Dear Lexie,

What's Love Got to Do With It?

Ok, it's that time again - the time when cards are sought and flowers are bought, when poems are penned and songs are composed. It is the time when love notes are written and entirely too much heart-shaped candy is eaten. And to what end? Well, of course, it's all in the name of love. But this is par for the course this time each year as we celebrate February 14 or, as it is known by lovers the world over, Valentine's Day.

Read more>>

Dat and Youth Department Embark on New's Ministry

Work in Progress

For a long time now, the Disability Action Team (DAT) has been trying to ascertain how we can have an impact on those within our congregation who have physical and/or emotional needs.

Learn more>>

The Universe and the White Elephant

Natural Causes, Natural Law

Imagine a room in which a body lies crushed, flat as a pancake. A dozen
detectives crawl around, examining the floor with magnifying glasses for any clue to the identity of the perpetrator.

Women's Ministry News

Women's Ministry Update

On Sabbath, February 16, the Women's Ministry Team will celebrate along with all of our church family at the ordination of Sligo's first woman pastor, Josephine Benton.

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WHAT'S LOVE GOT TO DO WITH IT?

By melindap On February 13, 2013 · Add Comment · In eWeekend

Ok, it's that time again - the time when cards are sought and flowers are bought, when poems are penned and songs are composed. It is the time when love notes are written and entirely too much heart-shaped candy is eaten. And to what end? Well, of course, it's all in the name of love. But this is the course of this time each year as we celebrate February 14 or, as it is known by lovers the world over, Valentine's Day.

There is probably no more popular subject in our world today than love. Just think about it: Love in one way or another, continues to dominate just about every aspect of our modern culture. When you take into account that most of the songs that are recorded and movies that are produced have love as their theme, you can't help but admit that our culture is obsessed with the idea of love.

But the question that begs to be asked is, if love is so popular, even to the point of having its own day, why is there so much hatred in our world today? Why are there so many senseless murders taking place amongst the young and the innocent? Could it be that love isn't as powerful as we have been led to believe, or that what we have thought to be love is simply not the "Real McCoy" but a cheap imitation? In the words of singer Tina Turner, "What's Love Got to Do with It?"

We may compose countless songs about love and write many famous movies and novels about it, but that's no indication that we have even the remotest idea of what love, true love, is really all about. Years ago I came across a definition of love that I believe, if adhered to, would completely transform the way our culture views love. I found this definition in a book titled, Living God's Love, by Douglas Cooper. Cooper says "Love is using one's God-given power of choice to do or say, that which is in the best interest or good of another regardless of feelings." In essence Cooper is saying that we demonstrate love when we do what's best for the other person despite how we may feel about it or them. If we all led our lives by that concept of love, no one would ever have to ask, "what's love got to do with it?" It would be clear to us all that love, true love, has everything to do with it.

- Pr. Charles Tapp
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There is probably no more popular subject in our world today than love. Just think about it for a moment. Love in one way or another, continues to dominate just about every aspect of our modern culture. When you take into account that most of the songs that are recorded and movies that are produced have love as their theme, you can’t help but admit that our culture is obsessed with the idea of love.

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- Pr. Charles Tapp
For a long time now, the Disability Action Team (DAT) has been trying to ascertain how we can have an impact on those within our congregation who have physical and/or emotional needs. Then during our first meeting this fall Ken Flemmer—who Co-chairs the DAT—asked a different question—what if we get the youth of our church excited about working with folks with disabilities? That single question has injected new life and purpose into the DAT!!

At our last meeting we were joined by Ross Patterson the Assistant Director of the Youth Department and Nitasha Isaac who attends WAU just to talk to us about some of our ideas and see if they’d even be interested in working with us! Their enthusiastic response was both overwhelming—and humbling at the same time!! Not only did they think such a project would work, they added ideas to make this a vibrant ministry. A ministry which I feel will be mutually beneficial to both those with disabilities as well our youth.

