

February 2025



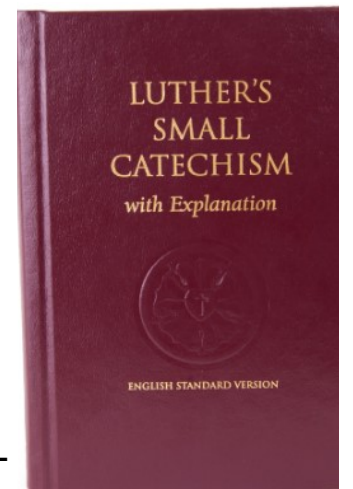
The Mountain Top Messenger

February 2025

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
Elders: Feb. 2 Doug 5 Scott 9 JohnS 12 Darryl 16 Randy 19 JohnP 23 Scott 26 Doug Mar. 2 JohnS 5 Darryl						1
2 8:45am Sunday School 9:00am Worship Service 10:15am Bible Study 2:00pm LGP	3 10:00am Bible Study Dartball Bye	4	5 6:00pm Worship Service	6	7	8
9 8:45am Sunday School 9:00am Worship Service 10:15am Bible Study	10 10:00am Bible Study Dartball 7:00pm. Zion vs. Salem 2	11 1:00pm Sewing Circle	12 6:00pm Worship Service	13	14	15
16 8:45am Sunday School 9:00am Worship Service	17 5:30pm Council Mtg Dartball 7:00pm. Zion at Messiah	18	19 1:00pm Hospice Group-Gathering 6:00pm Worship Service	20 9:00am Winkel	21	22
23 8:45am Sunday School 9:00am Worship Service	24 Dartball 7:00pm. Zion at Sanborn	25 1:00pm Sewing Circle	26 6:00pm Worship Service	27 1:30pm Northern Lights	28	

Well, here we are February, first month of the promised monthly writing on the Ten Commandments. And here I am backing off just a hair, let me explain. I am indeed planning on covering the Ten Commandments this year and as I started preparing what I wanted to say about the first commandment, I realized two things. First, there are eleven months remaining in the year and second, I realized that I wanted to talk a little about the small catechism itself as it will be the source of most of our facts on the doctrinal side of my writings. So other than that I am about ready to begin, February looks like a normal month with Lent not starting until March 9th, so we will have some stuff planned for then, but we can talk about that later. So with that being said, let us begin.

First a little history, as you may already know, Dr. Martin Luther wrote his small catechism in 1529 with it first being published in May of that year. This is essentially the same catechism that we use today. In our newest synodical rendition Luther's catechism goes from page 12 to page 40, and covers the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles Creed, The Sacrament of Baptism, Confession, the Sacrament of the Altar, Daily Prayers, Table of Duties, and Christian Questions with their answers. A lot of information jammed into 28 pages. The remaining 400 pages of the book are the explanation, this is not Luther's work but has been created by the Synod to help address and answer question that may arise and may not be covered by the small catechism itself. All of the answers in the explanation are both Biblically and doctrinally sound and in the newest version, copyright 2017, includes even more Biblically supportive references.



So the question might be raised; why do we need a catechism? A good question and I believe Luther's response to that question would be fun to look at, I am not going to insert the whole thing, but I believe this first part is the most direct and to the point, while hitting the nail most soundly on the head. To preface his writing just a bit, Luther went on a tour of what might be considered his district to check on the state of the churches there, here are his findings:

"The deplorable, miserable condition which I discovered lately when I, too, was a visitor, has forced and urged me to prepare [publish] this Catechism, or Christian doctrine, in this small,

FEBRUARY Altar Guild
 Eleanor Munson 715-682-8155
 Jane Hauser 715-779-5298



plain, simple form. Mercy! Good God! what manifold misery I beheld! The common people, especially in the villages, have no knowledge whatever of Christian doctrine, and, alas! many pastors are altogether incapable and incompetent to teach [so much so, that one is ashamed to speak of it]. Nevertheless, all maintain that they are Christians, have been baptized and receive the [common] holy Sacraments. Yet they [_do not_ understand and] cannot [_even_] recite either the Lord's Prayer, or the Creed, or the Ten Commandments; they live like dumb brutes and irrational hogs; and yet, now that the Gospel has come, they have nicely learned to abuse all liberty like experts." (Luther's Preface to the Small Catechism, Pg 363)

