

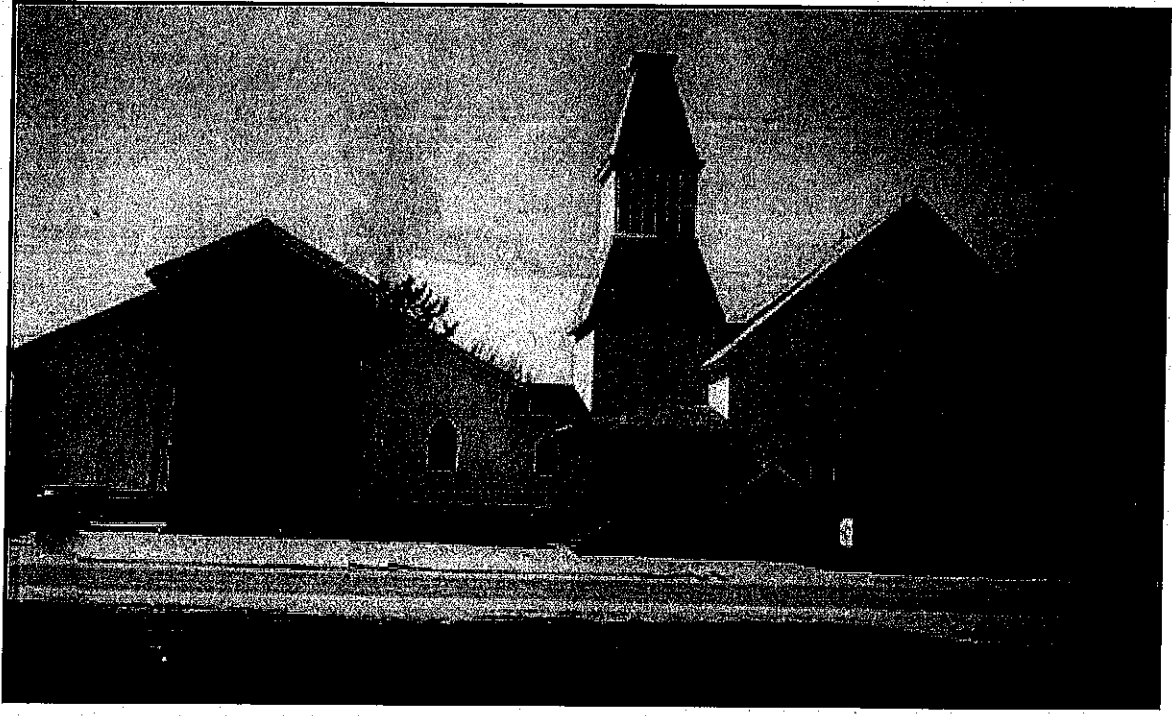
Seward Congregational Church
Box 104, 3029 S. Pecatonica Road
Seward, IL 61077-0104
(815)247-8612
<https://sewardcongregational.com>

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*The
Chimes*

March 2025 Church News



Why Do We Observe Lent?

Have you ever thought about the reason many observe the season of Lent, while others do not? Have you ever taken the time to explore why you observe Lent?

There are three things that will aid us in our Christian lives the people emphasize or don't emphasize during this time leading up to Easter. Those are fasting, praying, and charitable giving. The argument of some is that we should be doing those all the time, which is true. However, are there not times when we grow somewhat lax with one or more of those things because life gets in the way? This season of Lent is to help us get back on track (if we have lost sight of why we do those things) so that we rekindle or renew our relationship with our God.

Fasting. Many people associate this with food, and rightfully so since there are many places in Scripture that mention fasting. Some folks may not, because of dietary reasons, be able to do that. Instead, they focus on giving up something else that would leave them time to focus on God: like TV, the internet, insert anything here that would give time to focus on God and our relationship to Him.

Prayer. The idea of abstaining from certain things, then, is for us to pray during that time when we would have spent eating, watching tv, checking emails, etc. on the net, or whatever you have given up. Prayer is a conversation with our Creator. Conversation is two-way not a list that we give God to deal with. During this time, we speak and listen for the Voice of the Father to teach us and guide us. As we fast and pray, we seek renewal and the refreshing touch of the Holy Spirit in our lives. We may pray for healing, that a loved one would realize their need for God in their life, or for guidance for an important decision that we must make—just to name a few things. Ultimately, prayer is communication with our Heavenly Father who desires that we spend that time with Him.

