

THE HERALD

Listening to God's Heart From the Heart of the City



By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things.

Galatians 5:22-23

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK


Draw your minds back to January 10, as we remembered our baptisms, reclaimed the name “Beloved,” and heard the message of John the Baptist to the Pharisees and Sadducees: “Bear fruit worthy of repentance.” (Matthew 3:8) Bearing fruit isn’t an easy image for us. We think of fruit trees bearing apples, oranges, or figs...but for humans to bear fruit is a different story.

We gain our insights into bearing fruit from Paul’s letter to the church at Galatia. “By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things.” (Galatians 5:22-23). Paul is contrasting these fruit of the Spirit to works of the flesh (see Galatians 5:16-21). If you compare and contrast the works of the flesh with the fruit of the Spirit, you see some marked difference in how we, in Christ, are to behave and live together.

I’ve been thinking about these verses because, this month, we have a secular holiday. Walk into any store, and you know that Valentine’s Day is upon us (as it was in stores the day after Christmas). We think of love in a sappy, sugary, flowery kind of way (which might be why flowers and chocolates are major gifts of the industry)...but the way that Paul describes it is not “eros” love (the love you have for your spouse) or “philos” love (the love you have for your brother or sister), but as “agape” love – love that sacrifices, love the is like that which God has for us.

And so, during this month, I invite you to spend some time thinking about the fruit of the Spirit in your own life. As you turn these pages, you’ll read some reflections from members of our congregation about how they are bearing particular fruit of the Spirit, or how we, as a congregation, are bearing fruit. Do not take those words lightly, but read them as an opportunity for your own spiritual growth and development. How is God calling each of us to bear these fruit of the Spirit in our own lives?

Grace and peace,



Pastor Jay

A NOTE FROM BEV

To My Church Family,

I just received results from my cats scans. I have been blessed once again. They have come back stable and even some tumors have shrunk and no new ones. PRAISE THE LORD. Thank you all for your prayers. I also want to thank each family that brought food to our house when I got out of the hospital. I know that is what helped me regain my strength back.

Thank you again and God Bless.

Bev Harness

PRAYER REQUESTS

Charlie Clark; Donita Holmes; Jerry Phillipe; Vicki Lewis; Bernie Limper; Margie Moore McNamara; Sam Mitchell; Jim Currie; Greta Rich; Eleanor Laswell; Debbie Doom; Peg, John, Jeremy, and Greg Markello; Ruth Rice; Nora Busby; Ashley Reed; Tom Carrow, Carolyn Enlow Nickum; Jay Holtzhouser; Ken Martin; Jennifer Null; Tom Willey; Carol Wolf; Brenda Graham; Wilma Johnson; Betty Boyd Hippler; Neema Mutayaba, Heather Johnson; Lynn Ewin; Alan Sebens; Gary Albin; Debbie Hayden; Samantha Brown; Jim Eckert and his family; The ladies attending the jail ministry; Levi Damron; Dr. K. Renee Hamlet; Michelle Kohlmeier; Monica and Dion Wright; Jennifer Churchwell; Lois McConnell; Bea Brinkman and her family; Tammy and Nathan Cherry; Larry Stein; Children of the women currently in the CC Jail; Debbie Nichols; Cathy Frakes; Trisha Mason; the family of Rosemary Graham

THANK YOU!

Dear Janis, Greg and Pastor Parish Committee,

Thank you for the lovely evening on Sunday, January 3rd. The food was excellent and such a nice evening of fellowship and fun.

We appreciated it so much!

In Christ,

FUMC Staff

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

2/1	Tabitha Seaney
2/2	Tyler Mefford, Mary Jane Parker
2/5	Allie Oxford, Nadene Keene
2/7	Waneta McCann, Taya Harmon
2/8	Brenda Graham
2/9	Krystal Damron
2/10	Jack Frakes
2/11	Rodney Frakes, Dalton Davis
2/12	Dan Inboden, Lori Treadway
2/14	Dorcas Sills, Martin Williamson
2/15	Linda Hutchens
2/16	Keith Christy, Ruth Parrott
2/18	Walter Conner
2/20	Katelin Veenstra
2/22	Mary Stephens, Greg Catt
2/24	Connie Carter
2/25	Jane Elliott
2/26	Trevor Carter

FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

2/1	Walter & Margaret Conner
2/14	David & Mary Correll
2/16	Guy & Shirley Treadway
2/28	Larry & Kay Bonnell

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT: LOVE

I see the Fruit of the Spirit Love at work in the world every week as I help with NOW (Nutrition on Weekends) bagging. As we fill the bags with food everyone is smiling, laughing and working together for a common goal. No matter how bad my day has been, I am happy and feel so positive knowing that we are helping children in our community. When we are done we join hands, make a circle and say a prayer of thanks to God for the children and the many volunteers throughout our church and the community who give their time, money and love to the NOW Program. Each week I feel the presence of God and the abundant love that each volunteer has for the many children who need our love and assistance.

