The Love of Christ

The month of February is often associated with love, because of Valentine’s Day. This is an annual holiday celebrated on February 14. Several early Christian martyrs were named Valentine. Perhaps the Valentine for whom Valentine’s Day is named was a priest in Rome who was martyred in 269 AD. According to legend, Valentine ministered to persecuted Christians. Eventually the Roman Emperor Claudius II met with Valentine and was impressed with him. Claudius tried to get Valentine to convert to Roman paganism to save his life. Valentine refused and instead tried to convert Claudius to Christianity. Because Valentine refused to convert, he was eventually executed. However, before his execution, Valentine was reported to have performed a miracle by healing Julia, the blind daughter of his jailor Asterius. As a result of this, the jailor’s daughter and forty-six members of his household came to believe in Jesus and were baptized. On the evening before his execution, Valentine apparently wrote a card to Julia, who was now no longer blind, and signed it as, “Your Valentine.” Thus, the expression “From Your Valentine” was later adopted by modern Valentine cards and letters.

In a recent sermon we came across an expression about the
“love of Christ.” Paul prayed in Ephesians 3:17b-19a, “…that you…may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge.” Surely the love of Christ far surpasses any love that we might have for one another. The Puritan, Thomas Watson, once said, “Love is the queen of the graces; it outshines all the others, as the sun the lesser planets.”

In commending the love of Christ to us, the Apostle Paul prayed that we “may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth” of this love. Commentator Kent Hughes notes that the dimensions of Christ’s love is:

1) A love which is wide enough to embrace the world. John 3:16 tells us, “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

2) A love which is long enough to last forever (1 Corinthians 13:8). As Spurgeon said, “It is so long that your old age cannot wear it out, so long your continual tribulation cannot exhaust it, your successive temptations shall not drain it dry; like eternity itself it knows no bounds.”

3) A love which is high enough to take sinners to Heaven (1 John 3:1, 2).

4) A love which is deep enough to take Christ to the very depths to reach the lowest sinner (Philippians 2:8).

I pray that each one of us may know personally and experientially the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge.
The TBPC Missions Committee would like to invite you to attend the 2018 TBPC Missions Weekend, beginning on Saturday, February 3, 2018.

This conference serves as a great opportunity to meet the missionaries that our church supports. In addition, we can learn the prayer needs of each of our missionaries and rejoice at how God’s Word is being shared throughout the world. The TBPC supported missionaries who have confirmed they plan to attend this year are Nathaniel and Cherita Adawonu (NHMI), Esaie and Natacha Etienne (MTW), Andrew & Meghan Newman (RUF/USF) and Carla Stevens (MTW).

On Saturday evening February 3 at 6-8 pm, the Mission’s Committee will be hosting our second annual Chili Cook-Off. We are looking for the best 2018 chili recipe in the church. First place will be taking home bragging rights for the whole year. If you are interested in participating in the Chili Cook-Off, please let Luke Egbert (legbert35@yahoo.com or 813-541-3518) or Freddy Fritz (freddyfritz@tampabaypresbyterian.org) know. Sides and fixings will also be provided for the dinner. Please write “Chili” on your Welcome Card and the number that will be attending. Please bring a covered dish large enough for 10 people according to the following suggestions. If your last name begins with: A-E – Salads, F-L – Breads, M-O – Sides, P-Z – Desserts. Following dinner there will be a great opportunity to learn more about our missionaries, their needs and how we can pray for them, and to also learn how God is using them for his kingdom.

On Sunday morning February 4 at 8:45 am, we will provide another great opportunity to meet our missionaries during the CE&F time. Our missionaries will rotate between classrooms to answer questions, socialize, and share stories and praises about their work in the mission field.

After Worship on February 4 at 12:45 pm, everyone is invited to join the Missions Committee and our missionaries for lunch (Dutch treat) at Asian Buffet (The Shoppes at New Tampa, 1742 Bruce B. Downs Blvd., Wesley Chapel). Please write “Asian Lunch” on your Welcome Card and indicate how many will be attending.

Please make some time the weekend of February 3-4 to attend the Saturday dinner and Sunday events for the 2018 TBPC Missions Conference. If you plan to attend any of the events, please sign up on the Welcome Card to allow us to plan accordingly.

