

# EPWORTH METHODIST CHURCH



**February 2024**

**TELEPHONE(334) 298-3186 WWW.EPWORTH-PC.ORG**

## What is Love?

What is love? That seems to be an appropriate question to ask, with Valentine's Day being just around the corner.

Since the beginning of time, it seems, people have sought to answer that complex but captivating question. So, what *is* love? The question is made even more complex when we recognize that there is more than one variety or "shade" of love. For example, there is erotic love, which might tend to be more self-serving. Then there is a measure of love more like friendship, which leads us to call Philadelphia, for example, the "City of Brotherly Love."

However, the question becomes simpler when we limit our question to understanding the meaning of *agape* love, or the self-giving, self-sacrificing degree of love that Jesus Christ demonstrated in His ministry and in His death on the cross. Christian love—*agape* love—is well described in the 13<sup>th</sup> chapter of Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, commonly called "the love chapter" of the Bible. In writing to the Corinthian church, Paul says:

Love is patient  
Love is kind  
Love is not jealous or boastful  
Love is not arrogant  
Love is not rude  
Love does not insist on its own way  
Love is not irritable  
Love is not resentful  
Love does not rejoice at the wrong, but love rejoices in the right.

It seems a very convicting but useful exercise to examine ourselves and our relationships to other people and to God, in the light of *agape* love, by inserting our own name into that passage of scripture at every place where the word **love** appears. For example, can I say I am *patient* with other people? Am I *kind* to other people? Am I *jealous* or *boastful*? Am I *arrogant* or *rude* in dealing with others? Do I always *insist on my own way*? Am I *irritable* or *resentful* in relating to others, even those closest to me? Do I *rejoice in the wrong* when someone makes a mistake, or do I *rejoice along with them when they succeed in doing something right*?

Here's a plan. Will you covenant with me to earnestly strive to personify the attributes of *agape* love (mentioned above) on this



**by Rev. Grant Parker**

Valentine's Day, February 14 and beyond? Who knows? It just might be contagious!!!

Keep your hand in Jesus' hand  
and your eyes on the Cross!

Let's keep the Faith, but share  
the Gospel!

Brother Grant

## Visitation Volunteers

The following people will accompany Brother Grant when he goes visiting on Monday nights. If you are listed here, please meet Brother Grant at 6:30 pm at the church to go with him to visit prospective new members.

Feb 5th—Ross Goode

Feb 12th—Kathryn Perdue

Feb 19th—Mary Frances Head

Feb 26th—Becky Coreno

Blessings,

Kathryn Perdue



In last month's Newsletter, we thanked you for doing your finest job ever in Wreaths Across America (WAA) and told you we would update you this month on WAA Day. Here is that update and some information about 2024.

WAA Day, 16 December 2023, went great. Fort Mitchell National Cemetery (FMNC) had enough wreaths to cover every grave site in the cemetery. It looked magnificent. Your Epworth team drove two shuttle buses, placed 68 wreaths on the gravesites of your specific Veterans, helped place other wreaths on grave sites across FMNC, and Pastor Grant gave the closing prayer. It was a splendid day and an amazing honor to our Veterans. Thank you again.

We're already off to a terrific start in 2024. Epworth worshippers took great advantage of WAA's Special Deal. Epworth sent WAA \$4,981 for wreaths, which is enough to ensure FMNC will receive 732 wreaths this year.

The Special Deal ended January 16th, but WAA will still give us one free wreath for FMNC for every two wreaths we sponsor for \$17 each from now thru the cutoff date in late November 2024. Let's continue to sponsor wreaths thru WAA to honor our Veterans and surpass the great record of 945 wreaths we achieved in 2023.



## **Valentine Dinner**

*Please join us Thursday, February 15<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm for an evening of good fellowship, great food, entertainment, and lots of door prizes. There will be a sign-up sheet in the Gathering Room to make your reservations, or you can email the church at [info@epworth-pc.org](mailto:info@epworth-pc.org). The deadline to make your reservations is Sunday, February 11<sup>th</sup>. The cost of the meal is \$15 per person and needs to be paid in advance.*

*(Please note that if you make a reservation and do not cancel by Monday, February 12<sup>th</sup> at noon, we must ask that you pay for the meal that has been ordered for you.)*

