

MALTA UNITED



Methodist Church February 2022

PASTOR JEREMIAH'S MESSAGE

⁷ Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. ⁸ Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. (1 John 4:7-8 NRSV)

Our perceptions of how things are and reality can be different. As a child I perceived that winter started in December (probably due to all those snowflakes and snowmen, Christmas decorations and songs), and I thought of things getting milder by the time we reached February. I have since learned the reality in Illinois, at least our part of it, one is much more likely to see more heavy snow in February than December. (And frankly there is often more snow in March than December.) I needed to change how I thought about things to match reality, and frankly knowing what I know now, I may not like that winter can linger. But it frustrates me less, because I know that is what it is "supposed to do" in our part of the world.

I thought about how our perceptions can be changed by God, and above all, by the love that God demonstrates to us through Jesus Christ. This month of February, cold, grey, and snowy, as it can be, is also the month when we celebrate Valentine's Day and the idea of love. So as I sat down to write this, I

was thinking about love, and how love changes how we see things, and flat-out changes all things.

I believe at the heart of all, God is and God's actions - is love. I believe the core message of Christianity is that God is changing the world through love. I believe the foundation starts at the core of life for those who seek to follow Jesus. They are to love God and love others. How powerful are these words from John that states, "that God is love?"

This month in our worship services we will ponder how we can experience God's love through reading the Bible, and share God's love through evangelism. In both these activities, and all things, I seek to live life through the lens of Jesus - the lens of love. How can love, this beautiful gift from God, guide all we do? How can love help us see reality in a new way, and help us, with God's guidance, make life better for everyone? Let us all consider how love can change our perceptions and show us comforting, beautiful, helpful realities, that help us show love to others.





On Sunday, January 23rd, Joan Tucker was Baptized during our Worship Service by Pastor Jeremiah. She is our church custodian and a friend of our church family at Malta UMC.

Joan Tucker, *"God claims you, God helps you, protects you, and loves you too. We this day do all agree a child of God you'll always be."*



Midwest Mission sends a big thank you for our generous donation of the medical equipment to their mission.

Every donation is a blessing God uses to bless you and others.

Your donation will leave Midwest Mission and be a practical example of God's love in the world to the "least of these". The King will reply, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

Matthew 25:40

It is due to your generosity and partnership with Midwest Missions that we can touch so many lives for Christ around the world and around the corner. Thank you so much for blessing others through the ministry of Midwest Missions.



ASH WEDNESDAY: March 02 Worship Service at 7:00 p.m. with Communion

World Day of Prayer: Friday, March 4

1st SUNDAY IN LENT: March 06th with Communion

Daylight Savings Time starts: Sunday, March 13
(Turn clocks ahead Saturday at midnight)

1st Day of Spring: Sunday, March 20

PALM/PASSION SUNDAY: April 10

HOLY WEEK: April 11 – April 16

HOLY/MAUNDY THURSDAY: April 14 Worship Service at 7 P.M. with Communion.

GOOD FRIDAY: April 15 with Worship Service at 7:00 p.m.

EASTER: April 17



**Afternoon Sunday School:
Loving Like Jesus**

All young children up to 3rd grade are invited to our Afternoon Sunday School this month of February

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on Sunday February 6th and the 20th at 4:00 PM. Through songs, activities, videos, and more we are going to think about how Jesus teaches us to love others. With a focus on what Jesus taught us through his Beatitudes; that is teachings on blessings from the Gospel of Matthew. All young children are invited and to bring their friends. Please contact Pastor Jeremiah or Kitty Jouris.

Also, if you are a youth or an adult and would like to help, please contact Pastor Jeremiah. Lots of loving mentors helps children learn and grow in Jesus!



TODAY'S SISTERS

Today's Sisters will be meeting the 3rd **Thursday** of each month starting this year (2022). They did not meet in January. Their first meeting is **Thursday, February 17th at 9:00 a.m. at Malta UMC.**

Hostess: Vicky Vint

Devotion & Minutes: Kitty Jouris.

Due to Covid restrictions at the church, there will be no refreshments served.

