

The Messenger

A Publication of Community Bible Fellowship

February 2019

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

A NOTE from the KARSTENS...

Dear Friends,

My wife Kelli and I, along with our son Caleb, extend our deepest appreciation to each one of you for the warm reception we received from you, our new church family here in Aledo. We can't express in words how grateful we are for all the help we have received with getting settled in our new home. We pray daily for God's providence over His church here in Aledo and look forward to getting to know each one of you personally as we share in the joy of doing the work of His Kingdom.

The Christian life is not easy. If we are honest, we know that there are times when we struggle to live the way that God has commanded us to live. Maybe in your life there were times when you encountered problems. Maybe in your life there were times of struggle. Maybe in your life there were moments when you wanted to give up. Maybe you are in the midst of a trial or tribulation right now, and we not only pray for you but encourage you to share this burden with us.

If those tests are currently behind you, praise God, for in His strength you persevered. You carried on with God's love, mercy, and grace. When there was no hope, God was your hope. When there seemed to be no way out, God made a way out. When your strength was gone, God was your strength. When you needed guidance and encouragement to persevere, God was faithful. God guided you through those difficult times, and you persevered, you endured, you overcame, you survived - because God was with you. Perhaps right now you need encouragement to persevere.

Please accept this warm invitation and join us as we explore and unfold the treasure of God's Word in a new series titled "Cultivating the Fruit of the Spirit." Through this new series, we look at what it means to "Be the Church." How are we called? How do we return to being a church of the 1st and 2nd century? What does it mean for us to be a Christ-centered church?

As we prepare to enter this new series, pray, meditate and be encouraged as you read the words of Paul in Colossians 1:9-14. Paul's prayer for the Colossians was that they would persevere. Persevere to understand God's will for their lives. Persevere to spiritual maturity. Persevere to patiently endure hardship. Persevere to grow in their relationship with God.

Our prayer should be the same as the Apostle Paul. We need to persevere; we need to endure. We need to understand God's will and purpose for our lives. We must desire to grow in spiritual maturity. We **need**—to draw closer to Jesus.

In His Grip,

Pastor Paul, Kelli and Caleb

Be A Love Bird

-newsletternewsletter.com

Many stories about the origin of Valentine's Day have come down through the centuries. There's no definitive story, but most revolve around the imprisonment of Valentinus (St. Valentine) for his disregard of Roman laws.

Many legends are also associated with Valentine's Day. For example, because birds seemed to arrive and mate in some countries in mid-February, human couples came to be called "love birds."

In 1667, the first recorded Valentine card was printed. Today, people will give their sweethearts countless millions of cards and acres of heart-shaped boxes filled with candy. But why wait for Valentine's Day to share love with others? Remember Jesus' words in John 13:34 (NRSV): *"I give you a new commandment, that you love one another."*



I have
LOVED
you
with an
everlasting
love.
Jeremiah 31:3

He has loved you from the beginning of time and will love you for all of eternity.

Artwork by Jennifer Ueckert at Studio JRJ



Carew's News...From under the Guava Tree
MERRY CHRISTMAS 2018

Isa 7:14 Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Immanuel, we all know this name, Christ with us. Is He WITH you? Carol holds a Bible study on our front porch each Friday morning. She's been taking each woman of the New Testament and going through them one by one. It just happened that the last few weeks have fallen on Mary and her husband, Joseph. She asked the others in the Bible study what Immanuel means to them. They all said GOD WITH US! YES! She then asked them, if you say God is with you, is He with you always? They said yes. OK then, when you sin, is HE with you when you sin? When you are feeling lost and forgotten, is HE with you? To these pointed questions most of them said NO. How can God be with us when we sin? Well, what about you? IS He with you?? God sent His Son to be Immanuel, God with us! If you have let him in, then He is with you and will never leave you nor forsake you. But maybe you are like the inn keeper who had no room for him. Maybe you want to keep Him near but not IN WITH you.

Here in Chad we don't experience all the hustle and bustle of buying, buying, buying. People here celebrate together more as a church and as a family. The women might get a new dress, and the children may get some clothes as well. However, many of them might only get a piece of candy for the day. IF the family can, they might buy a soccer ball or a doll for the children to share. Generally, though, it is more about having food to eat on Christmas Day. The skits that are done play a huge part within the church family too. Christmas isn't just one day, but the celebration will begin on Christmas Eve with the youth putting on skits until late into the night, and then early in the morning everyone will gather for service and to hear songs that have been practiced for months and to see more skits. Often Christmas services will go until 2:00 PM, as so many want to share what they have been memorizing. After the service, the church will eat together as a family. If they don't all get a chance to share their program, then during the next few weeks the church will continue to hold Christmas specials.

