

February
2022

LOVE GOD

LOVE ONE ANOTHER

LOVE THE COMMUNITY

LOPC NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2022

From Jeff Birch, Senior Pastor

What Do We Really Need?

February is Valentine's Day, and truth be told, I struggle with Valentine's Day. Why do I struggle with it? Because I am not a very romantic person. Evie is such a better gift giver than I am. She is so creative, and she is always coming up with things that surprise me. While I, on the other hand, have never been able to pull off a surprise on her. Valentine's Day can be a struggle for other reasons as well. It can be a time of incredible loneliness or sadness, wishing things were different, missing a loved one, or just not having the love in our life that we so crave and long for.

I get that, and that is why these made-for-Hallmark type holidays can be such a mixed bag. But they can also be a time where we reflect and are renewed in what we truly need and what we have in Christ. The apostle Paul, in his letter to the Ephesians, sums up very well in his prayer for the church what our heart truly needs. Listen to the text.

"For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that according to the riches of his glory

he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith – that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen” (Ephesians 3:14-21).

Now, think about this. This is Paul’s prayer for the church. He could have prayed for so many things for the church. He could have prayed for power in witness or safety from enemies, or for our families to be blessed. All good things. But what does he pray for? For us to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge. Incredible! What is our greatest need? Apparently, it is for us to know more deeply, more profoundly, the love of Christ.

In fact, that is why, earlier in the prayer, Paul asks that we would be strengthened in our inner being so that Christ would be able to dwell within us. Again, apparently, we can’t handle the love of Christ. Our inner beings are too weak. We need spiritual strength to be able to cultivate the breadth, length, height and depth of His love.

Lastly, look at how Paul concludes his prayer. He concludes with this amazing promise that God is able to do far more abundantly than we could ever ask or imagine. Now, we all too often totally misconstrue this promise. We think about it circumstantially. I have this particular need and God is able to do far more abundantly than we could ask or imagine. Then, if he doesn’t answer the prayer the way we would like we get disappointed or disillusioned. But look at what this is promising. The text says that we may be filled with all the fullness of God, and that is what God is able to do far more abundantly than we could ever ask or imagine.

But and here is the crucial question. Is that what we want? Do you hear that and read this text and kind of say to yourself, “Oh yeah, well, whatever, that’s great, but I would rather have” fill in the blank? Maybe we need a sort of adjustment of perspective?


Listen to how Tim Keller puts it: *“All Christians are filled with the fullness of God. This petition, if you think about it brings a lot of confusion. Paul is praying for things that are already true. Or is he? What is going on here? The only way to understand what he is saying is this: If it is really true that all Christians have Christ dwelling in their hearts by faith, then he must be saying that it is one thing to have money in the bank, but it is another thing to draw it. You can have a billion dollars and live poor. So, it is one thing to have Christ living in your heart, but it is another thing to experience it. It is one thing to have the fullness of God in your life it is another thing to actually experience it. And he is saying therefore something important, something enormously important. He is saying there is something possible that you have not begun to tap. And if you are a Christian you must realize that. There are always these two sides. You can have Christ living in you and not experience it. You can have the fullness of God and not experience it. Here is Paul praying that you will know it. Why? We know but we don’t*

know. Every Christian knows that God loves them, but yet he is praying that we will know the love of God. You know but you don't know; you think you know but you don't know. You will never get anywhere near the experience of God until the first thing you do is to bow your head and you say I haven't the slightest idea what these words mean; I have hardly ever tasted; I have tasted four drops out of the ocean. That is the reality of Christian experience."

Yes, Valentine's Day can be hard. Or it can be great. We don't minimize the difficulty, nor do we gloss over the joy. Whichever it is, let us recognize our truest need: to experience the love of Christ and to tap into the fullness of God that is ours through our union with Jesus Christ.




Jeff

Community Bible Reading Plan



Community Bible Reading Plan
LO
Lake Oconee
Presbyterian Church
PC

PARTNER WITH US AS WE READ THROUGH THE BIBLE IN 2022:

-  hard copies
(available at the church)
-  weekly eblast
-  weekly Facebook
post

Officer Ordination

All of the nominated officers listed below were elected at the congregational meeting on Sunday, January 23, and were installed on Sunday, January 30, during the morning worship.

Deacons: Doug Attaway, Mark Stott

Elders: Wes Hunt, Bob Patton, Tommy Evans

Jim Hildebrand

On behalf of Session

Women's Ministry

From the President

As you can see by the picture, the Women's Ministry Council has changed for 2022! L to R are:
Carol Johansen (Treasurer)
Sue Burmeister (Vice President)
Karen Tepper (Spiritual Advisor)
Renee Benzur (Secretary)
Lynne Fowlkes (President)
Thanks to Bill Benzur for the picture.