MISSION NEWS

from *Lithuania United Methodist Church*

Rev. Remigijus Matulaitis

Like the rest of the world, Lithuania continues to struggle with the impact of Covid 19 on each of us. We are still able to do in person worship with the help of our Lay Ministers. Jelena and Andrust (two of our pastors) have now moved to minister in Estonia. So our Lay leadership is crucial to us at this point. It means that Rev. Walla (Missionary) and Rev. Remigijus are the only clergy in Lithuania for today. Our churches are open for Sunday services and weekly ministries with minimal restrictions. We are able to sing and share Holy Communion, but keeping within Covid-19 safety instructions and that means no sharing of "passing the peace". We now have virtual quarterly Bible Studies with our "Friends of Lithuania" group.

Thank you for your support of our ministry by your prayers and may God Bless you.

If you wish to send a note, here is there address: Lithuania United Methodist Church, J.Naugardo 8, Kaunas 44280 LT-, Lithuania





A special lady in the community has been making some beautiful Prayer Shawls and has left 5 at our church. If you know of anyone who you could bless with a Prayer Shawl, let Vicke know. We can get more if needed.

One was delivered over Christmas to a member of our church, and another in January and they both loved them. They are beautiful and a wonderful warm gift!



This special lady asked that her name not be posted in the newsletter, but a Big Thank YOU goes out to her for these beautiful Prayer Shawls and for sharing her talent & gifts with us. They are greatly appreciated, especially by those who receive them.

Sorry this group was missed

“Lay Leadership 2021-2022”
in the January newsletter.

WORSHIP MINISTRIES

Jodi Slade, Chair
Nancy Plote, Co-Chair
Ed Cheek
Marcia Hueber
Kitty Jouris
Hope Willrett
Connie Lynch
Vicke Heins
Pastor Jeremiah



HOLD FAST TO THE MAST

Strengthening Our Spiritual Lives CONVOCATION 2022

Saturday, February 12, 2022

9-Noon / Via Zoom

Cost is \$10

Register by February 3

www.umcnic.org/calendar/laity-convocation-2022

This years focus is spiritual formation. In Romans 12 Paul tells us “Don’t be conformed to the patterns of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds.” We can do that by forming and growing our spiritual life.

Speakers:

Kara Lasen Oliver – Associate Publisher with *The Upper Room*

Rev. Dr. Regina Bridges Davis – Spiritual Clinical Counselor & Ordained UMC Deacon

George Groves – NIC United Methodist Men President



Story of St. Valentine

“The story of Valentine's Day begins in the third century with an oppressive Roman emperor and a humble Christian Martyr. The emperor was Claudius II. The Christian was Valentinus.

Claudius had ordered all Romans to worship twelve gods, and had made it a crime punishable by death to associate with Christians. But Valentinus was dedicated to the ideals of Christ; not even the

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threat of death could keep him from practicing his beliefs. He was arrested and imprisoned.

During the last weeks of Valentinus's life a remarkable thing happened. Seeing that he was a man of learning, the jailer asked whether his daughter, Julia, might be brought to Valentinus for lessons. She had been blind since birth. Julia was a pretty young girl with a quick mind. Valentinus read stories of Rome's history to her. He described the world of nature to her. He taught her arithmetic and told her about God. She saw the world through his eyes, trusted his wisdom, and found comfort in his quiet strength.

"Valentinus, does God really hear our prayers?" Julia asked one day. "Yes, my child, He hears each one."

"Do you know what I pray for every morning and every night? I pray that I might see. I want so much to see everything you've told me about!" "God does what is best for us if we will only believe in Him," Valentinus said. "Oh, Valentinus, I do believe! I do!" She knelt and grasped his hand. They sat quietly together, each praying. Suddenly there was a brilliant light in the prison cell. Radiant, Julia screamed, "Valentinus, I can see! I can see!" "Praise be to God!" Valentinus exclaimed, and he knelt in prayer.

On the eve of his death Valentinus wrote a last note to Julia, urging her to stay close to God. He signed it, "From your Valentine."

His sentence was carried out the next day, February 14, 270 A.D., near a gate that was later named Porta Valentini in his memory. He was buried at what is now the Church of Praxedes in Rome.

It is said that Julia planted a pink-blossomed almond tree near his grave. Today, the almond tree remains a symbol of abiding love and friendship.

