



FCC PILGRIM PULSE

FEBRUARY 2022

A Message from our Pastor... "Love God's Way"

Many of us remember the popular TV show "The Love Boat". This popular television series had a successful nine year run from 1977 until 1986. If you remember, every week people from every walk of life would arrive on the ship looking to find the love of their life. Once on the ship, every silly, strange and crazy situation that you could imagine would take place as these fictional characters worked and schemed to discover the true love of their life. How many times in our own lives have we searched for love in every way possible? Every person has a longing to be loved. We all want to be filled with love and want to be able to give our love to others.

The English language only has one word for love and that is love. We use love to describe our feeling toward many different things and the love for them is not the same in every case. We "love" pizza, but we also "love" our children. I would hope that our love for pizza is different than our love for our children. We love our children, but we also have special people in our lives like a spouse that we love. These are two different types of love.

Love has many different emotions attached to it. In the scriptures, we see "love" as a major theme. It is important that we understand that love comes in several forms. There are several different types of love used in the New Testament. Paul's letters to the early churches were written in Greek. The Greek language has several different words that characterize love. Let's take a quick look and discover what these different types of love are and how they relate to the full love of God.

The first love we have is called, "Storge". This love is the natural affection that one has for those who are dependent on you. Our kids are in this category. For most of us, we do not have to learn to love a baby when it is born. It doesn't matter what they look like or act like we love them. We have a natural affection for that little baby.

The second type of love is called "Philia". This love is the brotherly we feel for friends and family. This love is built on friendship and equality. This type of love is common to us. This love is has its foundation in common enjoyed activities and a deep connected relationship.

The third type of love that we have is "Eros". This love involves passion. A passion or sensual desire that is deeper and different the Philia love already discussed. This passionate type of love is not based solely on a physical attraction and appearance, but also on a deep emotional connection. This is the love used to describe the feeling between spouses as an example. A relationship where they are connected on a deeper and more intimate level. This type of love opens one's heart to connect with the heart of someone else.

The last type of love used in the New Testament is "Agape". Agape love is perfect love. Agape love is love that is given to someone without any payment or response required by the giver. Even when there is no response, the giver of the agape love chooses continues to love anyway. This is how God loves us. He chooses to continue to show us his love and will continue to show us his love regardless of our response. This love is not instinctual, it has to be chosen. We have to choose to love others in the same unconditional way God loves us.

When we look at the scriptures, it is important that we recognize that different types of love are being used. When Jesus was asked "What is the greatest commandment?" he answered, "Love the Lord your God with all you heart, soul, mind and strength", as well as "Love your neighbor as yourself". It is Agape love that is being given here. When we are filled with the Spirit, we able to love God's way and give Agape love. We are able then to truly "Love the Lord our God with all our heart and soul, mind and strength, and to love our neighbors as ourselves". We get to choose to love other people the same way we loved by God. This is how you love God's way.

God bless you all in the weeks to come, and I encourage you to find a place where can worship God on a regular basis.

Your brother in Christ,
Pastor Ed

If you wish to have your name or your loved one to be placed on our prayer list, please contact the church office. *Please remember you must have permission to do so. Thank you!

IN OUR PRAYERS

OUR MILITARY: Matthew Crittenden, Jordan Varney, Paul Lepley, TJ Curry, Joshua Roose, Stephanie Roose, Melissa Staffen, Rick Grimes, Joe Suchowolec, Griffin Gloden, and Kyle Durdle.

ONGOING PRAYERS FOR:

Lucas Hopkins	Jerry McPherson	Darcie Jorgensen	Deb Kazmierczak	James Griffith, Jr.
Rob Sansom	Gloria McPherson	Dr. Joseph Mejia	Coreen Johnston	Brian Tiffany
Trudy Petersen	Owen Crouch	Kathy Palmer		

FCC FAMILY AT CARE FACILITIES:

Lois Hazelwood	-at Hathaway Hills Assisted Living Room #31
Bette Houle	-at The Brook Assisted Living, Cedar Springs
Corla Morgan	-at SHUM RNC, Room #103
Jelane Hamper	-at Green Acres, Room #206
Barb Hoy	-at Canal View Houghton County Medical Facility
Mable Tate	-at United Rehab and Nursing, Room #108
Pat Toth	-at Hathaway Hills Assisted Living, Room #15



MEMBERS, FAMILY AND FRIENDS:

Brycen Headley	Grandson of Holly & Jim Case
John Koppenol	Father of Holly Case
Jeanne Beauvais	Sister of Bruce Beauvais
Ann Corner	Member of FCC

SPECIAL PRAYERS AND CONDOLENCES FOR:

- The Family of Jackie Kocher as she passed away January 15, 2022.
- The Family of Jim Case, Sr., as he passed away January 16, 2022.
- The Family of Carrol Minard, as he passed away January 20, 2022.

