

# River News



## *From The Pastor's Pen*

*~ Pastor Sarah Flack*

Happy February, River Church! In 1 Corinthians 16:14, we read:

*Your every action must be done with love.*

Such a short statement to have so heavy a call! Think about what is being said here. First of all, notice that this is a command, not a suggestion. When Paul writes to the Christians of Corinth, he is conveying that God expects them to act with love and to keep acting with love. This wasn't a once and done deal; Paul was telling them to make it a pattern of behavior: when they acted, it was to be done with love.

Notice also that this is a personal call to action. Paul didn't say, "their every action must be done with love." Those who hear the words of this letter are meant to take this command personally: Your every action must be done with love.

So, it's a command, it's personal, and then notice that it is universal. There are no actions that aren't to be done with love; instead, every action must be done with love. If you are a person who likes clear rules with no room for exceptions, this is just such a rule. In a sense, this makes it easier because we don't have to stop and think about what our motive should be in each situation—it should always be love.

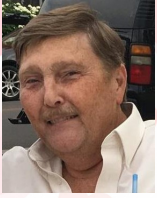
To actually put this into practice, though, can be difficult. It may require examining our motives when we act. It may require changing what we do or how we speak so our actions and words reflect love. It may require praying for a changed heart toward a person or situation. It may require choosing to act with love even if we don't feel very loving.

But to act with love is what we are called to do. That word for "love," *agapē* in the Greek, is not based on an emotion or feeling, by the way, although an emotion or feeling of love may be present. Instead, it is a willful determination to put the welfare of others above our own. In other words, it is a sincere concern for the good of another. This kind of love is a fruit of the Spirit, meaning the Holy Spirit enables believers to love in this way (Galatians 5:22-23). When we do everything with love, we are imitating our Savior Jesus (Ephesians 5:1-2). And it is this kind of love that helps followers of Christ work together in unity (Colossians 3:14).

February is the month that stores tell us we need to buy cards, flowers, and candy for one another as a sign of our love. But what if instead of buying things, we as Christians lived out the command of "every action must be done with love" year-round? It would not only be a way to show who Jesus is to the world but also a way to show who we are because of Jesus—a people formed out of the love of God who can love because He first loved us.

So, River Church, go forth, love one another, and let all that you do be done with love.

Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Sarah



*Elder Ministry*  
~ *Dean Wilkie*

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to all the saints calling themselves the “frozen chosen” in northern NY. It is my hope that you’ve been able to stay warm and out of the worst of the snowstorm weather. Be blessed, be warm, and know that we’re over halfway through it now.

I’m taking the scripture for this month’s newsletter from Deuteronomy 4:7, it reads “*for what great nation is there that has a god so near as the Lord our God is near to us whenever we call upon him*”. We find in this Old Testament scripture that God has promised to be near his people Israel, his chosen nation. He promised that if they obeyed him and followed him and the laws that he had given them, that he would be with them when they called upon him.

Again we see in the New Testament, that God sent his son Jesus, to become man and dwell among us. He healed people, He changed their lives, He ate and communed with them, they talked with Him face-to-face. That is such a mind blowing concept that we cannot come in face-to-face, but we can commune with Him and we can talk with Him. Jesus promise upon his departure is in the words of James 4:8 he encourages “*draw near to Him and He will draw near to us*”. No other god desires this closeness with humanity and most of the false gods aren’t looking for fellowship or relationship, they’re looking for servitude.

As I approach 3 score and 10years(whew!), I have been a believer for almost 6 decades, I remember being so excited to turn 12 years of age, for 3 primary reasons. The first, as an active Episcopalian, upon confirmation I could become an altar boy. The 2nd reason, to join the Boy Scout troop that was active in Depauville, and have something to consistently attend. Lastly, After acquiring working papers from the school dist. office, I could sell the “Grit” newspaper(then a weekly newspaper; costing 15cents) and I would have a little more cash at my disposal - besides my stipend that I got for doing house chores. Alas - I digress with history after being active for many years as an altar boy, though I had a great desire to read through the Bible, it’s taken me quite a few years to fully read through the entire Bible, God’s word to us, God’s will for us. Saying yes to reading the entire Bible is the beginning of a commitment to draw near to Jesus, with intention and consistency. It is best to set aside a time that you can devote yourself to focus and concentrate on it. No other god desires this closeness with his servants. Are we are not mere slaves in servitude to our Lord, who paid the ultimate price for us? He doesn’t call us servants, He calls us brothers n sisters. He calls us child of the most high King.

