

The Messenger

N. Ft. Myers Church of the Nazarene

A loving, caring, serving community of believers in Jesus

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To Love or Not to Love

February, a month to remember many things – but most likely, we often think of it as the month when we celebrate romantic love. Valentine’s Day – many believe – was thought up by the greeting card companies to sell more cards or perhaps by the chocolate companies or the flower companies. Truthfully, we can search for a long time to learn the origin of this day of celebrating love, but we’ll find lots of differing explanations. Similarly, there are lots of differing opinions on the day itself. Some see it as a day to honor the ones they love. While others scoff at the celebration for all kinds of personal reasons.

In whatever way we wish to define it or view it, can there really be any harm in focusing any day on the topic of love? As believers, perhaps no subject should define any day we live more than the subject of love. Sadly, too many believers see love as some sort of lofty preference of one person for another. However, Jesus prefers that that preference should always be for Him first – (see Luke 14:26).

Really, we should not wonder at the confusion we have over what love really means and what it should really look like. It is a hard word to define, and an even harder word to live out. The difficulty lies in the ways in which scripture defines and portrays true love.

Greater love has no one than this, that a person will lay down his life for his friends. John 15:13

There is no fear in love, but perfect love drives out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love. We love, because He first loved us. If someone says, “I love God,” and yet he hates his brother or sister, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother and sister whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. And this commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God must also love his brother and sister. I John 4:18-21

It is certainly clear in just those two passages of scripture that defining love, understanding love, and putting love into practice, are very different. We do not typically consider what we must lose when we practice love as GOD requires us to practice it, do we? In our humanity, we like to think of the sweet feelings love conjures up and the personal satisfaction we receive when we receive love. Seldom do we first consider what we must lose when we practice love as we are meant to practice it.

Practicing love means allowing GOD to remove qualities we may have been clinging to such as insincerity and pride and selfishness. As believers, we also must realize that GOD did not love us because we were lovable, but simply because it was in His nature to do so. And it may bring up that warm, fuzzy feeling again to know that He loved us when we were unlovable – until we consider His command in John 15:12 to “*love one another as I have loved you.*” That kind of love means in the same way He loved us when we were unlovable, He is going to bring people into our lives who are not going to be easy to love, and we will need to love them just the same.

This month of focusing on love should stand to remind us that the incredible grace GOD showed us by loving us when we were unlovable should compel us to love the same way. It may make us feel sad when we consider that it is necessary for us to love – even those who irritate us and with whom we do not agree. But consider how irritating we may have been to GOD, or how disagreeable we have acted toward Him. The question for us is whether we are prepared to be so closely identified with Jesus that when the world looks at us, they see His sweetness and His compassion and His grace. It is a behavior that we will either allow to be nurtured and grow in us, or one we will ignore and decide not to demonstrate. To love or not to love – that is the choice. Pastor Becky

February Calendar

- 9 – Church Board Meeting
- 12-13 – Church Yard Sale
- 14 – The Cragun's in Concert
Happy Valentine's Day



February Birthdays & Anniversaries

- 2 – Katy Garner
Carole Dillehay
- 9 – Butch Heath
- 10 – Dave & Kathy Parker
- 14 – Donna Souzis
- 19 – Bill Predko
- 24 – Larry Wills
- 27 – Denise Ballentine
Jerry & Doretta Parker

Prayer Needs:

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|---|---------------------|
| Ben Bergman | Eloise Garner |
| Ronnie Kiser | John Davis Family |
| June Carsey | Drew Baker |
| Shelby Pickett | Elis Lodge |
| Rev. Greg Story, D.S. | Eileen Massett |
| Paul Jones | Tom Blakeman |
| Dorothy Chapman | Paul & Grace Boling |
| Mark & Kim Barr | Louis Perez |
| Kenny & Gail Goodman | Eileen Jennings |
| Children & Teen Depts. | Unsaved Loved Ones |
| Those affected negatively by the Corona Virus | |

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| Patrick Lindsey | Phoebe Barr |
| Lisa Koch | Rev. Jim Spear |
| Amanda Blackburn | Anna Marie Anderson |
| Rev. Dan Copp | Cindy Jones' son |
| Dave Peck | Ernie Rybold |
| Joseph Groves | Regina Williams & Fam |
| Lorraine Jungles | Laurel Chapman |
| The Monroe Family | Our District Family |
| Doug Keuther | The Church Roof |
| Youth, Children's and Worship Leaders | |



Friday, February 12 and Saturday, February 13 – 7 A.M. to 2:00 P.M.

It's not too late to bring in your gently used items and see Lucille Logan.

Beginning sometime in January, we will begin live streaming our services not only on our church's Facebook page, but also to our YouTube page. Further information on that will be coming soon. If you download the phone app for the church, this will allow you to simply tap on the church's service

Also, we are keeping our church directory updated on our webpage. If you would like to access the directory online, simply go to our website: nfmnazarene.com and scroll to the very bottom of the screen. There is a picture of a lock that you can click on and enter a password to have access. If you want that password, please contact Pastor Van or Pastor Becky.