MESSAGES OF "THANKS" FROM:

- Holly & Jim Case for all the continued prayers, cards, and encouragement over the last few months. They are very grateful for their church family and friends!
- Michele Kocher for all thankful for all the prayers and cards! She is doing better!

Prayer Notes:

***Thank you to all for your Prayers! Please feel free to send a card to anyone listed above.**

Pastoral Contact Info:

If you are in need of prayers or other assistance, please feel free to email Pastor Ed at pastor.edfccog@gmail.com.

BOARD MEETINGS:

Deacons: Tuesday, Feb. 8th at 6:30pm
Trustees: Monday, Feb. 28th at 6:30pm

Trustees of the Month: Cindy Hanson and Kurt Kreeger

Deacon of the Month: Deb House

~ FCC NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS ~

NEW MEMBER CLASS!

Our Class has begun but we have room for anyone who would still like to attend! This class gives anyone (current member or interested persons) the opportunity to learn more about the history, ministries, organization, and beliefs of this Congregational church. We will be meeting on Feb. 2nd, 9th, and 16th. Contact the church office or Pastor Ed for more info if you are feeling led to join this community of faith by becoming a member!

- If you are unable to attend one or more of the classes but would still like the study material, please contact the church office.

STEWARDSHIP NEWS

Tithing boxes for 2022 are still available; they are now located by the bulletin board in front of the church office. If you do not see your box, please contact the office and one will be assigned to you.

- Please make sure to turn in your stewardship form! If you did not receive a stewardship letter and would like to pledge your faith, please contact the church office. Thank you all for your continued support!

CHURCH OFFICE NEWS

The church office hours are Mon. through Thurs. from 9:00 to 3:00 with a break from 2:00-2:30pm. Please call ahead if you need assistance.

- Make sure to update your contact info with the office to ensure you are receiving the Pilgrim Pulse and all our church mailings!

FCC CELEBRATIONS

Happy Birthday! To Patty Ritzema (2/1), Ken Reed (2/4), Ellia Devitt (2/5), Rex Venema (2/10), Jerry Jones (2/12), Nancy Staffen (2/14), Coleen Venema (2/15), Michele Kocher (2/17), Barb Hoy (2/19 – cards would be appreciated!) Patrick Emerson (2/20), and Celeste Faber (2/24). **Happy Anniversary!** To Myron & Sandra Tiffany (2/14).

PRESCHOOL NEWS

It is February! The month of love and showing love to others! The children will be bringing in their homemade valentine boxes for the pajama/valentine part on Feb. 14th. Throughout the month they will be learning about shapes, how to love & be kind, fairy tales, the dentist, and healthy bodies.

- We are also having our 2nd annual Daddy/Daughter and Mother/Son dance on Fri., Feb. 11th. There will food, drinks, dancing, and a picture booth!
- There are two quilts left for sale in the library! They are \$20 each and the proceeds will go towards the end-of-year picnic!

PARISH NURSE NEWS

Our Nurse is available Mon. 8-4, Tues. 8-12 and Thurs. from 8-4. If you have medical questions or concerns, call Patrice at 616-894-7288.

- COVID booster shots are available for everyone 12 years old and up. These are essential in preventing severe COVID disease. Free COVID test kits are available to be mailed to your home by going to the website COVIDtest.gov; if you need help please, contact Patrice.
- Free home COVID tests can be ordered to be sent to your home by calling: 1-800-232-0233 or by going online to: COVIDtests.gov. There is a limit of 4 per household.
- Free N95 face masks are now available at Meijer. They are inside the main door by the greeter

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP NEWS

- **'Thank you'** to everyone who helped take down and box up our Christmas decorations!
- **Terri Lynn Nuts:** We still have a few items left: Cranberry Granola, Chocolate Peanuts, Bridge mix, Peanut Clusters, Almonds, Lt. Walnuts. To purchase any of these items, please see or call Chris Hubbard.
- **Silent Breakfast:** Please mark your calendars for Mar. 2 at 10am for An Ash Wednesday Silent Breakfast. The Silent Breakfast is a solemn beginning of Lent with a symbolic "breakfast" with a communion-type feel. Pastor Ed is the speaker this year and all are invited to meet in the library before processing to Fellowship Hall in silence. After the "breakfast," Pastor Ed will also include imposition of ashes.