On each February 14, Saint Valentine's Day, messages of affection, love, and devotion are exchanged around the world.



Wednesday March 2, 2022, 7:00 PM
with Communion!

Ash Wednesday is the first day of the season of Lent. (The 40 days, not including Sundays before Easter,) will be on March 2, 2022, and Malta UMC will have a 7:00 PM worship service that evening with Communion. This will be an in-person worship service, and we will also have a Zoom broadcast. Lent is a season for us to look at our lives, and to repent. That is with God's help, changing the ways we live to be more in-line with Jesus' teachings. Ash Wednesday in particular, is a day of repentance. Where those who follow Jesus are invited to examine their lives. See where we have caused harm, ask forgiveness, make amends, and then change how we live, with God's help, to not cause harm in the future.

Signs of repentance, since ancient times, have been ashes, and sack cloth or burlap. If we were not in a time of pandemic, we would mark ourselves with the sign of the cross in ashes, as a sign that we ask God's forgiveness. That we understand our mortality, and that we seek to live in a new way, so

as to better share Christ's love. As we are in a time of pandemic, this ancient ritual could put the health of some people at risk, so we are turning to another sign of repentance. From the time before Jesus, possibly 3000 years or more, those who've sought to repent have worn sack cloth to show the sincerity of their desire to change their ways. As part of our service on Ash Wednesday, we will each receive a piece of sack cloth, as a visual reminder for us of our desire to repent and live lives more fully guided by God's love.

You are invited, as all are in our community, to join us for worship Ash Wednesday evening as we repent, pray, hear from the scriptures, and finally take communion; all as a sign that we seek to repent. To live in a new way guided by God's love shown in Jesus. May we be changed by God's forgiveness and love, and may we be equipped to share that love with others in Jesus Name this season of Lent and all year long.



MALTA /AREA MILITARY MEN AND WOMEN CURRENTLY SERVING OUR COUNTRY

**Send Cards & Letters (anytime) to the Troops,
Send them to: Support Our Troops
13791 N. Nebraska Ave., Tampa, FL 33613.**

Almburg, Brett	Nelson, Michael
Bakken, Benjamin P.	Norman, Jacob
Bakken, Monique	Page, Greg
Built, Andy	Peterson, Eric
Clark, Ben	Ritter, Matt
Clark, Kerry	Swink, Ashley
Howe, Chase	West, Jonathon M.
Hoyle, Steve	Wilson, Kim.
Brett Johnson & Mrs.	Woodyatt, John M.
Samantha Johnson	Yedinak, Pete
Madsen, Jeff	



CHURCH COUNCIL NEWS:

**Next Meeting: February 7th with Finance 7 p.m.
Church Council 7:30 p.m.**

Church Council Committee:

Pastor Jeremiah Thompson

Church Council Chair: Ed Cheek

Secretary of CC: Sue Augustine

Church Finance: Bill Augustine

Church Financial Secretary: Nancy Plote

Church Treasurer: Kevin McArtor

Trustees Chair: Tom Plote

Lay Leader Delegate: Jodi Slade

Alternate Lay Delegate: Mary Lynn McArtor

Church Education: Kitty Jouris

Ruth Hueber



Malta UMC Lay Leadership

Church Council Chair: Ed Cheek

Board of Trustees Chair: Tom Plote

Committee of Finance & Stewardship Chair:

Bill Augustine

Staff, Pastor & Parish Relations Chair:

Marcia Hueber

Worship Ministries Chair: Jodi Slade

Mission & Outreach Chair: Mary Lynn McArtor

Christian Education Chair: Kitty Jouris

Membership Care Chair: Sue Augustine

Committee on Records & History Chair: Marilyn Berg

Committee on Lay Leadership Chair: Pastor Jeremiah

Discipleship Chair: Pastor Jeremiah

If you are interested in joining one of these groups, please contact the Chair
They would love to hear from you!