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HAPPENING IN FEBRUARY

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 6:00 P.M.: MISSIONS CHILI COOK-OFF  See article page 3.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 8:45 A.M.: CE&F WITH MISSIONARIES  Everyone is encouraged to attend and get to know our missionaries a little better.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 12:45 P.M.: LUNCH WITH MISSIONARIES  See article page 3.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2:00 P.M.: MARGARET MITTON’S 103rd BIRTHDAY PARTY  Kathy Blankenship (Margaret Mitton’s daughter) has invited all of TBPC to come and celebrate this special event to be held at Westbrooke Manor located at 6701 Dairy Rd, Zephyrhills, FL.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 6:00 P.M.: SUNDAY SECONDS  The Session has approved adding a 2nd Worship Service on the 2nd Sunday of each month, beginning February 11 at 6:00 P.M. Plan to attend this opportunity to take advantage of the means of grace. The evening message will be, “What Does the Bible Teach about Sexual Orientation?” Childcare will be available.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 12:00 P.M.: EMPTYNESTERS LUNCHEON  Please join us for lunch at Sonny’s BBQ Restaurant, 5324 Bruce B. Downs Blvd, Wesley Chapel (just before SR 54).  Save the date and plan to attend!  Looking forward to having you with us!”  Contact Sandy Neal (813-973-7814 or sandybill1941@gmail.com) for questions.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 18 3:00 P.M.: NEW MEMBER’S CLASS  Anyone interested in learning more about TBPC is welcome to attend the New Member’s Class at 3:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m., which includes dinner and childcare. Please write “NMC” on your Welcome Card, contact the Church Office or see Pastor Freddy.

LIGONIER CONFERENCE: MARCH 8-10  This year’s conference will be held at First Baptist Church Orlando and will be centered around the theme of “Awakening.” Their goal will be to help believers understand the importance of awakening and the way the Lord brings it about so that we might be used by God to be the means of a new awakening today. Rosaria Butterfield, Kevin DeYoung, Sinclair Ferguson, W. Robert Godfrey, Tim Keesee, Steven Lawson, Albert Mohler, Stephen Nichols, Miguel Núñez, Burk Parsons, Joni Eareckson Tada, and Derek Thomas will teach on subjects including awakening in Scripture and history, the means of awakening, the signs of an awakened church, and several others. To register, call 800-435-4343 or online https://www.ligonier.org/events/2018-national-conference/register.

NEW NTCA ADMINISTRATOR  The Board of NTCA is pleased to announce Ashleigh Kemp as the new Administrator of NTCA! We are grateful for your prayers during the search and for God’s goodness in this provision. Please continue to pray for a transition that honors him, as Ashleigh begins part-time in April and assumes full responsibility in August.

Trumpet Staff
Rev. Freddy Fritz, Editor-in-Chief  Nancy Morrison, Editor

It is the goal of the Trumpet staff to provide articles for learning and growing, news for connecting with our church family, and information on opportunities for service and participation. The views and opinions expressed in the Trumpet have not been reviewed or endorsed by the Session. Please forward articles, ministry reports and calendar items for the next edition of the Trumpet to morrison774@gmail.com by the 20th of the month preceding publication.
Friends, Fellowship, Food and Fun

It was a chilly, cloudy, overcast and rainy morning of January 13, 2018. The kind of morning that us northerners would look out the window and say it looks like snow today. Well, it was a perfect day for 12 of us to join together at the church to celebrate our first Sister-to-Sister event of 2018, our annual Soups-On where we enjoyed three homemade soups, side dishes, and desserts.

Marianne Cali began her devotion by reminding us that we should mark a new beginning with self-improvement. God’s wonderful creation is full of new beginnings. The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new EVERY morning. A new beginning is not only on New Year’s Day but every day is a new opportunity to start again. Here are some tips to help us succeed with our resolutions:

1. Choose the goal carefully and specifically. Is the goal relevant and important to us?
2. Don’t waste time looking back. Learn from past mistakes or sins, confess them to God, and put them behind you. One cannot change the past. Remember our God is one of new beginnings.
3. Bathe your efforts in prayer. Paul states, “Brothers, do not consider that I have made it on my own.”
4. Press on toward the goal. Marianne reminded us that Peter failed many times but did not give up and Jesus did not give up on Him.

Nancy Kirkpatrick showed us how to fold formal linen napkins into Christmas trees, roses, and bunny rabbits. Thank you to Nancy, Marianne, and Rachael for sharing your designs.

Linen napkins folded into Christmas trees
Quick thoughts and reminders:

Women’s Ministry is in need of a coordinator for its Sister-to-Sister efforts. It really is fun and easy to pull together the 4 events a year. Our next event will be in April. Please contact me if you are interested or have questions.

I have Gertrude’s recipe for the delicious Spicy Buttermilk Prune Cake she served at the Sister to Sister event. I will be happy to share.

The next WM15 meeting will be on February 11 right after worship service where we will discuss the options for the 2018 Christmas Brunch. All ladies in the church are invited. Location is the Youth Room.

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The rose design