

# connect.

Tuscola  
United  
Methodist  
Church

February  
2023



Love is in the air! As Valentine's approaches, of course our thoughts turn to love. We celebrate romantic love (eros in Greek) with big red hearts, pink glitter, and chocolates, but does that have anything to do with real love?

One of the most common Bible passages about love is 1 Corinthians 13, and it is a very common passage for people to have read at their weddings. They hear the beautiful words from verses 4-7 which states, "Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant 5 or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable; it keeps no record of wrongs; 6 it does not rejoice in wrongdoing but rejoices in the truth. 7 It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things." (NRSV) Couples want to have this kind of marriage, and so they use these words to celebrate their relationship.

However, 1 Corinthians 13 is about a whole lot more than eros love. 1 Corinthians 13 describes agape (ah – GAH- pay) love which Christianity.com defines as, "a sacrificial love that unites and heals. It is the love of God that we see through the cross of Jesus Christ. This love saves and restores humanity in the face of sin and death." That type of love is way bigger than eros, or philia (deep love for friends).

But can we see agape in our relationships too? I think we can. I see agape love when I watch one member of a couple care for another in the last stages of life. The ill spouse is no longer able to give anything back to their partner. There is nothing to be gained by taking care of them. Loving them is a selfless, giving act. In many cases, this circumstance might go on for years, and loving them becomes an act of sacrifice. The healthy spouse becomes homebound themselves in order to care for the ill spouse. They give up social activities, church, family events, dinners out – all of these things just to be there for their spouse. Maybe it's true that most marriages start with eros love. The healthiest marriages stay in eros love with a healthy dose of philia love too. But the most beautiful marriages are the ones that ones that embody agape love when necessary.

For all of you who are or have been in a deep, abiding relationship in your life, I offer this prayer: May each of you experience the joy of eros love in your life. May each of you experience the comfort of philia love in your life. And may each of you find yourself capable of loving your partner with the overwhelming love of agape.

Phila in Christ,

Pastor Terri

BE JOYFUL IN *hope.*  
 PATIENT IN *affliction.*  
 FAITHFUL IN *prayer.*

Romans 12:12, NIV



**Read Through the Bible in a Year**

I hope you will consider joining us as we read through the Bible in one year. Even if you didn't start already, you can start with February's reading and add the first few books of the Bible at the end.

May God illumine your journey through scripture!

February 5<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> – Leviticus 24 – Numbers 18

February 12<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> – Numbers 19 - 29

February 19<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> – Numbers 30 – Deuteronomy

15

February 26<sup>th</sup> – March 4<sup>th</sup> – Deuteronomy 16 – 34

**Sermons**

February 5<sup>th</sup> – I Corinthians 13 – The Power Within YOU – Special Speaker: Ingrid Minger

**Sermon Series: I Am a Church Member**

Best-selling author and ministry leader Thom S. Rainer drew an exceptional response when he posted a 500-word declaration about church membership to his daily blog. "I Am a Church Member" started a conversation about the attitudes and responsibilities of church members. Rainer later developed this idea into a book which addresses the outbreak of inactive or barely committed church members and explains what is necessary from a body of believers. Over

the next few weeks, we will examine what it means to belong to a church. Plan to pick up a copy of the book and read along with our sermon series!

February 12<sup>th</sup> – Matthew 20:20-28 - I Am a Church Member: I Will Treasure Church Membership as a Gift

February 19<sup>th</sup> – Transfiguration Sunday - Matthew 17:1-9 – "This is My Son"

Wednesday, February 22<sup>nd</sup> – Ash Wednesday

**My Lenten Playlist** – February 26<sup>th</sup> – April 9<sup>th</sup> – In the same way that we find beautiful truths about the birth of Jesus through Christmas music, other hymns teach us about the power of sacrifice and God's deep love. This Lent, we will examine the theological truths in hymns such as *Holy, Holy, Holy, Fairest*

*Lord Jesus, Come Thou Fount, Be Thou My Vision, Tell Me the Stories of Jesus, and Christ the Lord is Risen Today.*

February 26<sup>th</sup> – Isaiah 6:1-8 – My Lenten Playlist: Merciful and Mighty



**Help Needed!**

You might notice that the office is a bit understaffed this month. That's because Sarah is taking parental leave to care for their new son, Rhett. Please be patient if you find the church closed for an hour here or there as Cheryl and

I are trying to cover our positions and the office! If you have some extra time and would like to volunteer to read a book in the front office while answering the phones, we sure could use the help. Please call to the office to let us

know your availability.

