

February 2026 Newsletter
"Communicating the Love of Jesus"

Sunday School: 9:00 a.m.
Worship Service: 10:00 a.m.

Living Word Lutheran Church

PO Box 242, New London, MN 56273
Located north of the New London Township Hall on Cty Rd 9 NE
Phone: 320-354-4637
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Questions for Pastor...

"Who took Matthew 17:21 out of the Bible?"

When you read through Matthew's Gospel in an older translation (like the King James Version) every now and then you will find verses that you won't find in the more up-to-date translations. Matthew 17:21 is one of those. (Matthew 18:10 and Acts 8:37 are a couple others).



Matthew records in chapter 17 of his Gospel (Good News about Jesus) an account of a man bringing his son to Jesus' disciples to be healed of an unclean spirit that tormented the boy with seizures. The disciples couldn't get rid of the spirit or heal the boy. Jesus arrived, rebuked the demon, it came out and the boy was instantly healed. Then we read:

19 *Then the disciples came to Jesus in private and asked, "Why couldn't we drive it out?"*

20 *He replied, "Because you have so little faith. Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you."* [21] [a]

There's nothing in v21 except a footnote.

It's not difficult to find videos by folks on the internet (e.g. Instagram, YouTube, Facebook) who are indignant about this and who will tell you there's some grand conspiracy to remove verses from the Bible. These videos claim that the omitted verses contain information the supposed conspirators don't want us to know about or don't like.

Sorry, but the real reason is not conspiratorial, and won't likely get lots of "clicks" on any website or app. If you read the footnote at the bottom of the page it says:

"Some manuscripts insert verse 21: *"But this kind never comes out except by prayer and fasting."*"

There are hundreds of ancient manuscripts of Matthew's gospel. These manuscripts are all copies that are made, not by a copy machine, but

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hand-written manually by copyists. Most of the manuscripts do not include v21, but a few do.

It's pretty easy to figure out why a few copyists added the verse. In Mark's Gospel, his account of the same event ends with Jesus answering, *"This kind can only be driven out by prayer."* (Some manuscripts include: "and fasting.") Mark 9:29

When the person who's tasked with copying Matthew's Gospel comes to the end of Matthew's account of the healing and he doesn't find *"This kind can only be driven out by prayer,"* he remembers the account in Mark's gospel does have that phrase and thinks, "I've got to make it match what's in Mark's Gospel." So, he tacks on *"This kind can only be driven out by prayer,"* in order to make it match up with the account as written in Mark.

As humans, we get the idea that if two accounts of the same event don't exactly match, people won't believe them. But in reality, just the opposite is true, because two people will rarely, if ever, give the exact same details in the re-telling of an event. Crime investigators know that if two people re-tell what they saw or heard using the exact same details, they have gotten together and made the story up.

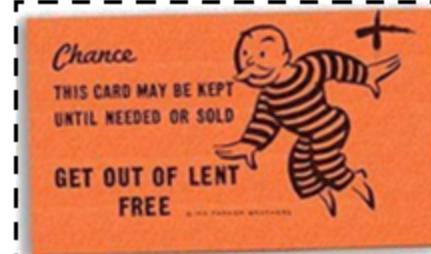
For example, if Violet and I were to tell about a crime we witnessed, she'd likely tell what color the guy's eyes were or describe his clothes and hair. I probably wouldn't remember any of those things, but I could definitely tell you the make, model and color of the vehicle he hopped into. Violet wouldn't have a clue about that. So, if both of our recollections came out word-for-word the same, that's a huge red flag indicating that we got our heads together and made it up.

The fact that each of the Gospels have details not found in the other Gospels or leave out details the others include is exactly what we'd expect of from four people who are actually telling the truth.

Thanks for asking
Pastor David

Send your questions to pastor@livingwordlutheran.net

February
Newsletter
Coupon
Clip & Save



Ash Wednesday...

Ash Wednesday begins the 40-day season of Lent. This year Ash Wednesday falls on February 18.

Ashes symbolize humility, remorse over sin and repentance. Many times in the Old Testament we read about people who put on sackcloth and covered themselves in ashes to show their grief over sin and their desire to repent and turn back to God. Ashes also suggest a need for cleansing, particularly the cleansing we celebrate at the end of Lent by the blood Jesus shed on Good Friday.

During our Ash Wednesday worship we each have a time to record our sins on a piece of paper. The confirmation students take those papers out and burn them, then they return with the ashes that are applied to our foreheads. This serves as a visual reminder that Jesus has taken our sins to the cross and paid for them there!

Please join us for worship at 6:30 p.m. on Ash Wednesday



Lenten Devotion Services...

Begin on Wednesday, February 25th @ 6:00. Please join us each week as we prepare ourselves for the upcoming Easter celebration - and come early to join us for...



Soup & Sandwich Suppers

@ 5:00—Prior to each Lenten Devotion Service

Please sign up at church to bring either a soup or sandwiches.

Confirmation News...

6-7th Confirmation classes:

- Feb 4 and 11: Class at 6:00
- Feb 18: Ash Wednesday Service @ 6:30
- Feb 25: Lenten Devotion @ 6:00



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That for a day: Cookie dough is the sushi of desserts.

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Who Can You Invite?

Who can you invite? Pray about it. Ask God to give you the words and opportunity. Then just do it. Ask them to come with you. Offer to pick them up. (And if they don't take you up on your invitation,, keep praying for them and for another opportunity to invite.)



- Celebrate February Birthdays - Feb 10 - 11:00 a.m.
- The Chili Cookoff - Feb 15 - After worship
- Bingo - Feb 22 - After worship
- February Fellowship Supper - Feb 26 - 6:00 p.m.
- Our Midweek Lenten Services / Soup & Sandwich Suppers

Friendship Sunday...

(February 15)

Friendship Brunch features our Chili Cookoff Contest (see page 6 of this newsletter) (We'll also have some soup for those who can't have chili.)



Pray about your invitations. Ask God to give you the words and opportunity. Then ask them to come with you. Offer to pick them up. (And if they don't take you up on your invitation, keep praying for them and for another opportunity to invite.)