## **Anniversaries**

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| <b>Feb 3</b>  | Bill & Ronnie Badowski                     |
| <b>Feb 5</b>  | Robert & Marina Meacham                    |
| <b>Feb 6</b>  | Mark & Mary Ensley                         |
| <b>Feb 7</b>  | Eddie & Abby Supan                         |
| <b>Feb 10</b> | Bryce & Becky Gaunt<br>Bubba & Caylin Tate |
| <b>Feb 20</b> | Scott & Judy Burkes                        |
| <b>Feb 22</b> | Ed & Regina Ridgley                        |
| <b>Feb 24</b> | Ralph & Pam O'Brien                        |
| <b>Feb 28</b> | Leo & Becky Ivey                           |

| Birthdays |   |
|-----------|---|
| Feb 1     | Gabriel Watson                                      |
| Feb 2     | Sylvia Curtiss<br>Jimmy Mann<br>Hank Baker          |
| Feb 3     | Kyle Page<br>Ella Bell<br>Delilah Kennedy           |
| Feb 4     | Liz Wise  |
| Feb 5     | Ron Hart<br>Emma Cato                               |
| Feb 6     | Adrianna Hartley                                    |
| Feb 7     | Andrew Head   |
| Feb 8     | Dustin Brassell                                     |
| Feb 9     | Kinsley Riepe                                       |
| Feb 10    | Bonnie Wilgis<br>David Head<br>Jess Thomas          |
| Feb 11    | Adam Norden<br>Sheri Nishimura                      |
| Feb 12    | Sue Barnes  |
| Feb 13    | Carol Cain  |
| Feb 14    | Eleonore Hall<br>Seabo Griggs                       |
| Feb 15    | Amy Head  |
| Feb 18    | Emma Head   |
| Feb 19    | Ben Johnson   |
| Feb 21    | Ralph O'Brien                                       |
| Feb 22    | Wendy Sieck   |
| Feb 23    | Katie Collins                                       |
| Feb 24    | Ronnie Head   |
| Feb 25    | Betty Register<br>Stephanie Baker<br>Miranda Griggs |
| Feb 26    | Rejean Lee<br>Karen Cameron                         |

## VETERANS DAY DINNER

- Epworth is planning to host its 2024 free Veterans Day Dinner to honor our current military men and women, our Veterans, and their immediate families on Tuesday, 12 November 2024.
- We want to give our military and veteran personnel and their immediate families a great, catered meal, warm fellowship, a dynamic speaker, some patriotic entertainment, and great door prizes.
- If you are a member or attendee at Epworth, or if you have a friend who may be interested in Epworth, we want to ensure we send you and your friend a personal invitation so you and your family can attend.
- The “Epworth Military Connections” page on our military bulletin board in the Gathering Room shows all the active, retired, and Veteran military personnel we believe we have at Epworth. We suspect there are more, and we need your help so we can honor them and invite them, too!
- If you are or know a current or former military person who attends Epworth or who is a family member of an Epworth attendee, and whose name is not already on our bulletin board, please let Pastor Grant ([grant.parker@epworth-pc.org](mailto:grant.parker@epworth-pc.org) or 334-297-3186) or Ross Goode ([camovet@ctvea.net](mailto:camovet@ctvea.net) or 706-464-5089) know.

**Mark your calendars for 12 November 2024, and watch for more information concerning this year’s Veterans Dinner soon.**

## Men’s Ministry News

Memorial bricks are \$100 each which includes engraving. The bricks will be installed in front of the Bell Tower. Order forms are placed on the Gathering Room counter. If you have questions, please contact Ron Hart, John Henderson, or Roy Hogge.

The Men’s Ministry is scheduling their **Yard Sale for Saturday, February 24, 2024**. They have already started collecting donations. You can bring your donations to the Church either Monday or Wednesday 9:00 am – 3:30 pm. If assistance is needed to unload your donated items, please contact any member of the Men’s Ministry group to schedule a time for them to meet you at the church.

Your donations will make the Yard Sale a success.



# *A message from our Youth Minister Daniel Cook*

The month of love is here and Valentine's Day is around the corner. According to online sites, Americans will spend over \$20 billion dollars for Valentine's Day. One article did a survey and found that the top gifts this year look to be candy (57%), greeting cards (40%), flowers (37%), an evening out (32%), jewelry (21%), gift cards (20%) and clothing (19%). Of the \$20 billion dollars spent, \$345 million will be spent on 58 million pounds of chocolate.