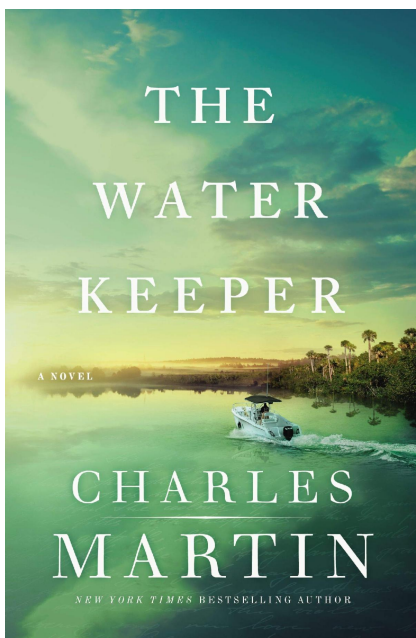


At this point, we're beginning to plan some activities for the women in our church. Some of us are new to the area, so we'd love suggestions for places we can go within a fairly short range of the church. We'd like to make this your Women's Organization, so don't be bashful!

We look forward to the coming year as we "come out of the Covid restrictions" and move forward. We are also looking for projects to help our community in the coming year, as Christ has shown us so clearly in the New Testament. Thanks in advance for your suggestions.

Sincerely in His Name,
Lynne Fowlkes
Women's Ministry Council President

Book Binders



The next book is *The Water Keeper* by Charles Martin, and the next meeting is **Friday, February 18.**

Meal Support



The Women's Ministry will coordinate meals to be provided for those in need due to illness, injury, recovery from hospitalization, or after childbirth.

February Trivia

February Fun

How many of these February Fun Facts do you know?

Answers at the bottom.

Which of these does not occur during the month of February?

- A) Chinese New Year
- B) Black History Month
- C) Daylight Saving Time

Groundhog Day is February 2. If the groundhog sees his shadow, what is predicted?

- A) early spring
- B) continued winter temps
- C) saving a lot on your car insurance

The Lunar New Year is the most important holiday in China and begins on

February 1. This year - 2022 - is the year of the:

- A) ox
- B) chicken
- C) tiger

The Super Bowl is scheduled for February 13. Where will it be held?

- A) SoFi Stadium in Inglewood, CA
- B) Raymond James Stadium in Tampa, FL
- C) State Farm Stadium in Glendale, AZ

According to the National Retail Federation (NRF), the most popular Valentine's Day purchase for 2021 was:

- A) jewelry
- B) candy
- C) greeting cards

President's Day is often associated with the February birthdays of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. What two other U.S. Presidents were born this month?

- A) William Henry Harrison
- B) Calvin Coolidge
- C) Ronald Reagan

February was chosen as Black History Month to coincide with the birthdays of:

- A) Frederick Douglass
- B) Sojourner Truth
- C) Abraham Lincoln

The birth stone of February is:

- A) opal
- B) citrine
- C) amethyst

The birth flower for February is:

- A) carnation
- B) daffodil
- C) violet

TRUE or FALSE: February 2022 has 29 days, making this year a leap year.

Coming Soon to Theatres: The Mulligan

DEBUTING IN AUGUSTA DURING MASTERS WEEK AND THEN PLAYING NATIONWIDE

THE MULLIGAN is based on the beloved book by former PGA touring pro Wally Armstrong and bestselling author and business executive Ken Blanchard. This inspiring story about relationships, forgiveness, and priorities is a shot of grace. Golf's gracious do-over, a mulligan, is the beginning of Paul McAllister's second chance. Guided by the wisdom and advice of the Old Pro (played by Pat Boone), Paul learns about priorities, self-confidence, and playing a good game both on and off the course. The Mulligan is a parable of second chances.

FYI: Doug & Jeanne Hesse were extras during filming, but Doug notes that they, "probably ended up on the cutting room floor."



Church App

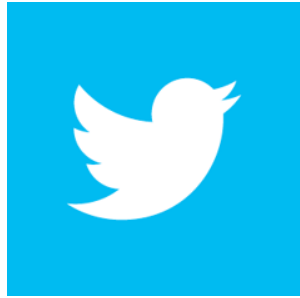

Join realm[®]
and stay connected!

*Call or come by the church office for assistance
with installing the church's mobile APP!*

Check us out on social media!

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[instagram.com@lakeoconeepca](https://www.instagram.com/lakeoconeepca)

MNA Disaster Response



Sheds of Hope

The next Sheds of HOPE build is scheduled for March 28, 29, 30 and April 1. Volunteers are welcome, and experience isn't required, though it's helpful! In the meantime, check out some photos taken during our November 2021 build dates. For more information about Sheds of HOPE, contact [Dick Forrester](#).





