



PRAYER MEETING

September 6



The Fruit of the Spirit: Love One Another

Welcome and Opening Prayer

Leader

Lord God, you call us to **love one another** as we are loved by you. How easily we say these words and how hard they are to do. Your love is patient and kind; it is not arrogant or rude. Your love does not rejoice in wrongdoing but is entirely true and leads us into truth. You invite us into relationship with you and there we learn what love is and what love does.

Love forgives. Love believes. Love hopes and never gives up. We need your infusion to live this way, for we are limited by our experiences of being unloved by others. We come to you, Perfect Love, to be healed in order to be healing agents in this world. Your love is trustworthy and clear-sighted, accepting us in our brokenness and transforming us into wholeness. Your love has the power to change us all.

We pray to know your love and to love one another, so that instead of insisting on our own way, or being irritable and resentful, we would be like Jesus, if only in small steps.

Have your way in us. Help us live in love.

In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

Call to Worship

Galatians 5: 13-14, 16-24

New International Reader's Version

My brothers and sisters, you were chosen to be free. But don't use your freedom as an excuse to live under the power of sin. Instead, serve one another in love. The whole law is fulfilled by obeying this one command. "Love your neighbor as you love yourself."

So I say, live by the Holy Spirit's power. Then you will not do what your desires controlled by sin want you to do. The desires controlled by sin do not want what the Spirit delights in. And the Spirit does not want what the desires controlled by sin delight in. The two are at war with each other. That's why you are not supposed to do whatever you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the authority of the law.

The result of sin's control in our lives is clear. It includes sexual sins, impure acts and wild living. It includes worshipping statues of gods and worshipping evil powers. It also includes hatred and fighting, jealousy and fits of anger. Sinful desire is interested only in getting ahead. It stirs up trouble. It separates people into their own little groups. It wants what others have. It gets drunk and takes part in wild parties.

It does many things of that kind. I warn you now as I did before. People who live like this will not receive God's kingdom. But the fruit the Holy Spirit produces is love, joy and peace. It is being patient, kind and good. It is being faithful and gentle and having control of oneself. There is no law against things of that kind. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed their sinful desires to his cross. They don't want these things anymore.

Music

Quiet your hearts and minds as you listen to today's music. Open to God and listen to what the Holy Spirit might say to you.

Others, Israel Houghton

Others

I see the state of the world and it grieves me
I hear the cries of the broken, of the rich and poor,
Smell the fear of disease all around me
I feel responsible now that I see
'Cause we all were born to live for more than this
So I want to love like you love
I want to love others the way that you love me

I've held the children unseen and they move me
I wonder what I can do to improve a thousand lives
I feel the absence of love and it scares me

I feel responsible now that I see
'Cause we all were born to live for more than this
So much more than this

So, I want love like you love
I want to love others the way you love me

I was that lost soul that you rescued
I was the orphan you adopted
and brought into your heart
I was acquainted with the hopelessness
of living in the streets
That was me

Now I'm gonna love like you love,
Help me love others the way you love me

I'm gonna forgive like you forgave
And rescue like you have saved
Others
The way that you love me

You first loved me, that's why I love you
'Cause you first loved me

Praise

“This day, we praise You, O God for your generous love, shown to us through Jesus, and every day offered to us in hundreds of ways. We thank you for the opportunity to show your love to others. May you be praised and magnified as we love others with the love we’ve been given.”

Congregational Psalm/ Passages from Psalms

Leader and People

For the word of the LORD is right and true;
he is faithful in all he does. The LORD loves
righteousness and justice; the earth is full
of his unfailing love.

Ps 33:4-5

Within your temple, O God, we meditate on
your unfailing love.

Like your name, O God, your praise reaches
to the ends of the earth;
your right hand is filled with righteousness.

Ps 48:9-10

I will sing of the LORD's great love forever;
with my mouth I will make your faithfulness
known through all generations.

I will declare that your love stands firm
forever, that you have established your
faithfulness in heaven itself.

Ps 89:1-2

But from everlasting to everlasting the LORD's love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their children's children—with those who keep his covenant and remember to obey his precepts. *Ps 103: 17-18*

Not to us, LORD, not to us but to your name be the glory, because of your love and faithfulness. *Ps 115:1*

Put your hope in the LORD, for with the LORD
is unfailing love and with him is full
redemption. *Ps 130: 7*

I will sing of the LORD's great love forever;
with my mouth I will make your faithfulness
known through all generations. I will declare
that your love stands firm forever. *Ps 89:1*

Reading about the Word of the Day

Life is our “open-book” test on love. Day in and day out as we plan, work, produce, commute, and relate, we make life-altering choices to either love or neglect others. We can lay down our lives or make them all about us. We can wait or demand instant gratification. We can forgive or hold onto anger.

True, we can never achieve perfect love. But failing at love is not the worst thing that can happen to us. Excluding difficult people so I can live as I want is far worse. Love serves and brings God's peaceable kingdom. Love restores and heals the world. Love works. Love works on me. Love works on you.

