



The Wisconsin Baptist

Published by the American Baptist Churches of Wisconsin

February Edition

Tuesday,
Jan. 17th,
2023

Rev. Dr. John Jones IV, Associate Regional Minister of Education

*“Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.”
1 John 4:7*

I married into the Valentyn family, so I’ve come to understand Valentine’s Day, and everything that comes with it, as an important day. My mother-in-law decorates her Christmas tree in all hearts. My wife, Katherine, follows her father’s tradition of wearing all red and white to work every February 14. It’s a nice gesture, a reminder and celebration of love – certainly a gesture you can’t miss.

I was never very big on Valentine’s Day before meeting Katherine. I thought of it more as a Hallmark Holiday. And I rarely got much of a meaningful message about love from my experience of February 14. I’m far from a cynic, but my understanding of romance does not have a lot to do with what I’ve seen surrounding Valentine’s Day.

But over the years, through a broadened perspective and the influence of many good examples, I’ve come to understand February 14 as a celebration of more than romantic love. Legend has it that St. Valentine’s Day comes from a 3rd century Christian martyr in Rome who died for the love at the core of his faith. He died proclaiming his faith and believing in God’s love. *That* kind of love I know and respect.

I have a friend and former student who would say “God loves you, and I do too” when saying goodbye to me. And I know she often said the same to others. I’m sure she didn’t always *feel* the love she was trying to express. I heard her say it to people with whom I know she had some difficulties. She was stating the reality: God loves you, and I do too. And she was living into that reality. Her boldness and witness has always stayed with me as an example.

She’s trying, in word and deed, to keep living out the love that is the core of her faith in the God of Jesus Christ. She’s participating in God’s ongoing and active love of the world through that witness.

In the cold dark days of winter, I will take all the many red, heart-shaped emblems of Valentine’s Day as a personal challenge to live out that deep and abiding love to which God calls me – even a love for my enemies. Whether you’re a romantic or a cynic, I hope you’ll consider doing the same, “because love is from God.”

Important Dates ABC-WI Region	Office Hours Regional Office	Important Dates Camp Tamarack
Feb. 18: Church Board & Leadership Workshop	Monday - Thursday 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM	Feb. 3-5: Youth Retreat Feb. 18: Ice Fishing Fun Summer Events can be found on the Camp T. website

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Please consider giving to RMMO & supporting the ministers and missionaries who by their ministry & service have given so much to all of us.



Church Board & Leadership Workshop

Feb. 18 at 9:30 AM



Camp Tamarack Events

- **Winter Youth Retreat:** Feb. 3-5
(*Registration Deadline - Feb. 1*)
- **Ice Fishing Fun Day:** Feb. 18



SAVE THE DATE

ABC-WI 179th Annual Gathering

- When: Oct. 13-15
- Where: Green Lake Conference Center
- Focus: Next Generation Ministries



Synergy E-Newsletter

The Synergy E-Newsletter has lots of Church stories and events for our ABC-WI family. If you haven’t already, please subscribe through the ABC-WI website!

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Together Living Faithfully Through Christ Today



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