If we spend time with Him, He reveals himself to us through His written word, and we discover new and rich insights about Him as we linger a while with Him. So hide your self in His word and take refuge in your Lord God that we may know of His promises and tell His good works ! Amen

*“Show me your ways oh Lord, teach me your paths. Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, my hope is in You all day long”*. Ps 25:4-5

In His service,

Elder Dean.



## *Grief Ministry* *~ Laura Schafer*

### **GRIEF**

Grief....I know grief. I know the pain of losing someone I love. I know the questions that often flood our minds in those early days of our grief journey.

I also know the healing and comfort that comes from the Lord. I have experienced it! I have found joy and peace even as I grieved my loss. I know God protects us and keeps our life. The keeping just may not look like what we thought it would.

For those of you early in your grief journey, you are still hurting. You may still be crying almost daily. You may find everyday life hard.

Those of you who have been on your grief journey longer may feel like your lives will never be the same again. The truth is: it won't be. Someone you care for deeply is no longer alive on this earth. This experience will change you. BUT, God can and will use this for His glory and your good, IF you let Him. God is a compassionate, gracious God who loves you. He will heal your broken heart.

*"I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come? My help comes from the Lord, Who made heaven and earth. Psalm 121:1-2 (I encourage you to read all of Psalm 121).*

I know you may be asking yourselves, was there something I could have done to stop my loved ones death? Did I miss a sign that something was wrong? Could I have changed what happened? We must remember that the length of our days are decided by God and only God, we cannot change what He puts into place.

*"Your eyes have seen my unformed substance; and in your book were written ALL the days that were ordained for me, when yet there were not one of them." Psalm 139:16*

Each of us are unique. The people we lost were unique and special to us. Their lives were unique. Their deaths were unique. Our grief will be unique. But the source of healing for each of us is the same: Jesus Christ. Healing from loss does not happen quickly. It takes work. It requires that we diligently seek the Lord and trust Him. We must remain steadfast through this trial.

*"Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love Him." James 1:12*

This is my favorite verse of hope for those of us who have lost a loved one. One day we will be reunited with our loved one(s) and we will be together on that day when we will see the Lord, face to face for all of eternity.

*"But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. ..." (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)*



## *RCC Women's Ministry* *~ Wendy Falzano and Charlotte Frese*



Well, it has been brutally cold outside, but the women of the Circle warmed many hearts with their service project in January.

The Circle gathered together in January to make Valentines for some of Samaritan's Nursing Home Residents. Some women cut out the Valentines while others decorated. The goal was to try to have enough for one floor of the six at Samaritan. The nurses would determine which floor would benefit most.

After the gathering, a few of the women committed to making some more. (Thank you Lillian, Patsy and Char.)

When all were done, there were enough Valentines for all the residents in the nursing home. That is, 6 floors with 38-40 residents per floor! Good job ladies!! Your hands were God's love in action.

Thank you Angela for your time of testimony and devotion!

Our next gathering will be Saturday, February 19 th , 10-12. We are looking at another service project.... possibly pillow case dresses for children and women of Haiti, (or another area of need.)

If you like to sew, or "knot" ( ), come join us for some wonderful fellowship with other women. Bring your scissors, some extra pillow cases and a machine if you "sew" desire.

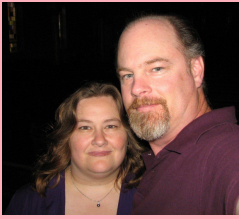
Our gatherings are often centered around service projects, but we also like to make pies, have scavenger hunts, do crafts and play games. We just like to have the time to meet with our sisters to encourage, pray and have fun. Sometimes tears and sometimes laughs but always a "Heart"-felt time. We have been blessed so much by women giving their testimonies or being able to come along someone who is hurting.

If you have any ideas of what we could do at one of our monthly gatherings, we are always looking for ideas. Let us know what is on your "heart", what is your passion?