CHRISTIAN ED NEWS

- February is **Noisy Coin Month!!!** Every Sunday in February, our kids will be collecting coins to benefit IM KIDS 3rd MEAL. This program provides a sack dinner for those students who might not get anything to eat. Bring your loose change to toss into our bread pans when the kids come around after the Children's Sermon! Thank you!
- **Sunday School Classes:** We Welcome New Sunday School Helpers Morgan Veneman and Rachel Milam, who have volunteered to help with Sunday School and have also helped during worship with lighting candles, offering, etc. We appreciate the extra help!
- **Children's Sermon:** Children's Sermons are always needed and how we love our growing list of volunteers! We are now reserving dates in February. Thank you all, for sharing your talents with our youth. You demonstrate a true caring for our youth and they get to know you better.

MUSIC COMMITTEE NEWS

Special Music line-up for February:

- Feb. 6 – performance by Stephanie Clark & Family.
- Feb. 13 – a performance by the Praise Choir.
- Feb. 20 – performance TBA.
- Feb. 27 – performance TBA.
- If you would like to sing with the choir, or provide special music, contact Deb Dieckman or the office.
- We are pursuing any interested people to direct choir, accompany choir, and play the organ. These are paid positions. See Fran Gibbs for more information.

CHILDREN'S PRAISE CHOIR NEWS

Our Practices are every Thurs. from 4-5pm. Our next performance will be Feb. 13th. We invite children of all ages to join us! We are also asking for donations of individually wrapped treats for the children. If you would like to donate treats, please drop them off to Candy. Thank you!

DEACONS NEWS

- Join us for **Coffee Service** on February 13. It will be hosted in the library and front foyer with beverage service.
- **Deacons Meeting** will be on Tuesday, February 8, at 6:30 PM in the conference room of the education wing.
- **New member class** is underway on Wednesdays from 6-7pm. Please sign up, call the office, or see Pastor Ed for more info. The class is open to current members as a refresher and to potential members to find out more about the Congregational Faith.

JERRY KISTE LOVE OFFERING

As you know, the beloved scoutmaster Jerry Kiste, recently passed away, after a difficult health struggle. We would like to honor his contributions to the scout groups that have been at our church for over 50 years. First Congregational Church will contribute, along with anyone else who would like to contribute. You may do so via check or cash by Scout Sunday, February 13 so that collected amounts can be presented to the troops on that day. Special envelopes will be in the pews and contributions can be mailed in or dropped off. Please make your checks out to First Congregational Church. All proceeds will be used to build a Jerry Kiste Pavilion at Gerber Scout Reservation at our troop's campsite area. Jerry was on the properties committee at Gerber Scout Reservation for many years.



PF YOUTH NEWS

Our next meetings will be Feb. 13th and 27th at 11:45 in the library. If you would like more info on joining the youth group or upcoming missions, please contact Claude Johnson at claudej2002us@yahoo.com.

PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY REMINDER

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) is advising the following mitigation strategies:


1. Wear a mask in all indoor public settings, regardless of vaccination status.
2. Get vaccinated against COVID-19. If vaccinated, get a booster shot – everyone 18 and older is eligible.
3. Get a flu shot. Everyone ages six months and older are recommended to get a flu shot.
4. Get tested for COVID-19 if exposed or symptomatic, regardless of vaccination status.
5. Avoid holiday travel if not fully vaccinated.

* The info above is intended as an aid to our congregation in determining best practices for yourself and your family. It is not any sort of requirement or mandate.

