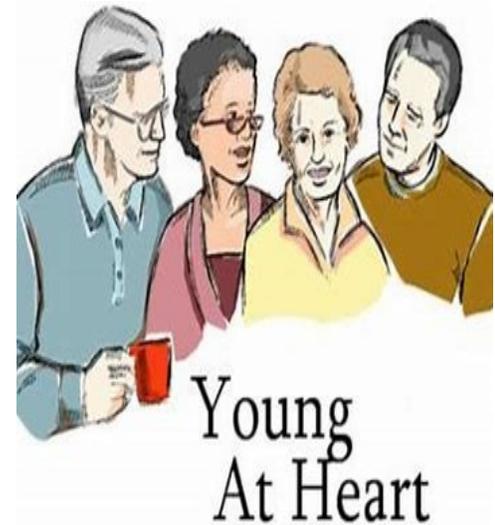


# YOUNG AT HEART NEWSLETTER



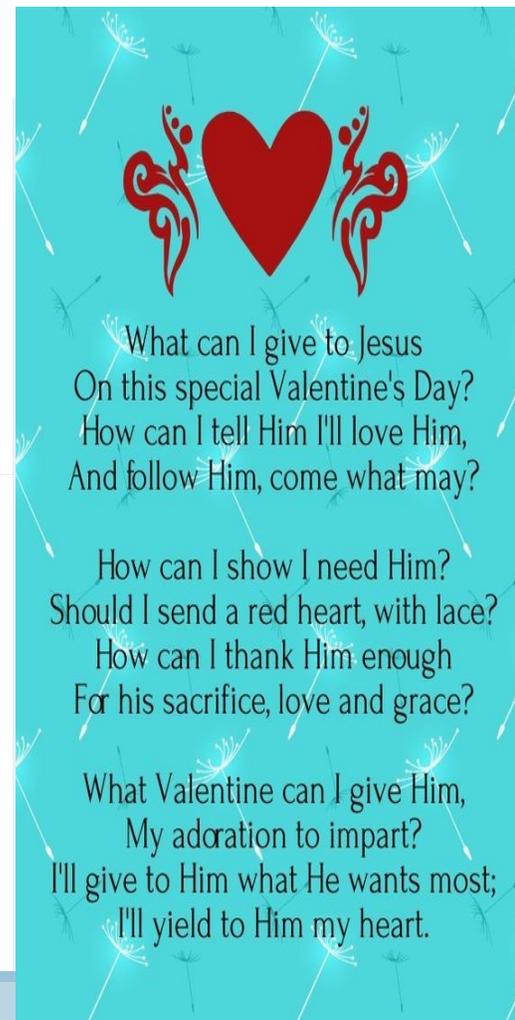
Dear Church Leaders and Members,

There are a number of holidays in February: President's Day, Groundhog Day and Valentine's Day. Of the three, Valentine's Day is probably dreaded the most by some people in your congregation. I have some tips for you to make this a day to look forward to rather than to dread it.

1. **Dine with Friends**—get together with other widows for a potluck or go to a nice restaurant. Invite some singles to join you.
2. **Do something Loving for yourself**—A massage or a new haircut or even shopping (for anything from pretty shoes to a new shade of lipstick) can give you a lift.
3. **Spend time that day with your grandchildren(if you have them)** - or young nieces/nephews. I find their exuberance and honesty are powerful therapy for sadness.
4. **Do a good deed for someone else**—It takes your mind off yourself and what you don't have.
5. **Make a list of all the people and things (like your garden, your job, or your dog) that you love in your life**— Think about who or what you might want to add.

And try to hang on to your perspective. Remember, it's only 24 hours. Tomorrow is on the way.

Pastor Sue





## HOW TO GET HELP FROM SOCIAL SECURITY

The Social Security Administration (SSA) wants people to know how to get help when they need it. This is especially important during the pandemic, when in-person service is by appointment only for limited issues. One way you can find help is at SSA.gov or by calling 800-772-1213 or by contacting a local Social Security office.

