



Annual Souper Bowl Cookoff Super Sunday, February 3

Super Bowl Sunday means different things to different people—parties, food, beverages, commercials, halftime, crazy face-painted fans, headaches on Monday, etc. But around here it also means time for soup! In observance of Souper Bowl Day of Caring we will again hold our Annual Souper Bowl Cookoff on Sunday, February 3 after the worship service, so there will be plenty of time to get home and see all the pre-game festivities on TV.

What we need are individuals or groups willing to bring in a crockpot of their favorite soup, chowder, or chili that morning before church. Desserts would also be appreciated. Like other years, we will all have a chance to sample and vote for our favorite. The “chef” of the soup receiving the most votes will receive a much-coveted prize and will join previous “Presbyterian Soup Hall of Fame” inductees Nancy Dietterick (2017) and Alison Hause (2018) in culinary immortality. So dig out your favorite recipes! Other soups not in the cookoff will be available for purchase, and monetary donations will gladly be accepted. All monies received will be donated to our local Berwick and Nescopeck Food Pantries.

Finally, show that you're a true fan that day by donning the gear/apparel/colors of your favorite team (NFL, college, or high school) even if they're not in the big game.

This has turned out to be a fun annual event—let's keep it going!

Super Bowl or Souper Bowl?

Our youth are at it again! For your viewing pleasure our kids will be performing a short skit during worship about the Super Bowl. Or is it Souper Bowl? Come and find out **February 3rd!**

In this Issue

Posting from the Pastor

NOROC

Girl Scouts

February

Birthdays/Anniversary's

February Assistants



Tomorrow is the final day of January, meaning (at least for me) that the months of cold and dark and winter weather are 3/5's done. There is surely more to come (as I write this it was 1 degree above zero as I started my car) and we'll cover up and shovel out and bravely or with mutterings under our breath stay on the sled to the bottom of the hill – where spring will await us!

The text I've chosen for the first Sunday in February is 1 Cor. 13, better known as the "Love Chapter". Paul takes a break from addressing specific behaviors happening within the congregation to lift up love, which he describes as 'the more excellent way'. Our understanding of love from the context of faith has been hijacked by the cultural commitment to Valentine's Day and everything that comes with it. Nothing wrong with intentionally saying "I love you" to those we love with gifts, flowers, candy, a meal reservation – and a card.

I don't know about you but I learned from my mother the importance of selecting a card, taking care to make sure it matches the person, the relation-ship, the setting. Seldom is it the first card I pick up that makes its way home with me; time is required to match the design and the text and the feeling. Nowhere is that more important than Valentine's Day. We will be married twenty years come April, and the content of the cards has changed over those two decades, a barometer of how my love has deepened, broadened and found itself more alive.

The love of which Paul writes is not meant for the faint of heart. Couples often choose a portion of it for their wedding service, usually the middle section: ***Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrong doings but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends...***

These wonderful sounding words (as are the phrases in a card) seem so possible when love is new, full of passion and dreams. There is every intention of living into this definition. What is needed for that to happen, of course, are qualities like courage, insight, acceptance, forgiveness, and trust – which will be forged over time as we allow ourselves to be vulnerable, inquisitive and honest.

We've had a sentence posted on our signboard for at least a year now. I see no reason to change it because it names the core of faithful living in Christ Jesus: LET US SEE WHAT LOVE WILL DO. *Do* is the key word; loving in the intellectual arena has its place, yet only when it is amplified to action, something seen and heard and felt does it come into its fullness.

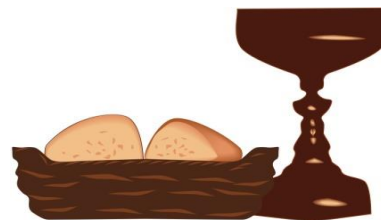
So, enjoy Valentine's Day and don't forget to do something special for the person God loves wildly and forever: YOU! Hoping to see you in worship!