Giving. As we pray and meditate and contemplate our relationship with God, He may prompt us to give more—and that does not mean only monetary giving. That could mean time and talents that would uplift someone around us.

Lent means more than just going through the motions and hoping that God sees what we are doing. Lent is, and should be, a spiritual journey whereby we draw ever closer to Almighty God, the King of kings, and Lord of lords. The packet of Scripture that the ladies made just may help us to focus during this season of Lent.

---From the desk of Pastor Joel

Seward Congregational Church Chimes
March 2025
Announcements

BIBLE STUDY: Will Meet not meet in March due to Lenten services.

DIACONATE: The Diaconate will meet on March 5, 2025 at 11:30 a.m.

TRUSTEE'S: The trustee's will meet on March 18 at 6:30 p.m.

CHOIR: Will meet on March 6, 13, 20, 27

LENTEN SERVICES: Ash Wednesday March 5 will be at 1st Presbyterian church in Winnebago with a soup supper at 5:30 followed by the Lenten service at 6:30, March 12 will be at Seward congregational with soup supper at 5:30 p.m. followed by the Lenten service at 6:30 p.m. March 19 will be at the Winnebago Methodist church with a soup supper at 5:30 followed by the Lenten service at 6:30, and on March 26 Services will be at Middle Creek in Winnebago with a soup supper at 5:30 p.m. followed by the Lenten Service at 6:30 p.m.

ADVENT CALENDARS: Friendly reminder: Please return the Christmas advent calendars to the church or if unable call the church to arrange it to be picked up. We plan to use them again for Christmas 2025. We hope all of you enjoyed the Advent calendar provided to each family. We have gotten great feedback about the bible verses and the family time to remember the season with bible verses to reflect on.

REMINDER: All contributions for the CHIMES newsletter are due to the Office by the 3rd Friday of every month.

MONTHLY SUMMARY

Monthly Budget \$7,338.59

January

General Fund	Income \$5,311.00
	Expense \$10,003.50

MARCH BIRTHDAY & ANNIVERSARIES

Birthdays

Anniversaries

1-Matt Cowman

7 Bryan & Bev Allen

4-Rosie Rust

12-Cathy Hicke

16- Aurora Joanne Hilton

26- Maury Daubs

February 5th, 2025 Diaconate meeting minutes

Teresa Gobeli called the meeting to order at 11:30am. In addition to Teresa, those present were Julie Gasior, Bev Weerda, Delores Poppen, Karleen Merchant, Bev Hilton and Pastor Joel.

Pastor Joel opened in prayer.

The minutes of the Dec. 8th meeting were read. Motion by Bev H to approve. 2nd by Julie. Motion carried. Then the minutes of the January meeting were read. Motion by Bev W to approve. 2nd by Delores. Motion carried.

Bev Weerda gave treasurers report. Balance in account is \$801.23. Karleen made motion to approve, seconded by Julie. Motion carried.

Joel gave pastors report for Dec and January. Karleen motioned to approve, seconded by Bev H. Motion carried.

We discussed Advent. In 2025, we will try to get Advent readers before the season begins. In other old business, Teresa stated she will be proofreading the Chimes.

Under new business, Teresa gave everyone a page of Diaconate duties, per the Constitution. Tasks were discussed.

We will not have an Ash Wednesday service this year, as First Presbyterian/Winnebago will kickoff the Lenten season that evening with a soup supper, followed by worship. We will host the Lenten service on Wednesday, March 12th. It will begin with a soup supper at 5:30, followed by worship. Bev H, Teresa and Delores will make soup/chili. Randy Gobeli has volunteered to make bread. Julie, Karleen and Bev W. will bring bars or cookies for dessert.

Joel asked if we would like to host a Singspiration on Sunday, March 30th at 6pm. Bev H made motion to host, seconded by Bev W. Motion approved.

Teresa discussed music/Praise hymns. We hope to have 3-5 volunteers willing to lead these, during worship.