Our next step will be to do some sensitivity training in order to educate our youth about those with disabilities. As those of us who have disabilities can attest, many times folks within our congregation aren’t able to see beyond our differences into the people that we really are. So this sensitivity training will help our young people understand disabilities better in order to meet their needs. After this training occurs, the young people will break into small teams of 2 or 3 people who will be willing to assist people with disabilities within our congregation.

This program is still a work in progress!! But we envision these teams of young people going out into our community to help meet specific needs. For example, perhaps you’re an elderly person who has some difficulty walking in your yard. While you refuse to look at yourself as “disabled” you just can’t do yard work any longer. But what you wouldn’t give to have a couple of kids volunteer to come over one Sunday to clean your yard and plant some flowers!! Or maybe you’re the parent of a child with a disability and you would love just to attend church and hear the sermon for once knowing that your child is being cared for. Or maybe you’re just lonely and would really enjoy some company. If you fit into any of these categories—this program is for you!

But what will our youth gain from this project? Simply put—they will learn to see those of us who have different abilities as people first—with hopes and dreams like everyone else. And when you consider that many of our young people will go on to become doctors and nurses, psychologists and social workers this new ministry project may become one of our most important endeavors.

As the Co-chair of the DAT I ask you all to please pray for this project. Then stay tuned because good things are going to happen!!!
Imagine a room in which a body lies crushed, flat as a pancake. A dozen detectives crawl around, examining the floor with magnifying glasses for any clue to the identity of the perpetrator. In the middle of the room, next to the body, stands a large, [WHITE] elephant. The detectives carefully avoid bumping into the pachyderm’s legs as they crawl, and never even glance at it. Over time the detectives get frustrated with their lack of progress but resolutely press on, looking even more closely at the floor. You see, textbooks say detectives must “get their man,” so they never consider elephants. —Michael J. Behe, Darwin’s Black Box

Scientists are increasingly able to explain the everyday function of our miraculous world, and while they cannot define first cause or origins of life, they use their knowledge of ‘how things work’ to dismiss the existence of God. One could liken this to finding a watch on the beach and assuming it appeared naturally with no design. For most people, such a conclusion would be deemed absurd. But science is limited in that it “…must invoke only natural causes, and explain by reference only to natural law.” (Richard Dickerson) God is supernatural and therefore outside the realm of science.

I recently met Dr. Lawrence Krauss (theoretical physicist and outspoken atheist), who, in his book *The Universe from Nothing*, sets out to prove that the universe was created by the Big Bang (from nothing, in an instant). Through a series of complicated theories he then concludes that because gravity exists, there need not be a Creator. In contrast, the Bible clearly states: “By the word of the LORD were the heavens made, their starry host by the breath of his mouth.” Psalm 33:6 and “By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God’s command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.” Hebrews 11:3
In God’s words, the universe was created in an instant from nothing. I think Einstein put it best: “Science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind.” While the Bible and Krauss agree on the manner in which the universe came to be, he has decided to use his analysis of the ‘how’ as grounds to remove the divine watchmaker from the equation—leaving very little room for the large, white elephant in the room labeled God. Perhaps “an atheist can’t find God for the same reason a thief can’t find a policeman.” (Unknown)*

Take music for example: While digging through an attic in Salzburg, you stumble across a lost symphony from the Classical period. Excited about the implications of this unique find, music theorists quickly begin analyzing every inch of the masterpiece. Music after all is just math, and music theory is the study of the math behind music. After some time, the music theorists come back and hail it as a truly remarkable find: every interval is perfectly constructed, the harmonic progressions are seamless, and the melodies soar with perfect architecture above the wonderfully constructed form. One would then balk in protest if these theorists concluded that because the math worked perfectly and the structure of the piece could be thoroughly explained, such a work came together organically. After all, the laws of math that govern music occur naturally, and because these laws are easily observable, science would then reason that no composer is needed.

