

The Reformer

Lawyersville and Sharon Reformed Churches 160

Mission Statement: As disciples of Christ, we are empowered by the Holy Spirit to join together to worship God, to study his Word, and use our gifts to extend God's grace and love to others.

February 2015

What's Inside:

Pastor's Page
Church Review
Calendar of Events
Children's Fun Page
Birthdays-Anniversaries



LRC - Church Service

9:00 A.M.

**Sunday School
following worship**

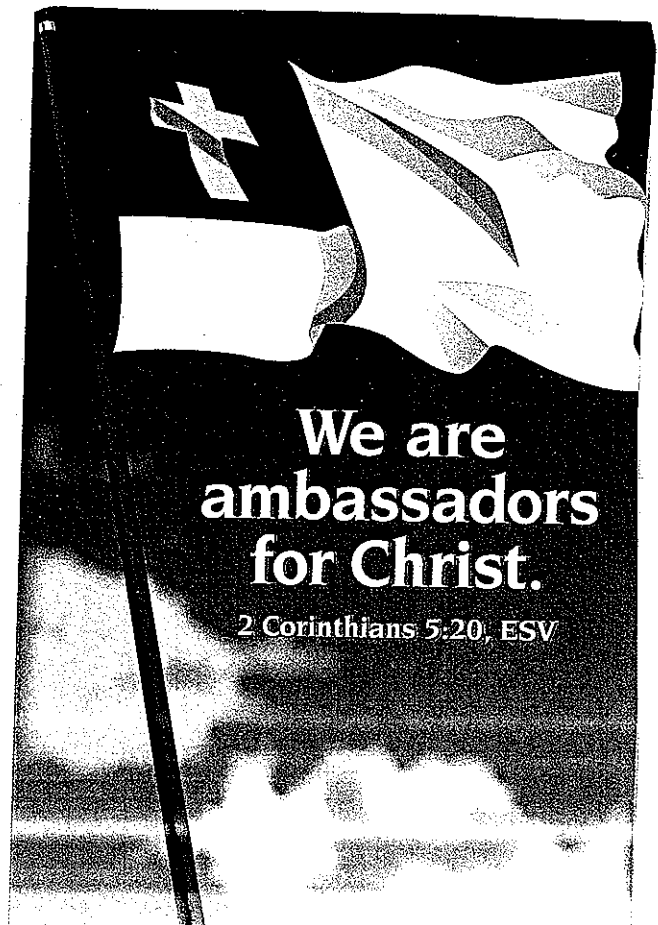
SRC - Church Service

11:00 A.M.

Sunday School

9:30 A.M.

Rev. Pacia Vamvas



Special dates

- African-American History Month
- Boy Scout Sunday, *February 8, 2015*
- Valentine's Day, *February 14, 2015*
- Transfiguration of Our Lord, *February 15, 2015*
- Presidents Day, *February 16, 2015*
- Ash Wednesday, *February 18, 2015*
- First Sunday in Lent, *February 22, 2015*

Lent

The Sundays of the Season of Epiphany, the revealing of the Light of the world, end with Transfiguration Sunday, 15 February (see Mark 9.2-9). Jesus' face shines like the sun, and his clothes appear dazzling white. Note the same words spoken on the celebration of the Baptism of our Lord – "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well-pleased." (v. 7 adds the words "Listen to him!")

Lent comes from the word "lengthen", signifying the longer days as Easter approaches. Lent is the oldest Christian Season; the observance of Lent appeared between 200 – 300 C.E. (Common Era). Three days after Transfiguration Sunday, Lent officially begins on Ash Wednesday. The day before is often celebrated. Mardi Gras is French for "Fat Tuesday." Famous Mardi Gras celebrations take place in New Orleans and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. These are loud, raucous events, with (often excessive) partying taking place. Another Fat Tuesday practice involves the last night of eating rich, fatty foods before the season of fasting begins. Some examples are pancakes, donuts and other fried breads made with milk, butter, sugar. The day is also sometimes referred to as Shrove Tuesday, from the word "shrive", meaning to confess.