LOCAL AREA NEWS


- **Medicare Made Easy:** a free course through MCC (registration required). Held on Wed., April 20, from 6-7 at the Greenville location. Learn the ABC's and D of Medicare and how to make the most of your Medicare benefits. Register in person at the Greenville campus or online at www.montcalm.edu.
- **Take-out or Dine-In Wednesday Meals:** Serving starts at noon at the Senior center up in Stanton. Reserve meals by the Monday before by calling CoA option #4. Seniors 60+ is a \$3 donation, under 60 is \$6.50 charge.
- **AARP Tax Info:** will be offering free tax help for low and moderate income taxpayers, with special attention to those 60+, starting Feb. 8th through April 12th. Appointments available, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:30-2:30; call CoA option #4.
- **CoA Phone Tree Menu:** When you call 989-831-7476, you are presented with the following options:
 - Option 1: Meal Program (Hannah or Robert)
 - Option 2: Transportation (Debbie)
 - Option 3: In home services (Cheryl)
 - Option 4: Trips/Events, Volunteers (Lauri)
 - Option 5: Veterans Services (Trevor)
 - Option 6: MMAP
 - Option 7: Director (Ryan)
 - Option 8: Case Management (Pam)
 - Option 0: Operator (Bonnie)

~ February 2022 ~

<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
		1 5:30 GS	2 10a PURLS 4p Girl Scouts 6p New Member Class	3 11a GAMA 4p Praise Choir 4:30 Scouts (all) 7:30 AA	4	5
	6 Communion 9:30 Choir 10:30 Worship *Noisy Coin Special Music – <i>Stephanie Clark & Family</i> 3p Venture	7	8 5:30 GS 6:30 Deacons	9 10a PURLS 4p Girl Scouts 6p New Member Class	10 4p Praise Choir 4:30 Scouts (all) 7:30 AA	11
13 Scout Sunday 10:30 Worship *Noisy Coin Special Music – <i>Praise Choir</i> Coffee Service 11:45 PF Mtg.	14 <i>Valentines Day</i>	15 5:30 GS	16 4p Girl Scouts 6p New Member Class (final)	17 4p Praise Choir 4:30 Scouts (all) 7:30 AA	18	19
20 10:30 Worship *Noisy Coin Special Music – <i>TBA</i> 3p Venture	21 <i>President's Day</i>	22 5:30 GS 1p WF Board Mtg.	23 10a PURLS 4p Girl Scouts	24 4p Praise Choir 4:30 Scouts (all) 7:30 AA	25	26
27 Transfiguration Sunday 9:30 Choir 10:30 Worship *Noisy Coin Special Music – <i>Chancel Choir</i> 11:45 PF Mtg.	28 6:30 Trustees	<p>*Noisy Coin will be collected every Sunday this month!</p> <p>*Jerry Kiste Love Offering – due by Feb. 13th</p> <p>*Coffee Service Feb. 13th</p> <p>*New Member Classes: Wednesday 2nd, 9th, and 16th at 6pm.</p>				

Calendar Notes:

~ March 2022 ~

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 5:30 GS	2 *Ash Wed. 10a PURLS 10a Silent Bfast & Imp. of Ashes 4p Girl Scouts	3 11a GAMA 4p Praise Choir 4:30 Scouts (all) 7:30 AA	4	5
6 Communion & 1 st Sunday of Lent 10:30 Worship Special Music – TBA 3p Venture	7	8 5:30 GS 6:30 Deacons	9 10a PURLS 4p Girl Scouts	10 4p Praise Choir 4:30 Scouts (all) 7:30 AA	11 <div>6p Scout Lock-in</div>	12 Pinewood Dirby
13 Daylight Savings Time Begins 10:30 Worship Special Music – TBA 11:45 PF Mtg.	14	15 5:30 GS	16 10a PURLS 4p Girl Scouts	17 St. Patrick's Day  4p Praise Choir 4:30 Scouts (all) 7:30 AA	18	19
20 10:30 Worship Special Music – TBA 3p Venture	21	22 5:30 GS	23 10a PURLS 4p Girl Scouts	24 4p Praise Choir 4:30 Scouts (all) 7:30p AA	25	26
27 10:30 Worship Special Music – TBA 11:45 PF Mtg.	28 <div>All School Spring Break: March 28-April 3</div> 6:30 Trustees	29 1p WF Board Mtg. 5:30 GS	30 10a PURLS 4p Girl Scouts	31	Spring Forward Sun., March 14 th !	

Calendar Notes: