

The Greatest of These

is



Love

A complete retreat package

- Plus -

Useful helps in planning your own retreat or workshop



Lutheran Women in Mission

THE GREATEST OF THESE IS LOVE

Based on 1 Corinthians 13

This retreat package is prepared with already available materials from the LWML *Catalog*. It is designed to accomplish two goals:

- ♥ To provide a complete retreat package complete with Bible study, sketches to introduce sections of the study, suggestions for using various avenues for the study, hymns, get-acquainted activities, devotions, suggested schedules for retreats of various time lengths, and extra activities for weekend retreats.

- ♥ To illustrate how to put together existing materials from the LWML *Catalog* on a given topic and create a personalized retreat or program. Permission to copy any materials from this project is given and encouraged for group use.

The Christian Resources Editors Committee
1999-2001

The Greatest of These is LOVE

MATERIALS INCLUDED

(in the order in which they appear in the packet)

How to Plan a Retreat		
Overnight Retreat Schedule		
Weekend Retreat Schedule		
Helps and Suggestions		
Hymn and Song Suggestions		
<i>A Welcome Litany</i>	Chris Fiechtl	#5376
<i>Meditation on Corinthians</i>	Diane Rahe	#5363
<i>Let Me Introduce You . . .</i>	Lisa Moore	#5604
Heart Patterns with LOVE Verses		
Heart Quilt Template		
<i>At the End of the Day</i>	Vivian Nelson	#5305
<i>Energized by Freedom</i>	Ruth Koch	# 23 <i>More Bright Ideas</i>
<i>The Greatest of These is Love</i>	Rev. Victor Roth	#5205
<i>Love in Action</i>	Dorothy Kohr	#5316
<i>Who is My Neighbor?</i>	Unknown	#5260
<i>Who Will Wear the Crown?</i>	Ruth Dexheimer	#5432 <i>Collection of Litanies</i>
Friendship Hearts Template		
<i>One in Christ</i>	Cheryl Schultz	#5455 <i>Collection of Litanies</i>
Evaluation Form Sample		
<i>Love Notes from Scripture</i>		
Sample Registration and Publicity Materials		



HOW TO PLAN A RETREAT

When your group determines they would like to have a retreat, they will need to decide:

1. How long should the retreat last?
2. Who will present the Bible Study?
Suggestion: Ask your pastor or your zone counselor. If you feel you have someone in your group who will lead it, please seek the advice of your pastor or counselor in the presenting of the Bible study. He may be able to give you some helpful insight and guidance. If you are planning your own retreat and not using this package, see H. Speaker section.
3. Where will the retreat be held?
Will it be at church or at a retreat center?
4. Who will be responsible for keeping a record of expenses, receive registration fees, and pay the bills.
5. When will the retreat be held? If it is to be at a retreat center, try to have several dates, so reserving a date will be easier (the site may be booked if only one date is chosen). Meeting again to select another date will lose valuable time in booking the center for the date you select and perhaps another disappointment. If necessary, your group should be prepared to advance the amount of the deposit necessary to hold a retreat site.
6. Who will make the decision of where the retreat will be held?
7. Who will be on the Retreat Committee?

RETREAT COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Decide who will be the **chairman** if she has not been appointed by your group.
- B. If the committee will be handling the **financial responsibility** of the retreat, decide who that will be.

Set up some guidelines for that person.

- a. Keep an accurate record of all transactions.
- b. Who will approve payment of bills?
- c. Will an account be set up?
- d. Who will be able to sign checks? (suggestion: two people)

- C. If the group would like to hold the retreat at a **retreat center**, look into what centers are available.

Information you will need:

- ❖ **Accommodations:** How many people can they accommodate in rooms, for meals and in the meeting room space?
- ❖ **Costs:** Meeting room, overnight housing, meals, sound equipment, podium, chalk board, tables, chairs, piano, organ and other equipment, etc..
- ❖ **Deposit:** Amount and when needed.
- ❖ **Final Payment:** When due?
- ❖ **Rules for Use of Facilities:** i.e., Are snacks allowed for an evening event? Are there rules regarding moving equipment, including your own?
- ❖ **The Retreat Center Contact:** i.e., When you get there and one of the items you requested is not there, who do you go to?

- D. When a desirable place is found, ask if a temporary deposit (fully refundable) can be made to hold that date until you have group approval if that is necessary. If so, **get it in writing** and include the date and amount of refundable deposit received (see **H.** below).

- E. When approval is received, **be sure to get a signed contract listing the following:** costs of each item needed (see Costs above), total cost, date(s), who is responsible for assisting your group, amount of deposit received, amount of total payment and when it is Due, when you must give a number of those attending, **and** what their policy is for last minute cancellations.

F. If your retreat will be at a **church that is not your own** (as in a zone retreat), call to see if it is available and if there is a cost involved. If there are meals involved, who would prepare them? Costs? What about the equipment needed?

G. If the **church is a distance** from some of those attending, can arrangements be made for overnight housing?

H. Speaker: In selecting a speaker, consider the following:

- ❖ **Availability:** Make sure that whoever will lead the Bible study is available for the date chosen.
- ❖ **Financial obligations:** If you are using these guidelines in planning your own retreat and will have an outside speaker, decide what you will give the speaker for his or her time and preparation. You should also be prepared to pay mileage, housing and meals if necessary.
- ❖ **Resources for speakers:** If you are looking for a speaker, check *Declaring His Praise* (#20200), a speaker's directory, available for postage costs from the LWML office. It will also give you an idea of fees that some require and who would have expertise in the area of your theme for the retreat.
- ❖ **Choosing a speaker:** Make a list of speakers you feel will meet your needs. Then prioritize your choices and, beginning at the top, contact one at a time until you receive a yes.
- ❖ **Booking the speaker:** Ask if the speaker has a fee for services. This will help in figuring the total cost of the retreat and what amount will be charged to those attending.