Church Bingo...

Marcia has begun collecting prizes for BINGO

(Held after Sunday Service, February 22nd).

As usual we have some great prizes from places like Walt's, Perkins Lumber, Hanson's Tire and Lube, A & W, etc...



Please let her know if you have any prizes you could add. Thanks!

Mark Your Calendar...

Mission & Ministry Team

Thursday, February 12th @ 6:30 p.m.

Elders' Team @ 5:30 prior to MMT



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February Fellowship Outings...

Fellowship Supper:

Thursday, February 26th

6:00 p.m.

Jimmy P's

(new Italian restaurant in Willmar)

<https://tinyurl.com/4wjjzdhjk>



Celebrate February Birthdays:

Tuesday, February 10th

11:00 a.m.

Zorbaz - Spicer

2026 Chili Cookoff...

Rescheduled for Sunday, February 15th after Sunday Service

This is a Living Word outreach event, so please invite friends to eat (and compete)!



Competition Rules and Information –

- Chili cannot be store-bought, pre-made, canned or frozen - Competitors **MUST** have made it
- You will receive an entry number or color. Clearly display this card at your station. This will help attendees be acutely aware of your awesome chili!
- At least 1 person must be present during the competition and tasting at all times. Guests who come to taste and vote for your chili can do so from 11:30- 12:30 PM. Please plan for 1 crock pot to supply taste testers for the entire time.
- Living Word will supply a table, outlets, tasting cups, spoons and napkins. We will NOT supply crock pots or extension cords.
- Judging will be done by the participants who are tasting –
- Trophy will be awarded!

That for a day: Do you find it strange that we cook bacon but bake cookies?

Practical Wisdom...

Ways to Show Your Spouse You Love Them

(Start by not forgetting Valentine's Day!)

From "501 Practical Ways to Love Your Wife and Kids" and "501 Practical Ways to Love Your Husband and Kids"

Husbands:

- Call your wife during the day ... ask her out for dinner & a movie.
- Bring home some flowers - not just on Valentine's Day
- Think of how you've hurt your wife with your words: Ask for forgiveness!
- Serve your wife breakfast in bed- make her feel like "Queen for a Day"

Wives:

- Sit next to your husband in the car or truck - like you did when you were dating. (If you have bucket seats, then sit next to him on the couch and watch a movie together.)
- Thank your husband (in front of the kids) for something he did today
- Plan a vacation - where he wants to go.
- Write "I love you" on a post it note where he'll see it (or text him).

Husbands & Wives together:

- Write down three or four things you love about your spouse. Then take time to share those with each other.
- Get out the wedding album or watch the video together

Ways to Show Your Kids You Love them:

- Send them a text thanking them for something they did or said.
- Next time you go to the store, bring back a surprise (e.g a favorite snack)
- Read them a favorite story
- Tell them a favorite memory from when they were younger.
- Tell them you are sorry when you acted impatiently with them.
- If they don't live at home, call them up - just to say "Hi."
- Fix a meal with their favorite foods
- Ask them to help you with an important project around the house

Miscellaneous Notes...

Food Pantry Reminder

Please remember to bring your donations for the Food Pantry on the 2nd Sunday of each month. Place them in the purple container by the door at church. Thank to everyone for donating!

Check out our "Free Stuff" Table

Here's just a sampling of what you'll find :

- Kid's books
- February Newsletters
- January—March Portals of Prayer
- "Answers in Genesis" magazines



And if you - or your kids - don't have a Bible, please take one from the Coffee Cart.

Recorded videos of Sermons

Sermons can be found in on our Living Word YouTube channel (New London Living Word) at

<https://www.youtube.com/@newlondonlivingword8097streams>

Jan 4 "Keys to a wise New Year."

Jan 11 "Jesus is our 'righteousness. What does that mean?"

Jan 18 "Jesus' first miracle shows He doesn't just care about our eternal life, but also our 'everyday' life."

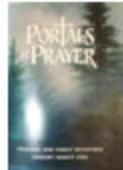
Jan 25 "A HUGE lesson on fighting battles from King Jehoshaphat.

Still Available: Direct Deposit for Your Offerings

Living Word has the option of an electronic option for making regular offerings. Contributions can be debited automatically from your checking or savings account .



If you are currently giving on a weekly basis, you will no longer need to write out 52 checks a year or prepare 52 envelopes. And, when travel, illness or other circumstances prevent you from attending services, this program will allow your weekly offerings to continue on an uninterrupted basis. An authorization form and a "Frequently Asked Questions" flyer are available from the church office.



Portals of Prayer.

Jan—March issue

Are in Mailboxes and on the Table by the Door

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Thought for a day: Here's the difference between knowledge and wisdom. Knowledge is knowing that a tomato is a fruit. Wisdom is not putting a tomato in a fruit salad.

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The Free to be Faithful® newsletter highlights important and relevant details on religious liberty issues that impact the rights of Christians to live faithfully.

In the Winter 2026 issue, read about:

- Religious persecution in Nigeria, where 52,000 Christians have been killed and 20,000 churches destroyed during the past 15 years. This issue includes a letter from the Center for Religious Freedom at Hudson Institute asking President Trump to designate Nigeria as a "Country of Particular Concern" under the International Religious Freedom Act.
- A new assessment to be undertaken by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration about the safety and efficacy of the abortion pill. Recent studies suggest that the complication rate of chemical abortions may be higher than previously reported.
- The Federal Bureau of Investigation's break with the Southern Poverty Law Center and its so-called "hate list" and "hate map" that have been used against Christian organizations.
- A federal lawsuit filed on behalf of two Christian families in Massachusetts that were disqualified from providing foster care because of their religious beliefs.
- A third court battle in Finland over a 2004 booklet articulating the historic Christian teaching on human sexuality. Finnish Member of Parliament Dr. Päivi Räsänen — the writer of the booklet — and Bishop Juhana Pohjola of the Evangelical Lutheran Mission Diocese of Finland — the publisher — appeared before the Supreme Court of Finland in October.