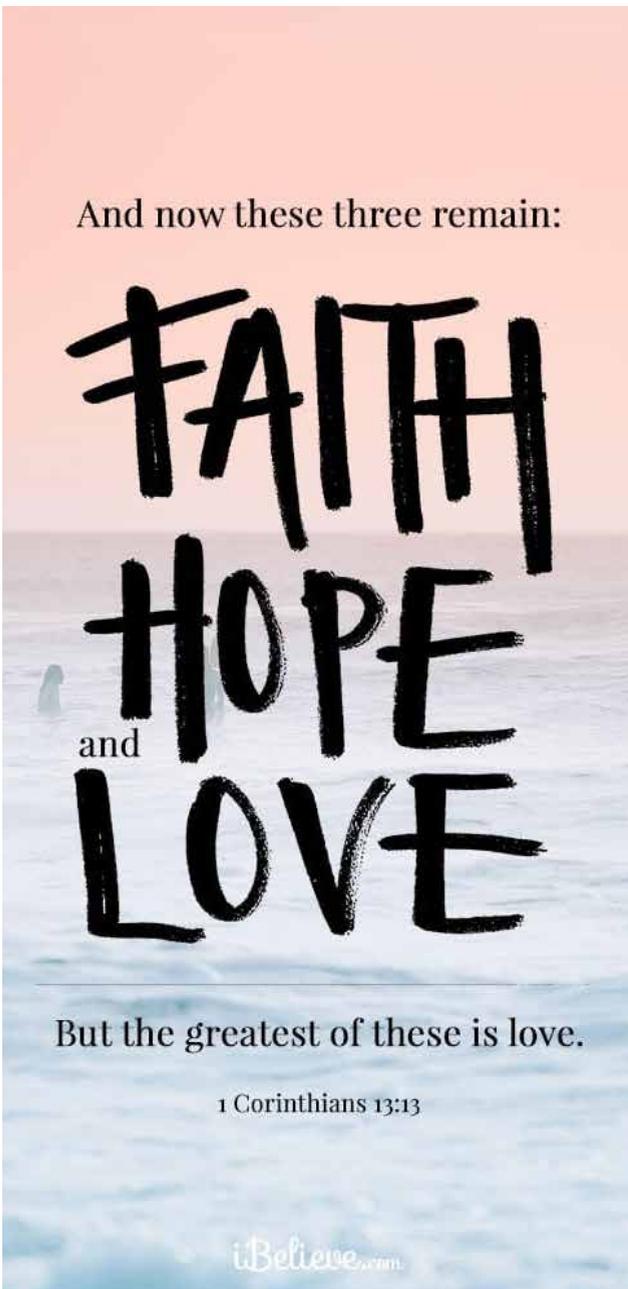
On Friday we are going to have a meal at our home with our workers who are our "family" here. Then we will play some fun, silly games together and share the Christmas story. We will also give them each a gift of money to show our love to them, and so they can buy that meal for their families on Christmas Day. What about YOU this Christmas? It's good to be thankful for all those gifts under the tree, but are you remembering the greatest Gift of all that was crucified on the tree? Please remember to pray for those who have so little yet are so thankful for all that He has done for them.

Merry CHRISTMAS from the Carew's and a Happy NEW YEAR! Thank you for being a part of our adventure!

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Puzzle!

Love is a fruit of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5:22-23. Identify another fruit that can make Valentine's Day — and every day — special. First, write a word that fits each clue below. Then unscramble the letters from the bold, vertical column to find another fruit of the Spirit.

Write it on the blanks below.

LEAVE

CHAPEAU

TRANQUILITY

BECOME MATURE

RESPOND

SPHERE

OLD TESTAMENT QUEEN

DISCOVER

CONFIDENCE

ALWAYS



Answer: depart, hat, peace, grow, answer, ball, Esther, find, trust, ever, gentleness



"Don't worry. I'm a church pastor. First little problem, and they'll find me."

WHY PRAY?

Three reasons you should pray...and pray often!

by Michael Dicker | 11 October 2018 | www.fevr.net

There are lots of reasons why people pray: it makes us feel good, it gives us a sense of calm, it helps us to deal with our problems, etc. And these are all good reasons to pray and good benefits of prayer.

