



# Sandston Presbyterian Church Newsletter February 2024

Worship Service is at 11:00am every Sunday in person.

Sunday School Classes (9:45am)

- The Shurley Class: meets in room 7
- Men's & Women's Class: meets in the library

## CONTACT US...

Email us:

**[sandspres@verizon.net](mailto:sandspres@verizon.net)**

Call us: **804-737-1527**

Office hours: **Monday -  
Thursday (8:30am -  
1:30pm)**

Follow us on Facebook  
**[@sandstonpc](#)**

Check out our website:  
**[www.sandstonpc.org](http://www.sandstonpc.org)**



## **A Note from Pastor Todd...**

### Saint Valentine

Wait...it's Lent? Already?! This is one of those years where it feels like we have barely finished celebrating the birth of the Christ child and catching our collective breaths and it's already time to talk about the journey to his death! Being on several Pastor's Facebook groups has given me the opportunity to see comments about the particular timing of Ash Wednesday this year, which falls on...Valentines Day! At first glance a day which celebrates romantic love via flowers, hearts, chocolates, etc. and a worship service that emphasizes that from dust we have come and to dust we shall return doesn't seem to have a whole lot in common. I was aware that Valentine's Day originated with SAINT Valentine and it occurred to me that I had no idea who he was. So I did a little research. Allow me to share (from The History Channel)...

*The Catholic 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. Still others insist that it was Saint Valentine of Terni, a bishop, who was the true namesake of the holiday. He, too, was beheaded by Claudius II outside Rome.*

*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 or burial—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, or February 15, Lupercalia was a fertility festival dedicated to Faunus, the Roman god of agriculture, as well as to the Roman founders Romulus and Remus.*

*Lupercalia survived the initial rise of Christianity but was outlawed—as it was deemed "un-Christian"—at the end of the 5th century, when Pope Gelasius declared February 14 St. Valentine's Day. It was not until much later, however, that the day became definitively associated with love. During the Middle Ages, it was commonly believed in France and England that February 14 was the beginning of birds' mating season, which added to the idea that the middle of Valentine's Day should be a day for romance. The English poet Geoffrey Chaucer was the first to record St. Valentine's Day as a day of romantic celebration in his 1375 poem "Parliament of Foules,".*

So in digesting all of this, we can *clearly* conclude that Ash Wednesday falling on February 14<sup>th</sup> is simply the latest attempt by the church to again interrupt a pagan holiday. Kidding! It is of course, nothing more than the way the calendar falls. However, as we begin our Lenten journey we are indeed celebrating love as well. It is God's love for us that was – and is – so fierce that there was – and is – no length God would not go to for relationship with creation. Even to the point of God's very own being born into, living with, and dying for that creation. So, as we start, let us remember that love - and also remember, "since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another." (1 John 4:11) May we journey faithfully.

Pastor Todd

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### **Life Line Screening**

There is a simple, convenient way for you to get preventive health screenings and learn your risk for stroke, heart disease and other chronic conditions. **Life Line Screening**, the nation's leading provider of preventive health screenings, will offer affordable, non-invasive and painless health screenings at **Sandston Presbyterian Church on Wednesday, February 14, 2024**. The church office has 2 complimentary screening certificates if anyone is interested.



## **Our Prayer List...**

Please keep the following individuals below in your thoughts and prayers.

- Alice Baldwin
  - Robin King
  - Laura Greer
  - Joe Woodham
  - Jan & Wayne Richter
  - Leon App
  - Joanne McCabe
  - Richard Young
- 

## **Annual Soup Luncheon**

Let's beat those winter blues with *hot bowls of soup*! It is time for our "**Annual Soup Luncheon**". Please join us for a fellowship lunch following worship service on **Sunday, February 11th**. We will have many types of soup, salad and sandwiches. If you would like to contribute soup, salad, ham on rolls, dessert, etc. please contact **Pat Fitzgerald by phone or email**. If cooking is not your thing, but lending a helping hand with clean-up or set-up is, please reach out to Pat! Hope to see you all there!