Read the newsletter here: <https://tinyurl.com/37m59k5w>

"Participate" in Worship from home...

If you can't be here in person: Watch on our YouTube channel with Sunday services being livestreamed at
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCG9eU-VvJEU22yCYxbhwig/featured>

Opportunities for Growth...



Sunday Morning Bible Study

The Book of Revelation
Every Sunday @ 9:00
Please join us for coffee and God's Word



Men's Study

"Current Issues"
Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m.
(pre-study meat at 6:15)



Monthly Morning Women's Study:

Wednesday, February 11th, at 10:00 a.m.
at church.
Please bring a Valentine's Snack to share.

Simple Ways to Give Your Spiritual Life a Lift...

Read Jesus' Sermon on the Mount
(He says a lot of shocking things in it!)

(Or you can listen to Pastor read the passages. He will text or email you a link to each day's recording)

You'll find the readings listed on our Daily Readings page



LWML Meeting & Women's Study:

Next meeting and Bible study will be
Wednesday, February 11th, at 10:00 a.m. at church.
Please bring a Valentine's Snack to share.

SHOES FOR MISSIONS:

A huge thank you to all who have donated! This is an on-going fund-raiser for Lutheran Island Camp.
Please continue to bring your good used shoes, slippers, or boots to church.



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That for a day: You can't go back and change the beginning, but you can start now to change the ending.

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Living Word's 2026 Goals Update...

- Continue the Make A Meal program.
We made more meals on Nov 15th
- Continue the monthly Fellowship outings: Birthdays and Supper
Feb 10 - Birthdays
Feb 15 - Friendship Sunday & Chili Cook-Off;
Feb 22 - Bingo **Feb 26 - Supper;**
- Continue the Birthday Card/Anniversary ministry
Ongoing
- Challenge every member to bring a guest this year
Pray about who you can invite to join you for any of our Fellowship Outings or Friendship Sunday.
- Enlist Youth and Young Adults to help with our **"Visitors (and members) Coffee Cart"**
- Initiate the "Prayer D-Fence" Program
(Adults "adopting" a kid to pray for, send cards etc....)
THIS MONTH we continue enlisting people to pray!
- Enlist younger members to help with the Building Project
Early 2026
- Host Tuesday's Table
Coming September 2026
- Chili Cook-Off
Friendship Sunday, February 15th
- Host another Block Party or Community Festival
This will depend on our building project
- Coordinating with Redeemer, Willmar and St. John, Atwater to host joint youth events
House of Hope, Madagascar, March 3rd
- Continue growing our active Youth numbers
Devotions on Wednesdays
- Offer support and encouragement to the Parents of Youth
Ongoing
- Keep the church yard looking nice and continue to de-clutter the storage areas inside.
Ongoing
- Parking Lot maintenance
After the Building Project is complete
- Encourage participation in Sunday School
Christmas Program on December 14th



Email Inspiration...

This modern-day parable about the Gospel is a bit long, but it's a good way to understand what Jesus did for us- and the various ways people respond. The authorship is unknown.

There was a boy by the name of Steve who was attending school in a western state. Mr. Christianson taught at this particular school. He had an open-door policy and would take in any student that had been thrown out of another class as long as they would abide by his rules. Steve had been kicked out of his sixth period and no other teacher wanted him, so he went into Mr. Christianson's class. Steve was told that he could not be late, so he arrived just seconds before the bell rang and he would sit in the very back of the room. He would also be the first to leave after the class was over. One day, Mr. Christianson asked Steve to stay after class so he could talk with him. After class, Mr. Christianson pulled Steve aside and said, "You think you're pretty tough, don't you?"

Steve's answer was, "Yeah, I do."

Then Mr. Christianson asked, "How many push-ups can you do?"

Steve said, "I do about 200 every night."

"200? That's pretty good, Steve," Mr. Christianson said. "Do you think you could do 300?"

Steve replied, "I don't know... I've never done 300 at a time."

"Do you think you could?" Again asked Mr. Christianson.

"Well, I can try," said Steve.

"Can you do 300 in sets of 10? I need you to do 300 in sets of ten for this to work. Can you do it? I need you to tell me you can do it," Mr. Christianson said.

Steve said, "Well... I think I can... yeah, I can do it."

Mr. Christianson said, "Good! I need you to do this on Friday."

Friday came and Steve got to class early and sat in the front of the room. When class started, Mr. Christianson pulled out a big box of donuts. Now these weren't the normal kinds of donuts, they were the extra fancy BIG kind, with cream centers and frosting swirls. Everyone was pretty excited- it was Friday, the last class of the day, and they were going to get an early start on the weekend.

Mr. Christianson went to the first girl in the first row and asked, "Cynthia, do you want a donut?"

Cynthia said, "Yes."

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That for a day: The advantage of exercising every day is that you die healthier.

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Mr. Christianson then turned to Steve and asked, "Steve, would you do ten push-ups so that Cynthia can have a donut?"

Steve said, "Sure," and jumped down from his desk to do a quick ten.

Then Steve again sat in his desk. Bro. Christianson put a donut on Cynthia's desk. Mr. Christianson then went to Joe, the next person, and asked, "Joe do you want a donut?"

Joe said, "Yes."

Mr. Christianson asked, "Steve would you do ten push-ups so Joe can have a donut?" Steve did ten push-ups, Joe got a donut. And so it went, down the first aisle, Steve did ten pushups for every person before they got their donut. And down the second aisle, till Mr. Christianson came to Scott. Scott was captain of the football team and center of the basketball team. He was very popular and never lacking for female companionship. When Mr. Christianson asked, "Scott do you want a donut?" Scott's reply was, "Well, can I do my own pushups?"

Mr. Christianson said, "No, Steve has to do them."

Then Scott said, "Well, I don't want one then."

Mr. Christianson then turned to Steve and asked "Steve, would you do ten pushups so Scott can have a donut he doesn't want?"

Steve started to do ten pushups. Scott said, "HEY! I said I didn't want one!"

Mr. Christianson said, "Look, this is my classroom, my class, my desks, and my donuts. Just leave it on the desk if you don't want it." And he put a donut on Scott's desk.

Now by this time, Steve had begun to slow down a little. He just stayed on the floor between sets because it took too much effort to be getting up and down. You could start to see a little perspiration coming out around his brow. Mr. Christianson started down the third row. Now the students were beginning to get a little angry.

Mr. Christianson asked Jenny, "Jenny, do you want a donut?"

Jenny said, "No."

Then Mr. Christianson asked Steve, "Steve, would you do ten pushups so Jenny can have a donut that she doesn't want?" Steve did ten, Jenny got a donut.

By now, the students were beginning to say "No" and there were all these uneaten donuts on the desks. Steve was also having to really put forth a lot of effort to get these pushups done for each donut. There began to be a small pool of sweat on the floor beneath his face, his arms

and brow were beginning to get red because of the physical effort involved. Mr. Christianson asked Robert to watch Steve to make sure he did ten pushups in a set because he couldn't bear to watch all of Steve's work for all of those uneaten donuts. So Robert began to watch Steve closely. Mr. Christianson started down the fourth row.

During his class, however, some students had wandered in and sat along the heaters located on the sides of the room. When Mr. Christianson realized this, he did a quick count and saw 34 students in the room. He started to worry if Steve would be able to make it.

Mr. Christianson went on to the next person and the next and the next. Near the end of that row, Steve was really having a rough time. He was taking a lot more time to complete each set.

Steve asked Mr. Christianson, "Do I have to make my nose touch on each one?"

Mr. Christianson thought for a moment, "Well, they're your pushups.. You can do them any way that you want." And Mr. Christianson went on.

A few moments later, Jason came to the room and was about to come in when all the students yelled, "NO! Don't come in! Stay out!"

Jason didn't know what was going on. Steve picked up his head and said, "No, let him come in."

Mr. Christianson said, "You realize that if Jason comes in you will have to do ten pushups for him."

Steve said, "Yes, let him come in."

Mr. Christianson said, "Okay, I'll let you get Jason's out of the way right now. Jason, do you want a donut?"

"Yes."

"Steve, will you do ten pushups so that Jason can have a donut?" Steve did ten pushups very slowly and with great effort. Jason, bewildered, was handed a donut and sat down.

Mr. Christianson finished the fourth row, then started among those seated on the heaters. Steve's arms were now shaking with each pushup in a struggle to lift himself against the force of gravity. Sweat was dropping off of his face and, by this time, there was not a dry eye in the room.

The very last two girls in the room were cheerleaders and very popular. Mr. Christianson went to Linda, the second to last, and asked, "Linda, do you want a doughnut? Linda said, very sadly, "No, thank you."

Mr. Christianson asked Steve, "Steve, would you do ten pushups so that Linda can have a donut she doesn't want?"

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That for a day: Some people look for a beautiful place. Others make a place beautiful.

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Grunting from the effort, Steve did ten very slow pushups for Linda..

Then Mr. Christianson turned to the last girl, Susan. "Susan, do you want a donut?" Susan, with tears flowing down her face, asked, "Mr. Christianson, can I help him?"

Mr. Christianson, with tears of his own, said, "No, he has to do it alone, Steve, would you do ten pushups so Susan can have a donut?"

As Steve very slowly finished his last pushup, with the understanding that he had accomplished all that was required of him, having done 350 pushups, his arms buckled beneath him and he fell to the floor.

Mr. Christianson turned to the room and said.

"This is how it was with our Savior, Jesus Christ. He said to the Father, "Into thy hands I commend my spirit." With the understanding that He had done everything that was required of Him, he collapsed on the cross and died—even for those that didn't want His gift. And just like some of those in this room, many choose not to accept the gift that was provided for them.



February 2026 - Daily Readings

We finish the **BOOK of JAMES**, then we look at Jesus' longest recorded sermon:
THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

Pastor records the readings (along with devotions based on the readings).
To receive these audio recordings daily, just email him: pastor@livingwordlutheran.net.
NOTE: Email or text Pastor with questions you have on something you read.

WEEK OF FEBRUARY 1

Feb 2 James 4:11-12 _____
Feb 3 James 4:13-17 _____
Feb 4 James 5:1-6 _____
Feb 5 James 5:7-11 _____
Feb 6 James 5:12 _____

WEEK OF FEBRUARY 8

Feb 9 James 5:13-18 _____
** _____
Feb 10 James 5:19-20 _____
Feb 11 Matthew 5:1-12 _____
Feb 12 Matthew 5:13-16 _____
Feb 13 Matthew 5:17-20 _____

WEEK OF FEBRUARY 15

Feb 16 Matthew 5:21-26 _____

Recordings of the Daily Readings can also be found on our website at:

<https://www.livingwordlutheran.net/devotions.htm>

Feb 17 Matthew 5:27-30 _____

Feb 18 Matthew 5:31-32 _____

Feb 19 Matthew 5:33-37 _____

Feb 20 Matthew 5:38-42 _____

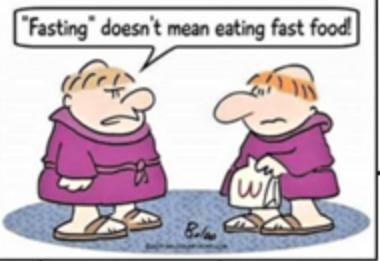
WEEK OF FEBRUARY 22 -

Feb 23 Matthew 5:43-48 _____
Feb 24 Matthew 6:1-4 _____
Feb 25 Matthew 6:5-15 _____
Feb 26 Matthew 6:16-18 _____
Feb 27 Matthew 6:19-24 _____

WEEK OF MARCH 1

Mar 2 Matthew 6:25-34 _____
Mar 3 Matthew 7:1-6 _____
Mar 4 Matthew 7:7-12 _____
Mar 5 Matthew 7:13-14 _____
Mar 6 Matthew 7:15-23 _____

February 2026 - Living Word Lutheran - Calendar of Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 9:00 - SUNDAY SCHOOL - ADULT STUDY 10:00 - WORSHIP w/communion 11:15 - FELLOWSHIP	2	3 6:30 - MEN'S STUDY	4 6:00 - CONFIRMATION	5	6 <div style="background-color: #800080; color: white; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> Lord's Supper Dates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sunday, February 1st • Sunday, February 15th </div>	7
8 9:00 - SUNDAY SCHOOL - ADULT STUDY 10:00 - WORSHIP 11:15 - FELLOWSHIP	9	10 11:00 - Celebrate FEB. BIRTHDAYS @ Zorbaz -Spicer 5:30 - BUILDING COMMITTEE	11 10:00 - LWML and WOMEN'S STUDY 6:00 - CONFIRMATION	12 MISSION Ministry 5:30 - ELDERS' TEAM 6:30 - MISSION & MINISTRY TEAM	13	14
15 FRIENDSHIP SUNDAY 9:00 - SUNDAY SCHOOL - ADULT STUDY 10:00- WORSHIP w/communion 11:15 - CHILI COOK-OFF	16	17 6:30 - MEN'S STUDY	18 ASH WEDNESDAY  6:30 ASH WED. SERVICE w/Communion	19	20 <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;">  </div>	21
22 9:00 - SUNDAY SCHOOL - ADULT STUDY 10:00 - WORSHIP 11:15 - ANNUAL BINGO GAME	23	24 5:30 - BUILDING COMMITTEE 6:30 - MEN'S STUDY	25 5:00 - SOUP SUPPER 6:00 - LENTEN DEVOTION & CONFIRMATION	26 6:00 - FELLOWSHIP SUPPER @ Jimmy P's (Willmar)		
Mar 1 9:00 - SUNDAY SCHOOL - ADULT STUDY 10:00- WORSHIP w/communion 11:15 - FELLOWSHIP	Mar 2	Mar 3 6:30 - MEN'S STUDY	Mar 4 5:00 - SOUP SUPPER 6:00 - LENTEN DEVOTION & CONFIRMATION	Mar 5	Mar 6	Mar 7

Upcoming Schedules...

After-Worship Fellowship

We will have coffee / water and cookies at 11:15 after worship .Please join us when you can! ...and, if you can, please sign up to serve coffee and goodies some Sunday.



Usher Schedule

Feb 1	Jim & Torasie Larson
Feb 8	Jason & Levi Miller
Feb 15	Wendy & Lonny Robbin
Ash Wed	Pam Johnson & Linda Van Meter
Feb 22	Larry Levin & Volunteer needed

USHERS NEEDED

We are still in need of more ushers to help collect offering. Please sign up at church if you could take a turn. Thanks!

Elders

Feb 1, 8	Scott & Dan
Feb 15, 18, 22	Kevin & Duane

Custodian

February	Alison Sarsland & Marcia Welsh
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Altar Guild

February	Mona Hjelle
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Accompanying Musicians

Feb 1	Sharon Willen
Feb 8	Scott Wachter
Feb 15	Sharon Willen
Ash Wed	Open
Feb 22	Scott Wachter



Opportunities to Serve...

Custodian Volunteers Needed.

Pick Your Month for you (or your family) to be our Church Custodian. All months through July are taken. (August—December are still available.) Talk to our Trustee, Lonnie Robbin, to sign up or find out more details.

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Thought for a day: Older people often go to another room to get something and when they get there, they stand there wondering what they came for. It is NOT a memory problem. It is God's way of making older people get more exercise.

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Thank God For...

You've seen our sign board out by the road with the beginning of a sentence: "Thank God For..." Each week we'd like to change the ending of that sentence to encourage people who drive past to remember that God is the giver of all good things - especially things we take for granted.

In January we thanked God for...

- Ice Castles

Let Pastor know how you'd complete that sentence in February and pray for a bit warmer weather so we can change the sign more often.



Join Us Sunday Mornings for...



Seen on Church Signboards...

Remember...

There's no "I" in "Love"

February Discipleship Verse...

"This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down His life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters."

1 John 3:16

Email Wisdom...

From God's Book of "Practical Wisdom for Everyday" (Proverbs)

- Humility and the fear of the LORD. Bring wealth and honor and life. Proverbs 22:4.
- Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it. Proverbs 22:6
- A generous man will himself be blessed, for he shares his food with the poor. Proverbs 22:9
- Do not wear yourself out to get rich; have the wisdom to show restraint Proverbs 23:4
- Listen to your father who gave you life, And do not despise your mother when she is old. Proverbs 23:22
- Buy the truth and do not sell it. Get wisdom, discipline and understanding. Proverbs 23:23
- If you say, "But we knew nothing about this," Does not He who weighs the heart perceive it? Does not He who guards your life know it? Will He not repay each person according to what he has done? Proverbs 24:12
- Do not gloat when your enemy falls; when he stumbles, do not let your heart rejoice, For the LORD will see and disapprove and turn His wrath away from him. Proverbs 24:17-18
- Do not testify against your neighbor without cause, or use your lips to deceive. Do not say, "I'll do to him as he has done to me; I'll pay that man back for what he did." Proverbs 24:28-29
- Through patience a ruler can be persuaded, and a gentle tongue can break a bone. Proverbs 25:15



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Thought for a day: Charcuterie is just Lunchables for adults.

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More Email Humor...

A professor asked his students to sign a statement saying that they had not received any outside assistance on the exam.

One anxious student said, "I prayed to God for help. Does that count?"

The professor glanced at the completed exam and replied, "Go ahead and sign. God definitely did not assist you."



Communion Notes...

The Lord's Supper will be celebrated in February on the normal First and Third Sundays (February 1st & 15th),



Reminders:

- Wine - is in the two outer rings of the individual-cup tray
- Grape Juice - is in the inner ring of the individual-cup tray
- Gluten-free bread wafers are available for those who have gluten-sensitive conditions. You will find these wafers in a separate cup in the communion tray.
- Those who are not comfortable coming to the altar should inform an Elder or Usher, and communion will be brought to you in your pew.

Email Humor...

A kindergarten teacher gave her class a "show and tell" assignment. Each student was instructed to bring in an object to share with the class that represented their religion.

The first student got up in front of the class and said, "My name is Benjamin and I am Jewish and this is a Star of David."

The second student got up in front of the class and said, "My name is Mary. I'm a Catholic and this is a Rosary."

The third student got up in front of the class and said, "My name is Tommy. I am Lutheran and this is a hotdish."

Make-A-Meal Program...

One of the best (and simplest) ways to share Jesus' love is by taking a meal for someone who is going through a tough time.

Please grab some meals from the freezer at church to take to someone who needs to know Jesus cares!



Building Committee Update...

Check out the new computerized drawings on the table by the entry door at church.

Money in CDs and Building Account: \$207,760

A HUGE "Thank You" to everyone who has made a pledge !!!

The BUILDING TEAM will meet Tuesday, February 10th @ 5:30 to continue putting together some specific plans with the goal of breaking ground in the spring!

If you have suggestions for the Committee to consider, please talk to a Committee Member (or just come to a meeting)!



Page 24

That for a day: In God we trust. All others we polygraph.

Page 25 | Around the Community...

21st Anniversary of Radio For Relief Thursday, March 26, 2026



March is Minnesota Food Share Month and YOUR church can make a BIG difference on Thursday, March 26, 2026 with Radio For Relief!

The Kandiyohi County Food Shelf can take your \$20 cash donation and purchase almost \$200 worth of food through Second Harvest Heartland. Because of generous churches like yours, \$944,109 in combined cash and food donations have been collected since Radio For Relief started. Let's make this 21st broadcast another success!

Plan now as donations add up quickly when we work together.

IMPORTANT REMINDER - 2026 broadcast is on a Thursday

You can share your Radio For Relief collection totals on-air like we've done the past six years. Please email MaryElin Macht, maryelinn@1025fm.com or call her at 320-235-1340 before NOON on Wednesday, March 25, 2026 to include your collection totals and possibly pre-record a quick message that could be featured during our Radio For Relief studio broadcasts airing from 7 am – 10 am on Thursday, March 26, 2026.

In 2025, the Kandiyohi County Food Shelf helped an average of 625 families a month and distributed over 485,137 pounds of food

Leading up to Radio For Relief, if you prefer to send a check to the Kandiyohi County Food Shelf, you should put Radio For Relief on the memo line of the check so it is included in the total. We'll also be encouraging listeners to donate online. Any in-person Radio For Relief donations can be dropped off that morning at the Kandiyohi County Food Shelf (enter through donation door).

For large groups and amounts of food, please schedule a time with them in advance to ensure enough volunteers there to help you.

Learn more at willmarradio.com and kandiyohicountyfoodshelf.com

Listen for Radio For Relief on 102.5 Q102, 1340 AM and 96.3 FM KWLM, 100.1 Big Country, 106.5 The Train, 94.1 The Loon, 93.5 Country Legends and on the Lakeland Media App on Thursday, March 26, 2026 from 7 am to 10 am

Around the Community...

HOUSE OF HOPE INVITES YOU
TO OUR 1ST ANNUAL BENEFIT EVENT



TUESDAY, MARCH 3, 2026

SOCIAL HOUR: 5:30 - 6:30 PM

PRESENTATION: 6:30 - 7:00 PM

RAFFLE & SILENT AUCTION WINNERS ANNOUNCED

ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH
19903 56th Avenue NE, Atwater, MN. 56209

TOGETHER, WE CAN TRANSFORM LIVES.

Please come and support this life-changing mission at our first annual Benefit on March 3rd. We have somewhat limited space at the church, so it will be "first-come first-serve" to meet Pastor Jean Rajaonasy in person as he travels the USA. Buy your tickets now and don't miss this opportunity.

For more information: www.hohmadagascar.org

You Tube: House of Hope Madagascar

Facebook: House of Hope Madagaskara or School of Hope Madagaskara

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That for a day: You're never as old as you're going to get.

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TICKET PURCHASE REQUIRED



Scan the QR code to register
\$20 per ticket - one raffle ticket included with purchase
Winners must be present to win

Checks payable to House of Hope- Madagascar with the memo of "Benefit 2026". Please provide email address with payment.

Mail to:
House of Hope Madagascar-USA Inc
PO Box 802
Pewaukee, WI. 53072

Inquires: info@hohmadagascar.org
For questions: Contact Ali Holien (706) 284-0646

House of Hope Madagascar-USA, Inc (HOHM), is a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. All donations to (HOHM) are tax deductible within the United States. EIN#99-3487397



BUILDING HOPE
FOR THE FUTURE

We're excited to share how love is shaping the next chapter of Hope. We are preparing for a significant building remodel and expansion.

Come join us to learn more or scan the QR code for more information.



THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12TH, 2026
3-6PM

A Minute for Couples...

(from the Prepare-Enrich blog)

4 Areas to take initiative in your marriage

When you see a problem, do you take the initiative to fix it?

It's typically pretty easy to point out issues: an ineffective process at work, a constantly messy room in your house, or a higher than usual electric bill. It's more difficult to actually take action to solve (or improve) the situation at hand. This also applies to your marriage.

Are there aspects of your relationship you know could be better? Instead of waiting for your spouse to take the lead or hoping things magically improve on their own, it's time to be proactive. Here are areas to take initiative in your marriage this year.

Household management

If you're struggling with the division of labor or notice your spouse feeling overwhelmed by what's on their plate, it's okay! Your current breakdown of roles and responsibilities is not set in stone. In fact, most couples benefit from reassessing and making adjustments to how they manage their household throughout their marriage. After all, your family's needs will vary as you go through different seasons of life. Take initiative this year by sitting down with your spouse to discuss what is and isn't working. Brainstorm some practical ways you can work towards a more satisfying balance. Think small, actionable steps that alleviate the pain points you're experiencing. For example, if you're overwhelmed with meal planning, maybe you try out a weekly repeating menu for a month. Don't be afraid to get creative or try out something new for a couple of weeks.

Dates and quality time

Do you wish you and your spouse went on more dates, or that it was more of a priority in your marriage? Do you want to try new places or activities? You'll always find an excuse for why it's not feasible, but the truth is, you can make it work if you want to! The first step: communicate to your spouse what changes you'd like to see – they might be thinking the same thing! And if this issue wasn't on their radar, that's okay! Letting them know your feelings gives them an opportunity to support your initiative and get on board. Then, jump in – put the effort into planning a date and the logistics that go with it, such as finding a sitter. Then, ask your spouse on that date! Not only will they likely appreciate your initiative, it sets a precedent and makes it easier for both of you to build on this momentum.



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Thought for a day: Those who get too big for their britches, are sure to be exposed in the end.

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Self-improvement

It's not always easy to recognize your own weaknesses, and when you do, it can be even harder to do anything about them. We often let avoidance, projection, or shame take over. This year can be different. Instead of tamping down the things you know you can work on, steel yourself and face them head on. Get feedback from your spouse or take a personal assessment to get more insight into where you can grow. Then think through small changes you can make or habits you can establish as stepping stones toward where you want to be. Whether it's being a more supportive spouse, a more patient parent, or a better communicator, you have the power within you to be the person you strive to be.

Relationship growth

You might feel your marriage is as strong as ever, or you might be aware of complacency creeping in. Wherever you fall, the reality is that keeping a strong and vitalized marriage requires ongoing effort and intention from both of you. You might wonder, "How do we grow in our marriage? Where do we start?" It can be as simple as having a conversation you've been avoiding, or discussing your relationship with more intention. Consider a resource like the Discussion Guide for Couples, which can act as a roadmap for what to talk about. Or (re)take an assessment like Prepare/Enrich or Couple Checkup, which can show you exactly which areas you're thriving and which have room for improvement. Being proactive about growing together is a crucial part of an enduring marriage.

The best marriages aren't perfect – they're intentional. Whether it's starting an honest conversation about your needs, planning intentional date nights, tackling household responsibilities together, or simply showing more appreciation every day, take the initiative today and watch your marriage grow stronger.



Prayer D-Fence...

Can You Be Part of Our Prayer D-Fence ?

Prayer D-Fence is our new ministry of praying for the Kids, Youth and Young Adults of our congregation.

Prayer is one of the powerful weapons (along with His Word) that God has given us to fight Satan and his temptations:

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. Ephesians 6:18

One of the Elders' Team goals for 2026 is to get this new ministry up and running. The first step is to enlist people who will commit to pray at least once a day for one of our young people. It's a great way not only to tap into God's power for them, but to and help keep them connected to our congregation!

Contact Tammy Miller for more info or to sign up!! 320-905-2434



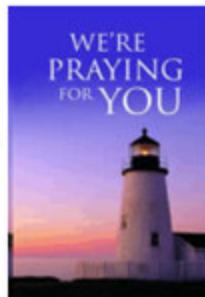
GOD'S DE-FENCE...

We Prayed for You...

Remember to use our
"We Prayed for You"
program...

We'd like to send out a card or two each week to people we prayed for during worship.

We are currently in need of a volunteer to mail the cards. If you could help, talk to Pastor David.



After-Worship Prayer Ministry

We have people who will pray with you or for you after Sunday service. They gather for prayer near the piano, just meet them there.

Also, we're always looking for a few more people who have a passion for praying!!!



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That for a day: How come one careless match can start a forest fire, but it takes a whole box

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Prayer...

Remember to use "The Prayer Force"

Please continue to call, text (320-220-1816) or email (dvdauk@tds.net) prayer requests to Pastor David for the Prayer Force prayer chain to include in their prayers. Thanks!

And an Invitation to Join our "Prayer Force"

Being a part of our prayer chain is a **HUGELY** important - and very simple - way you can serve God and His people! When a request to pray comes in, Pastor forwards it via text message (or email for those who don't have a cell phone). Then you simply include that request in your prayers. Text Pastor today and tell him "Yeah, I can do that!" Thanks!



Please Remember to Pray At 11:09 Every day

(inspired by Luke 11:9: "So I say to you, Ask and it will be given to you; Seek and you will find; Knock and the door will be opened to you")

Remember to take a time-out to PRAY for things like...

- Asking God to raise up volunteers for our Prayer D-Fence program
- Asking God for His guidance on who to invite to Friendship Sunday
- Asking God for the power to love like Jesus did - with sacrifice
- Asking God to show you what to "give up" and/or "take up" during Lent
- God's continued healing for all parents who have lost children
- For God to continue giving comfort and peace to all those grieving.
- Asking God for His guidance about who to invite to Friendship Sunday
- Safe travel (and good weather for traveling)
- Asking God to open people's eyes to see that Jesus is what they need
- Asking God for courage to follow where He guides
- For all those who are home-bound or in nursing facilities
- Thanking God that His Word is Truth amidst the lies of the world.
- Protection from the deceitful messages Satan sends your way
- Asking God for faith to stand for His Truth like Daniel's 3 friends !
- Asking God to humble you, seek Him and repent (2 Chronicles 7:14)
- + God's protection, wisdom & courage for government leaders
- The ministry of Hope Pregnancy Center in Willmar
- The ministry of House of Hope - Madagascar
- The ministry of the Jastrams in Japan



Monthly Music Videos...

Lots of great new music released in January...

- The song is familiar, but "It Really Is Amazing Grace" from Phil Wickham & Crowder is a great version...
<https://youtu.be/JdCkPewFsc8>
- I really like "Gimme A Hallelujah" from Warren Peay ...
<https://youtu.be/uPiHMriTNHK>
- "Ain't No Way" is my favorite song from Jamie McDonald's new album *Won't Let Go...* <https://youtu.be/jxBMdnKLdgo>. Listen to the full album at <https://tinyurl.com/6a597nba>
- Speaking of new albums, Petra released there first album in over 20 years *Hope...* <https://tinyurl.com/mw7u43jc>. Check out the song, "Kiss The Coals" ... <https://youtu.be/WTvpiczTrcU>
- A group from the 90's, Point Of Grace just released a new song, "Stand" ... <https://youtu.be/muMD2tXTxDc>
- As long as we are talking about veteran CCM artists, I should mention "The 6th of January", a new song from Amy Grant...
<https://youtu.be/jA05IQm4nQ>
- "Easy" is a new release from We The Kingdom...
<https://youtu.be/wwwpjzxkCXcQ>
- NeedToBreathe released a new song called "The Long Surrender" ...
<https://youtu.be/QpEIWCgG-kc>
- "So Long Sad Songs" is new from CAIN...
https://youtu.be/feOv8nufa_1
- Cochren & Co just released a new song called "What Grace Can Do" ... <https://youtu.be/X1zXR79segI>
- Colton Dixon has a new song, "In Spite Of Me" ...
<https://youtu.be/Y7sJpQFvMrs>
- "I'd Do It Again" is new from Andrew Ripp...
<https://youtu.be/gktYRMP4GLE>
- Matthew West has a new song called "Good" ...
<https://youtu.be/2vbJ7Wb-ITE>
- "The Silence" is new from Jonathan Cyphers with Ben Fuller...
<https://youtu.be/1CmpLjLCMPO>
- "God's Still Working On Me" is a great new song from Consumed By Fire... <https://youtu.be/JalmRHz9Lgw>

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Thought for a day: I like the word "indolence." It makes my laziness seem classy.

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- "Demons" is the latest from Josiah Queen...
<https://youtu.be/TrVovJ1HFEQ>
- I've not heard of the group, Ashes & Arrows, but I really like "Roll On My Brother" ... <https://youtu.be/lEdveCN8RHQ>
- "Oasis of Hope" is a beautiful new song from Terrian with Madison Ward... <https://youtu.be/7n2X4-7yhrk>
- Tauren Wells released a new song called "Breathe On It" ...
<https://youtu.be/9hW9sNMn2AO>
- "Upside Down" is new from the group, Homecoming...
<https://youtu.be/h3p6WzGpAcs>
- "Narrow Way" is a great new song from Aaron Williams...
<https://youtu.be/JMq0NvozvUo>
- Katie Nicole released a new song called :Have Your Way" ...
<https://youtu.be/1Fi64SKCjE>
- Finally, the great CeCe Winans has a new song, "For Your Glory" ... <https://youtu.be/qGBnjSSxR9o>

Story Behind The Song...

Since we are now in February the common them of the month is love, so I thought we would look at the song, "Jesus Loves Even Me". Some believers seem to struggle with the concept that Jesus loves them. Philip P. Bliss, a composer, who in his short life produced many songs and hymns, was one of those people.

Philip Paul Bliss was born July 9, 1838, in Hollywood, Clearfield County Pennsylvania. His family were poor farmers. His father, Issac, taught him to pray daily. And his mother taught him to read from the Bible.

The tall, lanky lad of twenty-one married Lucy J. Young in 1859. Lucy grew up in a musical family and encouraged Philip's talent. Two years later, he became an itinerant music teacher traveling from town to town on horseback with a melodeon. Philip's Grandmother-in-law paid for him to attend a six-week course at the Normal Music Academy in July 1860. The six-week course changed his life. After that training, he continued as an itinerant teacher but gained credibility as an expert in his area. At this time, he began composing music.

In 1864 at the age of twenty-six, they moved to Chicago, where he was a sought-after singer and teacher.

In 1869 Bliss became friends with evangelist D.L. Moody. Moody and others appreciated his musical abilities and his strong faith and en-

couraged him to quit his job and go full-time as a missionary singer. He joined D.L. Moody's ministry and used his royalties for his music sales to support himself. It was during this time he wrote "Jesus Loves Even Me".

The song came to him after attending a series of meetings where "O How I Love Jesus" was sung often. He thought "Have I not been singing enough about my poor love for Jesus? Shall I not rather sing of his great love for me?" Not long after, he composed "Jesus Loves Even Me."

"Jesus Loves Even Me" was first published in 1871 in his hymnbook *The Charn For Sunday Schools*. It quickly became popular in Great Britain and America. This was during the time of the Sunday School movement. Many hymn writers wrote simple songs that children could easily sing that encapsulated the gospel message of Jesus' love and redemption.

Sadly, Bliss only served two years in D.L. Moody's ministry before a train accident took him to his Heavenly home. Bliss and his wife were traveling home to Chicago from Pennsylvania on the Pacific Express. The railroad bridge over the Ashtabula River collapsed as the train neared the other side. Ninety-two of the one hundred and sixty-nine passengers died. Philip and Lucy Bliss were among them.

I am so glad that our Father in Heav'n
Tells of His love in the Book He has giv'n;
Wonderful things in the Bible I see,
This is the dearest, that Jesus loves me.

Refrain: I am so glad that Jesus loves me,
Jesus loves me, Jesus loves me;
I am so glad that Jesus loves me,
Jesus loves even me.

If I forget Him and wander away,
Still He doth love me wherever I stray;
Back to His dear loving arms would I flee,
When I remember that Jesus loves me.

Oh, if there's only one song I can sing,
When in His beauty I see the great King,
This shall my song through eternity be,
"Oh, what a wonder that Jesus loves me!"

Jesus loves me, and I know I love Him;
Love brought Him down my poor soul to redeem;

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Thought for a day: All the world's a stage and I missed rehearsal.

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Yes, it was love made Him die on the tree;
Oh, I am certain that Jesus loves me!

If one should ask of me, how can I tell?
Glory to Jesus, I know very well!
God's Holy Spirit with mine doth agree,
Constantly witnessing Jesus loves me.

In this assurance I find sweetest rest,
Trusting in Jesus, I know I am blest;
Satan, dismayed, from my soul now doth flee,
When I just tell him that Jesus loves me.

This is a very familiar hymn to us all. Listen to this classic performed by the great George Beverly Shaw... <https://youtu.be/BvHq0zAjPTw>

The Back Pew - Jeff Larson

THEBACKPEW.COM - Larson



Happy Valentines Day