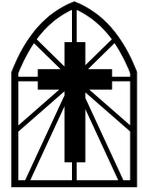


ST. JOHN LUTHERAN LCMS
11400 WEST PANAMA ROAD, CRETE, NE 68333



Come to the cross and learn of God's great love for all His people. There is friendship, fellowship, and the gift of God's word of forgiveness.

ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 33 ISSUE 2 FEBRUARY 2019

Throughout the year there are many seasons, celebration days, feasts, festivals, occasions, and observances in the Church. Christmas and Easter are certainly the most well-known and observed. But there are other smaller observances as well. Some of these are called "commemorations". These are days in which a Christian saint is remembered. February 14th brings us the commemoration of Saint Valentine, who was a martyr of the Christian faith.

Very little is actually known about Valentine. He was a physician and Christian priest in Rome during the third century A.D. At that time in Roman history, Christians and the Church were persecuted. Valentine was put to death by Emperor Claudius in either 269 or 270. The exact reasons for his death are unknown.

One legend indicates that before he was put to death for his Christian faith, Valentine wrote a note on an irregular piece of paper to the child of his jailer. The note was to encourage this child in her Christian faith. Tradition says that he signed it as "your Valentine". And from these alleged roots came the tradition of sending notes of affection to loved ones on Valentine's Day.

What a joy it is that we can show love for one another. But what greater joy is ours in the love that God has for us. And what a love letter He has sent us! Not just a message of love, but love incarnate—love in the flesh. For God the Son Himself came to show us the Father's heart. Jesus came to live a life of love for God and for men. And in the greatest act of love, He gave Himself over to die for our sins on the cross.

God's love for you is so much more than affectionate emotions. God's love is put into action. It is driven by His will and loving desire to save us and care for us. He doesn't just say, "I love you," He showed it. He acted upon it. He did it. He did love. The life, death, and resurrection of Jesus is all about God's love in action for you. This love saves us from death and gives us eternal life.

Since His love is poured out into our hearts, He enables us to truly love one another—not just in saying so, but in doing so. Love is more than a feeling. Love acts on behalf of the good of others. And that is what God's love is all about. He loves you by taking care of you and giving you blessings every day. But most of all His love is seen in Jesus on the cross. Jesus stepped in and took your place in the punishment for your sin. God put His love into action for you in Jesus. God's love actually gives life!

In this month of St. Valentine's Day, rejoice in the great love that God has for you—a love that acts and does what is good for you through Jesus Christ.

In Christ's love,

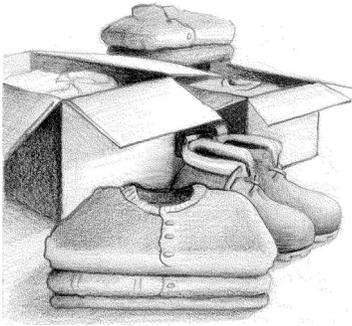
Pastor Toensing



PLEASE HAVE ALL INFORMATION OR ARTICLES FOR THE NEWSLETTER TO CHRIS HOLLMAN BY 25TH, THANK YOU!

Clothing for Orphan Grain Train: We can once again send used clothing to Orphan Grain Train. When leaving clothes in the drop box outside the church by the back door, please mark them for either OGT or PCM (People's City Mission).

Clothes for those in need



LUTHERAN WOMEN IN MISSION:

Meet Pat Benson from Marquette NE. She is the winner of the raffle quilt. Pat's great grandfather was Traugott Haessler who was the first called pastor of St. John. His name is the first one signed on the church's constitution in 1874. Congratulations, Pat!



FEBRUARY
BIRTHDAYS

& *BAPTISMS*

BIRTHDAYS

1 Drew Trautman
3 Dan Murphy
4 Brad Davis
6 Shelley Toensing
7 Adam Hughes
10 Kirk Johnson
11 Angie Louch
12 Jenna Keim
13 Olivia Pomajzl
14 Tory Dello
16 Jace Ourada, Melissa Persing,
Allan Reetz
17 Jordyn Adam, Del Reiss
18 Ryan Meinke, Shari Melk
20 Susan Vosika

23 Camryn Adam
24 Dolyn Meinke
25 Steve Schultz
26 Cierra Hensley, Megan Korbel
27 Bonnie Bleich, Linda Eggert,
Cindy Nitzel
28 Peggy Bojanski, Matt Ellingson
29 Gary Rezac

