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<div> <p>Small Groups meet every Sunday at 9:30 a.m. (unless otherwise noted)</p> <p><b>NO EVENING SERVICES</b> Beginning February 04</p> </div>		
FEB 01	10:55 a.m. 4:45 p.m.	Morning Worship Choir Practice
FEB 03	10:30 a.m. 11:30 a.m.	Group Bible Study Prayer Meeting
FEB 04	6:30 p.m.	Women's Bible Study
FEB 08	9:00 a.m. 11:00 a.m.  4:45 p.m.	<b>2nd SUNDAY CELEBRATION</b> <b>"SOUPER" Bowl Sunday</b> <i>Pick your favorite team and help feed your community.</i> Choir Practice
FEB 10	10:30 a.m. 11:30 a.m.	Group Bible Study Prayer Meeting
FEB 11	6:30 p.m.	Women's Bible Study
<div> <p><b>FEB 14</b></p> <p><i>Happy</i>  <b>Valentine's Day</b></p> </div>		
FEB 15 ABCCM SUNDAY	10:55 a.m. 4:45 p.m.	Morning Worship Choir Practice
FEB 17	10:30 a.m. 11:30 a.m.	Group Bible Study Prayer Meeting
FEB 18	6:30 p.m.	Women's Bible Study
FEB 22	10:55 a.m. 4:45 p.m.	Morning Worship Choir Practice
FEB 24	10:30 a.m. 11:30 a.m.	Group Bible Study Prayer Meeting
FEB 25	6:30 p.m.	Women's Bible Study
FEB 28	8:00 a.m.	<b>Men's Breakfast</b>



WHY IS VALENTINE'S DAY A THING AND SHOULD WE CARE ABOUT IT SO MUCH?

Exciting. Stressful. Important. Over-celebrated.

People's opinions about Valentine's Day vary. Some think it's great, others not so much. Flowers and chocolate. Instagram posts of presents and captions that express more feelings than most people care to read (no offense).

For some people it's a day of unity and happiness, for others it's a reminder of divisiveness and hurt.

These opinions are directed at the celebration of...what exactly? The Valentine's Day we know is pretty different from the holiday it's creators established. Do we even know what all of our hype is about? If you do, humor me for a moment while I summarize it for those of us who passed notes during history class.



THE HISTORY OF VALENTINE'S DAY

The holiday was originally called St. Valentine's Day in honor of a Roman priest named, you guessed it, St. Valentine. Scholars believe there were actually three men by this name and all were martyrs. Each was brutally killed — beheaded, decapitated, scourged — for refusing to deny his faith.

These men showed great love for God and His church by laying down their lives, just like Jesus did.

So how did we get from martyrs to heart candy? Good question.

In the Medieval times, people believed birds began to mate on February 14, a symbol connected to love. They established the tradition of dedicating the day to "lovers" in honor of St. Valentine, who had demonstrated love in its most extreme form. This, in turn, started the giving of gifts, letters, signs of affection, and chocolate. *(I made the last one up, but whoever thought of giving chocolate deserves to be celebrated.)*

The original meaning behind Valentine's Day has faded over time. The love many of us celebrate today is not the sobering, sacrificial love St. Valentine displayed. However unintentionally, Valentine's Day has turned into a holiday about proving our romantic love through grand gestures and big gifts. We compare our celebrations to others' and allow what we did or did not do to carry more weight than it probably should.

**Jesus' love, not our significant other's, is what sustains, fulfills, and completes us.**



SHOULD WE CARE SO MUCH ABOUT IT?

- There's no biblical command to celebrate Valentine's Day, nor is there one that says celebrating it is wrong, so whether you do or don't is up to you. What the Bible does say a lot about is love.
- ♥ God in his very nature is love. Without knowing Him, we will never know how to really love someone else (1 John 4:8).
  - ♥ The way we love one another should reflect the way Jesus loves us. He loves us sacrificially, sincerely, and endlessly (John 15:13, 1 John 3:18, Ephesians 3:17-19).
  - ♥ What love looks like is best described by the apostle Paul... even if we have everything, even if we give everything, without love life is meaningless (1 Corinthians 13:1-7).
  - ♥ There's nothing wrong with expressing feelings through gifts, special dates, or pictures. Celebrating people we care about is a way to reflect how Jesus loves us. Let's make sure that whatever we do, or don't do, is rooted in the understanding that Jesus' love, not our significant other, is what sustains, fulfills, and completes us.



WANT TO CELEBRATE BUT DON'T KNOW WHERE TO START?

Remember Jesus' love is enough. His love is what will ultimately fulfill us, not the perfect date or gift.

If you're in desperate need of someone to love you on Valentine's Day, you're missing out on walking in the freedom and confidence that come from the truth that you are loved by Jesus every day.

You don't have to give fancy gifts or spend tons of money to mirror Jesus' love, and you don't need someone else's love to know you are valuable.

No matter what stage of life we're in, we can all find ways to show Jesus to someone else. Jesus' love is a selfless love. A generous love. An unconditional love. A real love.

~ Copied



A LITTLE VALENTINE'S DAY TRIVIA

- 1) On average, how many marriage proposals are there on every Valentine's Day?
- 2) What activity increases a person's pulse rate to at least 110 bpm?
- 3) A single red rose surrounded by baby's breath is called what by florists?
- 4) What do yellow roses symbolize?
- 5) What major invention was patented on Valentine's Day?
- 6) What are the top five most popular gift categories on Valentine's Day?
- 7) In what country is Valentine's Day an official public holiday?
- 8) What is the Guinness World Record for the longest marriage ever recorded?

The record for the world's longest marriage goes to Herbert and Zelmira Fisher, who were married for an astonishing 86 years, 9 months, and 16 days as of February 14, 2024. In the 10+ years since we first wrote about Herbert and Zelmira, no one has even come close to beating their record. Although they have left this world, they will never be forgotten. ~ Guinness Book of World Records

Answers: 1) 220,000; 2) Kissing; 3) A signature rose; 4) Friendship; 5) The Telephone; 6) Candy, flowers, greeting cards, an evening out; 7) None; 8) 86 years and 290 days