I. Speaker's needs: When you have booked the speaker, write to him asking for confirmation of the dates and other arrangements you have made. Ask that he keep in touch with you, and let you know what his needs are in the way of equipment, printing of materials, etc. Let him know of any deadline the retreat center or church has set for reserving equipment. You may also want to get biographical information and a picture for publicity from him. Plan all housing and meal arrangements for your speaker. Appoint a hostess to see to any needs of the speaker during the retreat.

J. Make a full schedule for the retreat including all activities. List the needs for each activity, including equipment, supplies, etc. Will there be a cost for any of these items?

K. Establish the costs for the speaker (fee, mileage, lodging, meals, supplies and equipment), the cost of meeting room(s), meals, equipment, supplies and anything else that will be included in the retreat costs. (If housing is not necessary or they are on their own to arrange housing on or off the site for the retreat, or meals are not included, do not add these in. Remember to include the deposit if you will be reimbursing the group for the advance given for the deposit.) Divide the total cost of the retreat by the number of those you expect to attend. It is a good idea to add extra to the anticipated expenses to cover unexpected costs or attendance that is less than expected. If money is left over, let those at the retreat decide if they want it refunded or to go to a charitable need.

L. Publicity: Depending on who will attend, spread the word with posters and articles in your church, zone or district newsletter. Include information about the speaker, theme, date(s), site of retreat, what is included (registration, meals, housing, etc.) and cost. Expand on the theme to gain interest. Include who to contact for registration forms and who is to receive the form and check for cost. **Establish a deadline** for registration and payment. This will probably be dictated by the deadlines established at the retreat site. Make your deadline a week earlier to allow for mail delay. Send an acknowledgement card for reservations. See sample publicity materials.

M. Preparations: Will you have craft activities or other activities that require supplies? Will you have materials to print, favors to make, etc.? Decide who will do this and get started early. It is easier to add a few more (plan on extra supplies), than to wait until the last minute and have to make the needed materials. You will get far more out of the retreat personally if you arrive with everything done ahead of time.

N. Music and other publications: If you will be printing words or copying music, be sure they are not under copyright. *Lutheran Worship* lists what is under copyright in the back of the hymnal. If the hymn number is not listed, it is under public domain and safe to print. Sometimes the words, the music, or the setting (arrangement) are copyrighted; just do not print what is copyrighted. Some districts have CCLI licenses. If this is not a church retreat, check to see if they cover local groups or zones. If so, make sure the license covers what you want to use. CCLI licenses are not a blanket coverage for copying all music. Sometimes publishers are very cooperative when you call and ask for permission. It is well worth the try if a particular piece really fits your theme.

O. Meetings: It is a good idea for the committee to meet regularly to make sure all the bases are being covered and to iron out any problems that might arise. Always begin with prayer for guidance and thank God for all He has done through your committee. With His help,

your retreat will be a success! After your retreat, meet again to prepare a report from your group. List any recommendations you might have for planning your next retreat. (Make use of the retreat evaluation forms—see **Q**.)

P. Retreat schedule: Allow time for each part of your retreat and follow the schedule. This will allow for those who wish to retire early to do so. Others can enjoy fellowship after the scheduled activities. The person preparing the meals will also appreciate adherence to the schedule. Your speaker will have put a lot of time into preparation of the retreat material. He/she should be aware of the time schedule well in advance. A schedule well kept will prevent the unfair situation of cutting the speaker's time short. Those in charge of the retreat site will also appreciate the retreat ending according to the pre-arranged time.

Q. Retreat Packet: Folders with pockets are very helpful. Inside there should be a pencil, note pad, schedule of events, retreat session materials, get-acquainted materials, song sheets (see **N**. above), retreat evaluations and anything else they will need. Contact local fraternal organizations (i.e., Aid Association for Lutherans or Lutheran Brotherhood) as sources for folders, pads, pencils and even mints.

[These Guidelines have been included in this package to help you in your planning. While they may not include every possible answer, they will get you started and help you focus on some of the most important elements in retreat planning.]

AN OVERNIGHT RETREAT

SCHEDULE

*This schedule is designed for gathering in the evening
with the main portion of the retreat on the following day.*

Welcome: *A Welcome Litany*

Opening Devotion: *Meditation on Corinthians*

Ice Breaker: *Let Me Introduce You to a Friend*

Love Quilt

Closing: *At the End of the Day*

Following could be a time of fellowship with light snacks, singing or playing games.

Room Devotion: *Energized by Freedom*

Breakfast

Hymn: "I Love Your Kingdom, Lord" LW #296, TLH #462

Welcome by Chairman

Introduction of Speaker

The Greatest of These is Love

Retreat Session I [30 minutes]

Break [20 minutes - include time for singing including one with actions]

Sketch [introducing Session II -*Love in Action*]

Retreat Session II [30 minutes]

- A Time to Reflect [45 minutes -Take a walk outside, alone or with someone from your small group.]
- Lunch [45-60 minutes -“My Most Embarrassing Moment” or “A Funny Thing Happened to Me on the Way to...”]
- Retreat Session III [30 minutes]
- Break [20 minutes - allow time for some action songs or exercises]
- Sketch [introducing Session IV:-*Who is My Neighbor?*]
- Retreat Session IV [30 minutes]
- Wrap-up: Concluding remarks of speaker which may be included in the time allowed for Session IV if the speaker desires.
- Continuing Your New Friendship: See Part Three of: *Let Me Introduce You to a Friend*
- Evaluation time: How did we do?
- Closing Devotion: *One in Christ*
- Hymn: “Blest Be the Tie that Binds” LW # 295, TLH #464

**This schedule is for the “The Greatest of These is Love” retreat. However, it will serve as a guideline for any retreat of this time length.*

***This schedule can also be used for a **One Day Retreat**. Use the first three items on the agenda, then introduce the speaker. [It is important to allow time at the beginning for an ice breaker so those attending will have an opportunity to get to know one another before they begin either a one-on-one or small group time of sharing during the retreat.] Consideration should be given to extending the time an hour or to reducing the retreat sessions to three.*

A WEEKEND RETREAT

FRIDAY EVENING

Welcome: *A Welcome Litany*

Opening Devotion: *Meditation on Corinthians*

Ice Breaker: *Let Me Introduce You to a Friend*

Love Quilt

Closing: *At the End of the Day*

Following could be a time of fellowship with light snacks, singing or playing games.