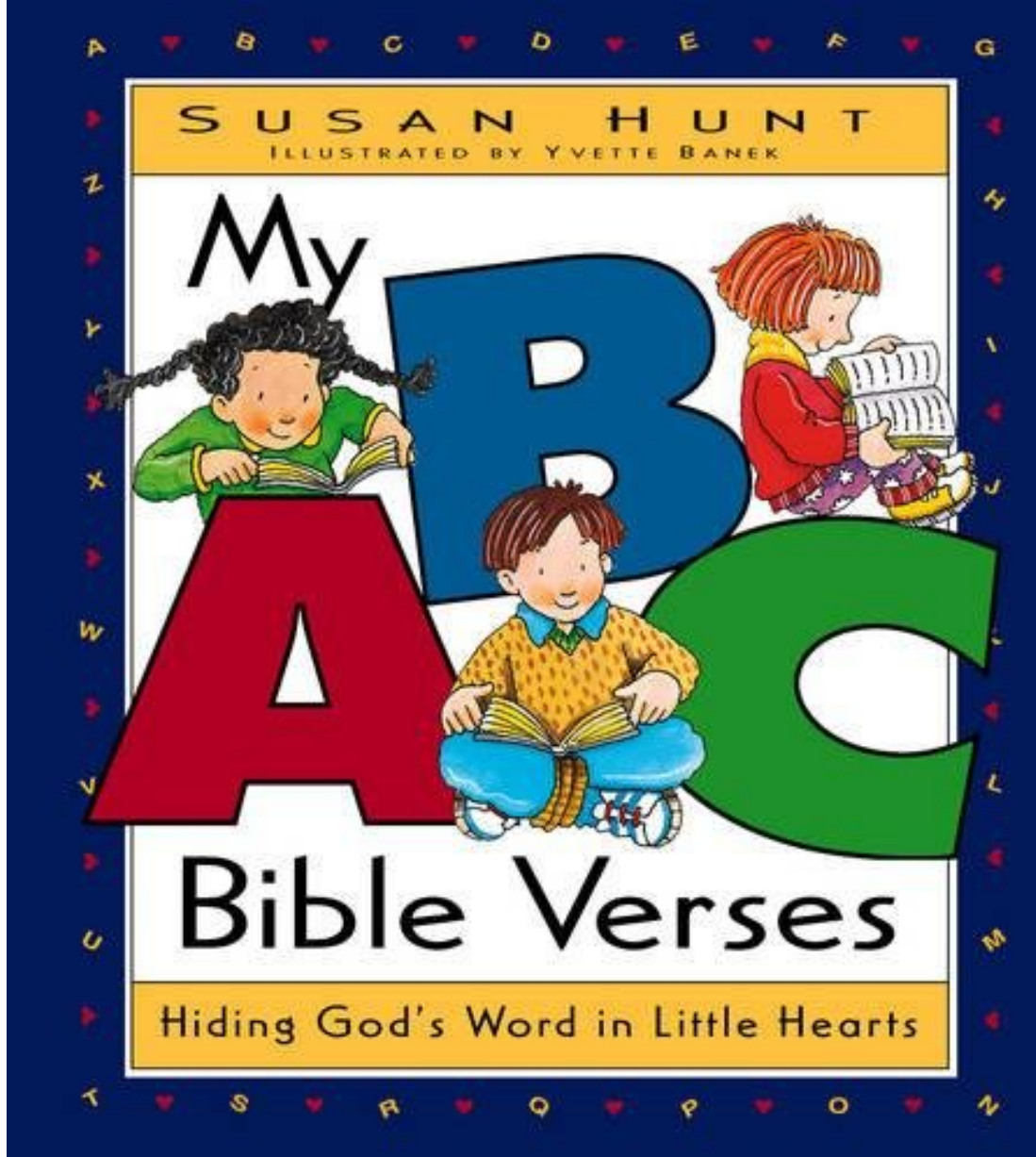
The Missions Ministry Team did not meet in January.

Youth Ministry



The LOPC Youth Group meets on **Sundays from 5-7 pm at LOPC** where there is food, fun, and Bible Study - and we **WANT YOU** to join us! We are looking for all middle and high school kids in and out of LOPC. Youth Group is for rising 6th grade students through high school.

Children's Ministry



During the Doxology, children ages 4-6 are dismissed for Children's Worship. We will be using curriculum from ***Teach Me to Worship*** through April 2022.

Teach Me to Worship is adapted from a curriculum originally developed by the staff at Orangewood Presbyterian Church in Maitland, FL. The curriculum presents and explains common elements of worship that the universal church has used throughout the ages. The material is available in PDF format which allows ministry leaders to download and print the material according to their schedule and need. A subscription to the curriculum includes unlimited access to the curriculum, handouts and activities for the children, letters to parents, training videos and worship music.

God established a testimony...which he commanded our fathers to teach to their children that the next generation might know...so that they should set their hope in God and not forget the works of God...

Psalms 78:5-7a

Love God, Love One Another,
Love the Community

Our Vision

Lake Oconee Presbyterian Church exists to worship God, nurture and equip God's people, and mobilize the church to build his kingdom.

February Trivia Answers

Which of these does not occur during the month of February?

- A) Chinese New Year
- B) Black History Month
- C) Daylight Saving Time (begins March 14)**

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- A) William Henry Harrison (2/9/1773)**
- B) Calvin Coolidge (7/4/1872)
- C) Ronald Reagan (2/6/1911)**

February was chosen as Black History Month to coincide with the birthdays of:

- A) Frederick Douglass (no official record; estimated February 1818)**
- B) Sojourner Truth (11/18/1797)
- C) Abraham Lincoln (2/12/1809)**

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The next leap year is 2024.