

Expansive Love

August 23 – September 13, 2020

“Owe no one anything, except to love one another... Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.” – Romans 13:8, 10

We are the church. We are called by God to be followers of Jesus. But what are we called to do? How are we to live out our faith? These last months have reminded us how deeply we are impacted by the lives of those around us and how we impact them. It has shown us that the discrete circles we've created or independent lives we've tried to lead are illusory. We are connected and God wants us to be connected. As the church, we are called to participate in God's ever expansive love, to create and nurture connections in new ways.

August 23 – Confessing love

“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds” – Rom 12:2
Matthew 16:13-20; Romans 12:1-8

The church is built on the rock of faith, on a confession lived out. We give our whole selves to this work, our minds transformed by the Word and our lives by discipleship. We are given the power to welcome and the power to exclude. By grace, we follow and become the one body of Christ

August 30 – Active love

“Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.” – Romans 12:21
Romans 12:9-21; Matthew 16:21-28

As disciples we are called to be and to give love. This is not a sweet, sappy love, but a robust active love. It is a love that embodies strength and justice. The road that it puts us on is not always easy. We walk in the footsteps of one who gave everything for this love and we often want to deny that this is the path we may need to take. But, when we embody the love of Jesus, we are able to live fully into Paul's call to overcome evil with good.

September 6 – Challenging love

“Owe no one anything, except to love one another” – Romans 13:8

Matthew 18:15-20; Romans 13:8-14

We are not always able to follow the path of expansive love that we are called to. Sometimes we fall to the side because we are tired, because it is difficult, because it hurts. That is why we do not walk alone. We help one another through. We teach and learn from one another. And when it seems that there is nothing left to do, we do it all again. We love. We live as if we are with Christ. We create community, because, however we gather, Christ is with us.

September 13 – Gratuitous love

“Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?” Jesus said to him, ‘Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.’ – Matthew 18:21-22

Matthew 18:21-35; Romans 14:1-12

How expansive is this love we’re called into? It is unending. We have received it and so we live it out. We work through and with our differences so we might live in love. We forgive as often as we need to be forgiven. We have received love. We have received forgiveness. We have received grace. We embody love, forgiveness, and grace in the world.