

The Crosswalk

First Christian Church
2501 N Park Lane
Altus, OK 73521

FEBRUARY
2017



Love

In February everybody's thinking about *love*. There are reminders all over the place that Valentine's Day is just around the corner. The seasonal aisle in the stores have red and pink hearts, chocolates, balloons, flowers, and anything else they can think to stock that says, "I love you." All the TV commercials mention it in some way. There's just no getting around it this time of year. There's a reason that in college all of my single friends and myself used to call Valentine's Day, Singles Awareness Day. When you have someone special in your life this is a beautiful and wonderful time of year, but when you're alone all of the attention society puts on love is like salt in a fresh wound.

We've probably all heard this sermon before, but it bears repeating, especially this time of year. The Greeks had three different words for love. The first is *storge*, it's loving because you have to. The love you have for your parents, your siblings; it's this loyalty that you instinctively have. It's not necessarily because you have to, but it's a love born out of loyalty. It's what parents are talking about when they say, "I don't care if you like your sister or not, you're going to love her anyway!"

Then there was *eros*. This is sexual love. Sensual, impulsive, spontaneous, love. It's the husband/wife passionate, "I want to kiss you right now" kind of love. Unfortunately, this is what most people in our culture envision when they say the word love and it frequently gets in the way of people trying to express other kinds of love. Rather than being misunderstood to mean something erotic people will just not express their love.

The third word they used was *phileo*. This is the best friend kind of love. Philadelphia, the city of brotherly love gets its name from this word. It's loving someone like they were your brother. You don't love them out of some loyalty you have together, but because they are your friend and you are that close.


But where does the love Jesus talked about fit in this system? Jesus talked about loving your enemies, loving those who persecute you, those beneath you, and those who can't love you back like widows and orphans. The Love Jesus spoke of doesn't fit into a system where you love because you must, because you're attracted to them, or because you like them. So Christians took a lackluster, really non-descript word, and applied it to Jesus' type of love and said this is *agape*.

In John 15 Jesus said, "Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends." Jesus' love isn't the "love because you have to", or "because you're attracted to them", or "because they're your buddy;" it's just because. He would later prove those words by laying down his own life for ours. Then, in that same passage, Jesus says to love each other as he loved us, and that's hard. It's easy to love people out of loyalty, it's easy to love someone that's pretty, and it's easy to love people that we like. However, it's hard to love people who are mean to us. It's hard to love the annoying, and the smelly. When I look into the empty tomb and realize that Jesus gave his life for me not because he had to, not because I earned it, or even because I'm so very pretty, but just because, I realize that all those other types of love are insufficient, as are my responses to people I'd rather not love.

On Valentine's Day people like to emphasize the *eros* type of love. However, if you're single, dating, engaged, married, divorced, widowed, or something else, you are loved more than you can possibly imagine. You are loved for who you are. You are loved because of who you are. And yes, you are loved, at times, in spite of who you are. But you have a Father in heaven who loves you. Maybe if we focused more on that this February we might all have a happy Valentine's Day and we might be able to show other people that they are loved as well.

Happy February,
Pastor Ben

FEBRUARY 2017

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1 LBS 9:30AM PRAY 5:30PM ABS 6:30PM	2 WORSHIP MTG 6:30PM	3	4
5 GS 4:00PM SS 9:30AM WS 10:30AM	6	7 ADMIN MTG 6:00PM EDUCATION MTG 6:30PM	8 LBS 9:30AM PRAY 5:30 PM ABS 6:30PM	9 ELDERS 6:00PM DEACONS 6:30PM BOARD 7:00PM	10	11
12 SS 9:30AM WS 10:30AM	13	14 HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY 	15 LBS 9:30AM F/ S&A MTG PRAY 5:30 PM LBS 6:30PM	16	17	18
19 GS 4:00PM SS 9:30AM WS 10:30AM	20 OFFICE CLOSED PRESIDENT'S DAY	21 FSG 6:00PM	22 LBS 9:30AM PRAY 5:30 PM ABS 6:30PM	23	24	25
26 SS 9:30AM WS 10:30AM	27	28				



**ABS-ADULT BIBLE STUDY; FSG-FOSTER SUPPORT GROUP; GS-GIRL SCOUTS;
LBS-LADIES BIBLE STUDY; SS-SUNDAY SCHOOL; WS-WORSHIP SERVICE**

Serving In February

February 5

Meditation: Randall Coffman
Com Servers: Bob McGuire, Carol Carson
 *Ruth Carson, Wendi Noon
 Sarah Skiles, Wanda Jones
Nursery: Roma Weinkauff
Children's Church: Dan White
AV Booth: Dan White
Greeters: Bob Clark/FD, John Signorelli/FHD
Com Prep & Clean Up: Shawn & Rebecca Cullen

February 12

Meditation: Lloyd Colston
Com Servers: Doug Tritle, *Iris Felix
 Jane Clark, Matthew Palmer
 Nicole Stanfill, Rebecca Cullen
Nursery: Sarah Skiles
Children's Church: Dan White
AV Booth: Dan White
Greeters: Bob Clark/FD, John Signorelli/FHD
Com Prep & Clean Up: Shawn & Rebecca Cullen