Ash Wednesday derives its name from the practice of placing ashes on the foreheads of adherents, as a reminder of human mortality and as a sign of mourning and repentance before God. On Ash Wednesday, we recall that Adam and Eve disobeyed the Lord God in the Garden of Eden. God had created Adam (Adam means "human being"; it is not a name at this time) "from the dust of the earth"; God created the woman from one of the man's rib bones. God had given the man and woman permission to eat of every tree – except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. When they eat of the tree's fruit, at the urging of the serpent, God curses the serpent, the woman, then the man (Neither is named up to this point). God had formed the man out of the dust of the ground (Genesis 2.7). God now declares "By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; you are dust, and to dust you shall return (Genesis 3.19). As the ashes are placed on the forehead during the Ash Wednesday Service, these words are repeated, "Remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return." The ashes are typically gathered from the burning of palms from the previous year's Palm Sunday. Although some view the Imposition of Ashes as "something the Catholics do", many congregations, including ours, join in the observance. The Service will be Wednesday, 18 February, approximately 7:00 P.M.; preceded by Supper @ 6:00 P.M., @ LRC.

There are forty days in Lent, to echo the forty days Jesus spent in the wilderness being tempted by Satan, and the forty years the Israelites spent in the wilderness after the Exodus from Egypt. Sundays are not included in the forty day count; every Sunday is considered a "little Easter", and is therefore a feast day. Adding the six Sundays of Lent to the forty days of fasting and penitence makes the Lenten Season 46 days long. The date of Ash Wednesday depends on the date of Easter, which is moveable. The formula for setting the day of Easter is the first Sunday after the first full moon after the Vernal Equinox. Easter can be as early as 22 March, and as late as 25 April. Ash Wednesday can be as early as 4 February, and as late as 10 March. This year Ash Wednesday is 18 February.

The Season of Lent is to be observed as a time of fasting, prayer, and, in some faith communities, the giving of alms (donations of money). Lent was used in the early church as a time of instruction in the Christian faith for people preparing for Baptism. They were baptized at the Saturday vigil service, the night before Easter Sunday. Today a large range of practices is observed. Some still fast from meat during Lent, especially on Fridays, when Jesus was on the Cross, giving up his "meat" for sinners. Some give up a favorite food or activity – chocolate, soda, social media, etc. Some faith communities do not have flowers in the sanctuary; some omit "Alleluias" in the worship service. A newer practice is to take something on during Lent – being more intentional about reading Scripture, adding a Lenten devotional, increased prayer, volunteer work. Lent is purposely a somber time, not only to model the sacrifice made by Jesus on our behalf, but also to make the joy of Easter that much brighter. Purple is the color of Lent. Some faith communities use blue during the Season of Advent, to distinguish the tone of the two seasons. The March issue will explore Holy Week (Palm Sunday' Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Vigil and Easter Sunday).

There are copies of I Love to Live the story, which explains the many celebrations of the Church Year, on display.

Lenten Series

The Lenten Worship Series is based on the book The God We Can Know: Exploring the "I Am" Statements of Jesus by Rob Fuquay. From the Introduction – "We all have yearnings. Deep yearnings. The kind of yearnings that make us wonder about life and this world and what it's all about. They're part of what binds us together. Even those of us disinterested in religion, and perhaps even faith, often wonder if there is a God; and, if so, what does this God have to do with us? That is what this book is about. This book is about knowing God, and more specifically, knowing God through Jesus. The Bible also tells a story of God's desire to be known. The Scriptures relate an unfolding drama of God's never-ending desire to come to us –

of God's revealing. The highest expression of that desire is the gift of God's self in the person of Jesus." "John's Gospel records a collection of self-revealing statements by Jesus known as the "I Am" statements. These statements, rich in imagery and steeped in historical meaning, provide powerful insights into the heart of God and God's desire to know and be known. In this book we'll explore those sayings with a threefold aim:

First, we want to understand the images Jesus uses to identify himself: bread, light, good shepherd, gate of the sheep, true vine, way of life, resurrection and life. Appreciating the historical Jewish roots behind these images opens up a myriad of possible meanings."