BAPTISMS

1 Joy Kouba
2 Arlin Pomajzl
4 Paul Beck
7 Adam & LaShalle Hughes

6 Angela Dello
9 Rev. Art Brinkmeyer
11 Vivian Kirkpatrick
12 Skye Hoyer, Irene Reiss,
Denise Slama
13 Kyle Shore
16 Mersadies Kvasnicka,
Robert Kvasnicka
19 Ryan Lee, Castyn Ziemann
21 Nicole Reetz
22 Jessica McBride
23 Brad Davis
24 Jenna Keim
26 Deanna Eggert

OUR MISSION Share the Joy of His News by growing inward through God's Word, Sacraments and fellowship and by growing outward through words, actions, and mission outreach.



LFL — LUTHERANS FOR LIFE

Door offering at Church on February 17

LFL is an organization of the Church working to speak and to live out the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Their brief mission is: Equipping Lutherans to be Gospel-motivated voices for life. Through encouragement and multiple resources LFL speaks the truth of life—Bringing Good News to Life. LFL applies the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the life issues, making Jesus known as the Son of God and Savior of all who can help and make a difference in people's lives.

The Vision is that every Lutheran, both individually and in community, upholds the God-given value of human life and seeks to influence society to do the same. You can find many of the things LFL does and the many resources they provide on their website at: <https://www.lutheransforlife.org/>

If you support LFL already in your offerings, wonderful! We are going to take a door offering to support the work of LFL on February 17th. Thank you for your support of this ministry of our Church.

LAMBS OF CHRIST PRESCHOOL

15th Annual Chili Fundraiser... Thanks so much for the amazing support shown for this event. I want to thank everyone that was involved in any way. This event can't be the success it was without all of you. So many different areas were needed such as food donations, food prep, and prize donations, set up and clean up. The support the day of the event was wonderful, thanks for continued support of our preschool program.

February Activities... We will be busy this month with Groundhog's day, Valentine's Day, Chapel and a Birthday celebration. We are hoping to start an early 3's program in March on Wednesday afternoons, if you know of someone that may be interested please have them contact me at the school or at 402-826-0611.

Parent Teacher Conferences... We will be holding conferences on February 6th and 7th.

Gods Blessings, Kathy Oelschlager

lambsofchristcrete@gmail.com 402/826-4375



HOSPITAL VISIT

There are circumstances in life that might land someone in the hospital. As your pastor, I consider it a high priority to visit when one of our members is in the hospital. But I might not always get the message. Sometimes people forget. Sometimes you might assume that someone else will let me know. If I should know that someone is in need of a pastoral visit in the hospital, please let me know. I would rather get five calls or messages letting me know than none.

Thank you. Pastor

LYF NEWS

The LYF will host their annual **Valentine's Dinner** on Sunday, **February 24** at 11:30 a.m. after Bible Class and Sunday School. The main dishes are lasagna with bread and a chicken dinner with steamed vegetables and a baked potato. A salad and desert is provided with both meals. The cost is \$10 per person. Please sign up with one of the youth or on the sheet in the narthex. **The last day to sign up is Sunday, February 17.**

CELL GROUP—BIBLE STUDY INVITATION

The Renner, Brunelle, Reetz and McDermott Cell Group invite those interested in joining and/or forming a group of their own, to the St. John Fellowship Hall on Sunday, February 10th at 6:30 p.m. There will be fellowship, coffee, dessert and a continuation of an ongoing Bible Study centered upon the book of Acts. We look forward to your company.



EVANGELISM COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Evangelism Committee hold its next meeting on Tuesday, February 5, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. Members of St. John are encouraged and welcomed to join this committee's Bible Study and discussion based upon the Concordia Mission Society "Good News" periodical. The regular committee meeting will follow.

BUILDING COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Building Committee would like to thank those boards and groups who supplied the committee and the architects with "group survey evaluations". This information is helpful and will be included with earlier received membership survey information and used to better formulate a plan(s) in consideration of a church Addition. We are thankful also for the representatives from each Board/Committee who participated in the round-table meeting with the architects on January 14th. It was another step in bringing the building committee and the architects to a broader understanding of the variety of needs expressed.

