



Love Letters

Most of us can remember our days in elementary and middle school where kids would pass notes in class. If that special girl or boy started a note in your direction your heart began to race, in part out of fear that the teacher would intercept it and read it out loud to the rest of the class, and in part because of the anticipation of what it might say. As a young Air Force officer, I was stationed in England. I tried to maintain a long-distance relationship with a young lady in California. With phone calls costing \$2 a minute we relied on letters to stay connected. When those letters arrived, I would read every word over and over again. It helped me feel close to its author. That relationship and those letters have long disappeared, but I still have a “treasure box” of letters and cards from parents, grandparents that hold a dear place in my heart.

That is how I look at God’s Word – it is His love letter to me. When I first became a follower of Christ at the age of 23, I was encouraged to start a 15-minute quiet each day where I would read Scripture and pray. I couldn’t imagine doing that every day, but I gave it a try. Forty-five years later it is still a part of my spiritual disciplines. Thirty-five years ago, my pastor encouraged me to commit to reading the entire Bible in a year. Again, I couldn’t imagine doing that, but that too has been a part of my spiritual discipline for 35 years. Fifteen minutes has given way to hours. Like love letters earlier in my life, God continues to reveal Himself to me every time I come to His love letter. I read it over and over because I’m in love with the God who gives it. I don’t believe we can truly know God apart from His word.

Thirty years ago this month, our family headed to Texas where I would attend seminary. I remember my professor in my first New Testament class saying that his greatest fear is that “we would take that which is holy and treat it as that which is common.” We then began to dissect the New Testament looking at arguments for and against authorship, authenticity, dating, etc. It’s the information you usually find in the introduction of a good commentary. I found myself becoming depressed as my love letter became something else. Although

that training was useful, I'm glad I was able to quickly return to reading Scripture as much with my heart as my head.

The Bible is an incredible book. It was written over a period of 1500 years, using 40 different authors. It forms the foundation for Judaism, Islam, and Christianity. The King James version contains 788,258 words, 31,102 verses, 1,189 chapters, and 66 books. In its entirety it has been translated into 532 languages, with part of it being translated into 2,883 languages. It is by far the best-selling book of all time. And yet, the Bible is under attack today, even within the church. Christians want to decide which parts of the Bible are still reliable and trustworthy, choosing to hold to those parts that are comfortable and rejecting parts that contradict our culture. Try that with a love letter.

This past week I was reading Paul's epistle to the Romans. I was struck by how amazing it was that any one human being could pull together so many incredible truths into one letter. I thought about the fact that he was a well-trained theologian, but then I remembered that other incredible writings in the Bible were penned by uneducated shepherds and fishermen. I then reflected on the miracle of God's intervention with ordinary men to make Himself known to us through His revelation. That revelation was made most clear in His incarnation in Christ. Even what we know about Jesus is through the careful documentation in God's Word.

Paul wrote Timothy that "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness" (2 Tim 3:16, NIV). God was active in its writing from beginning to end. David, in Psalm 19:7-8 wrote "the law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple. The precepts of the Lord are right, giving joy to the heart. (NIV) The Articles of Faith in the Church of the Nazarene says that Scripture was "given by divine inspiration, inerrantly revealing the will of God concerning all things necessary to our salvation . . ." I believe that Scripture is inerrant period. God would not let anything imperfect into His love letter.

So, what about you? Isn't it time to pull out the greatest love letter of all time? Grab a cup of coffee, find a comfortable chair, and pour over every word like it was from the greatest love of your life – because it is! I was thinking about that treasure box. The only thing that would make reading those old cards and letters better, is if I could have my mom, dad, son, and grandparents there to read them with me. What is so awesome is we get to do that with the author of God's Word. Paul wrote, "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him" - but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit.

The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words. (1 Cor 2:9-13, NIV)

God is ready and waiting for us to join him for a cup of coffee and conversation. Don't stand Him up.