February 19

Meditation: Don Skiles
Com Servers: Kristen Partin, Richard Barnes
 Tara Coffman, *Wanda Jones
 Kristen Partin, Wendi Noon
Nursery: Nicole Stanfill
Children's Church: Dan White
AV Booth: Dan White
Greeters: Bob Clark/FD, John Signorelli/FHD
Com Prep & Clean Up: Shawn & Rebecca Cullen

February 26

Meditation: Dan White
Com Servers: Brenda Gibson, Jackie Morey
 *John Signorelli, Robert Crawford
 Christina Barnes, Richard Barnes
Nursery: Jessica Buxton
Children's Church: Dan White
AV Booth: Dan White
Greeters: Bob Clark/FD, John Signorelli/FHD
Com Prep & Clean Up: Shawn & Rebecca Cullen

In Our Prayers

Yudell Barton
 (Brenda Risner's friend)
Debbie Cleland - cancer
 (Christina Barnes' co-worker)
Mike Chase - colon cancer
 (Jimmy Geigle's friend)
Laurie Cullen - salvation/early onset
 (Shawn Cullen's sister) **Alzheimer's**

Periodically the Prayer List will be updated. If we remove someone that you still want on the list, please let us know and we will be glad to put them back on.

If you have a prayer need or know of any changes, please contact the church office.



Birthdays & Anniversaries

- 02/01 Iris Felix
- 02/06 Jeremy & Jessica Buxton
- 02/07 Christina Barnes
- 02/09 Marilynn Wright
- 02/17 Ruth Carson
- 02/19 Lydia Palmer
- 02/24 Doug Garland



Sunday Services

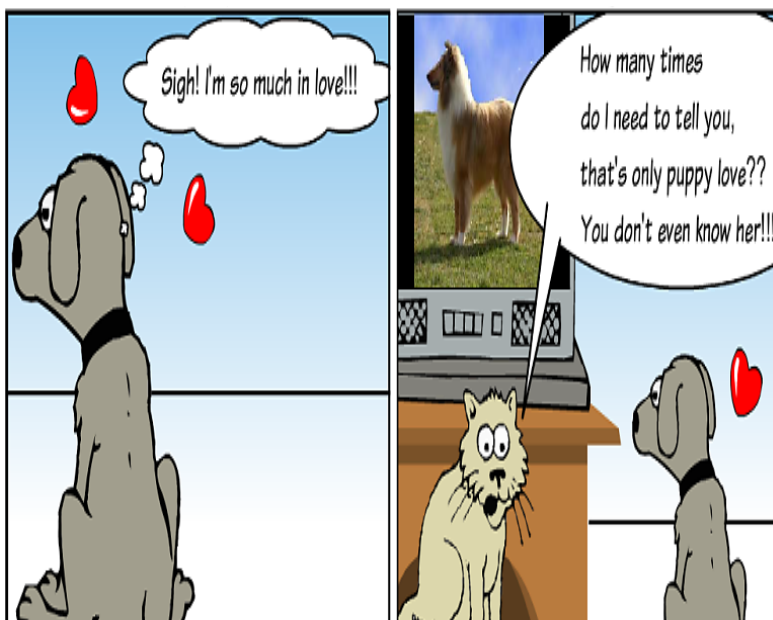
Sunday School 9:30 am
 Worship Service 10:30 am

Wednesday Night

Prayer Hour 5:30 pm
 Adult Bible Study 6:30 pm

Secretary's Report December 2016

Average Attendance	53.4
Average Visitors	6.8
Total Average Attendance	60.2
Total Offerings	\$8,847.00



Your Elders

Phil Carson, Randall Coffman, Doug Dalton
 Gene Drechsler, Jerry Gibson, Jim Jones

Your Deacons

Richard Barnes, Crystal Crawford, Brenda Gibson
 Wanda Jones, Matthew Palmer, Brenda Risner

What is Valentine's Day?"

"It's a day when you give out Valentine's Day cards. I think that's it." Dafna, 5

"I don't know. But you get candy!!" — Anika, 8

"I think you're supposed to find someone cute and hold their hand." Oscar, 6

"Valentine's Day is when you give cards with heart stickers all over them." Dev, 10

"It's a holiday about hearts and love and stuff." Max, 7

"So there was this man, I forget his first name, but his last name was Valentine, and he was a very kind man. And actually, I think his first name was "Kind," and he made up Valentine's Day. It's for people to get together and have fun." Ramona, 8

"It's kind of like Christmas, except not as good." Sophie, 9

"It's like where it's basically you give people cards, and it's "be nice to everybody" day. Like if you see a stranger on the street, you can say, 'Hi.'" Aki, 7

"Valentine's Day is a holiday made by greeting card companies to make money." Iris, 13

"In middle school, you pass out cards and then go home and throw them all out. At least I do. I emailed my classmates a PicCollage I made." Mike, 11

"It's a holiday where you tell the person that you love them. It's the loving holiday!" Olivia, 11

"Valentine's Day is a day you get together with people you love and celebrate caring for each other." Bryan, 14

"It means loving other people and sharing with other people and giving. That's what it's all about. Love." Sachi, 4



Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. 1 John 4:8

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. John 3:16

And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. Colossians 3:14

Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. John 15:13

So Jacob served seven years to get Rachel, but they seemed like only a few days to him because of his love for her. Genesis 29:20

Take delight in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart. Psalm 37:4

Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Romans 12:9