Pastor Steve

The Season for Giving... and Giving Back

During the month of December many people across the globe focus on giving to others...giving to the poor, the needy, the down trodden, the helpless, the hopeless. NOROC's mission is to find ways to give new opportunities to the children and youth of Tulcea County, Romania who are often left without help or hope. For the NOROC staff this means trips to the many centers, 19 in all, to deliver small gifts, treats, and holiday cheer. Since the centers are scattered throughout the town and county, this takes a lot of time and energy, and often extends through Epiphany, the 12th Day of Christmas. Our staff also enlists the help of the older youth, most of whom are regular attenders at the weekly Bible study, to tell the Good News of the birth of Jesus through song and scripture. Rehearsals for the Christmas Pageant began in late November. Songs were practiced, scriptures were chosen, and costumes were distributed. Commitments were made by the youth to be at every rehearsal. For those who normally have little to share in the way of monetary or material items, this becomes a way to give hope and help to the other children in Tulcea County's institutions. It becomes a way to give back for what God has done for them through NOROC. Before any of the festivities could begin, a shipment of 400 Christmas gift shoe boxes was received from

the Team 4 U organization in England. Petrica Adamita, a charter member of the weekly Bible Study, was on hand as always to "give back" to NOROC by helping to unload the boxes. Each shoe box contained age and gender specific gifts for the children. The first Christmas activity took place at the County Library for children in foster care. It included an artistic program supported by Betel Baptist Church of Tulcea (puppet theater), vocal and instrumental soloists from the Tulcea Art High School, and the teenagers from NOROC who told the Christmas story through song. In addition to visiting the children's centers, our youth sang carols and offered gifts to the women and men who stay in the Home for Elderly People. This is truly a time to share the joy of the season with the grandmas and grandpas who are alone and without family. Moș Crăciun (Father Christmas or Santa Claus) made surprise visits to several of the smaller centers in town: Cocorii 1, 2, & 3, Egreta, Pescarusul, and Dumbraveanca. Of course, there were gifts for everyone, as well as a chance to sit on "Santa's" lap! In addition to the Christmas shoe boxes NOROC provides a Christmas gift bag for each child with warm knitted items, small toys, and fruit. These gifts are made possible because of your generous donations.



Communion Dates 2019

March 6
April 18
April 21
June 9
July 28
October 6
November 3
December 1
December 24



Souper Bowl Skit
During worship
February 3rd

February 24th re:form
study during worship

Wands for Wildlife

Do you use mascara or know someone who does? Do they toss their empty tubes in the garbage when empty? Well stop right there! Our Girl Scout troop is collecting old mascara tubes/wands to benefit wildlife. Yes, that's right. The wands will be cleaned thoroughly and donated to an animal refuge in North Carolina where they will be used to care for wildlife that have been affected by natural disasters. There is a green collection bin on the back table of the sanctuary. You can drop off the whole tube or just the wand. The collection will be held until the end of March.



February Birthdays

James Ross	2/1
Joan Botto	2/19
Carolyn White	2/25
Dr. Harold Johnson	2/26

Happy Birthday!

February Assistants

February 3

Greeters: Carol Ross

Ushers: Keith Botto, Emma Botto

Assisting Elder: Eugeniu Grigorescu

Acolyte: Aaliyah D'Angelo

February 10

Greeters: Walter & Alison Hause

Ushers: Dave Force, Kevin White

Assisting Elder: Barb Huntington

Acolyte: Giuliana Force

February 17

Greeters: Janice Moskaluk

Ushers: Joan Thomas, Eugeniu Grigorescu

Assisting Elder: Joan Thomas

Acolyte: Morgan West

February 24

Greeters: Bill & Shirley Birt

Ushers: Steve Hiller, Jim Ross

Assisting Elder: Penny Siesko

Acolyte: Tyrone Birt

Deacon Visitor for February: Janice Moskaluk

Have a wonderful month with family and friends!

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Worship service 10:15am

Sunday school for all ages during worship

Salt + Light Youth Group

Nursery available