Following Jesus leads us into the same tests of love that he faced. Every day will bring choices to choose glory, fame, fortune, and success - or love. Jesus chose the time-consuming, energy-guzzling, betrayal-strewn journey of love. He risked that things done for love are worth doing. And he chose your life over his.

Say yes to God's invitation to love. It will be the making of you and the blessing of the world. Offer yourself up to God for the sake of his kingdom.

Adele Calhoun, Invitations from God

Scripture Reading

An expert on the law stood up to test Jesus, saying, “Teacher, what must I do to get life forever?”

Jesus said, “What is written in the law? What do you read there?”

The man answered, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your strength, and all your mind.” Also, “Love your neighbor as you love yourself.”

Jesus said to him, “Your answer is right. Do this and you will live.”

But the man, wanting to show the importance of his question, said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”

Jesus answered, “As a man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, some robbers attacked him. They tore off his clothes, beat him, and left him lying there, almost dead. It happened that a priest was going down that road. When he saw the man, he walked by on the other side. Next, a Levite came there, and after he went over and looked at the man, he walked by on the other side of the road.

Then a Samaritan traveling down the road came to where the hurt man was. When he saw the man, he felt very sorry for him. The Samaritan went to him, poured olive oil and wine on his wounds, and bandaged them. Then he put the hurt man on his own donkey and took him to an inn where he cared for him. The next day, the Samaritan brought out two coins, gave them to the

innkeeper, and said, 'Take care of this man. If you spend more money on him, I will pay it back to you when I come again.' ”

Then Jesus said, “Which one of these three men do you think was a neighbor to the man who was attacked by the robbers?”

The expert on the law answered, “The one who showed him mercy.”

Jesus said to him,

“Then go and do what he did.”

Luke 10:25-37 NCV

Reflect

Scripture Reading repeated

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Individual Silent Prayer

A time to pray and talk to God about what you heard and noticed. Pray for your needs. Pray thanks. Confess sin. Ask for help. Pray for others, for direction, for guidance, for God's glory.

Response

Responsive Reading

Leader and People

Leader: A new command I give you:
Love one another. As I have loved you,
so you must love one another. By this
everyone will know that you are my
disciples if you love one another.

Jn 13:34-35

People: Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. *Rom 12:9-10*

Leader: My brothers and sisters, God called you to be free, but do not use your freedom as an excuse to do what pleases your sinful self. Serve each other with love. *Gal 5:13 NCV*

People: As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. *Eph 4:1-3*

Leader: All of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble. Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing. *1 Pet 3:8-9*

People: We obey the truth so that we will have a sincere love for each other, loving one another deeply, from the heart. *1 Pet 1:22*

Together: And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us. Since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. If we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

1 John 3:23, 4:11, 12

Prayer for the World

Leader: Lord, we pray for God's loving-kindness to be the foundation of our hope

People: We pray for God's mercy in stopping the spread of this virus;

Leader: We pray for God's healing of those who are sick throughout the world

People: We pray for God's strength for medical personnel serving tirelessly

Leader: We pray for God's insight to be given to researchers seeking solutions

People: We pray for God's wisdom to guide and direct civic leaders, health officials, and world leaders

Leader: We pray for God's peace to guard us from fear or anxiety

People: We pray for God's provision for those whose livelihoods and income have been affected by this crisis

Leader: We pray for God's creativity to make us agents of love and compassion, that all believers would display the character of Christ

People: We pray for racial reconciliation, justice, compassionate civil dialog, understanding, and true unity

Together: Lord, we pray for healing for our nation, that Your righteousness and truth and justice would be known, and that the Holy Spirit would draw people everywhere to the saving power of Jesus.

Lord's Prayer

Together

Apostle's Creed

Together

I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost; born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead, and buried; the third day He rose again from the dead;

He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy Christian church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting; Amen.

Prayer of Confession

Together

Blessed is the one whose transgressions
are forgiven; whose sins are covered.

Blessed is the one whose sin the LORD
does not count against them and in
whose spirit is no deceit.

I acknowledge my sin to you and do not cover up my iniquity. I will confess my transgressions to the LORD. And you forgive the guilt of my sin. Therefore, let all the faithful pray to you while you may be found.

From Ps 32: 1-2, 5-6

Holy and merciful God, you alone know how often we have sinned in wandering from your ways and seeking selfish desires. We have wasted your gifts, forgotten your love, and neglected to love others. Have mercy on us, for we are sorry for our attitudes and actions. Forgive us our sins, create in us a clean heart, and put a new and right spirit within us, for your name's sake.

Assurance of Pardon

Leader

If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with you, so that you may be revered. For with the Lord there is steadfast love, and with him is great power to redeem. *Psalm 130: 7-8*

Celebration of Communion

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Leader

Our Father, we thank you for the gift of your love, free and full, most fully known through the sacrifice of Jesus. We cannot live in such overwhelmingly gracious love without responding to your call to show and share that love. Your love was meant to expand in us, and multiply through us.

Holy Spirit, lead us to love. Lead us to be like you, O Lord, the source and strength and supply of love.

We humbly thank you, as we ask in your name. Amen

Closing Prayer

Together

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console, to be understood as to understand, to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

Prayer of St. Francis Peace