So if one understands that a symphony must be composed by a talented musician, why, with all the infinite complexities that the universe boasts, would one assume that there is no Creator? “The created is never greater than the creator.” (Dr. S. Pandit, Cross Examination) In other words, a table is not greater than the carpenter that built it. So how could nothing produce the universe unless it had help from an all powerful, supernatural being—a being that was greater than His creation?

Science reasons that because God cannot be measured, contained, or systematically observed in a lab, this proves that God does not exist. But “absence of proof is not proof of absence.” (William Cowper) It may be impossible to prove that Mozart composed the symphony, but through careful study of the style, handwriting, and character of the piece, one could confidently come to that conclusion.

“For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.” Romans 1:20

If nothing created us, and a creation is no greater than the creator, we are less than nothing. And while one must take religion (or theoretical physics) on faith, I choose to confidently believe that we are in fact created by God who left his signature in universal design. Any good Bible student could have told Krauss that the universe had a beginning and was preceded by nothing. The biggest hurdle is facing the white elephant. Instead of constructing elaborate explanations reliant upon a series of improbable (and useful) accidents which are built upon a mountain of unproven and sometimes improbable theories, the simplest answer is usually correct. (Occam’s Razor)
Because “every watch has to have a watch-maker.” (Voltaire) And “the more complexities science finds in life, the more it argues against its own atheistic foundation.” (Clifford Goldstein)

By Jamie Jean

*Please note: this analogy is not trying to say that an Atheist is a criminal. However, a thief is not looking for a police officer nor does he want to find one. Also a thief is accountable to the police officer. Accepting the existence of God comes with the implication of accountability as well as facing difficult questions.

Recommended Resources:
Cross-Examination (Dr. S. Pandit)
Creation and Evolution (Dwight K. Nelson)
Darwin’s Black Box (Michael J. Behe)
The Universe from Nothing (Lawrence Krauss)
Is God Unnecessary?: Why Stephen Hawking Is Wrong According to the Laws of Physics (Walter Alan Ray)
The Goldilocks Enigma: Why Is the Universe Just Right for Life? (Paul Davies)
Origins: A Skeptic’s Guide to the Creation of Life on Earth (Robert Shapiro)
Creation and Science Multimedia Resources
Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church, pp 257-260
What Science Can and Cannot Do
Science and Faith Walking Hand in Hand?
What about Creation Video Series
Women’s Ministries News

By krosburg On February 7, 2013 · 2 Comments · In Ministry Spotlight, Women's Ministries

Josephine Benton

On Sabbath, February 16, the Women’s Ministry Team will celebrate along with all of our church family at the ordination of Sligo’s first woman pastor, Josephine Benton. As a result of the Columbia Union’s vote last year to ordain all those ministers within our region who are called to ministry, regardless of gender, this will be a high day to celebrate Pastor Benton’s call, which she fulfilled so many years ago. She served as our congregation’s first female pastor from 1973 – 1979, then as the senior pastor of the Rockville, MD SDA church until 1982. Her ordination will take place during second service on the 16th and we hope you will plan to join us. For the full article please visit the Columbia Union website

Please continue to pray for the leading of the Holy Spirit as the General Conference committee tasked with studying the theology of ordination in our denomination meets over the next months and years.

Different events/meetings of our WM team continue every month and we are always looking for more women to join us:

• Book Club – Feb. 13, Wednesday at 7:00 pm in the Disciple Room. This month’s book is “When I Was a Child I Read Books” by Marilynne Robinson. Find out more at http://us.macmillan.com/author/marilynnerobinson http://us.macmillan.com/wheniwasachildireadbooks/MarilynneRobinson

• Knit Night – every Wednesday at 7:00 pm in the Prayer Room

• First Monday – March 4 at 7:00 pm in Fellowship A

• Women in the Word Sabbath School Class – every Sabbath in the sanctuary, located just in front of the Parents’ Room