



## From The Pastor's Pen...

There is an old rock & roll song from the 60's that goes, "Love hurts, love scars, love wounds, and marres..."

Any of us who have ever been in any kind of a relationship know the truth in those words. You can't love without getting hurt. It may be the pain caused by careless words or actions, the deep pain of being betrayed, or the grief brought on by the death of the one you love.

Somehow, at some point, love hurts.

We cannot escape the hurt love brings our way, though some try. In yet another great song of that period, Simon and Garfunkle declared "If I never loved I never would have cried". ("I Am a Rock") Some try to escape the hurt by taking that avenue, by shutting down their emotions and deciding never to allow themselves to love enough to get hurt again.

How sad. It is sad because they just trade one pain for another – the pain of loneliness – and in the end that proves far worse than the pain of loving.

I love my wife. We've shared a lifetime together and I look forward to spending the rest of our years together. We both realize, however, that a morning will come when one of us will wake up alone. We will grieve. Because we have loved deeply we will hurt deeply.

Let's put it simply. We were created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27) and He is love. If we are to claim Him as our God we must love as well. He makes that abundantly clear;

**"Whoever does not love does not know God for God is love" (I John 4:8)**

and

**"All men will know you are my disciples if you love one another." (John 13:35)**

If we are to be his people we need to let go and love with abandon. We need to love our spouse, our children, our neighbors, our bosses, our enemies, and our church family unconditionally. We can't let the fear of getting hurt stop us from committing to relationships.

Maybe you are reluctant because of past hurts and you fear getting hurt again. Well, it might happen. I won't promise you otherwise. I just know the cost of not loving is far too great and the joy of loving far outweighs the pain.

Pastor Ron

**"UNLOCKING THE BIBLE STORY"**... What a blessing it has been to study the book of Romans. We are going to dive right back into Romans this week as we look at the topic "Nature" in Romans 7 and 8. Please read those chapters as well as chapter 7 in "Unlocking the Bible Story".

**OUR BUILDING PROJECT**... Please keep our building committee in your prayers as the preliminary work continues toward a spring groundbreaking for our building addition. Also be in prayer about your involvement. We will be giving you more information as we get closer to groundbreaking!

**FRIDAY EVENING!!! ADULT FELLOWSHIP NIGHT...** All Erie E. Free adults are invited to a special evening of food and fun at the home of Jerry and Lori Norman this Friday, February 26th. Everyone is asked to bring a snack (salty or sweet!) and your favorite game. The fun starts at 7:00 p.m.

**LADIES BIBLE STUDY UPDATE...** The books are ordered and time is fast approaching for the start of the Ladies Bible Study. Beginning Tuesday, March 9th the ladies will be meeting at the home of Carol Franks to study *Secrets of the Vine* by Bruce Wilkinson. The study will run from 6:30-8:00 p.m. each evening for four weeks. If you have not signed up see Carol, Lori, or Meri.

**MISSIONS SPOTLIGHT...** Josh and Jen Jensen have been faithfully serving the Chadwick (Illinois) Evangelical Free Church for the past ten years. We are grateful for the opportunity of partnering with Rural Home Missions Association in supporting the ministry of the Jensens in the Chadwick community!

**NEW MEMBERS DINNER ...** We will be welcoming new members into our body on Sunday March 7<sup>th</sup> with one of our always fabulous Erie E. Free potluck dinners! Mark it on your calendar. Let's pack the basement with happy eaters!

#### **PRAYER CONCERNS...**

- Continue to pray for Sam Melton
- Prayer for our expectant mom, Julie Norman.
- Pray for Leslie Wilkens as she travels to the Dominican Republic (Feb. 27 – Mar. 7)
- Continued prayer for Dorothy and Kerry Slayden.
- Pray for Walt and Bev Watts ministering in Clairmont, Florida.
- Pray for Lori Norman's mom, Shirley.
- Pray for our servicemen and servicewoman all around the world.
- Prayer for Susie Knickel's family – Susie's grandson lost a child this week to SIDS. Also pray for her son's health.

**SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT...** "Sacrificing your happiness for the happiness of the one you love, is by far, the truest type of love."

#### **THIS WEEK'S BIRTHDAYS, ANNIVERSARIES, & EVENTS ...**

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|---|--------|---------------------------|---|
| * | TODAY  | Feb. 24 <sup>th</sup> ... | Awana / KFC – 6:30-8:00 pm / H.S. Youth – 7:30-9:00 pm                            |
| * | Thurs. | Feb. 25 <sup>th</sup> ... | <b>Jessica Unruh</b>  |
| * | Friday | Feb. 26 <sup>th</sup> ... | <b>Kindyl Weber, Jan Unruh, George &amp; Joan Seger (Ann.)</b>                    |
| * | Sat.   | Feb. 27 <sup>th</sup> ... | <b>Quinn Wilkens</b>  |
| * | Sun.   | Feb. 28 <sup>th</sup> ... | Our Worship Celebration (9:00 am) Sunday School (10:30 am)<br><b>Julie Norman</b> |
| * | Tues.  | Mar. 2 <sup>nd</sup> ...  | <b>Tom Unruh</b>  |
| * | Wed.   | Mar. 3 <sup>rd</sup> ...  | <b>NO Awana</b> / KFC – 6:30-8:00 pm / H.S. Youth – 7:30-9:00                     |

#### **SERVANT SCHEDULE FOR SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 28<sup>th</sup> ...**

- \* Nursery – Linda Morine
- \* Greeters – Braxton Chesmore
- \* Fellowship – Shari Heun
- \* Scripture – Kevin Johnson