From the Pastor —

Think you know all about Valentine’s Day? You’re seeing red hearts and chalky little candies that say “You’re Mine” and pudgy flying babies with bows and arrows? Well, that’s the Valentine’s Day that Hallmark sells us. In the same way that, if you peel back a hundred layers of gunk off of Santa Claus at the North Pole you find the real St. Nicolas of Greece — so underneath the Cupids, if you dig a little, you can find a real St. Valentine of Rome.

Any information we have from the 3rd century is going to be more legend than fact, and the stories we have may be stories about more than one Valentine, but as near as anyone can tell, the real Valentine was a Roman priest martyred during the reign of Claudius II, known as Claudius Gothicus. He was arrested and imprisoned upon being caught marrying Christian couples and otherwise aiding Christians who were at the time being persecuted by Claudius in Rome. Helping Christians at this time was considered a crime. Claudius took a liking to this prisoner. However, when Valentinus tried to convert the Emperor, he was condemned to death. He was beaten with clubs and stones; when that failed to kill him, he was beheaded outside the Flaminian Gate. Various dates are given for the martyrdom or martyrdoms: 269, 270, or 273.

There are many other legends about Saint Valentine. One is that in the 1st century AD it is said that Valentine, who was a priest, defied the order of the emperor Claudius and secretly married couples so that the husbands wouldn’t have to go to war. The legend claims that soldiers were sparse at this time so this was a big inconvenience to the emperor. Another legend is that Valentine refused to sacrifice to pagan gods. Being imprisoned for this, Valentine gave his testimony in prison and through this prayers healed the jailer’s daughter who was suffering from blindness. On the day of his execution he left her a note that was signed “Your Valentine.”

The Valentine’s Day we have now with its focus on romantic love and friendship is fun and harmless. It’s too bad that the original meaning of the day has been largely lost. But being in touch with the original Valentine reminds us that there are many unknown or forgotten heroes and martyrs that, with their risk-taking and sacrifice, opened the way for the spread of the Christian faith. And that even a small act of kindness, like a goodbye letter to your jailer’s daughter, can have more impact that we’ll ever know. Have a blessed Valentine’s Day!

Peace,

Pastor Dan Borchers
LENTEN SCHEDULE

Ash Wednesday – February 18, 2015 -- Worship at 7:00 PM –
Service of Communion and Imposition of Ashes

Lenten Wednesdays – February 25 – March 25.

5:30 p.m. light suppers provided by various Saron groups (more info will be coming)

7:00 p.m. Worship

One Great Hour of Sharing 2015

“Our Fair Share” is the theme of our annual offering for One Great Hour of Sharing, which takes place during the Lenten season. 2 Corinthians 8:13-15 says: “I do not mean that there should be relief for others and pressure on you, but it is a question of a fair balance between your present abundance and their need, so that their abundance may be for your need, in order that there may be a fair balance. As it is written, ‘The one who had much did not have too much, and the one who had little did not have too little.’” How is it that there are enough resources on our plant to feed the entire world, and yet so many hunger? As people of faith, what is our role in a world where the gap between the rich and the poor only seems to widen? How do we ensure that everyone – all of God’s children – get their fair share? This offering assists people across the globe and in our own country with disaster relief and support in times of crises. Our Saron Women’s Guild will create a display to track our progress and the Sunday School students will receive coin banks in mid to late February. We will dedicate our offering on Palm Sunday, March 29, 2015. Envelopes will be in the pews after Ash Wednesday and checks should be written to “Saron UCC” to receive credit on your giving statement.

Saron’s Youth will be collecting for the Souper Bowl of Caring on Super Bowl Sunday, February 1st

Watch for them standing in the narthex with their “bowls” to collect donations

Souper Bowl of Caring is a national movement of young people working to fight hunger and poverty in their own communities around the time of the Super Bowl football game. In the weeks leading up to or on Super Bowl Sunday, young people take up a collection (many use a soup pot), asking for one dollar or one item of food for people in need. They give 100% of their donation directly to the local hunger-relief charity of their choice.

Sunday School News

- February 22nd the Sunday School sings at the 10:15 a.m. Worship Service
- Watch for Lenten Supper Sign Ups
- One Great Hour of Sharing Banks will be sent home the end of February and will be due back on Palm Sunday, March 29th
WHAT TO DO IF WE ARE HAVING BAD WEATHER
Winter is here! We hate to cancel worship, but if we need to, Tune in to WHBL 1330 AM (Sheboygan), Milwaukee TV Stations 4 (WTMJ), FOX 6, 12 (WISN), 58 (CBS 58) or Green Bay TV Stations 2 (WBay), 5 (WFRV), or 11 (WLUK); call the church office to listen for a cancellation message (467-6202) or check the church website for a cancellation notice (www.saronucc.org).

ANNUAL WINTER CELEBRATION (f/k/a/ Sweetheart/Theme Dinner)
Sunday, February 22, 2015 at
THREE GUYS AND A PIZZA PIE (FORMERLY DUTCH’S)
IN ELKHART LAKE.
A Social Hour will begin at 5:30 PM with Buffet Dinner served at 6 PM.