Room Devotion: *Energized by Freedom*

SATURDAY

Breakfast

Hymn: "I Love Your Kingdom, Lord" LW #296, TLH #462

Welcome by Chairman

Introduction of Speaker

The Greatest of These is Love

Retreat Session I	[30 minutes]
Break	[20 minutes - include time for singing, including one with actions]
Sketch	[introducing Session II - <i>Love in Action</i>]
Retreat Session II	[30 minutes]
A Time to Reflect	[45 minutes -Take a walk outside, alone or with someone from your small group.]
Lunch	[45-60 minutes -"My Most Embarrassing Moment" or "A Funny Thing Happened to Me on the Way to..."]

Retreat Session III [30 minutes]

Break [20 minutes -allow time for some action songs or exercises]

Sketch [introducing Session IV -*Who is My Neighbor?*]

Retreat Session IV [30-45 minutes]

Wrap-up: Concluding remarks of speaker which may be included in the time allowed for Session IV if the speaker desires.

Closing Prayer

Hymn: "Blest Be the Tie that Binds" LW # 295, TLH #464

Free Time

Dinner

SATURDAY EVENING:

Song Session: [15-20 minutes]

Drama: [1 hour] This can be a time to divide into groups (see suggestions under ice breaker notes). Ask participants to: **a.** write and present a sketch illustrating the material covered in one of the retreat sessions; **b.** do a pantomime of a portion of Scripture that speaks to the retreat theme; or **c.** pantomime a parable. Encourage them to make it "joyful." Let the other groups guess what it is. Perhaps an award to the most resourceful or best actors would add to the fun. This is a time to relax and enjoy the fellowship.

Table Games This can be an alternate activity for some or in addition to the drama

Love Quilt

Snack Time Light refreshments.

Song Time Songs should gradually become quieter leading up to the closing devotion.

Closing Devotion:

Closing Hymn: "All Praise to Thee My God, This Night" LW #484, TLH #558, AGPS #57

Room Devotion: *Who Will Wear the Crown?*

SUNDAY MORNING:

Breakfast

Worship: If you have the benefit of having a pastor at your retreat ask him to prepare a worship service for this morning. If not, is there a nearby church where your group may worship together?

Continuing Your New Friendship: See Part Three of *Let Me Introduce You to a Friend*

Evaluation Time: How did we do?

Closing Devotion: *One in Christ*

Lunch and/or Good-byes

*[*This schedule is for the "The Greatest of These is Love" retreat. However, it will serve as a guideline for any retreat of this time length.]*



The Greatest of These is LOVE

HELPS AND SUGGESTIONS

(for sketches and the use of included materials)

Get Acquainted/Ice Breaker

While *Let Me Introduce You to a Friend* is suggested for a Valentine's Day event, it lends itself well to a theme centered on love. Patterns are included for the hearts, along with suggestions for their use. Part Three would be a great activity at the end of the retreat. Include at least one copy in each packet. A pattern for this activity is included. Give each participant two hearts, one to give to the person who had the other half of the heart they had during the opening ice breaker and the other to a new friend of their choice.

Love Quilt

Have fabric squares already cut in white. Have bright colored or print fabric squares also cut to use when sewing the quilt together alternating with the white squares. Have embroidery threads or fine pointed permanent markers in colors to coordinate with the colored or print squares. You will need embroidery needles and hoops as well. Cut out cardboard hearts for patterns (heart template enclosed). Each participant receives a white square. Ask that, with a pencil (preferably a quilting pencil which will wash out), they draw a heart on the square using the pattern and write their favorite love verse from the Bible on it. This could just simply be the Scripture reference, i.e. John 3:16. Then ask that they embroider the heart and verse or use the permanent markers to trace the heart. The squares should be collected at the end of the retreat. You will need someone to sew them together and then add the batting and backing. The finished piece can be tied as for a World Relief quilt. Decide ahead of time who will receive the quilt and announce the recipient when the squares are distributed. If the quilt is for a child, participants might want to write love messages, such as "Jesus loves you." Leave materials out so they can be worked on during any free time.

Room Devotions

Room devotions are included for individuals or for those rooming together. [First night: *Energized by Freedom*; Second night: *Who Will Wear the Crown?*]

Sketches

Two sketches (skits) have been included to introduce sessions during the retreat. If possible, assign parts ahead of time to those attending the retreat. This will give them an opportunity to go through it. Tell them to bring any props necessary for their part. Eleven people will have an

opportunity to take part, it frees the committee from carrying even more items to the retreat and it avoids the last-minute rush to find someone to do a part. Please note: use only the sketch portion of *Who is My Neighbor?*

The Retreat *The Greatest of These is LOVE*

This material has an outline approach to it. To expand on it the following suggestions are made:

Session I:

Give the Bible verses to those attending - one person for each of the six parts. The leader would then fill in the blanks and perhaps expand on some of them with a total time of about 15 minutes. The discussion questions would be best used in small groups of five to seven. Allow about 15 minutes. Each group should discuss as many questions as possible. Assign one of the five questions to each group to report back on at the end of the session. Group reports should be limited to one minute each.

Session II:

Use the sketch to introduce this session. Let the leader read the Biblical quotes and answer the question. Do Parts I, II and III and answer the questions following. Give time limits on each part to keep it moving and so all parts can be covered - about five minutes each. Conclude with each group reporting on one of the three parts. Close with reading the Bible passage together and ask that each person ask themselves the question following. This question could be changed to fit the group - instead of "church" one could insert "group."

