . . and love your neighbor as yourself." (Matthew 22:37-39). Love, in this sense, is the affection God has for us, whether we deserve it or not, and that God enables us to return to him as well as to share with other people.

The second Greek word, *eros*, does not appear anywhere in the New Testament. It is the sensual kind of love that finds expression in English as erotic love. Even when the New Testament speaks about the love of a married couple, it uses *agape*, not *eros*. That would seem to indicate that even our most intimate, conjugal love relationships are expressions of the love God plants in us and enables us to share together.



The third word, *phileo*, appears in the New Testament as an expression of fellowship among persons, or comradeship. The place name in Asia Minor, Philadelphia, for example, translates as City of Brotherly Love. (No comment here on whether the city of Philadelphia, PA fits this description.)

The Old Testament language, Hebrew, also has more than one word which translates as love. The one I would mention here is *chesed*. Like *agape*, it is the love God shows to human beings. It is so full of meaning that it is translated different ways in different contexts. In our old King James Bibles it was often rendered as lovingkindness. In newer translations it is often given as kindness, mercy or simply as love. In Psalm 136 it appears repeatedly as God's "steadfast love," which lasts forever. Then in Proverbs 31:26, it is used to describe the way a model wife and mother cares for her family and others, teaching them "kindness."

The point of all this is that love, on Valentine's Day and every other day, is a wonderful human experience and emotion, made possible because God "first loved us" (1 John 4:19). As we celebrate love this month, remember to express a loving thank you to God, who makes it possible.

Pastor Jonathan Dixon

Thank You

Jonathan and Ellen Dixon thank you so much for the generous Christmas gift that you gave to us in December. We are always overwhelmed by your generosity in gift of money at this time of year, but also the generosity you show with your kind spirits. Weekly it is a privilege to worship with you, share your needs as well the joys in your lives.

Some of this generous spirit was given to us in January as Jonathan was in the hospital for surgery during a long weekend. Thanks for all your prayers, support, availability, cards, calls and understanding.

Thank you for the spiritual support that you give to the others within and outside of the congregation. It is a joy to watch your love and care.



Family Valentine Dinner

Concert and Silent Auction



Saturday, February 13, 6:00 p.m. at Riverton United Methodist Church!

Everyone is invited to the Riverton United Methodist Church fellowship hall on Saturday, Feb. 13, at 6:00 p.m. for a three-course fundraising dinner and silent auction, with sacred music provided by Jill Layne, who is Brett Pearson's sister.

We hold this annual dinner as a fundraiser for our long-term planning purposes. The three-course dinner (great home-cooking by the great cooks of the church) is guaranteed to be delicious!

Items that will be auctioned include: two season passes for the Springfield Muni and two tickets for a Springfield Theatre Center performance; gift certificates for the Spaghetti Shop, Sonic, Papa Murphy's, Parkway Café, Carlos O'Kelley's, Taco Bell, Big R, and Cold Stone Creamery; Pampered Chef items; Longaberger pottery baskets; lots of gift baskets for women, men, and kids; jewelry; toys; and many more items!!

There is no ticket price for the dinner; donations are accepted. Space is limited, and this event is very well-attended. Please place your **reservation** with Melissa Pantier at 629-7248 or 741-8172 (or on the sign-up sheet at church) by Friday, February 5.

This event has gained a reputation as a *great* time of music, fellowship and friendship. (You don't have to bid on items to enjoy this event. It is a lot of fun and a great way to meet and get acquainted with others in the church!) Please bring your whole family.

Happy Birthday

Shank, Ralph	February 1
Beattie, Carson	February 6
Hendricks, Les	February 8
Dunbar, Lois	February 10
Allison, Melvin	February 11
Bernahl, Roberta	February 11
Logsdon, Steve	February 12
Allison, Tyler	February 15
Pantier, Melissa	February 16
Beckner, David	February 17
Sucech, Jeri	February 19
Bruce, James	February 23
Shank, Carly	February 24
Sutton, Katherine	February 24
Rusciolelli, Kim	February 26
Beattie, Chris	February 29

Needed: 1 large rug that can be put on the floor in the Sunday



School Class. It will need to be able to roll up so it can be put away during the week. This will keep the kids off the cold floor.

Please call Ellen or speak to her on Sunday. 629-9270.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

Ron & Cheryl Atkins	February 11, 1967
Jerry & Judy McCullough	February 18, 1970
Timothy & Elizabeth Phillips	February 19, 1988
Roger & Missy Pfeiffer	February 27, 1988

LENT AND ASH WEDNESDAY



Lent begins this month, with Ash Wednesday February 17. On Ash Wednesday it has been a custom through centuries of Christianity for believers to have ashes smeared on their foreheads as a sign of repentance and humility. The Lenten season consists of forty days, plus Sundays, (Six and a half weeks total) leading up to Easter.

It has been customary for many Christians to undertake some act of self-denial or fasting during Lent. This disciplining of ourselves helps us appreciate the ultimate self-denial and sacrifice of Jesus Christ who gave his very life for us. In our Ash Wednesday service (7 PM Feb. 17) you will have an opportunity to make a commitment to God. We will symbolize our repentance and intention for Lenten discipline by privately writing our thoughts on a piece of paper and nailing the paper to a wooden cross. You can begin now to prepare for that event by prayerful consideration of what God would ask you to do in self-denial or service during Lent.