Menu includes:
Ham and Marinated Chicken Breasts
Mashed Potatoes
Garlic Baby Red Potatoes
Glazed Carrots
Salad
Dinner Rolls
Coffee, Milk or Water

Dessert provided by your table hostess.

Cost is $15.00 per person. Please make checks payable to Saron UCC and put in the envelope on the kiosk.
Sign-up and payment is due by Sunday, February 8, 2015.
To The Members of Saron United Church of Christ

We, the members of the Senior Choir would like to invite all who love to sing to come and join us on Thursday nights at 7:30 p.m. in the choir section of church. We do not audition, nor do we accept only those singers who are thought to have perfect voices. We do want you to know that we are a group of people that enjoy singing together and our choir director, Bonnie Hanke, helps us in making the songs meaningful and filled with praise, for the Lord.

Psalm 100 says; “Make a joyful noise/Serve the Lord with gladness,” and that’s all we do collectively and hope more of you will feel the same and come join us.

In Our Thoughts and Prayers:

Those who are homebound or in care centers: Elvera Dassow (Harvest Home), Janice Hartmann (Pine Haven), Eleonore Herzog (Pine Haven Assisted Living), Ilene Struve (Kindred Hearts, Plymouth) Milton Meinnert (at home), Evelyn Depping (The Waterford at Plymouth—formally known as Libby’s House), Marilyn Perronne (at home), Mae Schmidt (at home), Beverly Kleinhans (at home)…

Saron members as well as friends and family of Saron who have been hospitalized or receiving ongoing medical care for challenging health problems or are battling cancer……

Those in military service: Jordan Rick (U.S. Marine Corps); Christopher Kletzien (U.S. Army, Germany); Jake Meinnert (U.S. Army)….

Elaine, the student we sponsor in Haiti…..

To those who grieve: The family of Saron member Debbie Rautmann who’s mother Carol Gaedtke died on December 24th….

We celebrate the following baby who was born into the life and family of Saron UCC: Elaina Angeline Rick was born on December 26, 2014, to Michael and Lindsay Rick.

The Sacrament of Baptism was celebrated for: Kassidy Ann Taylor on Sunday, January 18, 2015. Kassidy was born on December 9, 2014 and is the daughter of Doug and Heidi (Hanke) Taylor and the sister of Heath.

The Sacrament of Baptism was celebrated for: Evelyn Nicole Rick on Sunday, January 25, 2015. Evelyn was born on October 9, 2014, and is the daughter of Zachary and Amy Rick.
**Happy Anniversary** We hope you keep the following couples in your prayers as they celebrate their Anniversary this month. If we missed your special day or reported a wrong date please let us know by calling the church office (467-6202 or e-mail barb@saronucc.org).

- February 6  Jeff & Kim Hanke
- February 11 Glenn & Maureen Schnicke
- February 15 Laura & Kris Belding
- February 17 Russ & Erlinda Beebe
- February 24 Jim & Peggy Leu
- February 27 Randy & Verla Peichl

**Happy Birthday** We hope you keep the following people in your prayers as they celebrate their Birthday this month. If we missed your special day or reported a wrong date please let us know by calling the church office (467-6202 or e-mail barb@saronucc.org).

- February 1 Aubrey Hanke
  - Jill Imig
  - Michelle Johannning
  - Kristy Mulder
  - Bryan Rick
  - Arwin Zimbal
- February 2 Al Blasel
  - Chloe Bohn
- February 3 Hartley Bell
  - Haley Post
  - Rachel Rautmann
- February 4 Brandon Gumm
  - Jada Lorenz
- February 5 Lisa Schneider
- February 6 Lloyd Feldmann
  - Mairin Jarvis
  - Ilene Struve
  - Kevin Wieck
- February 7 Adam Konz
- February 8 Collin Dulmes
- February 9 Julie Wieck
- February 10 Brian Wagner
- February 12 Anna Depping Herzog
  - Sue Kleinhans
  - Julianna Kuzulka
- February 13 Lauren Andrews
  - Tyler Chisholm
  - Jaiden Haack
  - Calob Rautmann
  - Katie Steiger
- February 15 Ann Boll
  - Sara Rautmann
- February 16 Anna Kleinhans
  - Heather Zimal
- February 17 Colin Bruton
  - Roland Groene
- February 17 Eugene Rautmann
- February 18 Matthew Andrews
- February 19 Judy Glander
  - Max Prange
  - Jerry Quilling
  - Mary Jo Quilling
- February 20 Jonah Albsmeier
  - Judy Dumke
- February 21 Jan Ebbott
  - Roy Herzog
  - Brynn Oppeneer
  - Barb Sebald
- February 22 Kristi Belcher
  - Bonnie Hanke
- February 23 Gretchen Herzog
- February 24 Peggy Nohl
- February 25 Dan Doebert
  - Karl Fasse
- February 27 Debbie Rautmann
  - Alisha Wield
- February 28 Gloria Kanzelberger
  - Nathan Kleinhans
  - Ron Nicolous