One of the things I find refreshing in Dr. Luther's writings is that he has a habit of not pulling any punches and while I would image his congregations wouldn't particularly enjoy being called dumb brutes and irrational hogs, sometimes, the truth hurts. And at this time in history, the church was hurting, and a large part of that was through lack of knowledge. And as you can see it was not only the laity but the clergy as well. At this same time Luther also wrote his Large Catechism which was intended more for the clergy and lay leaders, and if you have never read it I would indeed recommend it. It is very similar in style and layout as the small catechism, however in much more detail.

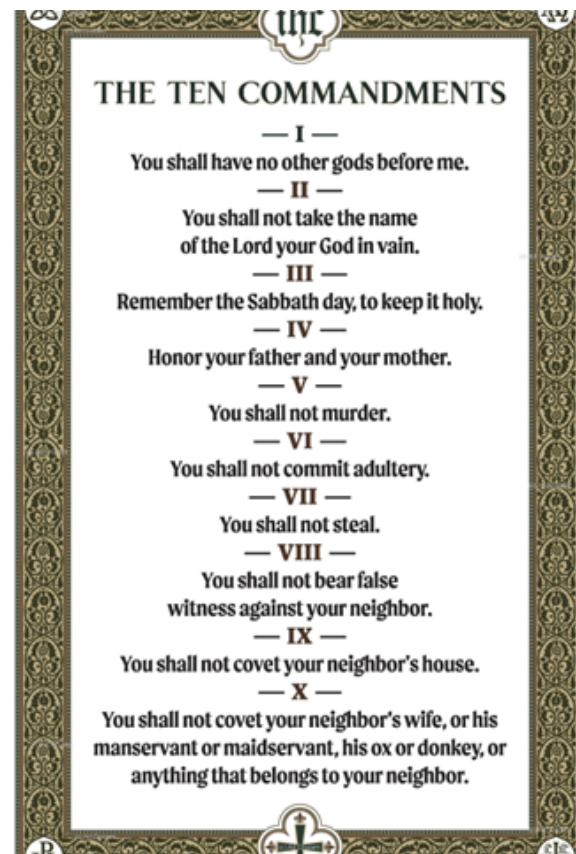
One other thing we should note is Luther took several steps to help with the instruction of the small catechism. In his original catechism he included wood block prints on each of the subjects, these were designed to help those who could not read, follow along, and understand what was being taught. He also put the responsibility of teaching the catechism on the head of the household. It wasn't the pastor or priest who was to do the teach, but the head of the household, in most cases the husband/father in the house. At that time it was the pastor who was to be the examiner.

As we go forward, starting next month with our First Commandment I hope this background information was helpful to you. I have small printed files of just the original catechism available at no cost and if you would like a copy of the newest printed catechism book, we can get those for you and I believe they run about \$10-15 a copy, if you don't have one, and by the way, there is nothing wrong with the older versions, such as the blue one or the maroon one, they still contain a lot of good information. If you would ever like to discuss any of the items you may run across in there please feel free to see me anytime.

Next month, the First Commandment: **Thou Shalt Have No Other Gods.**

The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you, the Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

Pastor Rick



Her Injured Dog Taught Her to Trust in God

Rebecca Ondov

A trip to the vet became a lesson in overcoming doubt.

I fidgeted as I sat in the veterinarian clinic with Sunrise, my golden retriever, waiting for the doctor to come into the room. Blood ran from Sunrise's right ear, down her golden coat, and pooled on the floor. She had ripped it open on some barbed wire fence, and it wouldn't stop bleeding. I gently touched her ear and cooed, "The doctor will get you fixed up." I wished that my own problems could be fixed so easily. I was [facing a major decision](#), which I had prayed about. Just when I thought I had received the answer, I'd begun to doubt and spiral backward.