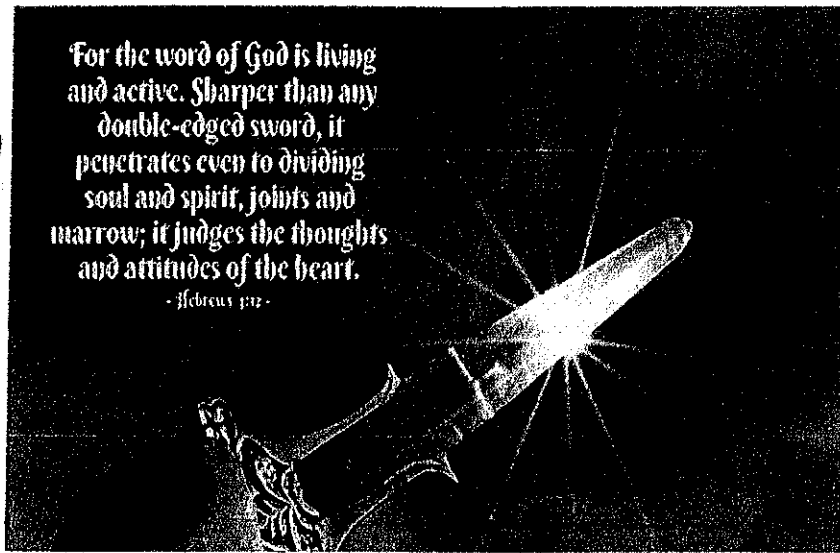
Bev H had idea of scripture readings for Lent. It was agreed that we should go ahead and put these together. We will meet Wednesday, Feb 19th to work on them.

Karleen said the date for the Women's Tea has been set for Saturday, April 26th. More details to follow.

Our next meeting will be Wednesday, March 5th at 11:30. There being no further business, Karleen made motion to adjourn, seconded by Delores. Meeting adjourned at 12:50pm

Respectfully submitted,

Karleen Merchant
Secretary



Adult Sunday School

Hebrews 4:12 says that The Word of God is alive. The Adult Sunday School Class endeavors to go deeper into the Word of God to find out what it means and how it affects us in our every day lives.

In the month of March, we will be working on the following scripture 2 Kings 6:8-23, Exodus chapters 2 and 3. Come join us and find out the messages that the Word of God has for you.

NOTE—Lessons usually take two to three weeks.

By Catherine Hicke

March 2025—Messages for Sundays of Lent

9 th	The Call to Discipleship	Luke 9:18-36
16 th	The Upper Room: Blessing and Betrayal	John 13:1-17
23 rd	Gethsemane: Prayer and Obedience	Matthew 26:36-46
30 th	Peter's Denial: Facing Failure	Luke 22:54-62

March 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 Sunday School 9:15 a.m. Worship Service 10:30 a.m. Fellowship following the service	3	4	5 Diaconate 11:30 a.m. Ash Wednesday Lenten service 51st Pres Winn Soup Supper 5:30 Worship 6:30 p.m	6 Choir 6:30	7	8
9 Sunday School 9:15 a.m. Worship Service 10:30 a.m. Fellowship following the service	10	11	12 Lenten service Seward 5:30 Soup Supper 6:30 p.m. Service	13 Choir 6:30	14	15
16 Sunday School 9:15 a.m. Worship Service 10:30 a.m. Fellowship following the service	17	18 Women's Fellowship 9 a.m. Trustee's 6:30 p.m.	19 Lenten service Winnebago UMC Soup Supper 5:30 p.m. Worship 6:30 p.m	20 Choir 6:30	21	22
23 Sunday School 9:15 a.m. Worship Service 10:30 a.m. Fellowship following the service	24	25	26 Middle creek 5:30 soup supper Worship 6:30	27 Choir 6:30	28	29
30 Sunday School 9:15 a.m. Worship Service 10:30 a.m. Fellowship following the service Communion Hymn Sing Seward Church 6 p.m. with fellowship to follow		31				

Seward Congregational Youth Grow in Faith

Recent activities for youth within our church.

February the Sunday School Children made beautiful valentine cards to share Jesus's love with. The cards were sent all around the world! We had some go to Canada, Europe, and Africa. These kids sure know how to share the love Jesus gives us! We have heard back from several that received the Valentines. What a positive way to reach out!

This past Sunday the Sunday School Singers blessed us with their singing. Their songs had a great message. They sang Humbly Grateful or Grumbly Hatefully and If Your Happy And You Know It, with great enthusiasm!