Session III:

Introduction by leader who may read the quotes or have two people read them. The question could be asked of the whole group. Part I could be done as a whole group, Parts II and III in a small group. Include a sharing time as above and close the session with all reading Psalm 128. The entire group could answer the question.

Session IV:

The sketch introduces the section. The leader leads introduction and Part I by either reading the Biblical quotes or assigning them. Questions may be answered by those present. Parts II and III would be small group sessions. The whole group gathers for sharing as before. The leader then gives concluding remarks tying in the topics of the four sessions and the conclusions of each. All present read the two final Bible passages in unison.

Songs

It is helpful to sing in between sessions as people will absorb more of the next session. Including actions will make it more so. This is especially true during the afternoon. After lunch

people tend to get drowsy. Action songs or even a few exercises, the rubbing of each other's back, etc., are all very helpful. Arrange to have a song leader. This will make singing more enjoyable and beneficial.

A Time to Reflect

If weather permits, a walk before lunch to consider what one has studied during the morning will help them to retain it. Sharing their thoughts on it with someone else can make it even more meaningful.

My Most Embarrassing Moment

Suggest that those sitting at each table share an embarrassing moment in their life or perhaps a "funny thing happened to me on the way to..." as an alternate activity. If tables are too long to permit hearing, divide the table into two sections.

Worship

Plans for your worship service should be made by the pastor who will lead the service. If it will be at the retreat site see that there are worship folders if needed. If worship will be at a church nearby, make sure of the times and travel time. Arrange for drivers on Saturday evening. It is better, with a group, to arrive early.

Continuing Your New Friendships

See Get Acquainted/Ice Breaker Part Three and pattern. Include these in the retreat packets.

Love Notes from Scripture has been included as a useful memento from the retreat.

Evaluation Forms

These should be included in the retreat packets with the other materials. A sample form is included and can be personalized to meet your group's needs. They need not be signed. Provide a box that participants can put them in. Information from these will be most helpful when planning your next event.

Registration and Publicity Materials

Included in the materials are samples for both a Registration Form and a Registration Confirmation form. Publicity items include bulletin blurbs, a poster and an invitation.



The Greatest of These is LOVE

HYMN AND SONG SUGGESTIONS

The words to the following hymns and songs may be printed without copyright permission with the exception noted. (Please note: use words only.)

❖“Savior, Thy Dying Love”	#372 LW, #403 TLH
❖“Blest Be the Tie that Binds”	#295 LW, #464 TLH
❖“You Will I Love, My Strength”	#375 LW, #399 TLH
❖“I Love Your Kingdom, Lord”	#296 LW, #462 TLH
❖“All Praise to Thee My God, This Night”	#484 LW, #558 TLH #57 AGPS
❖“His Banner over Me Is Love”	#118 AGPS
❖“My Song Is Love Unknown”	#91 LW, #176 AGPS
❖“Jesus Loves Me”	#144 AGPS
❖“Father, I Adore You”***	#94 AGPS
❖“This is My Commandment”	#240 AGPS

***This is under copyright and permission **must** be obtained to use it in printed form. To use this or other songs you may wish to add, please see “N.” under *How to Plan a Retreat* for more information.

Note: LW - *Lutheran Worship*
 TLH - *The Lutheran Hymnal*
 AGPS - *All God's People Sing*



A WELCOME LITANY

This litany is designed to be used as an officer or committee welcome for an LWML event such as a retreat, workshop, rally or meeting. At the appropriate place in the litany, insert the name of the sponsoring group (district, zone, etc.) and the name of the event.

Leader: Let's hear an official welcome...

Officers: We, the officers of *(name of sponsoring group)*, join in bidding YOU a warm welcome to this *(insert name of event)*. (Officers greet each woman with a handshake, hug, etc.)

Leader: We begin in the name of God...

Reader 1: In the name of God the Father...

Reader 2: In the name of God the Father, our Creator.

Leader: We begin in the name of God...

Reader 1: In the name of God the Son...

Reader 2: In the name of God the Son, our Redeemer.

Leader: We begin in the name of God...

Reader 1: In the name of God the Holy Spirit...

Reader 2: In the name of God the Holy Spirit, our Sanctifier.

All: In the name of the Holy Trinity we now begin and dedicate this *(event name)* to His honor and glory!

Leader: We feel like singing, Lord.

Reader 1: We want to tell everyone how great You are.

Reader 2: We want each of us to know the depth of Your abiding love,

Reader 3: And of Your eternal concern for those who follow You;

Reader 4: But our songs are so often off-key, and our speech so inadequate.

All: We simply cannot express what we know to be true about Your love for Your creatures upon this earth.

Leader: However, even the songs of birds proclaim Your praises;

Reader 1: The heavens and the earth beneath, the trees that reach toward You;

Reader 2: The flowers that glow in colorful beauty, the green hills and soaring mountains;

Reader 3: They all proclaim Your greatness, O God, and Your love for the children of men.

Reader 4: How glorious it is to be alive, to be here to listen, to sing, and to share.

SING: “All People That on Earth Do Dwell” (TLH #14, LW #435)

Reader 1: May the wisdom of God instruct us.

Reader 2: May the Word of God direct us.

Reader 3: May the hand of God protect us.

Reader 4: And may the peace and love of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with us.

Leader: May every breath of our body, every beat of our heart be dedicated to Your praise and glory. Amen.

SING: “Blessed Jesus, at Thy Word” (TLH #16, LW #202)

A WELCOME LITANY - *Written by* Chris Fiechtl
Published by Lutheran Women’s Missionary League
August 1993



MEDITATION ON CORINTHIANS

(In this devotion a reader presents thoughts and questions to which participants respond, not with words, but with their thoughts. The presentation becomes much more effective if done with a slow, deliberate pace. The reader should not rush and should allow for adequate, well-timed pauses to give the participants sufficient time for quiet reflection.)