"Second, we want to discover how those broad meanings connect with our lives today. Jesus defined himself in the context of the ordinary, everyday images people easily understood. We can translate these ancient images into applications for contemporary life. What does it mean to experience hunger or need guidance or desire security or want greater power for living? Better yet, how does a relationship with Jesus fulfill these needs? That is the purpose of the "I Am" sayings, which brings us to the third aim."

"Even more than insight or application, taking these things to heart can bring us into closer connection with Jesus. **Christianity is not a religion. It is a relationship.**

A living relationship requires nurture and attention. It is deepened with trust and respect. The "I Am" sayings of Jesus invite us into that kind of abiding relationship."

"I invite you on this journey not only to know more *about* God but to *know* God yourself."

The series will begin with the first Sunday in Lent, and run through Easter Sunday.

Cast Your Bread upon the Waters

When entering a hotel, where she and her husband were staying, Gladys, a devout Baptist, noticed a shabbily dressed man lounging idly in front of the newspaper stand in the lobby. She noticed that several men stopped to talk to him and gave him money. He seemed so cheered by the encounters. She impulsively put ten dollars in an envelope, wrote "God Bless" on the outside, and handed it to him. The next day, the man stopped her on the street. "Here's your \$250"; "God Bless" won, 25 to 1!"

A Story of Faith: The Seasons of Life

There was a father who had four sons. He wanted his sons to learn to not judge things too quickly. So he sent them each on a quest, in turn, to go and look at a pear tree that was a great distance away. The oldest son went in the winter, the second in the spring, the third in summer, and the youngest son in autumn. When they had gone and come back, the father called them together to describe what they had seen.

The first son said the tree was ugly, bent and twisted.

The second son said no – it was covered with green buds and full of promise.

The third son disagreed. He said it was laden with blossoms that smelled so sweet and looked so beautiful – it was the most graceful thing he had ever seen.

The last son disagreed with all of them. He said the tree was ripe and drooping with fruit, full of life and fulfillment.

The father then explained to his sons that they were all right, because they had each seen but one season in the tree's life. He told them that you cannot judge a tree, a person, by only one season, and that the essence of who they are – and the pleasure, joy and love that come from life – can only be measured at the end, when all the seasons are up.

If you give up when it's winter, you will miss the promise of your spring, the beauty of your summer, fulfillment of your autumn.

Don't judge a life by one difficult season. Don't let the pain of one season destroy the joy of the rest.

Submitted by Wil Ivins

February Worship

02.01.15 Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany (green)
Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

Deuteronomy 18.15-20 1 Corinthians 8.1-13
Psalm 111 + Mark 1.21-28 +
Lay Leaders LRC Lola Fletcher SRC Nancy MacFadden

*****02.08.15 Fifth
Sunday after the Epiphany (green)
Boy Scout Sunday (LRC)

Isaiah 40.21-31 1 Corinthians 9.16-23
Psalm 147.1-11, 20 + Mark 1.29-39 +
Lay Leaders LRC Lola Fletcher SRC Nancy MacFadden

02.15.15 Transfiguration Sunday (white)

2 Kings 2.1-12 2 Corinthians 4.3-6
Psalm 50.1-6 + Mark 9.2-9 +
Lay Leaders LRC Kelly Sperbeck SRC Laura Davenport

02.18.15 Ash Wednesday (purple)

Joel 2.1-2, 12-17 + or Isaiah 58.1-12 2 Corinthians 5.20-6.10
Psalm 51.1-17 + Matthew 6.1-6, 16-21

02.22.15 First Sunday in Lent (purple)

Genesis 9.8-17 1 Peter 3.18-22
Psalm 25.1-10 Mark 1.9-15
Exodus 3.1-14 +
Lay Leaders LRC Kelly Sperbeck SRC Laura Davenport

- The text(s) pastor pacia plans to use for the next Lord's Day, for the proclamation of the Word.

beloved - here is another option to receive the reformer. in addition to viewing on the website, it may also be e-mailed to you. if you choose this option, simply e-mail lola (lola756@bluenet.net), with your preference. a group will be compiled; the reformer will be e-mailed to all on the list. pass this along to any who have e-mail but are not on this list. the reformer will be published this weekend. blessing;

Laws or love?

