

Preaching St. Valentine's Day  
Suggestions for a Visual Sermon  
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If you are not using the Common Lectionary near February 14, try something on St. Valentine. For a three point visual sermon, find imagery for

1. Introductory theme-building image of a heart-shaped chocolate candy box
2. St. Valentine (drawing, portrait, or stained glass portrayal)
3. Add a picture of a Hershey's Kiss chocolate
4. Find picture of Milton Hershey with orphans he helped educate
5. Close out with the theme image of the heart-shaped candy box

Additional slides could be of brief scriptural texts, such as the Shema (Deut. 6:4), the Great Commandment (Matthew 22:36-40) or the love hymn in I Corinthians 13:13.

You might begin your message with a description of St. Valentine, his ministry, and how red heart-shaped symbols come to be associated with the day. Next, describe how chocolates come to be associated with Valentine's gifts (heart-healthy!), and then tell the story of the Hershey Foundation and their important work of providing education to orphans in the 20th century to now. Wrap it together with reference to the scriptural texts and the message of love.

Develop the sermon by gaining background on St. Valentine, the heart-healthy benefits of chocolate, and the Hershey Foundation:

Find information about the [Valentine story](#) here and [more here](#).

Those desiring to take a prophetic edge might connect Valentine's willingness to marry people whom the state/empire determined could not be married to each other, with the willingness of some of today's clergy and churches to perform marriage/commitment ceremonies for people who may not have the blessing of the state.

Why is chocolate associated with Valentine's Day? Find out about heart-healthy chocolate in [New York Times article](#) and one from the [Cleveland](#)

## [Clinic.](#)

How do Hershey's Kisses relate to Valentine's Day chocolates? Read the story of the [Hershey Foundation](#) and Milton Hershey's view on stewardship.

Many think of the film *Chocolate*(2000) for illustrating this theme, and there are scenes that would fit, including when one character comes into the chocolate shop in a cranky mood, and after sipping a delicious hot chocolate for the first time, has a mood change!

To add to the fun, have Hershey's Kisses in the pews and invite people to enjoy them during the sermon!

Finding a chocolate-scented candle and placing it on the altar/table would add to the ambience!