**More Help Needed!**

The church is looking for someone to shovel/blow snow at the front of the church and at the PASS entrance as needed. The salary is \$15/hour. If you or someone you know is interested in helping, please contact the church office.

**Winter Gift Bags for Shut-Ins**

The Congregational Care Team needs your help! We are collecting items to put together gift bags for our wonderful church members who tend to be isolated at this time of the year. Please consider purchasing some of these items or donating money to the church with the label "Congregational Care Gift Bags" for us to buy

supplies such as devotional books and stamps. Thanks!

Items Needed:

Chapstick

Hand lotion

Small packs of Kleenex

Small Hand Sanitizers

Stationary Kits

Mints/Sugar Free Candy

Adult Coloring Books

Colored Pencils

Pens

Notebooks

Adult Coloring Books

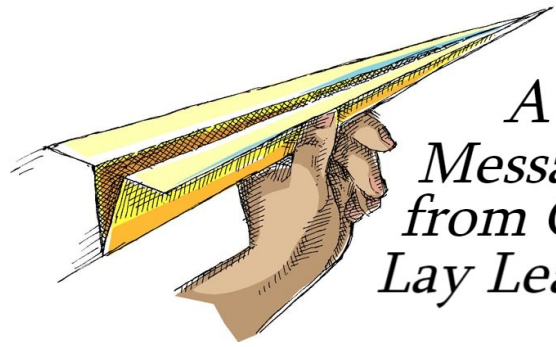
Large print Word Searches/Sudoku/Crosswords Books

Stamps

Happy Valentine's Day to my fellow members of TUMC!

February is the month in which we show those we care about just how much we love them. We look for special gifts or go out of our way to show our love in special ways like taking them out for an expensive meal. When I was in grade school, it was so much fun to decorate a shoebox to make it into a mailbox so every child could put a Valentine in it. Then when you were addressing your Valentines to be put in other children's mailboxes, you would pick the best Valentine in the pack for the child you thought most "special".

Matthew tells us this in chapter 22 verses 34-40 of his gospel:<sup>34</sup> Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. <sup>35</sup> One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: <sup>36</sup> "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" <sup>37</sup> Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind."<sup>[a]</sup> <sup>38</sup> This is the first and greatest commandment. <sup>39</sup> And the second is like it: "Love your neighbor as yourself."<sup>[b]</sup> <sup>40</sup> All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." Therefore, we Christians should be showing love every day not just on one day designated on the calendar and we should be showing it especially to God. Do we love God with the same fervor we show others we love during February? Do we spend time with him every day? Open our hearts to him? We cannot become close to others if we do not spend time with them and the same is true of God. Take time to read your Bible and to pray every day so you know God's thoughts and he knows yours. His love will never fail you.



## A Message from Our Lay Leader

The **Finance** committee met on 1/16 and discussed the fact that the financial reports do not currently contain information for some church assets such as the Wimple Farm. The committee voted to create new accounts for these assets and add them to the monthly reports to reflect a more complete picture of the church's finances. A request from the committee will go to Church Council to add the chair of the finance committee as a signer for the CDs that are being held by Edward Jones. The other signers are the treasurer, Church Council chair, and the pastor. The Income and Expense graph for the entire year is at the end of this article.

**Trustees** discussed the addition of the signs, railroad ties and yellow ropes along the parking lot perimeter to prevent the destruction of the grass by parents parking there to pick up their children from school. The church's internet service is being moved to Mediacom but, first, a new hub must be installed in the area. Switching to a new provider should give the church faster internet and better Wi-Fi coverage within the building. A new refrigerator/freezer was purchased and installed in the kitchen. It has two upper refrigerator sections, one lower freezer section, and one lower section that can function as either a refrigerator or freezer. The ice maker in the kitchen has stopped working so the water line from it will be moved to the new refrigerator and the ice maker removed. If the refrigerator cannot provide enough ice for an event, bagged ice will be purchased. Damaged ceiling tiles and the missing tiles in the junior and senior high rooms have been replaced. Trustees are searching for someone to remove snow from the sidewalks around the church. If anyone is interested, please contact Pastor Terri or Bruce Wood.