The Committee is currently awaiting a second set of preliminary, alternative plans from the architects. Once received, a deeper review with further changes will likely follow. Keep an eye on the church website for updates and/or upcoming meeting dates.

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY...REGRETS, REALITY, RESTORATION

All gentlemen of St. John are again invited on February 12 to the next Men's Bible Study. This meeting will introduce a brand new topical discussion, *Regrets, Reality, Restoration*. The simple truth is life is full of regrets. Imprinted on our psyches, some resist all attempts at erasure. What do we do when the condemning memory of past offense(s) won't be silenced? You are invited to join the men of St John. There are chairs and coffee for everyone beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall.

**ST. JOHN LUTHERAN
CHURCH –LCMS**
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 4 miles East & 2 miles South of Crete
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 secretarystjohn@hotmail.com
 www.stjohnkramer.org
 Rev. Maynard Toensing, Jr.
 pastortoensing@gmail.com



**That All May
Know Him**

OPPORTUNITIES FOR FURTHER GROWTH

Schedule at a Glance

Worship Service (Sundays)	9:00 a.m.
Sunday School & LYF (Sundays)	10:30 a.m.
Bible Class (Sundays)	10:30 a.m.
Midweek Classes (Wednesdays)	6:30 p.m.
Elder’s Meeting (February 4)	6:30 p.m.
Evangelism Committee (February 5)	7:00 p.m.
Men’s Bible Study (February 12)	7:00 p.m.
Lutheran Women in Mission (February 19)	7:00 p.m.
Ladies Aid Meeting (February 27)	2:00 p.m.

FROM THE ELDER’S

First of all a large offer of thanks goes out to those who volunteered to run for a church office for the current year. It was very nice to see several positions had multiple people willing to serve in the same position. Thanks also to those who are completing their terms of service. It's also nice to see the number of members attending the voters meetings after church on Sundays and the plan is to continuing that in the future.

There is always an ongoing need for Sunday school teachers. Please consider volunteering your time. One of the most important tasks we are given is as parents and as a church is instruction of our youth. Talk with pastor or one of the board of education members if you'd serve, even temporarily, in that role.

Also please consider supporting the congregational youth at the Valentine's dinner on the 24th of February. They always do an excellent job of serving.

Lastly we would encourage all to be reading their Bible on a regular basis. We take for granted how available the word of God is here in this time and in this country. It's tough to imagine there are still many places in the world where Bibles are scarce and people risk being arrested, and worse, for having, or attempting to have a personal Bible.

In the name of Jesus, the Christ, from the elders

THOSE SERVING DURING THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY

DUTY	2/3/2019	2/10/2019	2/17/2019	2/24/2019
Organist	Jolene Reetz	Jayne VanAsperen	Jolene Reetz	Jayne VanAsperen
Elders	Todd Hoyer	Gary Meinke	Terry Dittmer	Roger Koch
Greeters	Mr & Mrs Dean Prochnow and Mr & Mrs Del Reiss	Mr & Mrs Bob Renner and Mr & Mrs Rollo Schultz	Mr & Mrs Brent Wohl and Mr & Mrs Byron Shore	Mr & Mrs James Walker, Marianne Tesar & Chris Hollman
Acolytes	Calen Homolka & Jacob Meinke	Mersadies Kvasnicka & Colton Homolka	Ted Muff & Jordyn Adam	Skye Hoyer & Cole Novak

QUARTERLY VOTERS' MEETING JANUARY 27, 2019

The meeting was called to order at 10:10 a.m. by President Troy Henning. Tim McDermott led us in prayer. The minutes were read and approved. It was moved that we accept Seth Brethouwer as a Voting member. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report

The Quarterly Treasurer's report was read and approved.

Balance Forward 10/01/2018	\$58,663.50
Plus Regular Receipts	35,932.10
Plus Mission Receipts	1,833.00
Balance Plus Receipts	96,428.60
Less Regular Disbursements	41,037.71
Less Mission Disbursements	5,105.63
Ending Balance	\$50,285.26

The Annual Treasurer's report was read and approved.