Many times our lives are very busy, and we need time to wind down. Today you will have an opportunity to relax and reflect.

Listen to what St. Paul says to us in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7: *Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.* (NIV)

This passage tells us much about love and more specifically the characteristics of our love as children of God. Right now let's focus on five points:

PATIENCE...KINDNESS...HUMILITY...FORGIVENESS...ENDURANCE

Take a little mental trip with me. Sit back...take a deep breath...close your eyes and listen.
(Give time to follow directions.)

(Read SLOWLY and DELIBERATELY.)

PATIENCE

Patience is a virtue. It takes patience to wait for something. It takes patience to wait on the Lord. It takes patience to live out the life our Lord wants us to live.

(Pause after each of the following questions.)

Think of a friend or family members that you considered thoughtless this week.

- How did you react to that person?
- Were your children or your spouse less than perfect this week?
- If you didn't show patience with them, how did it affect your relationship?

Now think of someone who you consider very patient.

- How has their longsuffering been a blessing and an example for you?

Christ is our example of patience. Consider how He patiently handled the relationship with His disciples when they didn't understand what He was called to do. Let's take a moment for silent prayer. Ask the Spirit to bless you with patience -- His kind of patience.

(Allow time for prayer.)

KINDNESS

When one thinks of kindness, one often thinks of gentleness. Even the sound of the word has a soothing quality. Gentleness is tenderness. Kindness or gentleness is sensitivity. It is a caring attitude, an awareness of the importance of the other person's feelings, a sensitivity to how our words and actions affect other people.

Think of an instance when a kind or gentle word or gesture made a difference in your day.

- Think of the person who said or did that for you.
- How did this affect your attitude?

Think of a time when you have been kind or gentle with your family...with a friend...with a stranger...with an enemy.

- How would you rate yourself as a kind and gentle person?

Jesus took time for all. He healed, but most importantly, He recognized people's needs and soothed their troubled lives by His gentle spirit. Take a moment now to pray for a gentle and kind spirit.

(Allow time for prayer.)

HUMILITY

Paul reminds us that love does not boast and is not haughty with pride. Love is foot-washing. Humble people look for the good in others and recognize talents and abilities as gifts from God. Humility causes us to respond to challenges of service which might otherwise pass by because we question whether it is worth our involvement.

Reflect with me.

- Have you offered a service to a friend recently expecting thanks and praise but receiving neither?
- Were you bothered by this person's lack of response?
- Did you perform a service for the church recently realizing that the service would go unrecognized except in the eyes of God?
- Did you thank God that you were chosen for that task and were able to serve Him?

Jesus knelt down and washed His disciples' feet. A very humble act. An act considered by Peter to be too lowly for the Lord to do. This act along with many others become demonstrations of what we are to be like as we love and serve others.

Pray for the heart of a servant as we look to the one great example of humility, Jesus, the Suffering Servant.

(Allow time for prayer.)

FORGIVENESS

We are exhorted to be forgiving for the best of all reasons—because God, for Christ’s sake, has forgiven us. Forgiveness is allied to kindness, it fosters peace, it is a true demonstration of love.

Think of a time you have heard someone (yourself, perhaps?) declare, “I’ll never forgive her!”

—Can you remember a time when you have said, “I forgive you” and yet you still dwell on that transgression?

—How does this attitude fit with our petition to God, “Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgiven those who trespass against us”?

The love of Christ can be our guide. While He was hanging on the cross, He said, “Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.”

Let’s pray, asking God to give us a forgiving and forgetting heart.

(Allow time for prayer.)

ENDURANCE

Endurance. Love enables us to maintain our efforts in spite of rejection or weariness. Endurance is being able to carry on, to “fight the good fight,” so to speak. No matter how we are treated, we are reminded that we must continue doing what Christ asks. That takes strength and endurance.

Think back to a time when you had to go through something in your life which you just knew you couldn’t.

—What did you feel like when you made it?

—Can you think of a time when you didn’t make it?

—Can you think of a time when you gave up on a friend or yourself?

—Do you remember someone who was long suffering with you?

Think of someone or something you are dealing with now which is taking a great amount of your time and energy.

—How will you endure?

God assigned to Christ the most difficult task of going to the cross because of our sinful condition. Remember Him and how He in love endured and suffered because He wanted us to be forgiven followers.

Pray that He will give you His strength which will help you endure what you may face now or in the future.

(Allow time for prayer.)

LOVE

Paul reminds us that love is the greatest of virtues, and if we love, we will demonstrate it in patience, kindness, humility, forgiveness and endurance.

Jesus said, *All men will know that you are my disciples if you love one another.* John 13:35 NIV

Ideally, in the power of the Holy Spirit we should be totally loving in our speech, attitudes and actions. We need to be filled with God's love.

As we return to our daily living, consider again these verses from 1 Corinthians. As I read these verses, put your name in the place of the word "Love," and the pronoun "*she*" or "*he*" in place of the word "*it*."

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

MEDITATION ON CORINTHIANS - *Written by* Diane Rahe
Published by Lutheran Women's Missionary League
August 1993



LET ME INTRODUCE YOU TO A FRIEND

A Valentine's Day Fellowship

GETTING TO KNOW ONE ANOTHER: Please tell about yourself...

My favorite food is

My favorite color is

Three words that best describe me are

I would like to learn to

When I want to have fun, I

When I go someplace new, I look for

Even though I know I shouldn't, I worry about

If my house caught on fire, after saving my family, I would grab

The thing that makes me happiest is

My favorite Bible passage is

SHARING WITH A NEW FRIEND

Choose a partner by matching halves of small valentines or from basket draw hearts that have matching religious names (Redeemer, Lord, Creator, etc.). Together with your new friend, read and meditate on the following Bible verses:

Proverbs 18:24 If you want to have friends, you need to be a _____.

A friend is closer than a _____.

Proverbs 17:17 A friend loves _____.

Ephesians 4:32 Friends are _____, _____, _____.