Businessman John Barrier, unrecognizable in jeans and a T-shirt, cashed a check at his longtime bank. But the teller refused to validate his parking ticket, saying Barrier hadn't made an official transaction. A manager agreed, saying rules were rules.

Barrier then performed a major transaction, withdrawing \$1 million and taking it elsewhere. He got his parking ticket validated after all.

What a great illustration of the perils of legalism, when man-made laws become more important than people. Jesus repeatedly healed and "worked" on the Sabbath, much to the dismay of religious leaders. He was concerned about people's hearts, not their appearance.

What matters more to you: laws or love? appearance or substance? A heart examination may be in order!

"What can you do?"

Paul Smith (1921-2007) dug deep to summon incredible gifts of creativity and perseverance. Born with severe cerebral palsy, he started making art at age 11 on an old typewriter. Steadying one hand with the other so he could use one finger to make one deliberate keystroke at a time, he typed symbols, such as # and @, using a black or colored ribbon. In this painstaking way, he "painted" stunningly detailed pictures.

In a TV report from 2004 (search "Typewriter Artist" on YouTube), a friend says Smith found joy in being creative, and saw that as his life's purpose. When someone would say, "I could never do that," the artist would answer, "What can you do?"

Whatever our challenges, God has given us all gifts to share with the world. Perhaps you can't "paint" pictures with a typewriter ... but what can you do? Do it!



Prayer Requests

Church

Bob Young/in Albany Med
 Fran Putnam/broken hip/home
 Muriel Homes/St. Johnsville Nursing Home
 Helen Brown/Palatine Nursing Home/
 declining
 Vivian Empie/Tarpon Springs Nursing
 Home/on Hospice
 Elli Schubert/cardiac
 Rena Cooper/surgery recuperation

Family/Loved Ones

Richard Nirschl/Marchand Manor
 Sue Jones/Marchand Manor
 Mike Bautochka/bedsore /Thyroid problem
 Adnan Buxamusa/cardiac surgery r
 Ecuperation
 Jared van Wagenen/healing
 Peggy Wood/health & family issues
 Cindy Shuart/stroke/some improvement
 Joan/improving and Mason Springstead/
 pacemaker
 Ron Tryon/continued healing
 Logan Hayes/diabetes/insulin pump
 Heather Bivins/possible new treatment
 Donald Bennett/return of cancer
 Jenna/new cancer/last radiation treatment/
 family issues
 Paul Gordayer/cancer
 Bob Speidell/retinopathy
 Scott Speidell/leukemia/chemo
 Dodi Chechniki/ALS
 Chuck Ferrell/employment

Updates on those on the prayer list are needed, so that we know how best to pray. Inactive requests will be taken off the list.

Community

All Teachers and students
 College students and professors
 Grand-parents serving as guardians for their grand-
 children
 All families impacted by alcoholism and/or substance
 abuse
 Increased heroin addiction in our county
 All families and marriages in crisis
 All children suffering from physical, emotional and/
 or sexual abuse
 All God's children impacted by hunger and food inse-
 curity
 All those impacted by Irene, Lee and Sandy/
 Schoharie Area Long-Term Recovery (SALT)
 Concerns about the economy, unemployment and
 foreclosures
 All soldiers (esp. those deployed) and their families

Nation and World

Extremists' intolerance and violence
 Persecuted Christians
 Hatred and violence in the hearts of God's children
 The global economy
 All unrest in God's world
 Local, state national and world leaders
 Peacemaker groups
 Government dysfunction

*There is a group of pray-ers who receive prayer requests. If you would like to be added to either list (phone or e-mail), simply contact pastor pacia (234.9811 or PASTORPACIA@LRCANDSRC.ORG).

