

THE MASTERPIECE

Snowflakes are swirling round and round,
As they silently fall and kiss the ground,
I stand there quietly in the wintry chill,
My heart races wildly but my feet are still.

I stare at the ground being covered by snow,
Shivering in the wind as it constantly blows,
God is painting a wild creation,
Which is humanly impossible of duplication.

The world's largest masterpiece is well under way.
This artistic creation usually takes but a day,
It will likely be done before darkness of night,
Only one color is used which is snowflake white.

Other colors of nature will naturally blend
To add to her beauty as the snow descends,
This painting is priceless yet cannot be sold,
It is freely in sight for the world to behold.

Come morning the sun will rise on a scene
Such as mortal man has never seen before,
The world's largest painting now on display,
Is a sight to behold in the sun's brilliant rays.

While this picture is there, nature lovers revel,
In their minds forever are these beauties beheld,
As they enjoy this gift that fell to the ground,
Which was perfectly placed with hardly a sound.

Now the snow has completely gone,
Another season is now being born,
Bringing scenes of a different hue,
That God will bestow on you.

SOUTH COMMUNITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH NEWSLETTER

11800 47 Mile Rd.
Cadillac, MI. 49601
(231) – 775-3067

www.scommunityumc.org

FEBRUARY 2024

MORNING WORSHIP 9:30 A.M.
SUNDAY SCHOOL 11:00 A.M.

PASTOR JIM MORT
Marion Church Phone- (231) 743-2834
Parsonage Phone- (231) 743-0062

Vision Statement

We are a family united by God's love: serving, sharing and growing together. It is our mission to call people into a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Love and Ashes

February 14th is a significant day on the calendar this year. Not because it is Valentine's Day but because this year Ash Wednesday falls on February 14th. Greeting card companies, florists, and chocolatiers make the claim that Valentines Day is about love. And Valentines Day does provide an opportunity for people to express their feelings of romantic love for each other. I would like to suggest that Ash Wednesday is about a love that is greater than anything Valentines Day can offer. Ash Wednesday is about an incredibly powerful and enthusiastic love – God's love for us.

Ash Wednesday is the first day of Lent, the season of reflection and preparation leading up to Easter. Ash Wednesday and Lent take love to a whole new level. Lent is a season of pushing away distractions that keep us from embracing the love God has for us and fully expressing our love for God. As part of worship on Ash Wednesday, while the mark of the cross is drawn on us with ashes, we hear these words, "Repent and believe the gospel." The gospel is that God loves us so much that God sent his Son to live and die for us despite ourselves. What love that is!

Valentine's Day is about communicating love for another on that one day, but it does not give us what we need to do the hard work of love. Something that is required for us to love fully is renouncing (giving up) the things that keep us from loving well. Ash Wednesday and the season of Lent that follows gives us a chance to renounce those things.

We receive a special gift on Ash Wednesday. The ashes imposed on our foreheads are a sign of repentance and mourning. Those ashes are a mark and a reminder as deep and personal as cards, roses, or chocolate. Those ashes remind us of the depth of God's love for us, even when we fail to respond to it. The love of God is not just about feelings or sentiments, but about death to everything that hinders it – even our sin.

We need Ash Wednesday, whether it falls on Valentine's Day or not. We need it because we tend to forget what God's love for us means. God loved us enough for Jesus to be on the cross for us. This is not a sentimental gesture. It is whole-hearted commitment. Jesus is all in, and Lent is an invitation for us to respond to that love.

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May we respond to the love of God through Jesus Christ.

Blessings,

Pastor Jim

FINANCES:

Receipts for December - \$ 4,416.00

Disbursements for December - \$ 4,194.25

Receipts for 2023 - \$ 50,697.39

Disbursements for 2023 - \$ 52,104.24

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

12- Chic Broersma

19- Todd Benson

20- Piper George

Love INC

Love INC is looking for volunteers:

Food Pantry volunteers. The pantry is located at the Love Inc office on Sunnyside Drive in Cadillac. M-F, 9-1 (you don't have to work every day or the entire shift) what you have to offer, we will be happy to have!