- Pam Bell

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT: JOY

Oh my goodness! I am nervous as I sit to write this little paragraph that Pastor Jay has asked from me - nervous that I will sound silly in my understanding of the Bible and the word of our Lord; nervous someone will think Pastor Jay should have asked someone more qualified in their understanding of scripture to write this. Then, I say to myself that the reason my family and I have come to love FUMC so much is the immense and continuous loving welcome we have felt since the moment we walked in your doors for the first time last spring. So, I prayed really hard, read all of Galatians, and am setting out to explain how Joy, a Fruit of the Spirit, has been at work in my life. This is a really good one for me as I am a person who tries to see joy in all the little things in life. I easily smile and laugh every day. I try to find the good in everyone and the positive in challenging situations. I genuinely want to “Love my neighbor as myself” and celebrate in others’ Joy.

First though, some background info on me. Everyone has a story, and part of my story has made finding Joy and allowing this Fruit of the Spirit to work through me a little challenging. When I was only 27 years old, I very suddenly lost my husband, Jeff, to a life-long heart condition. Our beautiful baby boy, Cash, was only four months old. Also, earlier that same year I lost my Grandma, whom I was as close with as any granddaughter and grandmother can be; my entire life I have wanted to be and tried really hard to be as full of Grace and Joy as she. Then the next year my parents divorced. All of these devastating events were blows to the core of my identity. Having two small children to raise through all of these trials and tribulations gave me a reason to smile through my pain. To wake up every morning and put a smile on my face when I didn’t want to wake up to begin with. Over time, as they say, the pain eased and I was determined to find joy in my life and that my kids would have the happily ever after that they deserved.

I have to admit that my faith was shot at that point and I wish that this Libbi could have told that Libbi to have a little more faith, do a lot more praying and it would all work out as God had planned. I met Dan and I found love and hope again. Our beautiful family has grown and we are so very fortunate with all of the blessings in our life. I am as joyful and content now than I have ever been. And can honestly say I have a better love and relationship with God than ever before. But still, sometimes I am in awe of the love God has for me. I am far from a perfect Christian. I like red wine, margaritas and watching sinful soap operas. I sometimes say a curse word when I’m aggravated and get jealous of those with a bigger house than ours and forget to be thankful for all I have. In Galatians it says “Since we have lived by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit”. If I teach my kids anything, I hope to teach them to keep their faith in God and live their lives by the Spirit. I want them to know that when we allow God in our hearts, Joy will always follow.

- Libbi Fearday

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT: PEACE

We don't see much of the fruit of the Spirit on the nightly news and when it does happen it doesn't get much press time. Bad news, horrible news gets all the headlines; we see that again, over and over.

What can we do to interrupt some of this chatter aimed at us and concentrate on God's peace, where do we start?

We can't help everyone, but we can help at least 1 person for a start! Just a phone call to a neighbor to check on things or sharing a meal with someone could be a big step in sharing the fruit of peace. Once you start, you will find that it multiplies and both of you will find that you have been blessed by the "Fruit of the Spirit".

- **Bob Berty**

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT: PATIENCE

Patience, a fruit of the Spirit, is evident here in the church. The pastor patiently encourages the shy child to join the others for the children's moment. The teachers calmly corral the exuberant children heading to children's church. Many congregation members attend church faithfully, patiently using canes, walkers, and wheelchairs. The patience we see here in church should serve as models for daily life.

- **Sharon Freeland**

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT: KINDNESS

Finding kindness in my day to day life is easy. Working with children is the easiest way to see kindness. Children naturally want to give to others and share, it's us that teach them to be cautious or afraid we won't get something back. I see the kindness in the way families treat each other in our Head Start center, in the way the community brings gently used items to donate. I hear kindness in the voices of the people who call to get information to help their child, or to receive other services that our organization provides. I see kindness in the hearts of the many volunteers who come into the center and donate their time just because they love being around children. Kindness is one of the most overlooked fruits of the Spirit if you are not in need of something. If you stop and look around you at any given time, Kindness is one of the easiest fruits to share.

- **Nina Davis**

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT: GENEROSITY

Giving just comes naturally to some. My father was the most generous person I've ever known. Sure, he donated money to lots of wonderful causes and each church in our small town benefited from funds he earned as a county level politician, but it wasn't the financial generosity that impressed me as a child. He gave of his time and energy to build programs that would impact the community for decades to come. From organizing Little League baseball and basketball to helping develop senior citizen low income housing and initiating a scholarship/loan fund for students needing help or taking strawberries or apple cider to shut ins, he gave freely and generously of his time. Time given freely is a gift we can all share with each other and our world. Our FUMC family exemplifies the spirit of generosity with many outreach programs like NOW, scouts and the jail ministry. The true spirit of giving and giving back is alive and well and growing in us. I am truly thankful to be part of this loving and giving congregation. Let us grow in love and generosity together.

- Antje Pippin

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT: FAITHFULNESS

When I think of faithfulness, I think of my mom. She was a wonderful woman who loved & faithfully served the Lord & her family. When I graduated from RHS in 1977, she wrote these words to me in a graduation card, "Most of all, always be faithful to the Lord & help win others to Him because this is the greatest thing you can do in this life. I just know there are great things ahead for all of us in Heaven that we can't even imagine now. Love much, be kind, & patient in the future just like you have in the past & all will be well." Even though she suffered with Alzheimer's disease dementia for the last 5 years of her life, she was able to recite the Lord's Prayer perfectly to Dennis & I just a few hours before she died. I am so thankful that faithfulness was one of my mother's greatest "fruits of the Spirit" & I pray that it will always be one of mine, too.

- Susan Inboden

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT: GENTLENESS

As we grow in our faith, the Holy Spirit works in us to be more like Christ. As Paul reminds us, part of the fruit, or results, of that work is gentleness, or kindness. Gentleness involves humility and thankfulness toward God, and polite, restrained behavior toward others.

Every person is powerful. We can speak words that influence others; we can act in ways that help or hurt; and we can choose what influences will inform our words and actions. Gentleness constrains and channels that power, causing us to forgive readily. In our daily lives we cannot help coming into situations that bring conflicts with people. It is easy and natural for us to react with violence or anger, especially if we feel insecure in our position. But when we accept the reality of who we are in Christ and trust the Holy Spirit to help us, we can be gentle, whatever conflicts may arise.

Gentleness is a strong hand with a soft touch. It is a tender, compassionate approach toward others' weaknesses and limitations. A gentle person still speaks truth, sometimes even painful truth, but in doing so guards his tone so the truth can be well received. We need to consider gentleness as "the Christian spirit."

Gentleness includes true humility that does not consider itself too good or too exalted for humble tasks. Gentleness is never self-important but is courteous, and modest, yet causes us to be willing to try when a job needs to be done. My FUMC Friends, I want to emphasize that your Life is fragile—Handle with Prayer. Often remind yourself to be kind, gentle in your response to others.

"Thank you, Lord, for saving my soul. Thank you, Lord, for making me whole." Thank you, Lord, also that you saved me for a purpose. Thank you, Lord, for the experiences that teach us how to fulfill your purpose with humble gentleness. May we cultivate that fruit of the Spirit which gives all the glory to God and shows a gentleness that is powerful and demonstrates the high, holy, faithful love of God!

- Tancy Finkbiner

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT: SELF CONTROL

Self-control is defined in the dictionary as the quality that allows us to stop from doing things you want to do, but that might not be in our best interest. Self-control is hard to do in everyday life: should I eat that last cookie, take the last piece of pie, or should I keep my mouth shut in a heated conversation? We should pray for the Holy Spirit to help us take better control of our actions and minds, to make the right decisions that God would want.

- Ken Mattsey

FOOD FOR THE BODY AND SOUL

First UMC has upcoming opportunities to support our congregation's ministries, while feeding our bodies and souls. On Sunday, February 7, we will celebrate Scout Sunday with our Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, and Girl Scouts. After worship (10:00 am to noon), Boy Scout Troop 901 will be providing brunch in Asbury Hall for a free-will donation and as a thank-you to our congregation for hosting them. The menu includes breakfast casseroles, fruit, doughnuts, muffins, dump cake, and beverages.

Our Second Wednesday dinner on February 10 will be a fundraiser for the youth mission trip to Baldwin, Louisiana. Beginning at 5:30 pm, the dinner will include homemade chili, vegetable soup, cornbread, vegetables, and dessert. The suggested donation will be \$8 for adults and \$3 for children. Please sign up at the welcome center by February 7.

Youth have two great opportunities with food: one is to prepare and serve the 2nd Wednesday dinner (food preparation at 4:00 pm on February 9 and at 4:30 pm on February 10). The other opportunity is our regular UMYF meeting on February 21, when we will host Faith and Doubt night at 6:00 pm. We'll gather for dinner, then meet with a panel of leaders, where you can ask your toughest questions about faith and doubt.

Our "Just One" item for February is toothpaste! Single tubes are always best, so that each child and youth who comes to our Kids' Shopping Day will receive the same amount of toiletries, clothing, and school supplies. Our goal is 120 tubes, and you can place your donations in the "Just One" bin outside the church office.

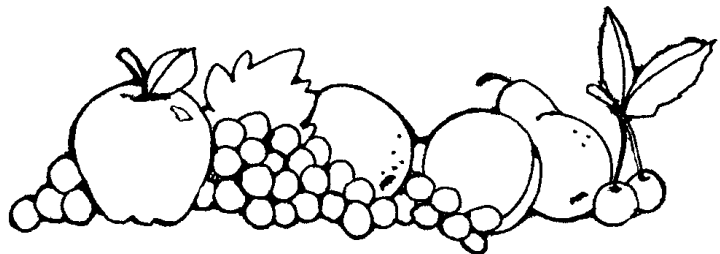
Don't just feed yourself, but help feed others as well! The Robinson High School Fellowship of Christian Athletes is sponsoring the Souper Bowl of Caring. Collection bins for your non-perishable food items are available in the Narthex, and we will be happy to receive your donations until February 14. All items collected go to the Robinson Food Pantry.

Care for your body, or someone else's, by learning how to use our AED machine! Kristy Veenstra will be leading a training session during the Sunday School hour on February 7 in Asbury Hall. We hope you will join her, as individuals, or as classes, to learn how to use this life-giving equipment!

And finally, food for your souls begins on February 14 with our congregational Lenten study! We'll meet each week (February 14 through March 20) to study A Disciple's Heart. Childcare will be available. Please sign up at the welcome center early, so that materials will be available for you (cost is \$10 each).

FEBRUARY 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 9:30 am Chrismon Ladies	2 6:00 pm Disciple II	3 3:00 pm Kids' Club	4 9:30 am Disciple II 4:00 pm NOW bagging 6:00 pm Jail Ministry 7:00 pm Handbell choir	5	6
7 8 am Handbells 9:00 am Worship 10:15 am Sunday School 11 am Chancel Choir 5 pm Young Adult Super Bowl Party at Parsonage	8 9:30 am Chrismon Ladies	9 4:00 pm Youth food prep for 2nd Wednesday Dinner 6:00 pm Disciple II	10 3:00 pm Kids' Club 4:30 pm Youth prep for 2nd Wednesday Dinner 4:30 pm NOW Bagging 5:30 pm 2nd Wednesday Dinner 7:00 pm Ash Wednesday Service	11 9:30 am Disciple II 6:00 pm Jail Ministry 7:00 pm Handbell choir	12	13
14 8 & 11 am Chancel Choir 9:00 am Worship 10:15 am Sunday School 2:30 pm Heritage Health 4:00 pm Lenten Study	15 9:30 am Chrismon Ladies	16 6:00 pm Disciple II	17 3:00 pm Kids' Club 6:00 pm Lay Leadership	18 9:30 am Disciple II 4:30 pm NOW bagging 6:00 pm Jail Ministry 7:00 pm Handbell choir	19	20
21 8 & 11 am Chancel Choir 9:00 am Worship 10:15 am Sunday School 4:00 pm Lenten Study 6:00 pm Youth Dinner	22 9:30 am Chrismon Ladies	23 6:00 pm Disciple II	24 3:00 pm Kids' Club 5:30 pm Trustees 6:30 pm Worship committee	25 9:30 am Disciple II 4:30 pm NOW bagging 6:00 pm Jail Ministry 7:00 pm Handbell choir	26	27 2 pm Departure for Winter Jam
28 8 & 11 am Chancel Choir 9:00 am Worship 10:15 am Sunday School 4:00 pm Lenten Study	29 9:30 am Chrismon Ladies					



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