SHROVE TUESDAY

The last day before Lent begins has come to be a time of celebration in many Christian lands. It was common practice in Europe to get all the fat and sweets out of the house (and do without them during Lent). What better way to be rid of them than a pancake feast and party. So the day became known as Fat Tuesday, Mardi Gras, in French. The English tradition calls it Shrove Tuesday. Some Mardi Gras celebrations have become so wild as to actually be unchristian. But we can keep the not-so-wild tradition by having a pancake feed. The United Methodist Men will do just that, on a donation basis, from 5:00 to 7:00 PM on February 16th, 2010 at the Riverton United Methodist Church, 429 Lincoln Street.



The United Methodist Women Will Meet:



February 9, Tuesday at 7:00 PM

The program will be presented by Betty Peel. Refreshments will be served. We welcome all the ladies of the Church. Please come join us if you can. Our hostesses will be Jeri Sucech and Evelyn Gandy.



Come See Us At The Fellowship Hall.



P.S. We still have Pecans left, pieces \$7.00 halves \$8.00. Call Rose Hughes 629-9565, Barbara Rhodes 629-9247, Doris Lamkey 629-9556, Bonnie Klaves 629-9794—or—any member.

FEBRUARY



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Pastor at Covenant Keepers, Belleville	2 Groundhog Day 	3 6:00 PM Staff-Parish Relations Committee	4	5	6
7 9:30 AM, Worship 10:30 AM, Sunday School 11:30 AM, Youth Group 6:30 PM, Audit Meeting	8	9 7:00 PM, United Methodist Women	10	11	12	13 7:30 AM, United Methodist Men 6:00 PM, Family Valentine Dinner
14 Transfiguration Sunday 9:30 AM, Worship 10:30 AM, Sunday School	15 6:30 PM, Finance Committee 7:15 PM, Administrative Council	16  Fat Tuesday 5 – 7 PM, Pancake and Sausage Supper	17 7:00 PM, Ash Wednesday Service	18	19	20
21 Lent 1, 9:30 AM, Worship 10:30 AM, Sunday Schedule 11:30 AM, Youth Group	22	23	24 7:00 PM, Choir Resumes	25	26	27
28 Lent 2, 9:30 AM, Worship 10:30 AM, Sunday School						

United Methodist Women

Official UMW Mission Statement

The organized unit of the United Methodist Women shall be a community of women whose purpose is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church.

At our church, approximately 41 women in many groups carry out this mission. We welcome all women who want to do so to attend any or all of the meetings, which are held the second Tuesday of every month. We also host special events throughout the year & honor those occasions with a "Mother/Child Banquet & Christmas party." Guests are always encouraged to attend.

We have a business meeting, which includes a devotion & program presented by a UMW member or special guest. Following all items of business, good treats are provided by several ladies.

Each month, cards are sent to shut-ins, those in mourning or for a special remembrance to keep in touch with those unable to participate in person, just to let them know they are being thought about & in our prayers.

Our budget for 2010 is approximately \$4100 of which one-half goes for programs to help many individuals. One of our special programs is the Reading Program with books located in the light cabinet in the southwest corner in the fellowship hall, these books can be checked out by anyone in the church. Books are added each year & we welcome anyone interested to contact a UMW member. We encourage you to read & enjoy this opportunity in 2010.

We introduce the Officers for 2010. Please hold them up in your prayers as they serve our church in this capacity.

President: Rose A. Hughes
Vice President: Bonnie Klaves
Treasurer: Barb Lucas
Secretary: Evelyn Gandy
Communications: Barbara Rhodes
Spiritual Growth: Grace Carriker
Education & Interpretation: Betty Peel
Social Action: Sharon Stroisch
Nurture, Membership & Outreach: Pat Upton
Nominations: Janet S. Gowin
Patsy Skaggs
Program Resources: Nadine Springer

Let us stop now and thank our United Methodist Women who do such marvelous actions within our church, community, county, state and nation, as well as around the world. Their gracious lives has mingled and infiltrated the fabric of our lives. Thank you to all of them.

Chili and Soup Supper

A Chili and Vegetable Soup supper will be served from 3:00 to 7:00 PM, Saturday March 6, 2010, at the Riverton United Methodist Church, 429 Lincoln Street. The menu will consist of Chili, Vegetable Soup, Desert and a Drink.

A donation of \$6.50 will be accepted. Carry Outs will also be available. Hot Dog and Chicken Salad Sandwiches are extra. Proceeds will go toward the Church Parking Lot.



!!! Bring your family and your appetite !!!



RIVERTON FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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WWW.RIVERTONFIRSTUMC.ORG

THE OAKS

Deadline for next issue is
Sunday, **February 15, 2010**
E-mail articles to
newsletter@rivertonfirstumc.org



UPCOMING EVENTS

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| † February 13, Family Valentine Dinner | † April 2, Good Friday |
| † February 15, Presidents Day | † April 4, Easter Sunday |
| † February 16, Shrove Tuesday | † May 5, Mother-Child Banquet |
| † February 17, Ash Wednesday (Lent Begins) | † May 9, Mother's Day |
| † March 6, Chili Supper | † May 31, Memorial Day |
| † March 14, Daylight Savings Time Begins | † June 20, Father's Day |
| † March 20, UM Men Annual Dinner | † July 4, Independence Sunday |
| † March 28, Palm Sunday | † October 31, Trunk-er-Treat |
| | † November 25, Thanksgiving |

