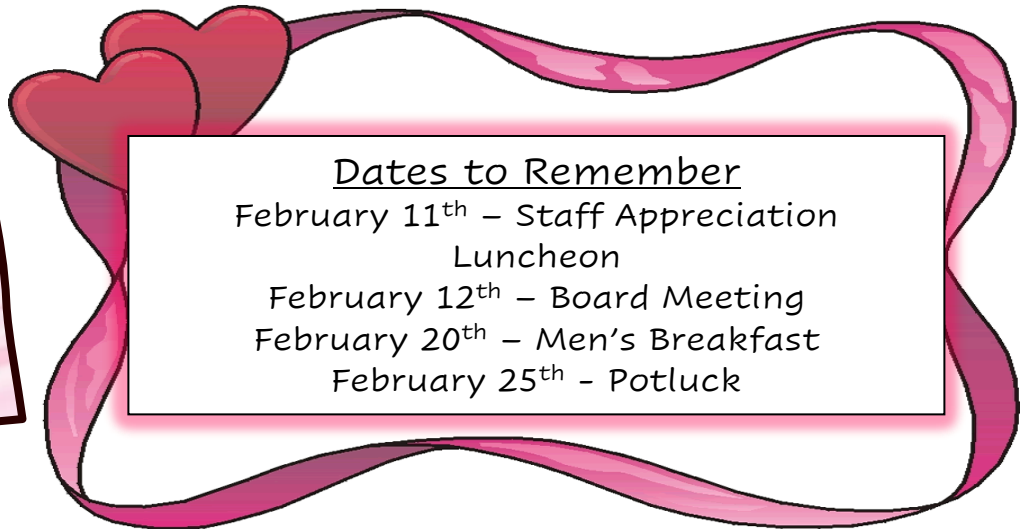


# Westgate Witness



## February 2024

2235 Harrisburg Pike, Lancaster, PA 17601 -- 717-394-1071



## Greetings in the Name of our Lord!

The Gratitude Attitude

**1 Thessalonians 5:16-18** *Always be joyful. Pray continually and give thanks whatever happens. That is what God wants for you in Christ Jesus.*

OK friends this is an honest admission—lately instead of always joyful—I am intermittently joyful. Instead of praying continually—too often it's pray when the “creek rises” when I am in not just in a pinch—but a panic. Instead of giving thanks whatever happens—much of the time it's giving thanks when things come together according to my plan. With these admissions I might also add that winter is very hard on me. I fight harder to stay on top of my emotions—struggle with melancholy—feel closed in, isolated, and sometimes just plain grumpy. You would think by this stage in my life I would have mastered the winter malaise—but this year is yet another reminder that I have not.

Even when circumstances are good some of us know if you look enough and hard enough, you'll find something to bellyache about. So maybe we should quit looking! Lift your eyes off the weeds. Major in the grace of God. Measure the gifts of God. Collect your blessings. Catalog His kindness.



Assemble your reason for gratitude and recite. **“Always be joyful. Pray continually and give thanks whatever happens. That is what God wants for you in Christ Jesus” (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18).**

Look at the totality of those terms. Always be joyful, Pray continually. Give thanks whatever happens. Perhaps we learn a lesson from Sidney Connell. When her brand-new bicycle was stolen, she called her dad with the bad news. He expected his daughter to be upset. But Sidney wasn't crying. She was honored. **“Dad,” she boasted, “out of all the bikes they could have taken they took mine.”** Gratitude is always an option. And that option makes all the difference even in the midst of Winter Blues. Matthew Henry the great author of Biblical commentaries chose the gratitude option. When the famous scholar was accosted by thieves and robbed of his money bag, he wrote in his diary, **“Let me be thankful first, because I was never robbed before; second because, although they took my purse they did not take my life; third although they took my all, it was not much; and, fourthly, because it was I who was robbed not I who did the robbing.”**

What a difference it makes in life when we make gratitude our default setting, and we find ourselves giving thanks even in the midst of the problems of life.

**Psalm 136:1** *Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever.*

**Joel 2:26** *You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied and praise the name of the Lord your God who has dealt wondrously with you.*

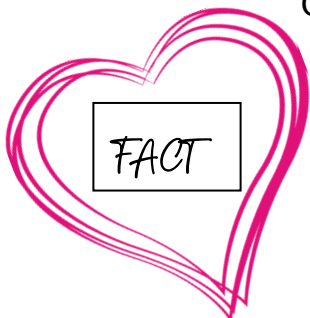
Pastor Robert Zimmerman



Next Board Meeting is scheduled for  
Monday, February 12th @ 6:30 PM



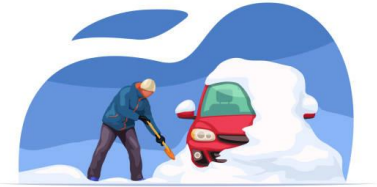
**AB Men's Breakfast** - Our next Men's Fellowship breakfast will be on February 20th at 9:00 am. We will meet at the Family Fare Restaurant, 5921 Main St., East Petersburg PA 17520 for a casual Christian Men's fellowship time.



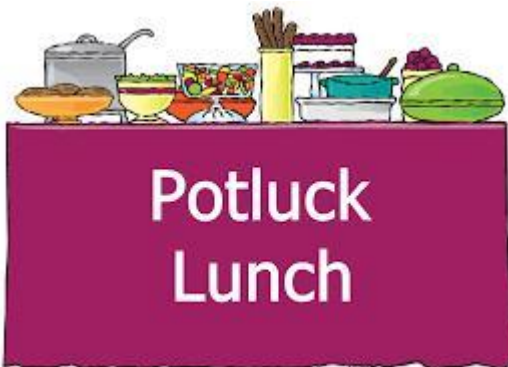
The 8th-century Gelasian Sacramentary recorded the celebration of the Feast of Saint Valentine on February 14. The day became associated with **romantic love** in the 14th and 15th centuries when notions of courtly love flourished, apparently by association with the "lovebirds" of early spring.