March Lessons

Moses and Elijah Appear With Jesus - Luke 9:28-36

Jesus Teaches About Rewards

Luke 6:17-26

Jesus Teaches About Loving Enemies

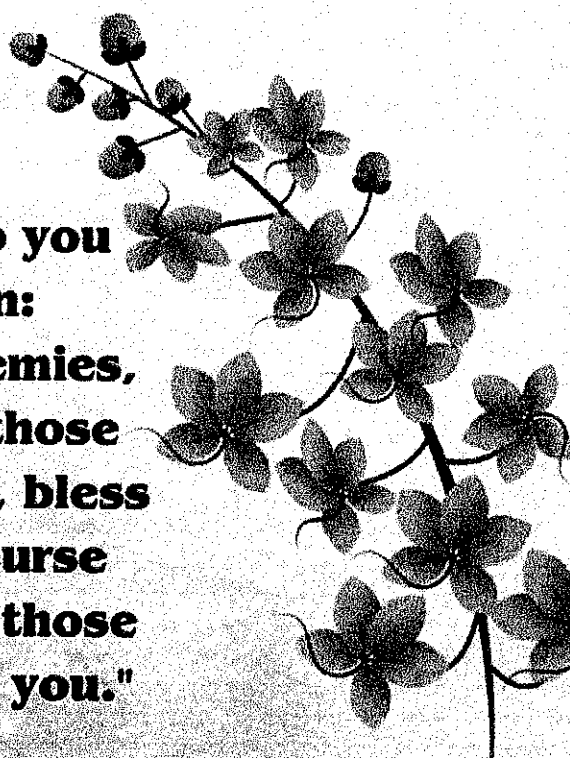
Luke 6:27-38



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"Love Your Enemies... Do to others as you would have them do to you." (Luke 6:27-36)

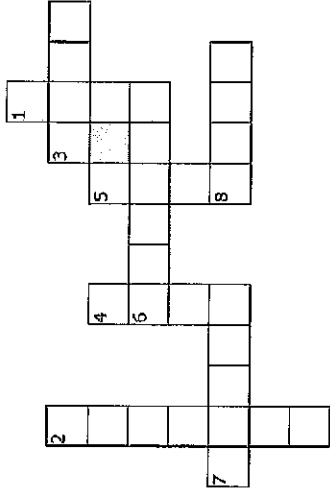
Golden Rule Bible Coloring Page for Kids Ages 4-10



**"But I say to you
who listen:
Love your enemies,
do good to those
who hate you, bless
those who curse
you, pray for those
who mistreat you."**

Luke 6:27-28

Crossword Puzzle



ACROSS

- A warm feeling of affection for another person
- Something good received in return for good behavior
- Any person or group that is opposed to you
- Something that causes harm; morally wrong; wicked

ENEMY
GOOD

EVIL
LOVE

REWARD
FRIENDS

HATE
PRAY

DOWN

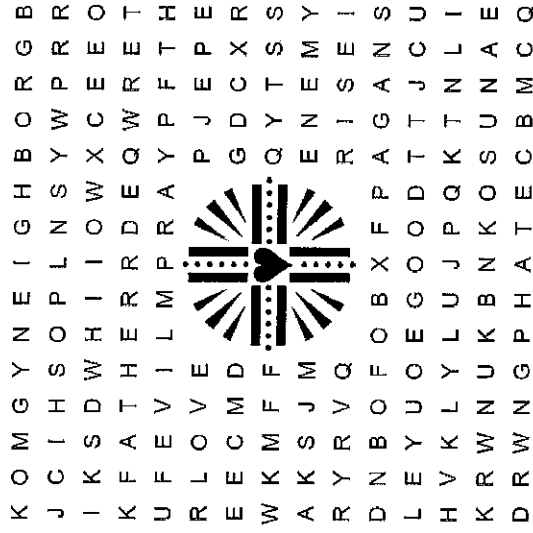
- Something that is pleasing; morally upright
- Persons you know and like very much
- To talk to God
- A strong feeling of dislike for someone or something

Children's Worship Bulletin

Love Your Enemies

Matthew 5:43-48

Word Search Puzzle



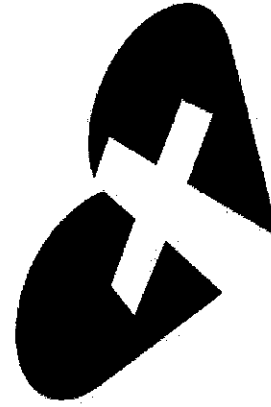
FATHER
LOVE
RISE

NEIGHBOR
REWARD
SUN

PRAY
EVIL
GOOD

PAGANS
HATE
BROTHERS

PERFECT
GREET
ENEMY



Love Your Enemies

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Decoder Puzzle

Each number represents a letter of the alphabet. Substitute the correct letter for the numbers to reveal the coded words.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
O	Q	W	H	A	U	D	K	F	Z	J	P	S	Y	I	V	R	B	E	M	N	L	C	X	T	G