**Church Council** also met on 1/16 and the following reports were made by committee representatives.

Margie Delheimer reported that the **SAM Pantry Executive committee** has been formed, as directed by Church Council. Members are: David Butler, Margie Delheimer, Jerry Leonard, Jerry Reynolds, Darcey Sementi, and Dorothy Voyles. There is one vacant position to be filled on the committee. A person from the committee will be designated as the church council representative and will be responsible for making a SAM pantry status report at each council meeting. The committee will be meeting soon to determine their recommendation regarding the monthly fee that the pantry will make to TUMC's general operating funds. The committee's recommendation will be presented at the March 20 council meeting.

**Pastor Terri** reported that next month she will be gone for 10 days on a trip to Israel with the Bishop Frank Beard and others.

**Children, Youth & Families** Director, Cheryl Warren, reported that youth group is being opened up to include fifth graders. TUMC will be hosting a one-day conference on February 11 for all children in first through fifth grades. Vacation Bible School will take place in June. Cheryl will be teaching arts and crafts to children who attend "Upward Camp" in July.

Treasurer, Dave Butler, shared from the **Finance** committee that final adjustments are being made to the 2022 financial statements and, as soon as this is completed, the 2022 final financial reports will be sent to Church Council members. The council voted and passed a motion to add the finance chair as an authorized signer for the funds invested with Edward Jones. See the previous finance committee paragraph in this article for additional information.

Judy Schenkel, **Trustee** representative, reported to the council that a new refrigerator has been purchased for the kitchen. See the previous paragraph in this article relating to trustees for more work by them.

Mary Ann Pattenaude described the process and time required to edit and upload videos of the church services to YouTube and Facebook for streaming as a part of the **Worship** committee's work. After discussion, a motion was made and passed to upload the January worship services to YouTube with a notice directing viewers to the church's Facebook page after Sunday, January 29.

Moving forward, the worship services will only be uploaded to Facebook for streaming.

**SPRC** chair, Mary Ann Pattenaude reported that Church Leader Training is being offered by the district on January 28 in Gilman, February 5 in Tolono, and February 16 virtually. Church council members are encouraged to attend. No return date has been set for custodian, Kathleen Dyer so, in the meantime, Anna Dvorachek will continue to fill in. Cheryl Bozarth will be training as back-up to the church secretary regarding all financial tasks. Sarah Evans, church secretary, will be on maternity leave until March 3. She will be working part-time from home to handle the financial tasks such as payroll and bill paying, and will submit a timecard for hours worked.

**TUWF** chair, Georgia Wilkinson, shared that the mother-daughter dinner is scheduled for April 20.

Jerry Leonard reported that he is working on coordinating a meeting with church men to discuss the future of **UMM**.