Balance Forward 01/01/2018	\$ 72,679.32
Plus Regular Receipts	141,451.78
Plus Mission Receipts	8,237.15
Balance Plus Receipts	222,368.25
Less Regular Disbursements	148,779.27
Less Mission Disbursements	23,303.72
Ending Balance	\$ 50,285.26

It was noted that our bottom line decreased by around \$20,000 from the first of the year, 2018. We've had some additional expenses and our giving has remained consistent. It was suggested that we need to encourage people to increase their tithing. Tim also said that the advertising expenses for the Evangelism Committee should be taken out of the Evangelism fund. It had been taken out of the overall budget.

Elders' Report

Head Elder James Walker reports the following statistic for the quarter ending December 31, 2018: One funeral, Kenneth Joe Tesar on November 27.

For the year:

- Baptisms - 6
- Funerals - 4
- New Members - 3
- Confirmations - 6
- Weddings - 1,
- Transfers Out (LCMS) - 1
- Releases Out (LCMS) - 1

Pastor Report

Pastor Toensing reported that activities have continued as we moved from Advent to Christmas to Epiphany.

Board of Education

Marla Musil read the report. Christmas program was on December 9. Thank you to all involved in making it another successful program. Sunday school is in full swing. Sign-up sheets are working well. Please sign up to volunteer your time and talents to teach our youth. Class attendance is on the low side so we encourage kids to stay after they attend church to join us in the classroom learning lessons, making crafts and having fun! Midweek classes are going well. Last day for Midweek classes is expected to be May 1, with a pizza party on May 8. No Confirmation this year. The Board of Education is looking forward to the voter's meeting on January 27. The results will determine the new first year board member; this new member will be in charge of Vacation Bible School. Thank you for all the continuous support the Board of Education receives from the congregation.

Trustees Report

Les Korte reports the following activities:

LED Lights to replace incandescence
Oiled Fans. Noted that this needs to be done twice a year.

Cleaned out Sewer lines and fixed men's urinal

Found venting deficiency where it pushes water out of the trap which causes some smells

Installed new backdoor lock. The church secretary has keys if you need one.

Dolyn fixed flag light

Fixed siding

Ready to order pew pads

Cleaned florescent lights

Took care of snow and ice

Will be installing new toilet in basement in the women's restroom

Will be fixing the gown closet

Needs new switches in the sanctuary

Elevator was inspected.

Les encouraged people to check out the nice new balcony railing.

Cemetery Report - none

Youth Group

Adam, LaShalle, and Tim report during the past quarter, the LYF group hosted the annual "Truck-or-Treat" and fall "Lock-in", conducted the bi-annual "roadside cleanup event", put up the outdoor manger scene and decorations in the sanctuary for Advent and Christmas and assembled treat bags for the younger children for their Christmas program.

Upcoming, the LYF is in the planning and development stage for the annual Valentine's dinner, to be held after Sunday School and Bible Class on Sunday, February 24th. The Easter Sunrise Breakfast will soon be on the horizon also.

Amidst the planning for these service activities, the kids maintain as often as possible their Sunday morning Bible Class led by Tim McDermott using material pulled from a youth periodical entitled, "Higher Things" where a great many available topics are biblically based, youth oriented and fit within the parameters of our available Sunday morning LYF time.

It is asked of the congregation to continue their support of LYF activities and Christian educational needs; keeping our youth in their prayers.

Evangelism Committee

Since the October 2018 Voters meeting, the committee spent time studying God's Word and in discussion & planning of various activities. They typically meet the first Tuesday of every month. The following are reported as the majority of them:

- Monthly Meetings - The Committee is currently engaged in the study of God's Word through guided discussion found within a Concordia Mission Society "Good News" periodical. Any and all members of St. John are encouraged to participate with us in these Bible-based study topics.
- 2020 Church Directories - Currently this topic is a common placeholder at every meeting as we plan a first conversation with 'Lifetouch' in anticipated preparation of another church photo directory in 2020.
- Membership Photo Board - The Committee, with the help of church volunteers, has captured a vast majority of member photos for a narthex photo board. Pictures are currently being organized and labeled. A church member has been kind enough to supply the work in furnishing and installing the actual photo board itself. It remains a work in progress.
- "Everyone His Witness" - This first LCMS, multi-week Evangelism workshop at St. John, "Everyone His Witness", has concluded. The Evangelism Board with the help of Pastor Toensing, are in discussion on ways to schedule this workshop again this Spring using a single, full Saturday for the event.
- The Church website statistics are shared at each meeting in helping to visualize the ongoing connection it continues to have with our members and the local community.