Sunrise wagged her tail as the veterinarian walked into the room, but when the doctor reached for her ear, she turned her head. No matter how the doctor tried, Sunrise kept her ear out of reach.

Frustrated, the doctor stepped back at the same time [I thought of a solution](#). Sunrise's right ear was next to me. I reached down and gently flipped her ear flap to the left side of her head, the side the doctor was on. The doctor easily examined the ear—Sunrise thought it was me touching her ear.

I grinned. "She wouldn't let you touch it because she didn't trust you." Those words struck me. I had some trust issues, too. My doubts about my decision were the result of not [trusting God](#).

In time, Sunrise healed, and so did I. By investing time with God and recounting his faithfulness toward me, I committed to trust him.

Lord, thank you for your faithfulness. Amen.



ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

1111-11TH AVE WEST

Sunday Worship Service 9:00am live streamed

Wednesday Evening Service 6:00pm

Sunday School - 1st – 7th grade Sunday 8:45am (Sept.-May)

Bible Studies Sundays 8:15am Mondays 10:00am

Pastor Rick Williams - 715-209-0479

Office Hours: M /T/Th 9-5 Wed. 12-8 Fri. off

Please call ahead if you need to speak with Pastor.

Office Secretary Lynn Ladd 715-682-6075 Office Hours M/T/Wed 8:30-2:30

Days and times may change.

Church President: John Pruss 715-292-4825 **Head Elder:** Darryl Warren 715-492-0488

Little Friends of Jesus Child Care Center: 715-682-5185

PRAYERS for Home-bound, Assisted Living, Nursing Home

Those who aren't able to attend common worship that they would find comfort knowing that the Lord is with them.

Ingrid Pocernich

Arlene Zimmerman

Violet Basina

PRAYERS FOR PROTECTION

For our full-time troops and public servants, for travel, missionaries, and for peace and protection for families.

David Wright

Jordan Thimm

Andrew Pruss

PRAYERS FOR HEALTH AND HEALING

For good test results, treatment, positive thinking, healing, and comfort during cancer treatments, for those suffering from addiction, mental illness and for healing, strength, comfort, and peace for family we pray for:

Brad Prill

Harold Larson

Tim Erickson

Janet Houle

Riley Bretting

Karen Piff

Chuck Sandor

Sheryl Hildebrandt

Judith Wismeth

Tom Anderson

Wayne

Vi Basina

Linda Stenroos

Patty Hmielewski

Pam Ekholm

Mike Trimble

Molly Colgrove

Carl Kubley

Dwayne Lynch

Don Pocernich

Larry Hildibrandt

Casey

James Fletcher

Steve Key

Jean Wickman

Nick Frisco

Jamie Klema

Linda Parrish

Mary Dahl

Sandy Bosma

Bill Swartz

Karen

Chuck



and those in our hearts

Immanuel, Mellen and Trinity, Berglund Congregations while they seek a new Pastor.

Merciful Lord, I lift up all those in need of healing to you today. I pray for your healing touch to be upon their bodies, minds and spirits, for complete and swift restoration of health. I ask that you grant them peace and comfort in the midst of any pain or suffering they may be experiencing. I trust in your goodness and faithfulness, and give you all the glory. Amen.

What is Happiness?

Even though it's a basic human emotion, the subject of happiness can be a tough nut to crack. Merriam-Webster defines happiness as "a state of well-being and contentment." That's a short definition that might leave us with more questions than answers. Can happiness quotes give us a better idea? What exactly is happiness? How do we find it? Is happiness found within? Is happiness found with others? There are enough questions out there to make us realize happiness might be harder to pinpoint than we thought. One way we can attempt to understand happiness is by looking at what others have to say about it. Poets, priests, monks and musicians throughout history have tried to explain happiness. Here are some uplifting quotes about happiness to help you understand what happiness is and maybe even find it. May they help you feel your own sense of happiness, whatever that means for you.