## **Meetings this month...**

The Beekeepers of Richmond will meet on **Tuesday, February 6th from 7pm to 9pm**. If you have an interest in bees this may be the place for you. If you have any questions please contact Arlo Amstutz.

The Highland Springs Garden Club will meet on **Tuesday, February 20th from 10am to 12:30pm** in the fellowship hall. Anyone who loves *flowers is encouraged to come and join us*. If you have any questions please contact Pat Fitzgerald.





### **PW Circle Meetings**

- The Finley-Walker Circle will meet on **Wednesday, February 14th at 10:00am.**
- The Davis Circle will meet on **Tuesday, February 13th at 6:00pm.**

### **PW Mission Project...**

It's that time of year again for the **PW** to put together hygiene kits for *Church World Services*. The kits contain seven items (including a face towel, wash cloth, soap, etc.) in a zip lock bag to be handed out during disasters in this country as well as the world. Our small church is mighty,



and we have prepared 100 kits for the last three years. Let's make it a fourth year! The value is \$15 per kit. **Monetary donations are being sought for this very important project.** There have been so many disasters in recent years, and this is such a small way we can help. **Checks must be made payable to Sandston PW.** The deadline is February 4th. Thank you!!!

### **February Birthdays**

- |    |                  |
|----|------------------|
| 1  | Carol Simmons    |
| 3  | Rusty Curle      |
| 4  | Joanne Null      |
| 9  | Pat Fitzgerald   |
| 12 | Devon Pence      |
| 14 | Kathy Wright     |
| 14 | Kellie O'Berry   |
| 16 | Ed Johnston, Jr. |
| 20 | Sean O'Brien     |
| 23 | Esther Gray      |
| 28 | Robin Shearin    |
| 28 | Raymond Heath    |

**What's going on in our community...**

**Eastern Henrico FISH**

We are collecting pancake syrup, jams, & jellies for the month of **February**. Please remember to pick up an item or two the next time you are grocery shopping. There is a box outside of the church office you can drop them off in. **The Deadline is February 29th**. For the month of **January** we were able to collect a total of 73+ items for our preschool Meredith Loughran Preschool. Thank you to everyone for the continued support every month!



**Camp Hanover**

**Summer Camp Registration is Open!** Camp Hanover, a PC(USA) summer camp located in Mechanicsville, offers overnight camp sessions for kids entering grades 2-12 and day camps for those going into grades 1-6. Registration is open and spots are filling up fast. As our church is part of the Presbytery of the James, you receive a \$30 discount on each summer camp registration. Visit [www.CampHanover.org](http://www.CampHanover.org) to view sessions for each age group and learn more.

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**Flower Calendar Requests 2024...**

We are taking requests for the flower calendar for 2024! You can find the request forms outside of the office as well as the narthex of the church. The cost of the flowers is \$35.00. You will find the available dates just below.



- February – 25
- March – 3, 17, & 24
- April – 7, 14, & 21
- May – 5, 12, 19, & 26
- June – 2, 9, 16, & 23
- July – 7, 21, & 28
- August – 4, 11, 18, & 25
- September – 1, 8, 15, & 22
- October – 6 & 20
- November – 3 & 24

# February Activity Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4 9:45am Sunday School  11:00am Worship Service & Communion	5	6 7-9pm Richmond Beekeepers Meeting	7	8	9	10
11 9:45am Sunday School  11:00am Worship Service  <b>Soup Luncheon Following Worship</b>	12	13 <b>6pm Davis Circle Meeting</b>	14 8am-5pm Life Line Screening  <b>10am Finley Walker Circle Meeting</b>  <b>Valentine's Day</b>	15	16	17
18 9:45am Sunday School  11:00am Worship Service	19	20 10am-12:30pm Highland Springs Garden Club	21	22	23	24
25 9:45am Sunday School  11:00am Worship Service	26	27	28	29		

