

# GraceNotes

A Monthly Newsletter of Grace Christian Church

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## GROWING IN GRACE

### “VALENTINES AND VANDALS”

On February 14, 1974, Valentine’s Day in our beloved hometown of Kingsport was violated by a malicious outbreak of vandalism. The official report said that the glass in 64 cars and 7 businesses was shot out with a pellet gun. Two juveniles were arrested on charges of ‘malicious mischief.’

It was a rather cruel substitute for the proverbial Valentine’s Day heart-rapturing pierce of Cupid arrows. Vandalism is from a heart of hate; Valentine’s is from a heart of love.

Cupid, of course, is mythology. The truth and reality of love is revealed in Christ. His was a love that shot no arrows, but, to the contrary, willingly took in the hands and feet the arrows of hate’s best shot. The nail prints of Jesus testify that love’s power and beauty is vested in its capacity to bear up, and even bleed, for those who would ‘shoot the messenger,’ so to speak. To a world whose standard love letter says, “I love you because of....,” God’s Messenger responds, “I love you in spite of....”

As we continue GROWING IN GRACE together, let us remember that the love of God is demonstrated in that “*while we were yet sinners (or vandals), Christ died for us*” (Romans 5:8). That means while arrows (or pellets) were still being shot, the pierced (or vandalized) Messenger sent this love note: “*Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do*” Luke 23:34). It brings an entirely new meaning to.....”Won’t you be my Valentine!”



Ed