- Engage to Equip – On Friday, January 18, 2019, Tim and Pastor Toensing attended the “Engage to Equip Workshop” in Waverly, NE. Rev. Peter Meier, who serves as the Executive Director of the Center for U.S. Missions, served as the presenter. Rev. Meier provided thoughtful context for attendees to step back from our everyday tasks and contemplate the needs of our local community/area, the gifts of our congregation, and how God might use us to bring His peace, hope and love to the hurting people in our wider community.
- Promotional Ads – The Committee formulated and placed holiday centered ads in the Crete Newspaper; Thanksgiving through Christmas. A plan is in place to submit another such ad in, at or before the upcoming Lenten Season in connection with our Easter Season services.
- District Mailing List – The committee discussed and is making plans to use a mailing list, obtained from the District LCMS, of NEW area residents in which to send informational postcards/invitations.
- Next Board Meeting – The next Evangelism Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 5, 2019.

Memorial Committee

Todd Hoyer reports making phone calls to people for additional donations for purchase of pew cushions because they are currently a little shy of the total amount that is needed. He asks that if someone has ideas for new memorial projects they should contact the Memorial Committee. The idea can be either general or specific. Once approved through the Memorial Committee, it then goes to the Voters for final approval. It was moved that we add the purchase of new video equipment to the Memorial list. Motion carried.

Old Business:

Building Committee - Tim McDermott reports that since the October 2018 Voters meeting, and under a directive of the Voters Assembly, the Building Committee progresses toward a presentation of two (2) potential project plans to be offered for consideration by the Voters. In Preparation, the following have taken place:

- 1) Requests had been extended to various Church Boards for feedback of wants/needs relative to their group. This feedback was documented and shared with Building Committee members and ADA architects, David Wiebe & John Hathaway.
- 2) ADA architects were invited to St. John to visit with church boards & groups in an open, round-table discussion to complement their group feedback in hopes of obtaining additional information, ideas or suggestions before beginning work on the second Architectural Preliminary Plan. This second plan is to be ‘equal in concept’ to the first preliminary plan.
- 3) The Committee is currently waiting for this secondary preliminary plan. Once obtained, both preliminary plans will undergo basic revisions meeting the initial universal goals derived from our congregational membership survey with support of board/group feedback. Those basic goals include the following:
 - a) Ground Level Fellowship Hall
 - b) New and Updated Kitchen
 - c) Improved Surfaced Parking
 - d) Expanded Youth, LYF, Sunday School – (Educational Space)
 - e) Accessibility/Restrooms/Storage
- 4) It is hoped that by the next quarterly Voters Meeting, there will be found suitable information in which bring back to the membership for consideration and/or further direction.

New Business

It was announced that a Safety Committee will be started at St. John headed by Mitch Homolka. If anyone is interested, you can join the committee. Judi Korte volunteered.

Discussed the need of a lay delegate to vote for the synodical President and 1st Vice President. Pastor Toensing will be the pastoral delegate. This year it can all be done on line. Motion was made to accept Gary Meinke as the lay delegate. Motion carried.

Salaries:

Janitor. Currently is \$488/month. Motion was moved to increase by 3% to \$500 per month. Motion carried.
Organist. Currently is \$69/service. Motion was made to increase by \$3 to \$72 per service. Motion carried.
Secretary. Currently is \$700/month. Motion was made to increase by 5% to \$735 per month. Motion carried.

Pastor Toensing salary 2019

Base salary (per 2019 Synod guidelines)

\$37,070.00
Years of service - 15 years @ \$400 per year = \$6,000
12 Years (in excess of 15) @ \$300 per year = \$3,600

TOTAL years of service + base = \$46,670.00

Suggested additions to base:

Congregation size - 300 to 500 baptized
(add up to 5% of base + years of service) 5% of \$46,670.00 = \$2,334

TOTAL BASE PLUS SUGGESTED ADDITIONS: \$46,670.00 + \$2,334 = \$49,004.00

Benefits:

Housing allowance - \$6,480 annually paid monthly @ \$540
Education allowance - up to \$500 annually (paid as reimbursement with receipt/documentation from Pastor)
HSA - \$7,000.00 annually (paid as lump sum as early in year as possible)
Concordia Plan, Package 2 - Option HDHP
Mileage reimbursement - paid at current IRS rate (2019 .58 per mile) with documentation from Pastor
5 weeks paid vacation