Blessings,

Pastor Doug

SFNAZ ANNOUNCEMENTS

OCTOBER IS PASTORS APPRECIATION MONTH

October is Pastor Appreciation Month! Thank you to our wonderful Pastors:

Wes Hershberger, Wanda Aller, Jordan Roth and David Dixon

We love you! Your church board invites you to encourage your pastors with a personal note of gratitude. We will take a love offering on October 29th or mark your check "Pastor Appreciation".

LIFE GROUPS

There are life groups starting, so be sure to watch church center to see which group God is leading you to join.

TRUNK OR TREAT – DECORATE YOUR TRUNK – Tuesday, October 31st – 6pm

We are looking for volunteers to decorate their vehicles for Trunk or Treat. If you would like to decorate your vehicle, (or will volunteer, but need our help with decorating), sign up on church center or at the kid's check in.

UPCOMING EVENTS

SENIOR LUNCHEON ~ Wednesday, October 11th - 12:00 pm.

- Join us at Old European. Call Roberta to RSVP 509-325-0711.

LIBERTY QUARTET ~ GRAND COULEE CHURCH ~ October 13th

- Grand Coulee Church of the Nazarene will also host the Liberty Quartet on Friday, **October 13th**, at 7:00 pm. Their address is 45925 St Rt 174 North. Here's another chance to hear the quartet and see Pastor Wanda's church.
- We have the privilege of hosting the Liberty Quartet on Friday **November 10th**, at 7:00 pm.

POP CONCERT WITH MARK HERMAN ~ October 19th - 7:00pm

- Join us for a free organ concert in the sanctuary. International Organ & Silent Film Presentations American Theatre Organ Society's Organist of the Year 2012, Mark Herman will be performing.

MISSIONARY SERVICE ~ Sunday, October 22nd 10:45am

- Guest speakers: Stan and Amiee Christopherson, missionaries to Croatia.

MOM'S CONNECT ~ Friday, October 27th ~ 10:00 am

Bring your little ones to play and join other moms for a time to share and chat.

DISCIPLESHIP CONNECTION CONFERENCE (OTHELLO) ~ Saturday, October 28th ~ 9am - 3:30pm ~ Othello Church of the Nazarene

- Formerly The Mix, Discipleship Connection will be held on October 28th at Othello NAZ. This day will be full of inspiration and encouragement with DS Dave Mowry's messages and workshops for Children's, Youth, Women's, and Men's Ministries, Discipleship, and Missions. Registration is open on church center for those who would like to represent SFNAZ. Deadline is 10/19.

BENEVOLENCE SUNDAY ~ Sunday, October 29th

- On the fifth Sunday of the month, we take up a separate offering designated for the benevolence fund. This is an opportunity to support fellow church members, and those within the community in need. If you feel led to contribute, please mark your envelope "benevolence".

TRUNK OR TREAT ~ Tuesday, October 31st

Bring the entire family for a night of games, candy, and fun. Free event! Invite your friends and neighbors.

ALL COMMUNITY HYMN SING ~ Sunday, November 5th – 3:00 – 4:30

TITHES & OFFERING

Thank you so much for your faithful support of our church! Here are a few options available to continue with giving tithes & offerings.

1. Online giving is available.

You may mail your check directly to the church
Spokane First Church of the Nazarene
9004 N Country Homes Blvd.
Spokane, WA 99218

2. GIVE BY TEXT - 84321

- Text the dollar amount you would like to give to 84321 and follow the prompts.

Faithfulness in Giving

	Income	Expenses	+/-
• General	\$ 289,600	\$ 318,100	\$ -28,500
• Missions	\$ 32,900	\$ 30,400	\$ +2,500

(March through August 2023)

Thank you for giving generously to your church general fund. Your faithful giving helps to meet our budgeted expenses.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRAYER

Prayer Chain by Email

- Contact the church office to receive prayer requests by email (office@sfnaz.org).

