

The Fun House



"I don't need a silly little card or candy for Valentine's Day.

I like the hard stuff
... Diamonds!

Joy Rides

A Friend of Christ

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. -1 CORINTHIANS 13:1

The church can be a noisy place, a venue full of resounding gongs and clanging symbols. It can also be a place of quiet rivers. My husband and I discovered that in the cold winter of 1999.

Barry's mother, Eleanor, was in the last days of battling liver cancer. We spent as much time as we could with Eleanor and William. We took turns holding Eleanor's hand through the night, wiping her brow, singing hymns, and praying for mercy from the ravages of a disease that moved in uninvited and refused to leave. Our greatest worry was that when we were not there, William was alone-or so we thought, until we met one of those quiet rivers. Her name is Terri Doucette.

William and Eleanor were members of Martin Luther Church, and Terri was in charge of the ministry of helps. I'm not sure what her job description is, but I'm sure it didn't include everything she quietly did in the name of the Lord. She stopped by every morning to administer Eleanor's medication. She sat for hours holding her hand and praying. She prepared food for William and stayed late at night to share a cup of coffee or a bowl of soup. She had time for all of us. She stayed till the end. When Eleanor took her final breath, Terri was right there in the room, cheering her all the way home.

Her job title introduced us to her, but Terri's spirit sang with the quiet grace of a friend of Christ.

Lord Jesus, may my life reflect my friendship with you. Amen.

~ Sheila Walsh (find more devotionals at www.sheilawalsh.com)



Here's

The Scoop

January 2009

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History Of Valentine's Day

Each February, in places around the world, flowers, gifts, and candy are exchanged between friends and loved ones in celebration of Valentine's Day. The name of St. Valentine is known across the globe as a patron saint. Most of us however, do not know the true history of St. Valentine and how this special day came to be. What we do know is that February is the month of romance. As we know it today, St. Valentine's Day contains elements of both ancient Roman and Christian traditions.

In third century Rome, Emperor Claudius II declared that single males made superior soldiers than did those who had wives and children and he outlawed marriage for all young men in order to optimize his potential army of soldiers. Valentine, a priest, immediately realized the injustice in this declaration and continued to perform marriages in secret ceremonies, which was in direct defiance of Emperor Claudius II. Upon learning of Valentine's actions, the Emperor immediately had him put to death.

There are additional stories surrounding Valentine that suggest he was killed for attempting to assist Christians in escaping Roman prisons. It is said that Valentine himself sent the first ever "valentine" greeting. It is believed that Valentine fell in love with a jailer's daughter while in prison. The girl had visited Valentine in jail, during which time Valentine fell deeply in love with her. It is thought that before his death, Valentine sent her a letter that he signed "From Your Valentine". This expression is still in use today on the millions of greetings that are sent out each year. The truth behind the origins of Valentine's Day is still shrouded in mystery, but the stories behind this man and his appeal as a historic, romantic, and heroic figure are what make Valentine's Day so special to us today.

Cards, gifts, and the promise of eternal love are the most common way that we express our feelings on this very special day each year. While we enjoy and anticipate Valentine's Day and the gifts we will give and receive, it is important to remember that this very special day originated with no gifts whatsoever, but rather an promise of eternal love and happiness that cost nothing at all.



Imagination Station

Fun on Valentines Day



Here are a few websites that have some fun activities:

Apples 4 The Teacher -

<http://www.apples4theteacher.com/holidays/valentines-day>

- **Valentines Day Jigsaw Puzzles** - What better way to show your friendship, then by sending your valentine these interactive jigsaw puzzles?
- **Fun Valentines Day Coloring Pages** - Get out your interactive crayon and color these symbols of love and friendship.

DLTK's Valentine's Day Activities for Kids -

<http://www.dltk-holidays.com/valentines/index.htm>

- **Printables** - BINGO Cards, Bookmarks, Cards, Gift Tags, etc.
- **Games & Puzzles** - Word Search, Memory Cards, Coloring pages, etc.
- **Poems & Recipes**



Activity Village - http://www.activityvillage.co.uk/valentines_day.htm

- **Origami** - Fold this pretty origami heart and tuck a secret message inside, or use it to make a home-made Valentine's Day card.
- **Crafts** - Stuck for inspiration this Valentine's Day, look at these Valentine crafts for kids complete with instructions!

Tomorrow Land

Mark Your Calendars!

Don't forget to make room in your schedule for our special events!

- Tuesday, February 24th - MOPS meeting "**The Roller Coaster**" - Discipline in the Adventure. **Disneyland Diva's** will be providing the meal.
- Friday, February 27th - MOPS Parent's Night Out @ 7:00 pm at Zion Ministry Center. Get a babysitter and join us for a great night of silly & sweet. We will have a desert bar (yummy) and comedy (fun)!
- Friday & Saturday, March 20th & 21st - **Cabbage Burger Fundraiser**
- Tuesday, March 24th - MOPS meeting "**The House of Mirrors**" - How others see us, we see ourselves and God sees us. **Six Flags Sisters** will be providing the meal.



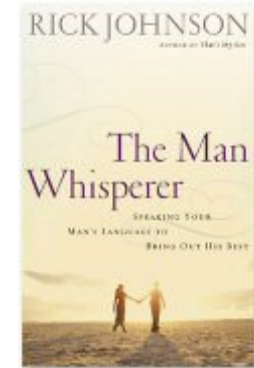
Our Favorite Thrills

Check out the MOPS SHOP at www.mopshop.org for resources like these:

The Man Whisperer

Speaking Your Man's Language to Bring Out His Best

Rick Johnson helps women identify the strengths in their men and the things that hold them back.



Whip It Good

30-Minute Turkey Chili

- * 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
 - * 1 medium yellow onion, chopped
 - * 5 cloves garlic, chopped
 - * 1 tablespoon kosher salt
 - * 2 teaspoons chili powder
 - * 1 teaspoon dried oregano
 - * 1 tablespoon tomato paste
 - * 1 chipotle chile en adobo, coarsely chopped, with 1 tablespoon sauce
 - * 1 pound ground turkey
 - * 1 (12-ounce) Mexican lager-style beer
 - * 1 (14 1/2-ounce) can whole peeled tomatoes, with their juice
 - * 1 (15 1/2-ounce) can kidney beans, rinsed and drained
- * Sliced scallions, cilantro sprigs, avocado, sour cream, grated Monterey jack cheese, and/or tortilla chips, for garnish, optional



Heat the olive oil in a large, heavy skillet over medium-high heat. Add the onion, garlic, salt, chili powder, and oregano and cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 3 minutes. Stir in the tomato paste and the chipotle chile and sauce; cook 1 minute more. Add the turkey, breaking it up with a wooden spoon, and cook until the meat loses its raw color, about 3 minutes. Add the beer and simmer until reduced by about half, about 8 minutes. Add the tomatoes--crushing them through your fingers into the skillet--along with their juices and the beans; bring to a boil. Cook, uncovered, stirring occasionally, until thick, about 10 minutes.

Ladle the chili into bowls and serve with the garnishes of your choice.

Cook's Note: A skillet's larger surface area reduces sauces faster than simmering in a saucepan.