But the problem is that these are very self-centered reasons for prayer, and they rely very heavily on our feelings and emotions. Feelings are good, but feelings don't always match what we know to be true. There are times when we feel that God is far away from us even though the truth is He is always with us. There are times when we feel too guilty to be in relationship with God even though the truth is He has dealt with our guilt and sin.

And so, if our feelings are all that motivate us to pray, we will then become hostage to the unreliable ups and downs of our emotions. We need some more stable and consistent reasons to motivate us to pray, reasons that do not rely on us but on God's unchanging character.

The Bible gives us at least 3 God-centered reasons to pray.

The first reason is: Because God Cares

Psalm 103 paints a majestic picture of God's compassion for his creatures and his intimate concern for his people. "The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love. He does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities." Because God cares for us, we can bring all our problems, our joys, and our requests to Him.

The second reason is: Because God is Powerful

Psalm 104 leaves us in no doubt about who is in control over this world. "He set the earth on its foundations" and He continues to look after the

beasts of the field, the birds of the air and raises each blade of grass from the earth and every plant. "All things look to You to give them their food at the proper time." God is sovereign over all things. (Read Job 38-41 if you still need convincing!) Because God is powerful, we pray with confidence that He is able to do something about our requests and petitions.

The third reason is: Because God is Our Father

Romans 8 describes the wonderful new privilege of the Christian life: No longer are we condemned enemies of God, but in Christ Jesus we are now God's children. It's no coincidence that as Paul talks about our adoption as God's children, he then talks about prayer: "The Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by Him we cry, 'Abba, Father.'" and "The Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And He who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God." Because God is our father we have access to his listening ear 24/7 and the privilege of praying to him at any time in any place about anything.

For many of us prayer is often a struggle - we're too tired, too distracted, too busy, too lazy, too overwhelmed, too guilty, too whatever... But perhaps if we can just remember that GOD CARES, GOD IS POWERFUL and GOD IS OUR FATHER, maybe we'll be more driven to come before God in prayer for ourselves, our church, our neighbor and our world.

Prayer



A MESSAGE OF *Love*

Make this valentine for a family member or friend.



What you need:

- 10 wooden craft sticks
- Painter's tape
- Markers
- A photo and glue (optional)
- Craft knife (and adult help)
- Ribbon or a rubber band

What you do:

1. Set the sticks side by side. Secure with two tape strips.
2. Flip the sticks over. Draw (or glue on) a picture or write a message or Bible verse. If using glue, let dry.
3. Flip the sticks again and remove tape. If you glued on a photo, have an adult help cut the sticks (and photo) apart.
4. Secure the sticks with ribbon or a rubber band.
5. Deliver the gift and invite the recipient to assemble the puzzle.

February Birthdays & Anniversaries

2/1	Lillian Hucke	2/14	Valeri Warren
2/4	Eileen Sipes	2/15	Jeff Turner
2/9	Elliott Shaw	2/15	Paul Walker
2/12	Olivia Hucke	2/19	Bob and Carmen Figanbaum
2/12	David Sipes		
2/13	Tyler Mills	2/27	Dani Hagens
2/13	Jesse Warren	2/27	Jerry and Judy Hagens

Mark Your Calendar

2/03, Sun | YA Bible Study w/Nathan & Jeanette Sipes | 2 PM
Sipes' Residence

2/06, Wed | The Book of James Bible Study w/Bob Hoffman
7 PM | Room N2

2/09, Sat | Youth Movie Night | 6 PM | Sanctuary

2/10, Sun | High School Youth Group | 4 PM | Activity Room

2/13, Wed | The Book of James Bible Study w/Bob Hoffman
7 PM | Room N2

2/17, Sun | YA Bible Study w/Nathan & Jeanette Sipes | 2 PM
Sipes' Residence

2/20, Wed | The Book of James Bible Study w/Bob Hoffman
7 PM | Room N2

2/24, Sun | Jr. High Youth Group | 5 PM | Activity Room

2/27, Wed | The Book of James Bible Study w/Bob Hoffman
7 PM | Room N2

CBF Financial Report – December

	Monthly	Year to Date
Total Income	\$25,596.08	\$212,157.93
Total Expenses	\$28,012.67	\$200,187.98
Net Operating Income	\$(2,416.59)	\$11,969.95



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