Ephesians 5:19-21 Friends encourage and uplift each other, _____ for each other and _____ to one another.

Colossians 1:3 Friends _____ for each other.

CONTINUING YOUR NEW FRIENDSHIP

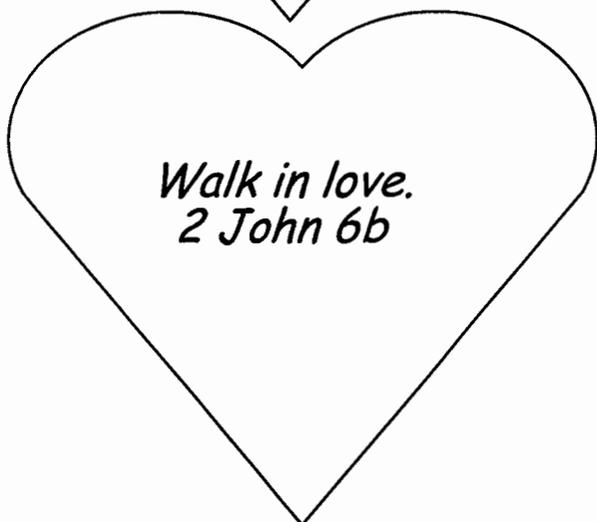
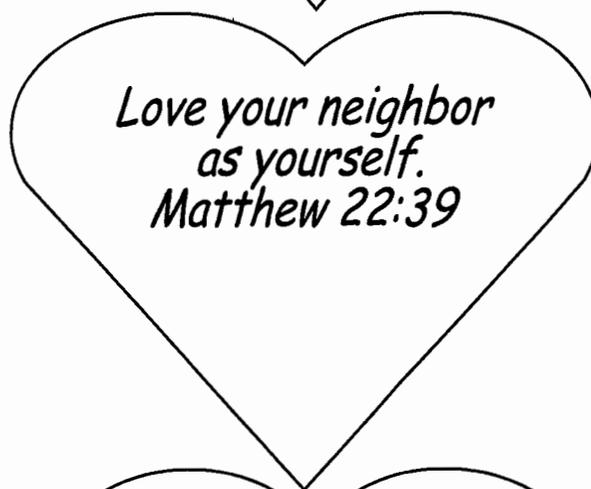
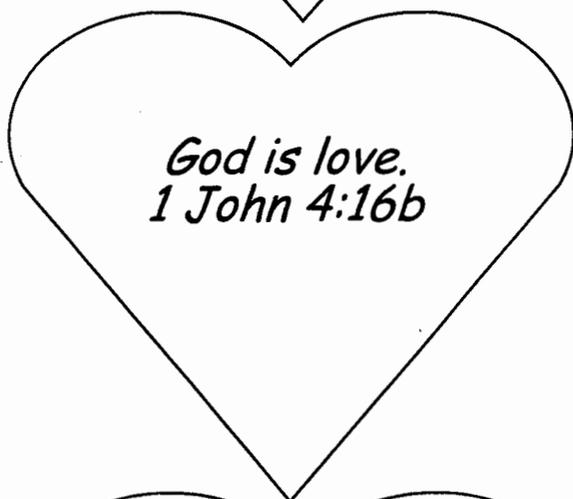
Put your name, address and phone number on this paper and give it to your new friend.

Read together:

Dear _____, I promise to be a friend to you. I can love you because God loved both of us first. With His help, I will be kind, tenderhearted and forgiving toward you. With His help, I will try to encourage and support you in your Christian life. I will thank God for you and I will pray for you.

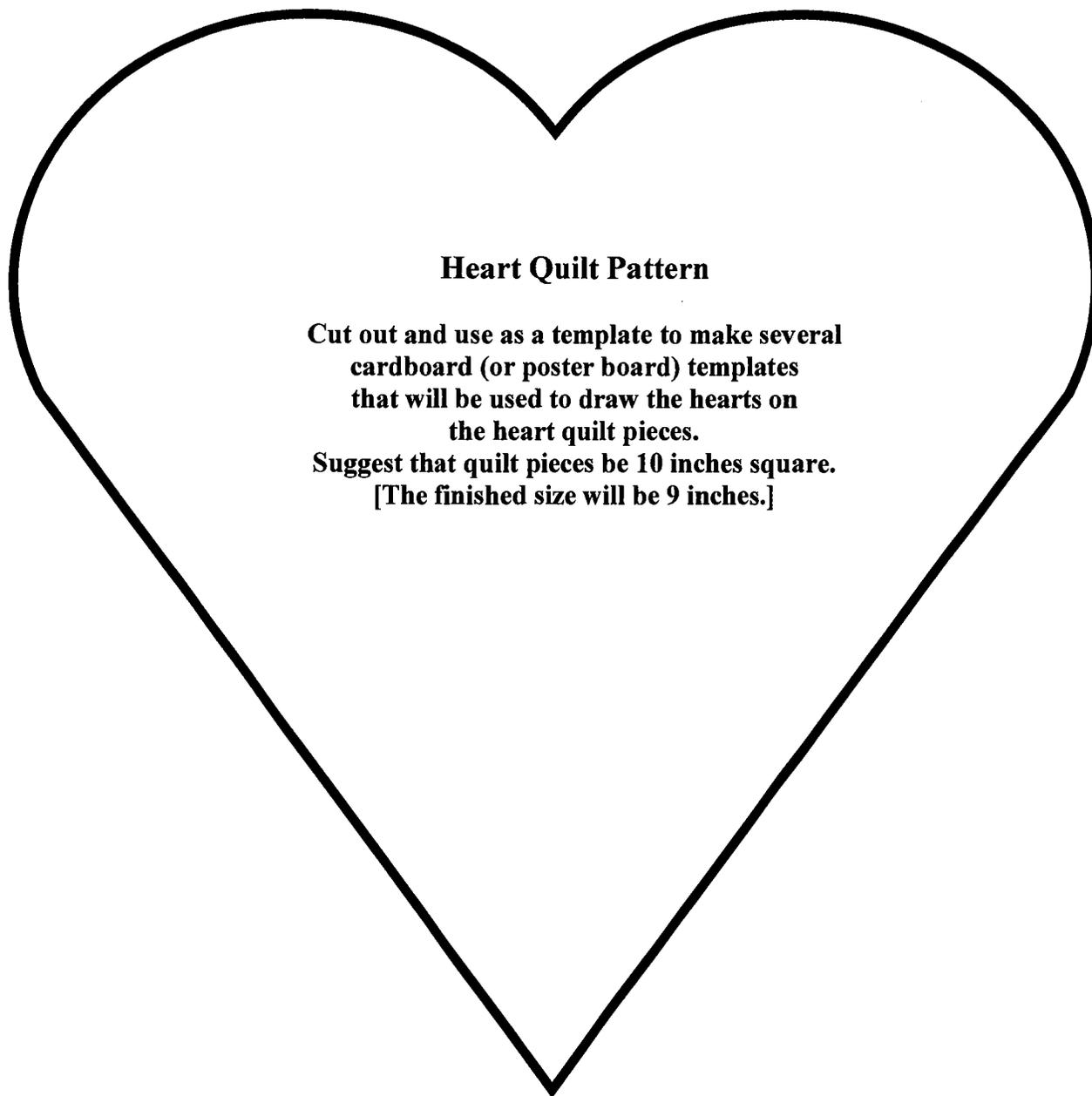
Your friend in Christ, _____.