One popular purchase when it comes to candy is the heart shaped boxes that are filled with different types of chocolate. This is an easy gift to buy because, you get a cute heart shaped box and chocolate—what else says love more than those two?! But there is a problem with this gift: a lot of times you aren't sure what is inside each piece of chocolate. You pick up one piece hoping for caramel and when you bite into it you get an oozing cherry filling. Gross! Sometimes you get lucky. The box comes with a guide that tells you which chocolate has which filling inside.

The great theologian Forrest Gump stated, "Life is like a box of chocolates, you never know what you are going to get." As followers of Christ this should not be the case for our personal lives. Our actions, talk, and attitude should be reflecting that of Christ. The way we interact with others allows them to see what is taking place in our mind and hearts.

## [John 13:34-35](#)

*So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples.*

When I think of the way God loves me, I see hope, grace, mercy, forgiveness, and never ending love. That is the way we should love others! We do not have to live our lives like a box of chocolates. Live your life showing God's love through your actions, talk, and the hope you have in Christ. As we strive to love others, we will point those around us to the One who loves even greater!



## Events in February:

**Wednesday Nights** - February Series: RHYTHM: A 4-Week Series from 1 & 2 Corinthians on Spiritual Growth. In this four-week series, we'll explore passages of Scripture from the Gospels, epistles, and Psalms that help us develop spiritual rhythms that help us grow. Together, we'll be challenged to create more predictable patterns in four key ways: by creating rhythms for spending time with God, using our gifts, sharing our stories, and spending time with others.

Join us on Wednesday night from 6:00 - 6:30 as we hang out in the gym, game room, and snack bar. From 6:30 - 7:30 we have our service that includes a time of games, teaching, and worship.

**Sunday Mornings Worship** - We invite all families and teenagers to attend a Sunday morning worship service. As you know there are three to choose from, with most teenagers attending the 9:45 service. We would love to see your family worship with us!

**Small Group - Sunday Mornings at 11:00** - Following the 9:45 service there is a class offered for all teenagers. Some may call it Sunday School and others call it a Small Group, but no matter what you call it, it is important. This is a place for teenagers to talk through the Bible and life with other teenagers to grow together as they navigate what it means to follow Christ.

**Valentine's Party - February 7th** - Join us for a Valentine's Party on February 7th. We will have competitions between the guys and the girls, candy, games, and snacks! Come as we talk about what real love is and where to find it! The gym, game room, and snack bar will open at 6:00 pm and service will start at 6:30 pm.

**January 28th @ 4:30** - The youth will be meeting this Sunday from 4:30 - 5:30 of a time of fellowship followed by a devotion. Come and get to know the youth leaders and other students while we play games and talk about Jesus!

## Upcoming Events in 2024:

- Summer Camp: June 12 - 15, 2024
- Summer Trips to Six Flags, White Waters, Braves games, and much more!
- Ski Trip - December 27-30, 2024



## EPWORTH KIDZ CREW

### THE WINTER GAMES ARE COMING!!

#### **DADS AND DAUGHTERS AND MOMS AND SONS!**

Join us for **THE WINTER GAMES** where Dads and Daughters will team up against Moms and Sons for some winter fun!

WHEN: Sunday, February 25th, 5:00 – 6:30 p.m.

WHERE: Epworth Gym

WHAT: Friendly family competition, ice cream bar, gaga ball!

VOLUNTEERS ARE WELCOME!! Sign up with Letha

Kids through 5<sup>th</sup> grade bring your parents for some great winter games.

“Extra” parents can help referee! REGISTER your name and the number in your family group at

[letha.parker@epworth-pc.org](mailto:letha.parker@epworth-pc.org).

GET YOUR GAME ON!

“Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever.” 1 Corinthians 9:25



### VBS MATERIALS ARE HERE!

#### **VBS PREPARATIONS**

Gearing up for VBS! If you are available to help with decorations, please contact me at 334-298-3186 or

[letha.parker@epworth-pc.org](mailto:letha.parker@epworth-pc.org).