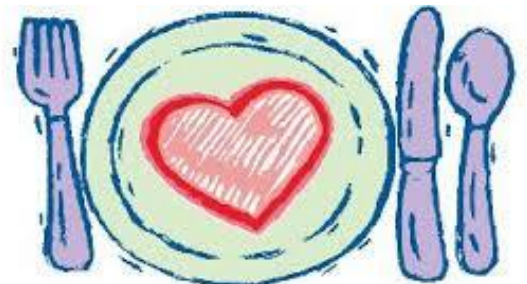
For decisions about worship on Sundays where the weather is questionable, please check your email by 9 a.m. Sunday morning. Pastor Zimmerman will send out a congregation wide email indicating any cancellations of worship due to weather. If you are not currently receiving Church emails and want to be added to the email list, please send your current email to Lora Shirey at [lorashirey1965@gmail.com](mailto:lorashirey1965@gmail.com) or to Robert Zimmerman at [rszimmy@aol.com](mailto:rszimmy@aol.com)



Church Staff Appreciation Luncheon Sunday February 11th, following Church. This lunch is for church staff and families and those who were nominated to the Pastoral Relations Committee and their spouses. Please let Rev. Richard Cook know of your plans to attend by this Sunday February 4th. The Luncheon will be at Harvey's Barbecue at 304 Main Street, Mount Joy, PA. If you wish to access Harvey's menu, go to their website: [www.harveysbarbeque.com](http://www.harveysbarbeque.com)



Join us for our Potluck Luncheon Sunday immediately following the worship service. Consider bringing a main course, a vegetable, fruit dish, salad or dessert. If you don't bring anything at all, please bring your appetite. We are doing a Potluck the last Sunday of each month for January, February, and March. If the luncheons are well supported, we will plan to continue them the last Sunday of each month. Additionally, it's a great opportunity to invite others.





We're Back!!

In a new year with a new topic, this is a perfect time to join our Women's Bible study!

Join us at 9:30am each Tuesday for coffee, fellowship, study, and prayer. Beginning on Tuesday, January 9, we will be jumping into a

topical study of the Importance and Power of Praise and Worship! We'll look at praise in the Old and New Testaments, the Psalms, the purpose of praise, the concept of 'Judah' and other areas. This is a joyous topic, and we'll include games, activities, and videos to enhance our study. See Lynda if you have any questions. We would love you to join us!"

### Adult Sunday School Announcement



This Sunday February 4<sup>th</sup> Anderson McMahan will be sharing his unique experiences in his mission with the Philadelphia Project which he participated in last Summer. There will be a brief time of questions

following his presentation. Stephen Appleby will continue throughout the remainder of February to focus on the series *"Well Versed—Biblical Answers to Today's Toughest Questions."*

Beginning Sunday March 3<sup>rd</sup> Gary Stump will begin a 4-5 week Biblically based class focusing on the Epistle of 2 Peter. 2 Peter is authored by Peter the Apostle/Disciple with particular focus on the grace of God in Christ which empowers Christians to live righteously, even in the face of opposition and persecution. The book also deals with false teaching which was exerting pressure on the early church to depart from the knowledge of Christ. The false teaching is was not only a theological but a moral challenge in seeking to live a legitimate Christian lifestyle.



Be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.

Ephesians 4:32



## A Squirrel Infestation



The **Presbyterian Church** called a meeting to decide what to do about their squirrel infestation. After much prayer and consideration, they concluded that the squirrels were predestined to be there, and they should not interfere with God's divine will.



At the **Baptist church**, the squirrels had taken an interest in the baptistry. The deacons met and decided to put a waterslide on the baptistry and let the squirrels drown themselves. The squirrels liked the slide and unfortunately knew how to swim, so twice as many showed up the following week.

The **Lutheran church** decided that they were not able to harm any of God's creatures. So, they humanely trapped their squirrel's and set them free near the Baptist church. Two weeks later, the squirrels were back when the Baptists took down the waterslide.

The **Episcopalians** tried a much more unique path by setting out pans of whiskey around their church in an effort to kill the squirrels with alcohol poisoning. They sadly learned how much damage a band of drunk squirrels can do.



But the **Catholic Church** came up with a more creative strategy! They baptized all the squirrels and made them members of the church. Now they only see them at Christmas and Easter.

Not much was heard from the **Jewish synagogue**. They took the first squirrel and circumcised him. They haven't seen a squirrel since.



*Happy Valentines Day*



# Birthdays – February



1st Susan Ferris  
 9th Harold Turner  
 Daniel Chure  
 10th Htee Bwe  
 11th Rich Schramm  
 13th Ruth Hessen  
 19th Tamara Joseph  
 21st Ty Zappa Ferris  
 24th Alex Guillen  
 25th Ray Weaver



4th Braxton & Stacy Sollenberger  
 17th Gary & Cora Stump  
 19th Phillip & Sandra Eby  
 23rd Mike & Ariel Pate

## Treasurer's Report

January 2024	\$14,651.00
Budget Income	\$12,980.00
Non-budget income	\$1,671.00

*love*

BEARS ALL THINGS  
 BELIEVES ALL THINGS  
 HOPES ALL THINGS  
 ENDURES ALL THINGS  
**LOVE NEVER FAILS**

1 CORINTHIANS 13:7