LET ME INTRODUCE YOU TO A FRIEND - *Written by* Lisa Moore
Published by Lutheran Women's Missionary League



These hearts may be copied for *Let Me Introduce You to a Friend* and could be cut from different colors of paper. They each should be cut in half in a different way so that only two halves will fit. These can be passed out at the door or each half placed in separate packets.

They may be used as patterns for use on colored paper or wallpaper, placing one heart in each packet. Those with the same color wallpaper are in the same small group for discussion during the retreat.



Heart Quilt Pattern

**Cut out and use as a template to make several
cardboard (or poster board) templates
that will be used to draw the hearts on
the heart quilt pieces.**

**Suggest that quilt pieces be 10 inches square.
[The finished size will be 9 inches.]**



#5305

AT THE END OF THE DAY

An evening of vesper devotion for a leader, reader and audience.

Leader: After a long day--a day of travel, of separations and reunions, of ideas and challenges, of laughter and perhaps of tears--at night we need time to be quiet and listen to God.

All Sing: Now the day is over; Night is drawing nigh;
Shadows of the evening Steal across the sky.
"Now the Day Is Over" (TLH #654)

Leader: As the shadows grow long, we begin to see God's evening creations, the stars and the moon, and we can sense the silence.

Reader: *So God made the two larger lights, the sun to rule over the day and the moon to rule over the night; He also made the stars. He placed the lights in the sky to shine on the earth, to rule over the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God was pleased with what he saw. Evening passed and morning came--that was the fourth day. Genesis 1:16-19 TEV*

All Sing: Now the darkness gathers, Stars begin to peep,
Birds and beasts and flowers Soon will be asleep.

Leader: The flowers close, and the birds stop their singing. Lord, we are tired, too. The work and the worries have been much today.

All Sing: Jesus, give the weary Calm and sweet repose;
With Thy tend'rest blessing, May mine eyelids close.

Leader: Bless us tonight, Lord, with the gift of your peace.

Reader: *"Peace is what I leave with you; it is my own peace that I give you. I do not give it as the world does. Do not be worried and upset; do not be afraid."*
John 14:27 TEV

All Sing: Through the long night-watches May Thine angels spread
Their white wings above me, Watching round my bed.

Leader: Help us, Lord, to trust you for protection as the Psalmist did.

Reader: *I lie down and sleep, and all night long the Lord protects me. Psalm 3:5 TEV*

Leader: As we lie down, Lord, many concerns are in our hearts. We care about those who don't know You, those who are ill, those who are unemployed, those who are lonely. Lord, as we name our concerns in our hearts, help us to trust you enough not to worry anymore tonight. Help us also to cast our burdens of guilt on You, for we know that You forgive us. Hear our prayers, Lord. Speak to us and help us to listen.

[Pause for silent prayer. Optional: Join hands in a circle. Leader may begin a prayer and have each person add a sentence to it. "Thank you, Lord" is enough to add if a person is uncomfortable with more. The leader ends the prayer when all have had a chance to pray.]

Leader: *May the God who gives us peace make you holy in every way and keep your whole being--spirit, soul and body--free from every fault at the coming of our Lord, Jesus Christ. He who calls you will do it, because he is faithful.*
1 Thessalonians 5:23-24 TEV

All Sing: When the morning wakens, Then may I arise
Pure and fresh and sinless In Thy holy eyes.

All Read: Tonight may the Lord bless us and keep us, the Lord make His face to shine upon us, and grant us peace. Amen.

AT THE END OF THE DAY - *Written by* Vivian Nelson
Published by Lutheran Women's Missionary League

ENERGIZED BY FREEDOM

Margaret's lifelong consuming passion was to go to heaven. Finally, she died. St. Peter took her by the hand and showed her beautiful sights, majestic mountains, lovely flowers, gorgeous sunsets, little children playing in the streets. Margaret was overwhelmed!

"My! Isn't heaven wonderful!" she exclaimed.

"Oh," St. Peter said, "This isn't heaven. This is the world in which you lived but which you never saw."

Margaret so much longed to be free of this life with all its difficulties and hardships that she definitely missed something. No wonder she was so anxious! Since the fall of Adam and Eve into sin, this is an imperfect world, full of imperfect people. Worst of all, we are imperfect people, and our sins grieve God's heart and cause terrible hurt. Of course, we long for heaven!