Quotes on the Pursuit of Happiness

The U.S. Declaration of Independence states that we have a right to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." These four quotes dig deeper into what finding happiness actually means.

- "To increase your happiness... randomly wish for somebody else to be happy." — *Chade-Meng Tan, author and philanthropist*
- "Happiness isn't on the road to anything... happiness is the road." — *Bob Dylan, quoting his grandmother*
- "Happiness often sneaks through a door you don't know you left open!" — *Susan J. Decuir, author*
- "Of course, it's not possible to experience constant euphoria, but if you're grateful you can find happiness in everything." — *Pharrell Williams, singer*

Quotes About Happiness from Within

Many poets and philosophers have long told us happiness can only be found within us. Do you agree? Here are four quotes about find-

ing happiness within to help you decide for yourself.

- "Happiness is a product of attitude and thought. It comes from you, not to you." — *Richard Daly, author*
- "Happiness for me is peace of mind. Being at peace with myself, at peace with God, at peace with my family." — *Mary J. Blige, singer*
- "Happiness floats. It doesn't need you to hold it down. It doesn't need anything." — *Naomi Shihab Nye, poet*

"Happiness is knowing there is a God...and being on speaking terms with him." — *Nancy M. Nichols, teacher*

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Happiness

ALTAR GUILD Currently we are not actively seeking any donations for the Altar Guild, but we are in need of help with flowers for the altar during the year other than Easter and Christmas. Open to any and all suggestions for this issue. You can contact Paula Pruss 715-292-1898 or any of the Altar Guild members for more information.



Zion Lutheran Church Council

January 20, 2025

Call to Order – John Pruss, President

Opening Prayer – Pastor Williams

Roll Call – John Pruss, President

Nick Jarvela, Trustees

JoAnn Martikonis, LFOJ

Pastor Williams

Darryl Warren, Elders & Education

Jule Jarvela, Secretary

Tami Thimm, Financial Secretary

Approval of Minutes – 1- Darryl Warren 2- Nick Jarvela MMC

Pastor's Report – Advent and Christmas went well, Winkel at Zion, services on Feb. 16 & 23 will be filled by Pastor Hyvonen

Approval of Treasurer's Report – printed

Approval of Agenda - 1 – Nick Jarvela 2- Darryl Warren MMC

Board Report

Elders & Education – None

Trustees – Insurance – deductible increase to control costs. Looking at other options, striker plate on office door replaced, lift continues to be out of order

Financial Secretary – None

LFOJ – printed budget, currently 25 children (20 fulltime)