Card Ministry

The Elders at LRC are encouraging a Card Ministry. Cards would be sent in the event of illness, death of a loved one, congratulations on a new baby, new job, new home. The most important card to send is a "just because, thinking of you" card to whoever God moves you to contact. Names and addresses will be available through the monthly Reformer prayer list. Take a few moments to brighten someone's day. Small gestures have great impact. You may be the only "Christ" the recipient encounters that day.

Those homebound:

Fran Putnam
343 Grosvenors Corners Rd.
Cobleskill, NY 12043

Dorothy Hill
2 Tryon Ave., Apt. 306
Glenville, NY 12303

Helen Holmes
153 Hansen Rd.
Cherry Valley, NY 13320

Helen Brown
Palatine Nursing Home
154 Lafayette St.
Palatine Bridge, NY 13428

Muriel Holmes
St. Johnsville
Nursing Home
7 Timmerman Ave.
St. Johnsville, NY 13452

Bob Young
4990 State Route 145
Cobleskill, NY 12043

LRC/RCWM: January 2015

Each year the RCWM does 2 rummage sales and a Christmas Bazaar to make monies for our missions that we support. This is a list of the missions:

SALT: Schoharie Area Long Term, Inc.	\$200
Lawyersville Reformed Church	\$200
Habitat for Humanity	\$100
Cobleskill Regional Hospital	\$50
City Mission of Schenectady	\$300
Doctors Without Borders	\$300
American Bible Society	\$25
Vellore CMC Foundation, INC.	\$100
Lifeline-Bassett Hospital/Schoharie Co.	\$100
Farano Center for Children	\$100
Catskill Area Hospice	\$200
RCA Board of Pensions	\$300
Catholic Charities of Schoharie Co.	\$50
Covent House	\$50
Total—	\$2075.00



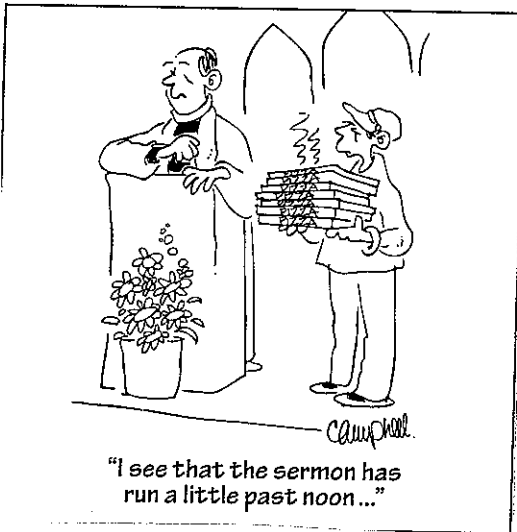
February

- 3 Rena Cooper
- 4 Betty Cullen
- 4 Jordan Ray
- 7 Harold Hall
- 7 Ally Prezorski
- 9 Lauren Prezorski
- 23 Heather Stidle



February

- 14 Jeff & Adriene Cullen



**YOU MAY
BE IN THE
DRIVERS
SEAT, BUT
GOD
HAS
THE MAP!**

Lenten living

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 18 this year. Christians have observed this season of the church year since the fourth century. It's traditionally a time of reflection, penitence and spiritual renewal before Easter.

During Lent, some Christians give up something that hinders their relationship with God. Others do something extra for their spiritual growth or make a special sacrifice. The key is to make Lent a memorable season of sincere spiritual growth — a time that can set the tone for the rest of the year.

Loves me not?

A girl asked a boy if he loved her, and he replied, "Yes, of course."

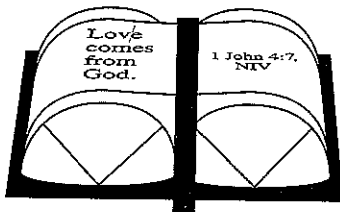
"Would you die for me?" the girl wondered.

After a brief pause, the honest lad said, "No, mine is an undying love."

Kid's Page

GOD'S SWEET WORD

Share this Bible treat — and God's love — with a special valentine.