Remember, you are always welcome to bring a friend. This can be another opportunity to bring a daughter, granddaughter or another young lady.

On the Circle bulletin board, there is some information that we received on the NY Annual Baptist Women Convention themed "Let the Walls Come Down" to be held April 22-24 in Celeron, NY. You can also find more info at American Baptist Women's Ministries of New York State at <https://www.abwm-nys.org>

If you have any questions or want to be added to our Circle Facebook Group, you can contact Char Frese (315-221-1303), Wendy Falzano (518-526-6149) or Angela Taylor (315-766-6542).



*Breaking The Chains  
Biblical Recovery Ministry  
~ Ken & Michelle Kavanagh*

*Though the mountain seems high  
And the journey seems long,  
There is no one better to have by your side than Jesus.  
Though the light grows dim  
And the path is hard to see,  
Fear not for He is with you.  
When enemies are on all sides  
And they begin to move in  
Stand firm in faith  
And He will rescue you.  
When your legs grow weak  
And you become weary,  
Worry not because He will strengthen you.  
When the storm begins to pass  
And your load begins to lighten,  
Thank God, because He carried you.*

*“God is our refuge and strength,  
a very present help in trouble.”  
(Psalm 46:1)*



*Happy Birthday to our brothers and sisters in Christ!*

02/02	Xia Hazelwood
02/08	Stephanie Shafer
02/08	Jolene Robbines
02/13	Bud Dier
02/13	Victoria Pritt
02/16	Norman Ashland
02/20	Sharon Questel
02/27	Candy Martilotta

*Be sure to wish them a very Happy Birthday!*

## *Chili Cook-Off*

Our Chilly Weather Chili Cook-Off will be held February 20th after Sunday Service.

If you wish to enter chili for the contest, please let the church office know as the deadline for all entries is February 13th!

If you wish to bring items for the chili, the following is suggested:

Sour Cream  
Cheddar Cheese  
Oyster Crackers  
Rolls/Bread  
Dessert

Please make sure to contact the church office to see which item is still needed.

# Church News

## Ministry

### RCC Audio Visual & Sound

Your help is needed!

RCC Audio Visual & Sound is looking for someone who is interested learning how to help with audio, visual and sound at the church. Training is available to those interested in helping.

If you would like to assist the Audio Visual & Sound Ministry, please see Justin in the sound booth or email him at [justincrandall@riverchurchnny.com](mailto:justincrandall@riverchurchnny.com) to learn more about this great opportunity!

### American Baptist Men NYS Joe Folckemer Scholarship

The American Baptist Men of NYS offers scholarship aid to mainly assist men in obtaining further education. The basis for the 2022 scholarship will be a \$500 scholarship. The prayerful goal is to help educate the American Baptist Men of tomorrow. Deadline is June 1st.

More information and an application is on the church information board or you can contact the scholarship committee c/o Richard Russell, 43 Orchard Park Rd. Pine City NY 14871 or email: [nyrussells@gmail.com](mailto:nyrussells@gmail.com)

### Men's Ministry

The Men's Ministry gathers the 1st Saturday of each month at the church. Feel free to invite a friend! Please RSVP JD Flack at 315-408-0330.

### Blueberry Streusel Muffins

1/4 cup butter, softened

1/3 cup sugar

1 egg, beaten

1 tsp vanilla

2 1/3 cup flour

4 tsp baking powder

1/2 tsp salt

1 cup milk

1 1/2 cup fresh or frozen blueberries or mixed fruit

Streusel

1/2 cup sugar

1/3 cup flour

1/2 tsp cinnamon

1/4 cup cold butter

In large bowl, cream butter and sugar. Beat in eggs and vanilla; mix well. Combine the flour, baking powder and salt; add to creamed mixture alternately with milk. Fold in blueberries.

Fill 12 greased or paper lined muffin cups 1/2 full. In small bowl combine sugar, flour and cinnamon; cut in butter until crumbly. Sprinkle over muffins. Bake at 375 for 25-30 minutes or until browned. Cool for 5 minutes before moving to a wire rack. Serve warm. Excellent nice and fluffy muffins!

Note: If using frozen berries, no need to thaw before adding to batter.