Evangelism – Working in Youth Gathering fundraisers, Church PR

Official Acts – Baptism – Dec. 28, 2024 – Miles Cooper Moore

Old Business – None

New Business

Hospice asked for a 12 month extension on holding their monthly meeting at Zion

Darryl Warren 2- Nick Jarvela MMC

Pastor looking into places to purchase new computers for offices

Next Council Meeting – February 17, 2025 at 5:30 PM

Men's Dartball

Feb. 3rd Bye

Feb. 10th vs. Salem 2

Feb. 17th at Messiah

Feb. 24th at Sanborn MC



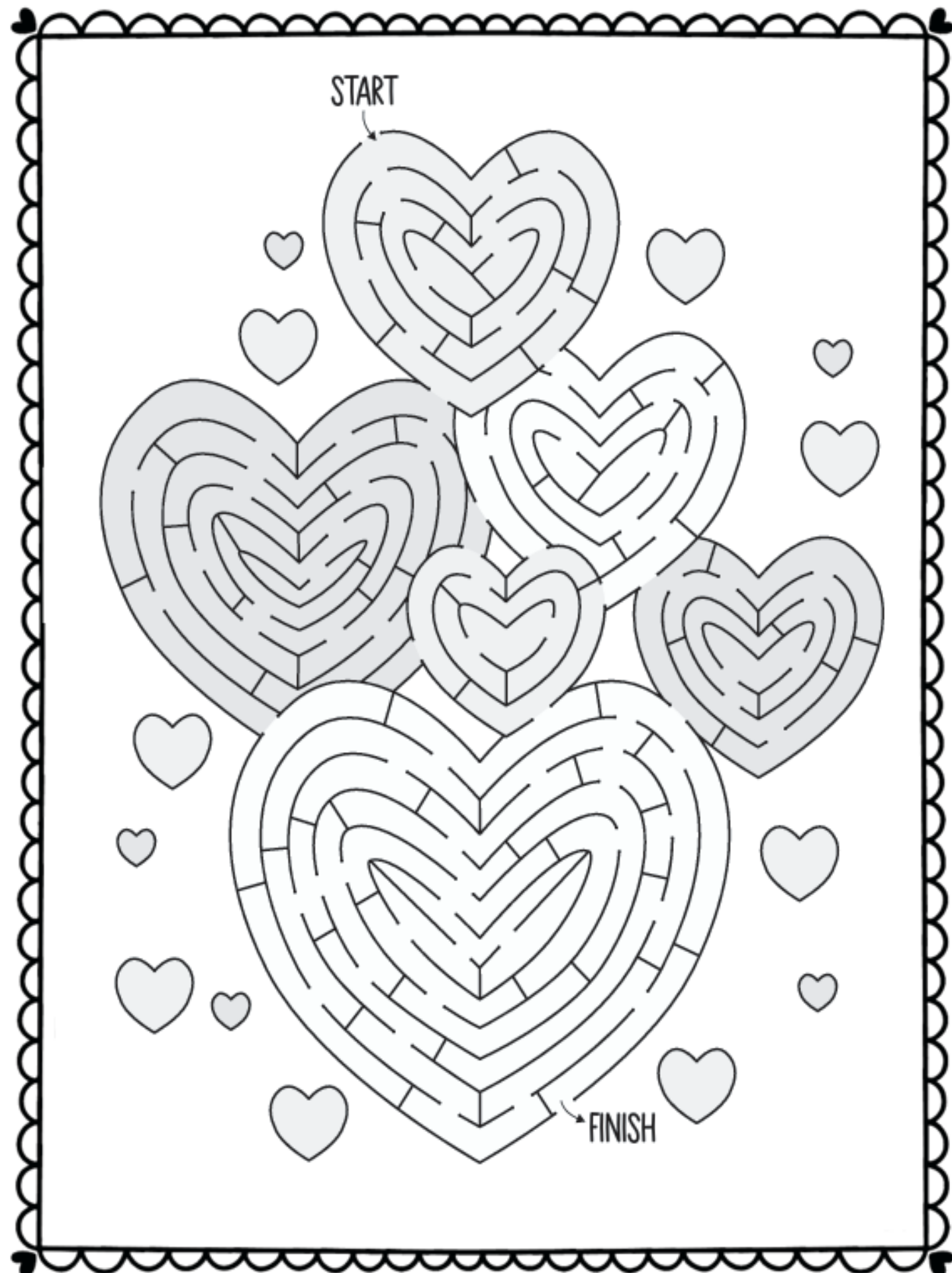
Mar. 3rd Make-up

games

Mar. 10th & 17th

Tournaments

VALENTINE'S DAY



- LOVE
- HEART
- CUPID
- ROSES
- CANDY
- HUG
- KISS
- DATE
- CARDS
- GIFTS
- FLOWERS
- CHOCOLATE
- SWEET
- FRIEND
- PINK
- RED
- LETTER
- CRUSH
- ROMANCE
- BALLOON
- JOY
- SMILE
- HAPPY
- CHERISH
- ADORE
- DEAR
- DARLING
- BELOVED
- VALENTINE
- FEBRUARY
- COUPLE
- EMBRACE
- PASSION
- AFFECTION
- TENDER
- LOVEBIRD
- SWEETHEART
- FRIENDSHIP
- FOREVER
- FAITHFUL
- ENAMORED
- CHARM
- BOUQUET
- ADMIRER
- PROPOSAL
- ENGAGE
- UNITY
- WHISPER
- ENCHANT
- GIGGLES
- JEWEL
- PRECIOUS
- DESIRE
- DEVOTION
- HARMONY
- PARTNER
- WARMTH
- GENTLE
- FONDNESS
- SOULMATE
- TRUST
- CARING
- ADMIRE
- BOND
- COMPANIONSHIP
- DAZZLE
- ELEGANCE
- FIDELITY
- GRACE
- HEARTFELT
- INSPIRATIONAL
- JOYFUL
- KINDNESS
- LOYAL
- MAGICAL
- NURTURING
- OPTIMISTIC
- PASSIONATE
- QUAINT
- RELIABLE
- SERENE
- THOUGHTFUL
- UNIQUE
- VIBRANT
- WONDERFUL
- XOXO
- YOUTHFUL
- ZEALOUS
- BLUSH
- CELEBRATE
- DREAMY
- ETERNITY
- FLIRT
- GLOW
- HAPPINESS
- INVITATION
- JOYOUS
- KEEPSAKE
- LAUGHTER
- MEMORIES

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S	R	T	P	E	P	A	S	V	M	P	H	V	B	U	Q	T	S	K	Z	H	U	D	H	R

LOVE IS

1 Corinthians 13:13

So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three;
but the greatest of these is love.



The Call of Jeremiah

"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations." Jeremiah 1:5 (NIV)

