

Happy Saturday WFMC Family!

[Link to Morning Worship Live-stream \(becomes live at 8:20a\)](#)

**Morning Worship:** We continue with our "normal" Sunday schedule, with in-person worship gatherings at 8:30a and 11:00a, and Sunday school, and Youth and Adult Bible Fellowships at 9:45a. In-person worshippers, please wear masks while moving, singing, and any time when you are closer than six feet from others inside the buildings.

At-home worshippers will find a copy of the worship folder and songs attached / below.

**Worship Seating** – as you may have noticed, attendance at in-person worship is increasing, likely due to individuals already having Covid and more persons being vaccinated. If you are one who is now comfortable returning to the sanctuary and your ABF, we welcome, welcome, welcome you back!

As we all gather together, please note a couple things:

- 1) Remember that everyone thinks a little differently about distance between family units, so please keep a comfortable distance (3 chairs) from other families, or at least ask, "Are you OK with me sitting this close?" and then be OK with the answer you receive. On the other hand, if you have been "doing life" with another family throughout this time and would choose to sit nearer to them, that's great – that allows more seats for those who should remain distanced. And...those of you who remain distanced, please understand that families who choose to sit more closely can certainly make that decision. There may be things about that dynamic that you don't understand. Let's presume the best and give plenty of grace regarding what other people choose to do.
- 2) When possible, please fill the seating rows from the walls in toward the center, leaving the aisle seats for later-comers. That's just kind, good practice, covid or not. We don't want to make people crawl over us if we can help it.
- 3) Also, please consider sitting toward the front, leaving the rear seats for later-comers. That helps everyone, including the ushers. The expensive seats used to be the ones in the front. ☺ Again, that's just kindness, regardless of covid, and I promise I won't spit on you during the sermon.

**"ABF" Stands for Adult Bible Fellowships**, and there are many from which to choose, some online only, some in-person only, and some hybrids. [Click here for the latest information on ABFs and all Sunday morning educational opportunities.](#)

**Worship Folder** Please take a look at the folder, attached, which has lots of announcements about what we're doing in these days. We have new groups beginning, new opportunities to minister and serve, and some former activities and opportunities are re-starting.

**Valentine's Day** That's tomorrow guys (and gals) and here's the rest of the story:

The history of Valentine's Day—and the story of its patron saint—is shrouded in mystery. We do know that February has long been celebrated as a month of romance, and that St. Valentine's Day, as we know it today, contains vestiges of both Christian and ancient Roman tradition. But who was Saint Valentine, and how did he become associated with this ancient rite?

The Roman church recognizes at least three different saints named Valentine or Valentinus, all of whom were martyred.

One legend contends that Valentine was a priest who served during the third century in Rome. When Emperor Claudius II decided that single men made better soldiers than those with wives and families, he outlawed marriage for young men. Valentine, realizing the injustice of the decree, defied Claudius and continued to perform marriages for young lovers in secret. When Valentine's actions were discovered, Claudius ordered that he be put to death.

Other stories suggest that Valentine may have been killed for attempting to help Christians escape harsh Roman prisons, where they were often beaten and tortured. According to one legend, an imprisoned Valentine actually sent the first “valentine” greeting himself after he fell in love with a young girl – possibly his jailor’s daughter—who visited him during his confinement. Before his death, it is alleged that he wrote her a letter signed “From your Valentine,” an expression that is still in use today. Although the truth behind the Valentine legends is murky, the stories all emphasize his appeal as a sympathetic, heroic – and most importantly, romantic – figure. By the Middle Ages, perhaps thanks to this reputation, Valentine would become one of the most popular saints in England and France.

While some believe that Valentine’s Day is celebrated in the middle of February to commemorate the anniversary of Valentine’s death – which probably occurred around A.D. 270, others claim that the Christian church may have decided to place St. Valentine’s feast day in the middle of February in an effort to “Christianize” the pagan celebration of Lupercalia.

Celebrated at the ides of February, Lupercalia was a fertility festival dedicated to Faunus, the Roman god of agriculture, as well as to the Roman founders Romulus and Remus.

Valentine greetings were popular as far back as the Middle Ages, though written valentines didn’t begin to appear until after 1400. The oldest known valentine still in existence today was a poem written in 1415 by Charles, Duke of Orleans, to his wife while he was imprisoned in the Tower of London following his capture at the Battle of Agincourt. (The greeting is now part of the manuscript collection of the British Library in London, England.) Several years later, it is believed that King Henry V hired a writer named John Lydgate to compose a valentine note to Catherine of Valois.

In addition to the United States, Valentine’s Day is celebrated in Canada, Mexico, the United Kingdom, France and Australia. In Great Britain, Valentine’s Day began to be popularly celebrated around the 17th century. By the middle of the 18th, it was common for friends and lovers of all social classes to exchange small tokens of affection or handwritten notes, and by 1900 printed cards began to replace written letters due to improvements in printing technology. Ready-made cards were an easy way for people to express their emotions in a time when direct expression of one’s feelings was discouraged. Cheaper postage rates also contributed to an increase in the popularity of sending Valentine’s Day greetings.

Americans probably began exchanging hand-made valentines in the early 1700s. In the 1840s, Esther A. Howland began selling the first mass-produced valentines in America. Howland, known as the “Mother of the Valentine,” made elaborate creations with real lace, ribbons and colorful pictures known as “scrap.” Today, according to the Greeting Card Association, an estimated 1 billion Valentine’s Day cards are sent each year, making Valentine’s Day the second largest card-sending holiday of the year. (An estimated 2.6 billion cards are sent for Christmas.)

**And Finally, In The Interest Of Keeping Our Senses of Humor –**



Peace and Blessings, Sisters and Brothers,  
Pastor Daryl