

## Dear Faith Shapers,

As we all know, Valentines Day is celebrated in the month of February. It's a holiday where cards are exchanged, followers are shared and chocolate is consumed. It's always seemed strange to me though that we chose to make a holiday out of something we should really be doing every day of the year—sharing our love with others (and eating chocolate too of course). So as you look for ways to celebrate this fun holiday for that one day this month, may you also look for ways to share your love, and God's love, with others through out the entire year. And one way you can do this is by using your talents and gifts to serve others. Become a mentor at your local school or church, 'adopt' a family in your church and send cards to the children to let them know you're praying for them. Spend time with others older and younger than yourself to hear their stories and to share your own. Just like Faith is caught more than taught, so is love. So may you live a life that others catch what you are living and grow to know and love our awesome God.

Kristin Johnson, Deacon

## Hearts full of God's Love: 8 Day Countdown to Valentines Day



Cut out 8 hearts on cardstock paper. On the hearts write out the following:

1. Be Mine: John 3:16
2. All Mine: John 10:27-30
3. True Love: Jeremiah 31:3
4. Love Me: Luke 10:27
5. I'm Sure: John 14:1-3
6. Sweet Talk: Psalm 119:103
7. Be Good: John 14:15
8. Call Me: Jeremiah 33:3

Each morning hide one of the hearts in the house. When the kids wake up, tell them that they are going on a treasure hunt for God's love. Then let them search for that day's heart. Once they find it, place it on the fridge, dinning room table, or somewhere in the house where you'll be able to see all the hearts displayed. Then look up the verse in the Bible and talk about what that verse means for them.



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# Growing in faith AND love by mentoring!

One's faith (and love) really CAN'T grow if you never spend time with someone of a different age or generation from yourself. We all need those older and younger than us to help us grow; emotionally and spiritually. And one of the greatest ways you can grow is by being a mentor. There are many ways one can mentor someone (whether older or younger than yourself).

- ⇒ Introduce yourself to a family on your block to make an intergenerational connection and help a parent in need.
- ⇒ Volunteer at your local school or after-school program to make a difference by spending time with the children
- ⇒ Approach a local social service agency to offer your services as a mentor to someone in need
- ⇒ Go to your local nursing home or assisted living facility to play board games or cards with the residents.
- ⇒ Ask your congregation's Youth Director if you can attend Youth Group as a 'caring adult' to be a positive presence for the youth.

Both Paul Wierson and Shirley Stakey have chosen to be mentors by being an active presence in the lives of kids in their community and church. Every week Paul volunteers at the Roland-Story Elementary School where he not only reads books to the second graders, but he also mentors two young boys during their lunch periods; eating lunch with them sharing stories about each other's lives.

Shirley mentors two young girls in her congregation at St. Petri Lutheran as part of their 'Prayer Buddies' ministry. She sends notes to them, greets them at church, and even spends time with them outside worship by doing fun activities like going out for ice cream, playing board games and making holiday treats and crafts together.

Both have chosen to share not only their hearts but their lives as well with these children as a way of sharing God's love with them. (1 Thessalonians 2:8)