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FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

01	Wilbur Watson
02	Jay Hunt
03	Madison Hunt
04	Amy Spychal
05	Ken Slade
07	Evelyn Luoma (105 years old)
08	Dorothy Weaver
10	Rachel Hill Marilyn Berg
15	Ted Plote
16	Owen Fucilla
24	Sue Augustine
25	Alice Pileski
26	Amy Engstrom
27	Jeanette Gommel



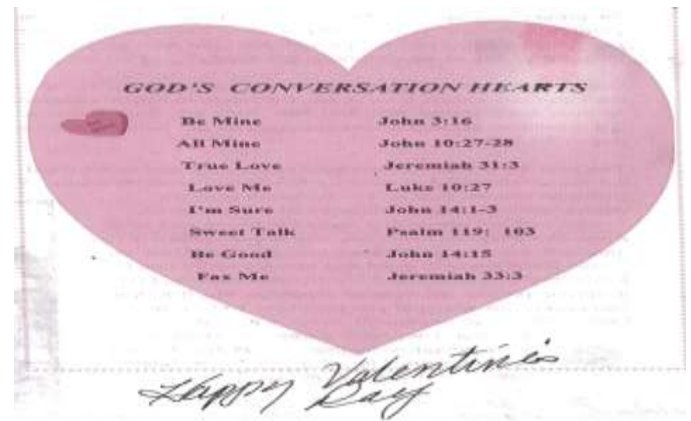
The Salvation Army



to Malta U.M.C.

Thank you for your generous donation of \$130.00
This helps us to provide a wide range of services to
more than 9,000 people in the DeKalb County area.

Your donation was more than a gift of money – you
also gave the most important thing of all for the
human spirit- a gift of Hope! With hope, people in
need can look forward to a better tomorrow. It is
your kindness that enables us to do the most good
for those who need our help the most. On behalf of
those we serve, thank you again for supporting
The Salvation Army.



*John 3:16 For God so loved the world
that he gave his only begotten Son,
That whosoever believes in him shall
not perish but have eternal life.*



John 10:27-28 *My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life and they*

Jeremiah 31:3 *The Lord appeared to us in the past, saying "I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with loving kindness."*

Luke 10: 27 *Jesus answered, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and love your neighbor as yourself."*

John 14:1-3 *Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am."*

Psalms 119:103 *How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth.*

John 14:15 *If you love me, you will obey what I command.*

Jeremiah 33:3 *Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.*



JESUS STOPPED BY AND NOBODY LOVES MORE THAN HIM. BUT BEFORE YOU GET JEALOUS OR ANYTHING YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT IT IS FOR YOU TOO



FEBRUARY

- 06 Frank & Kitty Jouris
- 13 Sue Vaughn
- 20 Ruth Hueber
- 27 Hope Willrett & Gene Hickey



CANCELLED

UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

"ACTION GROUPS 2022"

You will be notified when we start having Coffee Hour again.

FEBRUARY 2022 -

COFFEE HOUR CANCELLED

MARCH 2022 / Not sure yet.

Co-Chairs:

Heins, Vicke & Denny	815-252-0841
Hueber, Marcia	815-762-0010

Anderson, Ann & Marlin	815-825-2695
Berg, Marilyn & Harry	815-761-6232
Davison, Verna	815-756-2008
Fenstermaker, Katie & David	417-291-2031
Hopkins, Norma	815-751-1454
Hunt, Brenda & Jay	815-762-9845
Jordal, Linda & Jerry	815-601-6262
Quincer, Alice & Jim	815-761-8750
Siebrasse, Pat	815-970-5304

Note: Check your phone # - please give us a current #, if this is disconnected or changed.

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Carry Christ Into The New Year! **By Bishop John L. Hopkins**

"Peace I leave with you. My peace I give you. I give to you not as the world gives. Don't be troubled or afraid." John 14:27

As the calendar turns to 2022, we look back with grief and gratitude for all that has happened in this past year. We also look to the future with uncertainty and hope. How do you face uncertainty? What gives you peace?

As a young Christian, I became aware that when I remembered what Jesus had done for me, I felt close to him. Of course, when I became busy, it was easy to forget that Jesus was present in my life. When I was afraid or sick, I would turn to God, remember Jesus, and sense the Holy Spirit was with me. With the "Trinity" surrounding me, I may not have been invincible, but I certainly knew I was not alone.