If you are scheduled for an in-person appointment, visitors **MUST**:

- Wear a mask, regardless of vaccination status.
- Be prepared to wait outdoors when ability to follow physical distancing requirements is limited indoors.
- Come alone unless they require help with their visit. If they require help, SSA can only permit one person to accompany you.



### A PRAYER FOR TODAY

*Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.*

Psalm 90:12

O Lord, on these cold, wintry days when the snow is falling and I feel chilled to the bone, how difficult it is to rejoice and be glad. There are cloudless skies when life seems so good and rich, and then there are gray days when life seems so uncertain and disappointing. There are days when my heart is so full and overflowing

with praise, and there are days when my soul is empty, and I feel anxious about everything. I need this reminder that every day is a gift to be embraced, explored, and enjoyed. In every kind of day I must learn to say with the psalmist, "This is the day the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it." As it was in the beginning, it is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen and amen.

From Mike Powers

I wanted to share with you my favorite funny story. I hope you enjoy it. A man got up on Sunday morning and decided to go hunting instead of going to Church. The Hunting season for black bears was almost over. He walked all day looking for a bear but found no sign of one. Finally, he decided to climb one more hill and then go home. As he pulled himself up over a rock cropping he came nose to nose with the biggest bear he had ever seen. The bear roared and the man lost his grip and began to roll back down the hill. Half way down he lost his rifle and when he reached the bottom of the hill he realized he had broken his leg. He looked up the hill and the bear was



Running as fast as it could down the hill toward him. What could he do? Pray!! And he did. He prayed that if God would make this bear into a Christian he would be at church every Sunday, he would tithe, he would teach the middle school boys in Sunday school and anything else God wanted him to do. As the bear got very close to the man, it suddenly stopped, looked toward the heavens, dropped to its knees, folded his hands in prayer and said, "Lord, bless this food for which I am about to partake." Be careful what you ask for when you pray to God. Things might not turn out exactly as you expected them to.



# *Festival of Wisdom and Grace*

*August 1-4, 2022*

*Lake Junaluska, NC*

Mark your calendars for this annual event in the mountains of North Carolina for those in the second half of life. There will be preaching, teaching, workshops, boat rides, an Afternoon Tea, and a very special Concert. The theme in 2022 is Rest, Renewal, and Delight. Plan to come to this special event where your souls will be fed and your mind will rest, away from all the noise and busy-ness of home. I will let you know when the Lake Junaluska website is ready to receive reservations. Prayerfully give this gift to yourself this year.



## **5 Ways to Support a Widow/Widower on Valentine's Day**

1. **Make the Call**—The simple act of picking up the phone and calling them is a powerful defense against loneliness. You don't need to mention Valentine's Day—you can simply ask how they're doing, what they've been up to, or what they have coming up in the weeks or months ahead.
2. **Send a Card or Letter**- a thoughtful email is a great way to reach out to a friend or family member, but, if you want to go the extra mile, take the time to mail or drop off an actual card or letter.
3. **Give a Thoughtful Gift**— You don't have to worry about being romantic, but who doesn't like receiving a gift? Some tasty chocolates or a book you have enjoyed is always welcome
4. **Offer your Handyman Skills (or the use of Your Handyman)** - We all have tasks around the house that we haven't gotten to yet, and a widow is no different. You don't have to be a professional handyman to help her out. You can just show up with the tools and supplies you might need, or you can ask her ahead of time if there's anything specific she'd like you to handle.
5. **Spend Time Together**—Your presence is often the best gift you have to offer. You can meet for lunch on February 14, or you can rearrange your own Valentine's Plans to spend the evening with a dear friend. See a fun movie, go shopping, have a tasty meal or just enjoy one another's company.

This is an opportunity for you to be Christ's hands and feet on this often dreaded holiday. An opportunity to reach out to someone to listen, to laugh, to be a real friend to someone. They will be blessed and so will you.