Reed City Client item drop off/pick up – drivers. Each week we have items that need to be run to our Reed City INC Spot store, and vice-versa. We are looking for individuals who like to drive, and don't mind the trek to reed City and back! Days and times vary.

Community Pantry Volunteers We are looking for individuals who could help out in our large community pantry! It is not open yet, but in late spring we will need volunteers to help with sorting through donations and running the pantry itself. M-F, 9:30-3:30. (Again any day or time you are available works for us!) The Community pantry will also be located at the Love INC office. If you have any questions please call the Love INC office at, 231-779-1888

GOD'S WINTER WONDERLAND

Across the old bridge we go
And onward tracking through the snow
O'er wintry, winding country lanes,
Past cottages with frosted panes.
Along the way a deer appears,
Standing erect, with pointed ears.
Upon a hill, ice-laden trees
Lean forward as on bended knees.
a-down the hill the children ride
on sleighs...it's such a joyous sight!
On country pond the skaters band ;
How great God's winter wonderland!

WINTER MAGIC

Winter has a certain magic
That belongs to it alone.
Ice crystals form everywhere.
North winds howl and moan.

Tree boughs are laden heavy
With fresh white fallen snow.
Snowflakes settle softly
On the frozen ground below.

The water stream that once bubbled
And trickled down steepened hill,
Is now hushed and silent,
In a setting, quiet and still.

Children sliding down icy hills
Give shrieks of pure delight.
Skaters on the frozen pond
Last long into the night.

Jack Frost paints windowpanes
With designs of every kind.
Snow white paths are covered
With footprints left behind.

When winter makes its visit
Enjoy it while you may.
Spring will be arriving soon
And melt it all away.

*He spreads the snow like wool
And scatters the frost like ashes.
He hurls down his hail like pebbles.
Who can withstand his icy blast?
He sends his word and melts them;
He stirs up his breezes, and the waters flow.*
Psalm 147:16-18

THE SILENT DAYS

Winter brings the silent days
While on the ground the white snow lays,
All nature lends a quiet real
In peaceful moments quite ideal,
Asleep within the frozen ground,
Each bulb so safe and sound.

The silent days when home is best,
The special time of gentle rest,
When families gather round the fire
To satisfy a heart's desire,
"Tis then our summer dreams come true
A happiness for me and you.

We marvel at the magic bliss
We find within a snowflake's kiss,
We meditate on seasons past
The lovely fall that could not last,
Our faith renewed in many ways
As we delight to silent days.

THE SEASON

This is the season when the earth
Slumbers 'neath her quilt of snow,
When little bulbs make ready for
The day they will sprout and grow.
This is the season when stars
Are crystal jewels of light,
And moonlight filters thru the trees
Radiantly bright.
This is the season of repose
For nature's growing things;
Exquisite world without a flaw
Our God so richly brings.

ICICLE TIME

Icicle time is reigning,
The temperatures hang low;
All nature is sparkling
With newly-fallen snow.
The trees upon the hilltops
Are now all ermine-capped,
And all the little valleys
Hold snowflakes in their laps.

Icicles, brightly glistening,
Are hanging from the eaves;
Just as far as eye can scan
The earth is in deep freeze.
But just like a kaleidoscope,
There'll come a change of scene;
Winter days will fade away,
Revealing springtime's green.

WINTER WHITE

Softly, silently the snowflakes fall,
And flannel-posted fences raise their heads
Along the winding miles of ermine shrubs,
Down roadsides lined with crystal flowerbeds.
The intricate design of frosted lakes
Gleams dully 'neath a matted sky of gray.
Pale pointed fingers of the north wind tear
The frozen branches roughly from its way.
Like a scene within a water globe,
The smallest hand need only shake to see
The dazzling swirl that breathlessly descends
To shape the world in fragile mystery.
So the world appears to me tonight
Dressed in a flowing gown of ermine white.