Choose the word that best matches the definition.

1. To be brought into life by birth
A. child B. prophet C. rescue D. born
2. To utter words with the mouth; to talk
A. prophet B. speak C. mouth D. born
3. A very young person
A. child B. speak C. afraid D. mouth
4. A person who speaks for God
A. speak B. prophet C. child D. word
5. To be filled with fear
A. mouth B. prophet C. born D. afraid
6. The body opening through which we take in food
A. child B. rescue C. born D. mouth
7. Something said; a remark, or comment
A. afraid B. prophet C. rescue D. word
8. To save or set free
A. speak B. born C. afraid D. rescue

kind

protects

wrongs

patient

proud

What is Love?

Love is p__t__e__t.

Love is k__n__.

It does not e__v__.

It does not b__a__t.

It is not p__o__d.

It does not d__s__o__o__ others.

It is not s__l__-s__e__i__g.

It is not easily a__g__r__d.

It keeps no record of w__o__g__.

Love does not delight in evil but

r__j__i__e__ with the t__u__h.

It always p__o__e__t__, always t__u__t__,

always h__p__s, always p__r__e__e__e__.

rejoices

angered

self seeking

1 Corinthians 13:4-7

hopes

truth

trusts

envy

dishonor

perseveres

boast

Life Lessons from Gracie the Dog

By Edward Grinnan

See life through the eyes of love in this uplifting devotion from [Daily Guideposts](#).

“Be kind and compassionate to one another; forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.”—Ephesians 4:32 (NIV)

If looks could kill, I'd have been dead twice over.

[I'd taken Gracie to one of her favorite places](#)—Tractor Supply Company. Gracie has trained the cashiers there to give her treats, planting her big paws on the counter. Smart girl. But I had a secret agenda, and when Gracie perceived my nefarious plan, I got the look.

A bath.

At the rear of the store is a little doggie spa with tubs, shampoo, towels, blow dryers, combs, everything you need to bathe your dog.