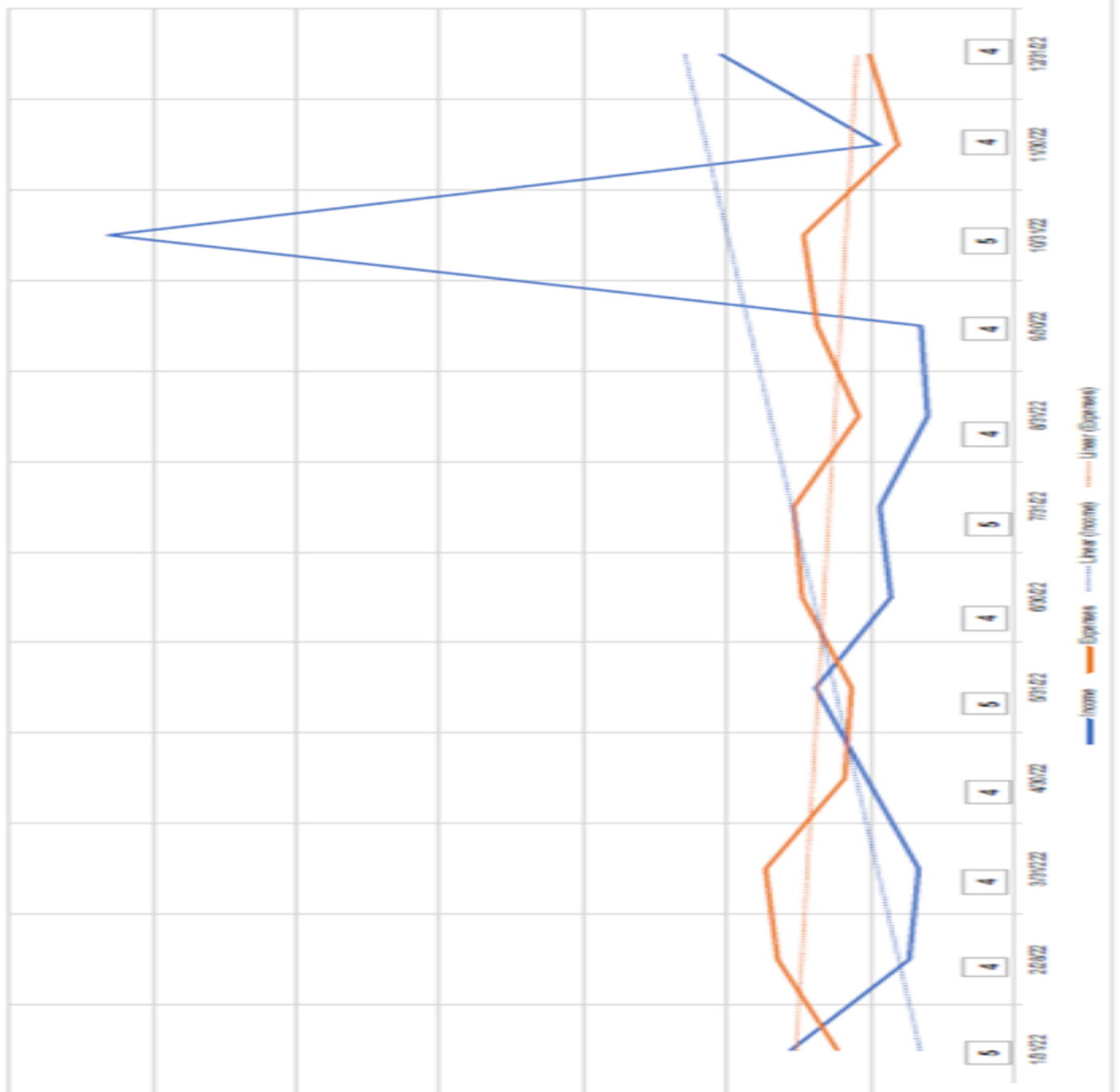
Pastor Terri reported that the **Nominations** committee is looking for 2-3 members.

The **Christian Justice** committee will be showing the PBS film “Growing up Trans” on February 26 at 6:00 PM according to council representative Judy Landeck. All are invited to attend and a discussion will follow.

The next church council meeting is March 20, 2023 at 6:00 PM in the church library. If anyone has an issue to bring before the Council, you are allotted five minutes at the beginning of the meeting in which to do so.

As always, if you have questions or comments, you may contact me, Karen Benner, at [kbbenner@gmail.com](mailto:kbbenner@gmail.com) or by phone at 217-721-7750.

TUMC Finance History  
12 Month Income and Expense Ending 12/31/22



# FROM the Youth director

Brrrrrrrr!!! It is still cold outside. Oh wait, its still only January. That's ok, we warmed up by a great night of roller skating and fellowship. We had a blast with over 60 people joining us for a really fun event. We had pizza, laser tag, neon golf, child play zone and of course an arcade. This was our second year of doing this and its wonderful to provide our congregation with a fun family night out together. If anyone would like to donate to the roller skating event that would be great. Just write roller skating children's ministry on your check or donation. Thank you so much in advance.

I have some exciting news to share with you. We are creating our own Children's Choir room. The room will be the old High School Youth Group room. The room will be kid friendly and awesome. Ingrid and I are super excited to get this new area ready for our children. The room will have a piano and any other instruments we may need to engage our children into the world of music.

On a another note, the children's ministry has just purchased our first 2 flocks of chicks for Heifer International this week. We used funds from the last coffee hour we did. Thank you so much to everyone who donated during that time. Look for in the future for a couple other fund raising events to purchase more supplies for Heifer.

Thank you and have a wonderful day,  
Cheryl

connect.

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## Our Staff

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