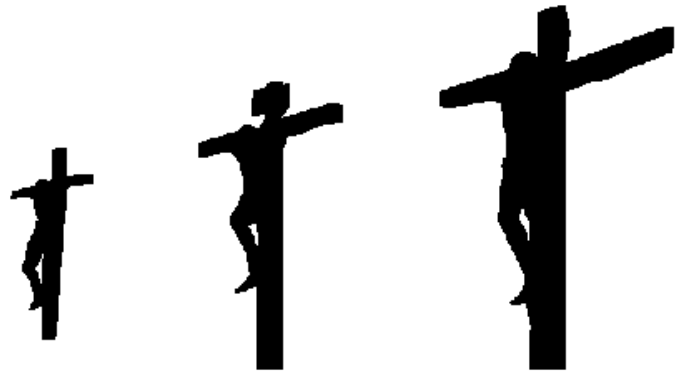


The Things Love Does

Well tomorrow (Wednesday, February 16) Terry and I are off to Washington DC to board a plane to California to visit Greg and his family. Most of you know Terry's feelings about flying, in fact a not so smooth flight some years ago made her vow never to fly again.

However, six months separation from our son was all the motivation she needed to check her fear with the baggage and head to California. I am concerned though, because I have not considered what words of comfort and encouragement I shall use to convince her to re-board a plane headed back to snowy Pennsylvania.



I guess most of us have experienced similar situations where love has compelled us or those who love us to do "the things love does," to step out of our comfort zone, and do something we would not otherwise consider doing. As we reflect on love I believe we find this is the true nature of love. Certainly it is the nature of Christian love, as Jesus said:

"Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends." John 15:13

The last few weeks my sermons have centered around the lessons in Max Lucado's book "Facing your Giants," focusing on God's promises so the things that try our resolve don't become intimidating giant fears.

Many of us have found hope and encouragement in God's promises. Yet hope and encouragement are only the beginning of deliverance from our fears. The apostle John says: ***"There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love."*** 1 John 4:18

The message here is that the power to overcome fear is not in the promises of God but in the love of the God who has made the promises. It is the love of God that empowers us to trust Him to guide us beyond our fears. Therefore the more we understand and experience the depth of God's love the more we are empowered to live fearlessly.

The church season of Lent begins on March 9 with Ash Wednesday. Lent is a traditional time of self examination as we focus on the passion of Christ, his journey toward the cross and what God is saying to us in the life death and resurrection of Christ. Nowhere else in scripture is there a clearer image of the nature of God, and the depth of His love for us than in the events of the passion of Christ. Paul reminds us:

"The message of the cross is foolish to those who are headed for destruction! But we who are being saved know it is the very power of God." 1 Corinthians 1:18

The message of the cross is clear about God's love. Jesus' life was not taken from him at the cross. Jesus laid down his life for you and for me. Most likely this is familiar news to most of

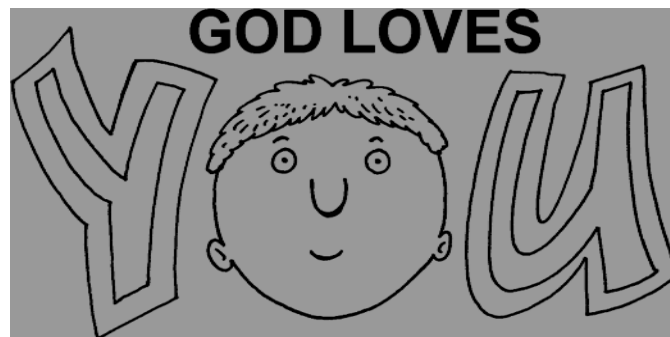
us. But have we taken the time to let the truth about “the things love does” soak into our hearts and minds to the point that it transforms and empowers us?

Throughout all of scripture the common thread is the message of God’s love, which calls us to a reverent awe-filled fear of God, leading us to trust and obedience, which leads to liberty and blessing. This will be the focus of my sermon series throughout Lent. I will be referencing another book by Max Lucado, “He Chose the Nails.”

Join us this Lenten season as we search together for even a deeper experience of God’s transforming love. This year instead of giving up something for Lent I invite you to take up something for Lent. Join us for Sunday worship, or our special midweek services advertized in this newsletter, purchase a copy of the book to use in daily devotions. We all can do something. If you can’t join us for worship for reasons beyond your control, contact me and we will see you get an audio copy of our services and our daily e-mail of encouragement.

Shalom,

Pastor Duane



**The Buffalo Run Charge
of the United Methodist Church**

“One congregation serving the community and worshipping in three locations.”