Other items regarding 2019 salary:

Pastor has requested that \$1,520 annually (\$126.67 monthly) be deducted from his base salary to be used at his discretion for “housing/furnishing” costs paid by him

Pastor has requested that \$1,200 annually (\$100.00 monthly) be deducted from his base salary to be used at his discretion for “professional expenses”

These last two amounts (\$1,520 & \$1,200) will remain the same each year as long as Pastor Toensing remains at St. John unless he requests a change in the amount

Motion was made to accept District Guidelines for salary increase. Motion passed.

It was brought up that we should establish a Stewardship committee that would work with the Finance Committee and that this committee would work on Time, Talents, and Treasures in our church.

Officers elected were:

President: Troy Henning reelected for another term. Motion was made to bypass the bylaws directive and allow Troy to serve again. Motion carried.

Vice President: Tim Reetz

Secretary: Linda Eggert

Treasurer: Wayne Eggert will move from Finance Secretary into Treasurer

Financial Secretary: Glen Louch

Finance Committee: Joy Kouba reelected for second term, Cindy Hoyer, and Heidi Wohl

Elder: Terry Dittmer and James Walker reelected for second term, and Mitch Homolka.

Installation of officers will be next Sunday. Thank you went to Troy Henning, Lynn Meinke, and Marianne Tesar for their service.

There were 60 members present and one guest.

Marianne Tesar, Secretary



PUZZLE

God's Love

We can't measure God's love for us. It starts before we're born and continues for eternity.

Directions: Down the left-hand column, spell out the name of each number. Then write the circled letters on the blank lines in the right-hand column. Read the words on the right, from top to bottom, to see what Psalm 33:22 (NIV) says about God's love.

20	_____○	"M a _____
4	○○○○	y _____
99	○○○ - ○○	u _ f a _ l _ _ _ g
7	○○○	l o _ _ _
1	○	b _ _
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81	_____ - ○○	_____ p _
9	○○	_____
24	_____○ - ○○	_____."

PSALM 33:22, NIV

Twenty "May
 Four your
 Niney-nine unfailing
 Seven love
 One be
 Twenty-eight with
 Sixty us
 Forty Lord,
 Seventy even
 Six as
 Twelve we
 Sixty-four put
 Twenty-four you."

ABC SALAD

(submitted by someone here at church)

- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 3 Tbsp lemon juice, *divided*
- 1 tsp sugar
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1 cup dried cranberries
- 3 large red apples, cut into 1/2 inch cubes
- 2 cups fresh broccoli florets
- 1/2 cup chopped walnuts

In a bowl, whisk the oil, 2 Tbsp lemon juice, sugar and salt. Add cranberries; let stand for 10 minutes. In a large bowl, toss the apples with remaining lemon juice. Add the broccoli, walnuts and cranberry mixture; toss to coat. Cover and refrigerate for 2 hours or until chilled. Toss before serving. Yield: 6-8 servings



February 2019

God's conversation hearts

Those familiar conversation hearts that show up every February can be more than just trite romantic or friendly sayings. Use them to remind you — or to teach a child — of the greatest love of all: God's love for us, which empowers our love for others. For example:

- TRUE LOVE: What love is truer than giving up one's only Son so people might have everlasting life? (John 3:16).
- MINE: Jesus knows us intimately, as a shepherd knows his sheep. No one can snatch us from him (John 10:27-29).
- FOREVER: God loves us with an "everlasting love" (Jeremiah 31:3).
- LOVE ME: The greatest commandment is to love God with our whole being (Luke 10:27).
- TRUST ME: "Let not your hearts be troubled." We can count on Jesus, now and for eternal life (John 14:1-3).
- SWEET TALK: God's words are sweeter than honey (Psalm 119:103).
- BE GOOD: We show our love for Christ by keeping his commands (John 14:15).
- CALL ME: God longs to be in fellowship with us. We can talk to him anytime in prayer (Jeremiah 33:3).
- FRIENDS: The greatest love involves laying down your life for your friends (John 15:13) — precisely what Jesus did.
- #1: "We love because [God] first loved us" (1 John 4:19).