Over the years, people have give me items to carry, so I would know the presence of Christ whenever I might be "troubled or afraid." I have nails from Good Friday services, a "Cross in My Pocket", a cross

from the Holy Land, and a "Palm Cross" to hold on to when facing surgery.

I learned two things carrying Christ with me. First, when you are mindful of Jesus, you do not have your mind on all that gives you fear. Secondly, when you face uncertainty with gratitude, you find joy in the midst of unexpected change.

As an old Christian, I still get sick and afraid. I grieve and give thanks over events during this past year. I cannot predict the future any better than when I was young. However, I know what to cling to for peace that passes all understanding.

Carry Christ with you into this New Year. When you are facing a relationship problem, take Jesus with you. When you are going through a medical issue, take Jesus with you. When you are heavy with grief or despair, take Jesus with you. When you do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly, take Jesus with you. Cling to something or someone who reminds you of what God has done in your life. Give thanks and find joy day by day in the year to come.

Prayer: O God, we give you thanks for the peace you have given us in Jesus Christ. Help us to cling to that peace as we love and serve you in this New Year. Amen.



Lenten Study: *The Lord's Prayer*

As we move into the season of Lent, a time of reflecting and changing our lives, remembering Jesus' death, and finally preparing for the joy of Easter, Jesus' resurrection, the final sign of God's love is more powerful than sin and death. You are invited to be part of an all church small group study on the Lord's Prayer by Rev. Adam Hamilton. (We also have a book for children and families to read together on this same topic.)

Our small group will meet **Wednesdays at 7:00 PM from March 9-April 13**, and each meeting will be around an hour. You can participate via Zoom from your home, or you can join me at the church. (Please note, if you'd like to participate but this time absolutely doesn't work for you, please contact me, Pastor Jeremiah, and we will see if any other arrangements are possible.)

In this study through scripture reading, a study book, video presentations, and discussion we will consider what Jesus taught us through the Lord's Prayer, and how this prayer offers guidance for all aspects of our lives. The style will be engaging and down to earth, but also thought provoking. As we look at these, perhaps very familiar words, we remember they are life changing and invite us to be part of how God is changing all things through Jesus. I hope you can join us. The books will be \$10 dollars. (If you can't afford that, sign up anyway). If you'd like to participate please contact me, Pastor Jeremiah at 815-592-3764 (call or text), or email me at castiger1@gmail.com.

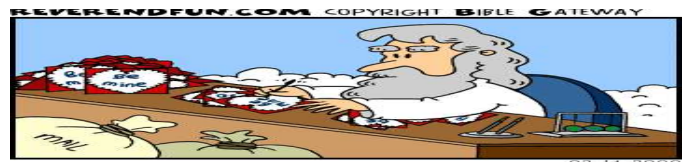
The Lord's Prayer

*Our Father which art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done. On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil:
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory, for ever
Amen.*

KIDS TIME

**LOVE
RULES**

CRAFT: MAKE THIS WREATH




Our thoughts and prayers go out to **Carol Sandberg and Family** on the passing of **Del** in January. He was a wonderful person and will be missed.

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February

SUNDAY	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
2022		1	2 Prayer & Fellowship 7p.m. In Person or Zoom	3	4	5
6 5 th Sunday after Epiphany with Communion Afternoon Sunday School 4:00 p.m.	7 Finance 7pm Church Council 7:30pm	8	9 Prayer & Fellowship 7p.m. In Person or Zoom	10 4H 6:30 p.m.	11	12 Laity Convention 9-12 Zoom
13 6 th Sunday after Epiphany Scouting Sunday	14 	15	16 Prayer & Fellowship 7p.m. In Person or Zoom	17 Today's Sisters 9:00 a.m. at Malta UMC	18	19
20 7 th Sunday after Epiphany Afternoon Sunday School 4:00 p.m.	21	22	23 Prayer & Fellowship 7p.m. In Person or Zoom	24	25	26
27 Transfiguration Sunday	28					

Malta United Methodist Church
(815) 825-2118
201 E. Sprague P.O. Box 158
Malta, IL 60150

maltaumc@outlook.com

Rev. Jeremiah Thompson, Pastor
Vicke Heins, Adm. Assistant
Hours: M-W-Th 8-Noon



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Malta, IL 60150