### UPCOMING DATES....

**EASTER EGGSTRAVAGANZA:** Sunday, March 24, 4:00-5:30

#### **KIDZ SUMMER CAMP:**

**Dates:** Monday through Thursday, July 8-11

**Camp:** MERGE in Shocco Springs Camp

**“In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.” -Matthew 5:16**

# February 2024

| SUN   | MON  | TUES  | WED  | THURS   | FRI       | SAT  |
|---|--|---|--|---|-----------|--|
|   |  |   |  | <b>1</b><br>9:00 am<br>Mom's Day Out & Preschool<br><br><b>6:30 pm EMW</b><br><b>will meet in the Fellowship Hall</b> | <b>2</b>  | <b>3</b>   |
| <b>4</b><br><br><b>5:30 pm</b><br><b>Cherubs Choir and Kidz Cruise</b>  | <b>5</b><br><br><b>12:00 pm—Happy Days</b><br><b>“Covered Dish” Luncheon</b> | <b>6</b><br>9:00 am<br>Mom's Day Out & Preschool<br>9:30 am<br>Bible Study<br>6:30 pm—Bible Study                                 | <b>7</b><br>9:00 am<br>Preschool<br>10:00 am<br>Cart workshop<br>6:00 pm<br>Youth<br>6:30 pm<br>Classes & Kids Konnections               | <b>8</b><br>9:00 am<br><br>Mom's Day Out & Preschool<br><br><b>6:00 pm—Grief Meeting</b>                              | <b>9</b>  | <b>10</b>  |
| <b>11</b><br><br><b>11:00 am</b><br><b>Service—Cherub will sing</b>   | <b>12</b><br><br><b>Newsletter Deadline</b>                                  | <b>13</b><br>9:00 am<br>Mom's Day Out & Preschool<br>9:30 am<br>Bible Study<br>6:30 pm—Bible Study                                | <b>14</b><br>9:00 am<br>Preschool<br>10:00 am<br>Cart workshop<br>6:00 pm<br>Youth<br><br><b>6:30 pm</b><br><b>ASH Wednesday Service</b> | <b>15</b><br>9:00 am<br>Mom's Day Out & Preschool<br><br><b>6:00 pm</b><br><b>Valentine Dinner</b>                    | <b>16</b> | <b>17</b>  |
| <b>18</b><br><br><b>5:30 pm</b><br><b>Cherub Choir and Kidz Cruise</b>  | <b>19</b><br><b>President's Day</b><br><b>Office Closed</b>                  | <b>20</b><br>9:00 am<br>Mom's Day Out & Preschool<br>9:30 am<br>Bible Study<br><b>6:00 pm—Prayer Vigil</b><br>6:30 pm—Bible Study | <b>21</b><br>9:00 am<br>Preschool<br>6:00 pm<br>Youth<br>6:30 pm<br>Classes & Kids Konnections   | <b>22</b><br>9:00 am<br>Mom's Day Out & Preschool<br><br><b>6:00 pm—Men's Ministry</b>                                | <b>23</b> | <b>24</b><br><br><b>Men's Ministry Yard Sale</b> |
| <b>25</b><br><br><b>4:00 pm</b><br><b>Admin Board</b><br><br><b>5:00—6:30 pm</b><br><b>The Kidz Winter Games</b><br><b>Dads &amp; Daughters and Moms &amp; Sons</b> | <b>26</b>  | <b>27</b><br>9:00 am<br>Mom's Day Out & Preschool<br>9:30 am<br>Bible Study<br>6:30 pm—Bible Study                                | <b>28</b><br>9:00 am<br>Preschool<br>10:00 am<br>Cart workshop<br>6:00 pm<br>Youth<br>6:30 pm<br>Classes & Kids Konnections              | <b>29</b><br>9:00 am<br>Mom's Day Out & Preschool   |           |  |

## **Donations Are Needed**

**Safe House Ministries** in Columbus Ga, which feeds and helps the homeless, is in need of several items.

Safe House is in real need of beef and chicken broth or stock. They also have an urgent need of metal dinner forks and coats. If you can help in this area, it is greatly appreciated. Please put your donation in the blue bin in the gathering room. Love, blessings, and thanks.

## **HELP US KEEP EPWORTH CHURCH SAFE**

- You may not see them, but members of our security ministry team volunteer during every service and special church-wide event to help ensure the safety of our worshippers and the sanctity of our services.
- It's a shame we have to think about security while we are in God's House, but unfortunately we believe it is a prudent precaution.
- We will ask members of our security ministry team to serve approximately one hour per month. We will train you before you serve.
- Join us ! If you are interested or know someone who is, please let Pastor Grant (grant.parker@epworth-pc.org or 334-298-3186) or Ross Goode (RCGoode525@gmail.com or 706-464-5089.) know.