What you need:

- Black card stock or construction paper (2" x 1.5")
- Double-sided tape
- 2 wrapped Hershey's Nuggets candy bars (silver or gold)
- Pen or marker
- White paper (2.75" x 1")
- Thin sliver of red paper or ribbon
- Scissors

What you do:

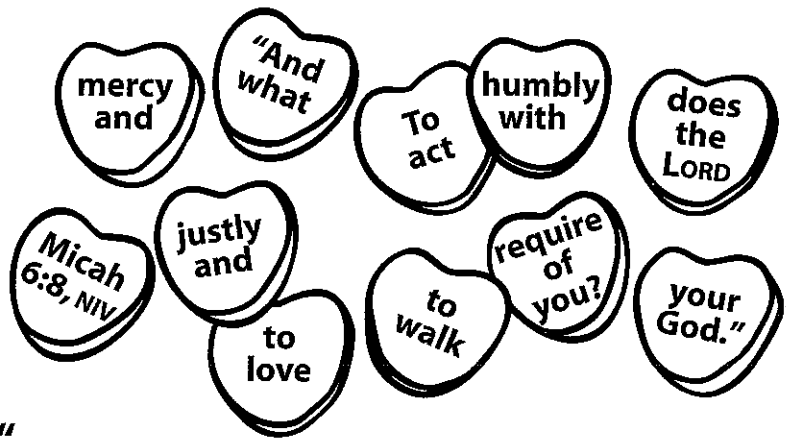
1. In the center of the black paper, tape down the candy bars side by side.
2. On the white paper, write a short Bible verse about love. Then wrap it around the candy bars horizontally and tape it down.
3. Place the red paper or ribbon between the two candy bars, and tape the top of this "bookmark" to the Bible.
4. Give away this fun, sweet message of God's love!



Conversation hearts

The world encourages people to look out for themselves and seek success, but in Micah 6:8, God tells us to live differently.

Directions: Put the conversation hearts in the correct order by writing the words on the lines below. Hint: Capitalization and quotation marks are included.



"

_____ ? _____

_____ " _____

_____ 6:8 _____

Answer: "And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." Micah 6:8, NIV

Food donations

Thank you to all who contribute donations of Food for the Food Pantry, held at the Baptist Church. We know, due to the economy, that there is an increase in requests. Some who have donated in the past find themselves in need of help. Please continue to give as you are able. Thank you for participating in this ministry of care. First Sunday of



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pastorpacia@lrcandsrc.org



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E-mail lola756@wildblue.net
Deadline: February 18th

MEMO BOARD

February

- 1,8,15,22 LRC Worship 9:00 A.M.
SRC Sunday School for all ages 9:30 A.M., Worship 11:00 A.M.
3 SRC Elders 5:15 P.M.; Deacons 5:30 P.M.; Consistory 6:00 P.M.
4,11,25 Bible Study 9:00 A.M.; Evening Study Group 7:00 @ the Parsonage
(large white house across the park from LRC, next to JWS Automotive)
Confirm Morning Bible Study (234.9811 or 234.2387)
No Study 18 February
8 Boy Scout Sunday (LRC)
12 LRC Elders and Deacons 5:15 P.M.; Consistory 5:45 P.M.
15 Special Offering (SRC)
18 Ash Wednesday Supper 6:00 P.M. in the Hall; approximately 7:00 P.M.
in the Sanctuary, @ LRC

"The Helper of the Strays"

Tax collectors and the lame,
blind and mute and lepers came.
Those with thirst and many sores,
came to Jesus by the scores.
"Help me, heal me, Lord," they prayed.
Jesus knew that all had strayed.
So he took their sins and loss
on his shoulders to the cross —
helping, healing all the strays,
always giving God the praise.

—MaryAnn Sundby

Returning thanks

After a family sat down for breakfast, the father offered his standard prayer of thanks. Afterward, though, he began his usual grumbling about financial hardships, the food's poor quality, how it was cooked and so on.

