

SAINTS VALENTINES DAY

Sunday, 14 February, is Valentine's Day. I hope you know more about it than I do! Even the Britannica has little on the subject. I knew that there were a number of saints in the Catholic tradition with the name of Valentine (in several forms and languages). But how did we get from the imperial sport of beheading bishops in the third century to the kind of observances we have today? Let me hasten to say that in this instance, I do believe the change has been positive and progress!

It appears likely that our festival activities have much more to do with the ancient Roman customs connected with the festival called Lupercalia which came each year on 15 February than with the religious meaning of the day. That festival honoured the pagan gods, Juno, Roman goddess of women and marriage, and Pan, the god of nature. As Christianity spread, church leaders tried to give Christian meaning and content to the day. The Sts. Valentine who were martyred on the day were considered to have died for their love, not of women, but of Jesus, their Lord. One aspect of the original festival was that young men and women in a group would place all names in boxes, divided by sex; each drew a name and the couple so paired remained together for the duration of the festival. One writer says, "they usually continued to enjoy one another's company long after the festival. Many such courtships ended in marriage." So, what's new?

The custom of exchanging valentines originated among English speaking people with the poet, Geoffrey Chaucer (the Canterbury writer). He mentioned that birds begin pairing off on this day; one supposes that he felt mankind should emulate the birds. The observances nowadays seem to turn more on merchants' promotions for the sale of about everything of which one can think than habits of birds.

Anything that encourages us to love each other and to make some expression of that love can only be good in the kind of world in which we live. All adults can remember the excitement of childhood Valentine boxes, and many of us know of Valentine suppers and like occasions. As with the Romans long ago, undoubtedly many such pairings do at least occasionally work out to longer relationships and now and then even to marriage.

In the way that fits you best, let this be a day of expressing your love to several persons beginning with family members. Only God knows how many hearts will be warmed as only He knows how many are lonely and need some loving care. So, take what began as a blending of pagan custom and religious remembrance and do good to God's people!

-- Ed Smith

THE SENIOR HIGH UMYF will be going to Carr Creek, Kentucky on the Appalachia Service Project June 27 - July 3. We all anticipate many rewarding experiences to result from this trip. Please be with us in your prayers as we prepare for this adventure in Christian service.

-- Laura Early

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN EXECUTIVE BOARD will have an important meeting on Wednesday, February 24, at 1:00 p. m. in the Bradshaw Room. All members are urged to be present.

14 FEBRUARY 1982, Sexagesima Sunday

The Gospel: St. Mark 4:26-32

The Sermon: Growth - Plants and People

Greeters: Dr. and Mrs. Owen McConnell

THE BULLETIN
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COMMUNITY SERVICE: Tour hosts are needed to prepare materials and escort visitors at the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics. After an orientation to the School, volunteers would be asked to conduct tours, assist visitors and school nominees, and assist in mailing. For more information call the Volunteer Services Bureau at 688-8977.

CONFIRMATION CLASS will begin Sunday, 28 February, at 4:00 p. m. in the Home Builder's Classroom back of the sanctuary just off the breezeway. Children should be in the fifth grade or eleven years old. Older children are welcome. The pastor directs this class. It will continue through Mother's Day on Sunday afternoons except for two Sundays: 21 March and Easter, 11 April. A call to the church office (688-1901), (688-2170) will enroll your child.

CHURCH WORLD SERVICE: It is time for the Church World Service used clothing drive. The clothing should be clean and in wearable condition. The need this time is for light weight clothing. Please bring items to stage area of Whitford Hall by February 23 for boxing. For further information, call Alice Walker, 286-9889.

OUR NEWEST MEMBER is Donna Lee Peters, 4917 Howe Street. She united with Duke Memorial by vows and confirmation last Sunday. She was baptized in the Episcopal Church of our Lady of Angels in Albany, N. Y. She is assistant to Dr. John Berry who is a member of Duke Memorial. Donna and John will be married on Saturday, 3 April at Duke Memorial. Her telephone number is 383-7289. A note or call of welcome is a good thing to do!

HOSPITALIZED: DCGH:

Imogene Ausbon 4130
Ella Kimrey 6118

THE STAFF-PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEE will meet Monday, 15 February, at 7:30 in the library. Business matters to consider include evaluations of the work of staff members and preparation of a recommendation as to the appointment of a pastor in June 1982. Members of the congregation are invited to make their expressions to members of the committee prior to the meeting. Chick Craig is chairman; other members are Delaina Buehler, Ran Few, Polly Mixon, Iris Byerly, Charlotte Corbin, James Mentzer, Eunice Mattox, and W. E. Self. The chairman and vice-chairman of the Administrative Board, Shirley Few and Mary Whanger, meet with this committee.

CHURCH CALENDAR FEBRUARY 14 - 20, 1982

Sun.	9:45 a. m.	Church School
	10:55 a. m.	Morning Worship
	5:00 p. m.	Senior UMYF
	5:00 p. m.	Junior and Carol Choirs
Mon.	3:00 p. m.	Circle 9 with Mrs. Arthur Kale, 500 E. Markham Ave. Laura Early, speaker
	7:30 p. m.	Staff-Parish Relations Committee, Library
Tues.	10:00 a. m.	Circle 8 with Betty Craig, 3522 Westover Road
Wed.	10:00 a. m.	Altar Guild, Library
	12:10 p. m.	Devotions and Lunch, Leader: Juanita Stott
Thurs.	7:30 p. m.	Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

THE SYMPATHY AND LOVING CONCERN of the congregation and pastor are expressed to Jim and Jo Ann Mentzer and family because of the death of Jo Ann's mother, Mrs. Blonnie J. Warren Sunday, 7 February 1982.

ATTENDANCE: Sunday, 7 February 1982

Church School.....250
Morning Worship.....331