- 12-17-5-14 _____
- 22-1-16-19 _____
- 19-16-15-22 _____
- 9-17-15-19-21-7-13 _____
- 17-19-3-5-17-7 _____
- 26-1-1-7 _____
- 4-5-25-19 _____
- 19-21-19-20-14 _____

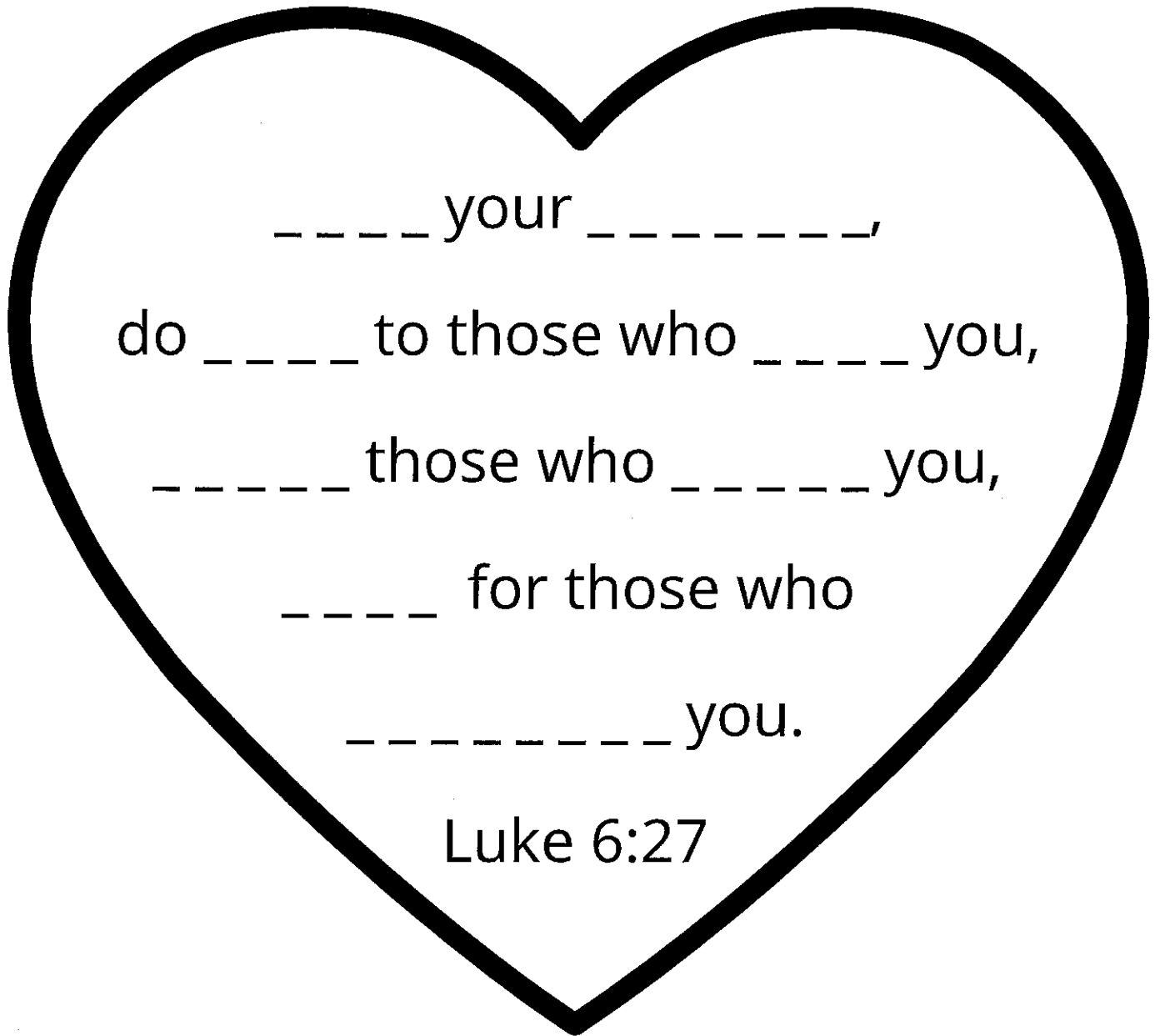
ENEMY	GOOD	EVIL	LOVE
REWARD	FRIENDS	PRAY	HATE



"But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you!"
Matthew 5:44

Fill in the blanks.

Jesus says:



Use these words:

bless

curse

enemies

good

hate

love

mistreat

pray