One of his children interrupted: "Dad, did God hear what you said a while ago when you were giving thanks?"

"Certainly," the father replied confidently.

"And did he hear what you said just now about the bacon and the coffee?"

"Of course," the father said, more hesitantly.

"Which did God believe?"

Why God Made Moms

"Why God Made Moms" answers given by elementary school age children to the following questions:

Why did God make mothers?

1. She's the only one who knows where the scotch tape is.
2. Mostly to clean the house.
3. To help us out of there when we were getting bom

How did God make mothers?

1. He used dirt, just like for the rest of us.
2. Magic plus super powers and a lot of stirring.
3. God made my Mom just the same like he made me. He just used bigger parts.

What ingredients are mothers made of?

1. God makes mothers out of clouds and angel hair and everything nice in the world and one dab of mean.
2. They had to get their start from men's bones. Then they mostly use string, I think.

Why did God give you your mother and not some other Mom?

1. We're related.
2. God knew she likes me a lot more than other people's moms like me.

What kind of little girl was your Mom?

1. My Mom has always been my Mom and none of that other stuff.
2. I don't know because I wasn't there, but my guess would be pretty bossy.
3. They say she used to be nice.

What did Mom need to know about dad before she married him?

1. His last name.
2. She had to know his background. Like is he a crook? Does he get drunk on beer?
3. Does he make at least \$800 a year? Did he say NO to drugs and YES to chores?

Why did your Mom marry your dad?

1. My dad makes the best spaghetti in the world. And my Mom eats a lot.
2. She got too old to do anything else with him.
3. My grandma says that Mom didn't have her thinking cap on.

Who's the boss at your house?

1. Mom doesn't want to be boss, but she has to because dad's such a goof ball.
2. Mom. You can tell by room inspection. She sees the stuff under the bed.
3. I guess Mom is, but only because she has a lot more to do than dad.

What's the difference between moms and dads?

1. Moms work at work & work at home, & dads just go to work at work.
2. Moms know how to talk to teachers without scaring them.
3. Dads are taller & stronger, but moms have all the real power 'cause that's who you got to ask if you want to sleep over at your friend's. Moms have magic, they make you feel better without medicine.

What does your Mom do in her spare time?

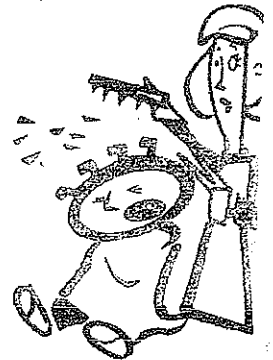
1. Mothers don't do spare time.
2. To hear her tell it, she pays bills all day long.

What would it take to make your Mom perfect?

1. On the inside she's already perfect. Outside, I think some kind of plastic surgery.
2. Diet. You know, her hair. I'd diet, maybe blue.

If you could change one thing about your Mom, what would it be?

1. She has this weird thing about me keeping my room clean. I'd get rid of that.



Pastor: The Rev. Pacia Ferrell Vamvas

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Pacia's Cell: 209-3208

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web site: www.lrcandsrc.org

Lawyersville Consistory

ELDERS

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Kelly Sperbeck - 294-7198 (2016)

Bonnie Tryon - 234-9130 (2015)

DEACONS

+ Lola Fletcher - 234-2283 (20117)

Lisa Boss - 361-7797 (2017)

Debbie Stanton - 234-3238 (2016)

*Vice President

+Chair of Deacons

Sharon Consistory

ELDERS

Laura Davenport - 705-0860 (2016)

Linda DiCicco - 284-2250 (2015)

*Dan Fiske - 518-705-1469 (2015)

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AdrienneCullen 294-4363 (2015)

Nancy MacFadden 708-4411(2015)

Kathy Parsons 284-2332 (2016)

*Vice President

+Chairman of Deacons

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Lawyersville Treasurer - Kelly Sperbeck 294-7198
Sharon Organist - Barbara Hall 284-2056
Sharon Treasurer - Barbara Hall 284-2056
Reformer - Lola Fletcher 234-2283

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