Prayer for District Churches

- October 1st: Nazarene Bible College and President Scott Sherwood; Nazarene Theological Seminary and President Jeren Rowell
- October 8th: Herminia Esqueda, Multi-Cultural Ministry Coordinator, and district multicultural leaders
- October 15th: Kennewick Story Point and Leavenworth
- October 22nd: Lewiston First and Lewiston Orchards
- October 29th: Moscow and Moses Lake Casa de Restauracion

Missions Prayer Requests

- October 1st: Guyana and Haiti
- October 8th: Honduras and Hong Kong
- October 15th: India and Indonesia
- October 22nd: Ireland and Israel
- October 29th: Bangladesh and Barbados

PRAYER REQUESTS

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Youth Pastor Candidates• Susan & Doug Wold• Tracy Aronson• Lloyd Brown	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Floyd Smith• Dick Sainsbury• The Cote family• Sheryl Valoff
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BEREAVEMENT

- Pat Hamilton's daughter, Cheryl passed September 12th. Please pray for Pat and the rest of the family.

LEARNING & GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

Bible Study ~ Sunday - 9:30am

- *The Book of Ephesians* - led by Ron Hand in the Fireside Room
- *You are Never Alone* by Max Lucado - led by Don & Lorraine Chambers in the Library

YOUNG ADULTS (Ages 18-26)

- *How to Face Life's Challenges* – led by Bud & Nicole Chambers

ADULT BIBLE STUDY ~ Tuesdays – 6:15pm

- *Driven by Eternity* by John Bevere – led by Randy Coffey in the Fireside Room

ADULT BIBLE STUDIES ~ Wednesday Evening 6:30pm

- *Women of Faith* – led by Wanda Aller in the Holy Grounds
- *Habits of the Household* – led by April Burrer in the Fireside Room
- *The Gospel for Real Life* – led by Sonya Turner (Library)
- *Men's Bible Study* – The Book of Job by Francis Chan in Conference Room

BIBLE STUDY ~ Thursdays – 7pm

- *Wild at Heart* – led by Scott Fuller in Conference Room

CELEBRATE RECOVERY ~ Friday's 6pm – led by Terry Turner



SUNDAY SCHEDULE

9:30am

- **Nursery** (Infant through 3 non-potty-trained years old)
- **PreK - 5th Learning and Growth** (3-year-old potty trained through kindergarten)

10:45am

- **Nursery-Toddlers** (Infant through 3 non-potty-trained years old)
- **PreK – Kindergarten Childrens Church** (3-year-old potty trained through kindergarten)
- **1st-5th grade Childrens Church**- dismissed after children's sermon in sanctuary.

6:30pm – 7:45pm

- **Nursery:** Infant through 3 non-potty trained
- **Pre K:** If's, And's & But's
- **Kindergarten - 5th** – Christmas music and drama: 6:30-7:45

Upcoming Events:

October 20th – (2nd-5th Grade) Girls night @ the Roth's.

- ***Games, dinner, movie ~ bring a snack to share***

October 31st- Trunk or Treat for the entire family - invite your friends

Needs in Children's Department:

- Pre-K teacher for 9:30 Learning and Growth
- Helper for Pre-K teacher for 9:30 Learning and Growth
- Nursery help for both hours on Sunday
- Wednesday night teacher for Pre-K

Please email me with any questions, jordanr@sfnaz.org



ATTENTION 6—12 GRADERS join us every week up the in the Youth Loft for:

WED ~ Youth Group 6:30 – 8pm

Start with games in gym, then separate into MS and HS small groups

SUN ~ Learning and Growth MS and HS classes 9:30am

Morning Worship in sanctuary 10:45am

WORSHIP MINISTRY UPDATES

Worship Team

- If you have an interest in being a part of the Sunday morning worship team, reach out to David Dixon. We are always interested in exploring how different people's musical gifts fit into our weekly worship rhythms.

Audio/Visual Media Team

- Are you a techie or creative person, or both? We are always looking to train additional people in how to run our sound system and live streaming system. Or are you interested in helping us create video content to use online or during services let's talk!

If you are interested in being a part of any of the opportunities listed above in worship ministry, please let David Dixon know.

David can be reached at davidd@fnaz.org