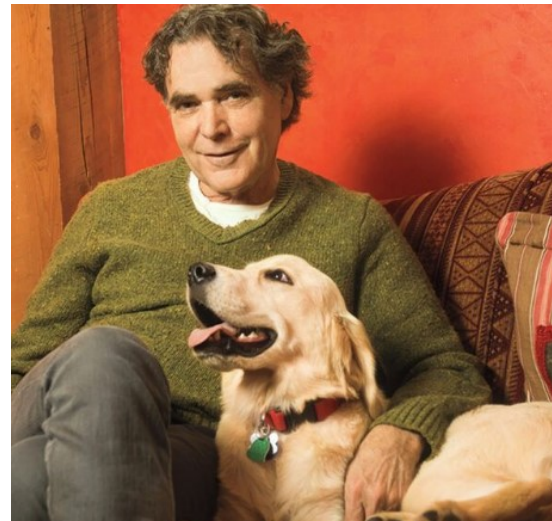
I've never understood how a dog who loves to roll in mud finds a bath so objectionable. I talk softly to her and ply her with treats, and she still acts as if she's been led to the gallows.

At home, she retires to one of her several beds and shows me her back. Turning their backs is a way dogs sometimes demonstrate that they are upset with you. Today she was particularly adamant in her affect. Even when [I brought her a peace offering](#)—a bit of string cheese, her favorite—she snatched the treat from me without making eye contact.

So I settled in to watch the Yankees drop another game to the Rays. I was nodding off when I felt a cold nudge on my hand. Gracie. She looked up at me as if to say, “[All is forgiven](#). Let's be friends again.”

Forgiveness is difficult. I'm not always as magnanimous as my dog. [I can cling to a grudge](#). Maybe I derive satisfaction in nursing a sense of injustice. Yet I know that [forgiveness is a necessary ingredient in a strong faith](#). Jesus came to earth to forgive our sins. We are expected to forgive. I scratched behind Gracie's ears, and she laid her head on my knee. It was nice to be friends again.

Lord, you know I have trouble forgiving a wrong. Today help me let go of a resentment and take a closer step toward you. Amen.



JANUARY LFOJ NEWSLETTER

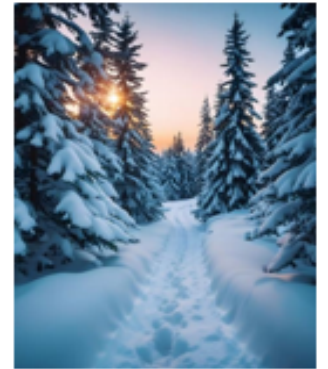
Dear parents and guardians, Happy New Year!

TOTVILLE NEWS: Greetings from the Infant Room!

We hope everyone had a happy Christmas! Happy birthday to Lovell on January 18th. She has joined her friends Jurek and Lyla in the Toddler Room. All three of them come to our door from time to time for a hug or to say hi.

There's never a dull moment. The babies keep us on our toes! We welcomed Gabriel and Adalynn, our newest and youngest babies. We enjoy watching the children grow and learn. They change so fast! Seeing them interact with each other is quite entertaining at times. They are developing friendships already at such an early age.

Happy New Year! - Denise and Nikki



TODDLER TIDBITS: The Toddler room learned lots about community helps this month! February will be filled with lessons on love and kindness.

I bought Valentine's Day bags for each child to hand out their Valentines to friends. Since we do have some students with allergies, just bringing in paper Valentines saying "from _____" would be perfect!

I will bring in the snacks that I know the kids can have.
Happy Valentine's Day! -Jane and Michelle

LEARNER LANE: Our themes this month have included snow, winter clothing, winter play, and Arctic animals!

Our Bible stories have been Moses and the tent of meeting, the baptism of Jesus, Baby Moses and Jesus calls Peter.

We welcomed Josie to the Learner Room this month! We are so excited to have her down here with us.

The Learner room will be participating in a Valentine's exchange in February! Keep an eye out for a message on [Brightwheel](#) with more details and a list of names.

Stay warm and have a wonderful rest of your January!

God Bless,

Tressa Groom Director JoAnn Martikonis Administrator

Watching a movie recently, I couldn't hear the dialogue over the chatter of the two women in front of me. Unable to bear it any longer, I tapped one of them on the shoulder. "Excuse me," I said. "I can't hear." "I should hope not," she answered. "This is a private conversation."