In fact, as sin convicts and imprisons us, some days we look around and can't wait to leave. But God interrupts our escape fantasies with the two glorious truths of Galatians 5:1: *It is for freedom that Christ has set us free.* (NIV)

First, Christ has set us free. When Christ took the burden of the law upon Himself, it crushed Him to death. But His rising from death assures us that we will not be crushed by the hardships and sin and burdens of the day. And then, Christ's freedom from death means that we can live in the freedom of grace.

The freedom of grace begins here and now and calls us to embrace everyday life. We move forward, toward life, into life, with enthusiasm and faith. By the Spirit's power, we make difficult choices and want to live a holy life; by prayer and the Word, we trust God when life looks dismal and hopeless; with hearts of thanksgiving, we look for signs of God's goodness and marks of His love. Somehow, in the midst of an imperfect world and the everyday grind, we embrace the joy of our salvation.

Energized and enthused, we roll up our sleeves. We listen with love. We volunteer for new projects precisely because "we've never done it that way before." We risk. We ponder and plan. We embrace the people God loves, offering ourselves as Christ's hands and feet and heart.

Some days we still long for freedom from this world and all its woes, but God keeps us here a while and invites us to use our freedom for this world. We are energized by the freedom God gives us!

PRAYER—Jesus my Savior, thank You for setting me free from sin's energy-sapping bondage and death. Fill me with the Holy Spirit's energy and enthusiasm for the tasks You set before me. Make me a joyful servant, fully present, full of the wonder of Your grace. I thank You for the promise of heaven, where I will praise Your goodness without end. Amen.

Ruth Koch, Mental Health Educator, Ann Arbor, Michigan
#23 from *Bright Ideas* 1999-2001



THE GREATEST OF THESE IS LOVE

Introduction:

Love is the greatest! The Greeks had three words for it rather than only one. Each word expressed a slightly different meaning of “love.” Filio was a brotherly love, or the relationship between friends; Eros was a sensual love such as that between sexes; Agape was considered the highest type of love—a love that was constant though undeserved, such as the kind of love that God has for us and we strive to have for others, but requires God’s Spirit to develop.

I What is LOVE called in 1 Corinthians 12:31? The best method in all relationships then is LOVE.

II A comparative evaluation of LOVE: 1 Corinthians 13:1-3.

vs. 1 _____ is nothing without love.

vs. 2 _____ and _____ are nothing without love.

vs. 3 _____ is nothing without love.

III What LOVE does not: 1 Corinthians 13:4-6.

A Outward feelings that would probably show in what ways?

1. Jealousy
2. Conceit, bragging, self-inflating
3. Thoughtlessness, inconsideration
4. Selfishness

B. Within the heart

1. Provocation
2. Evil planning, grudge bearing
3. Delighting in evil

IV What LOVE does: 1 Corinthians 13:4, 6, 7.

- A. Is patient
- B. Is kind
- C. Is happy with the truth
- D. Bears all things
- E. Believes all things
- F. Hopes all things
- G. Endures all things (wears well?)

V The permanence of LOVE: 1 Corinthians 13:8, see vs. 1-3

- A. Prophecies fail and end
- B. Tongues cease
- C. Knowledge vanishes
- D. LOVE never dies

VI The victory of LOVE: 1 Corinthians 13:9-13

- A. NOW it doesn't seem like a victory
- B. But then I will see it.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why are speech, knowledge and giving nothing without love? How can one improve speech, knowledge and giving to make it of value?
2. How far does love go in carrying out vs. 7?
3. Some say love is a 50-50 proposition. How would you respond to this and why?
4. From the thought in vs. 11, when would you think a person becomes "grown up"?
5. What comfort can the Christian find for life in vs. 12?

LOVE—IN THE CHURCH

Introduction:

Our togetherness because of Christ is made clear. See Ephesians 2:19-22 and Romans 12:4, 5. That which separates in Christ's church is also clear. Romans 8:9 and 1 Corinthians 3:11. What are those who are together in Christ to do? John 8:31, 32.

I WORD LOVE

- A. Love for the pure Word: Colossians 3:16; Psalm 110:97, 113, 167; Titus 1:9, Jeremiah 23:28; 1 Peter 2:2.
- B. Love in hearing that Word: Psalm 26:8; Psalm 27:4; John 8:47; Luke 11:28; Luke 10:42.
- C. Love in telling the Word: 1 Peter 2:9.
 1. If a person puts reason above the Word, does that person have love? Why?
 2. In what way is a person not loving when he refuses to hear the Word?
 3. What kind of person is it who refuses to tell the Word to others?
 4. Do we love when we speak out against false teaching?
 5. Can you think of an example of someone who had love for the Word?

II PEOPLE LOVE

- A. Between members and pastor: Acts 20:28; Ephesians 4:11-12; Thessalonians 5:12-13; Galatians 6:6.
- B. Between members and members: Ephesians 4:15, 25; 1 Corinthians 5:4-5; 2 Corinthians 7:7-8.
- C. Between members and non-members: 1 Timothy 3:7; 1 Peter 3:15.
 1. What do pastors do that breaks down love relationships with members in the church?
 2. What do members do that breaks down love relationships with pastors of the church?
 3. When a congregation carries out Matthew 18:15-17, is that love?
 4. In what way can the things mentioned in Colossians 3:8 destroy loving relation-

ships in the church?

III SERVICE LOVE

Read Ephesians 4:13, 15

- A. What is the purpose of love in the church? vs. 13
- B. Is there service without love in congregations? Identify it.
- C. List 5 things you as a member can do to foster love in your congregation.
 - (1) between pastor and members
 - (2) between members
 - (3) between members and non-membersShare your list

Conclusion: Read Ephesians 3:14-21. Is this a description of our love in the church?

LOVE—IN THE HOME

Introduction:

Read Deuteronomy 6:3-13, Psalm 127. Upon what must a home be built?

I. LOVE THROUGH RESPONSIBILITY

- A. In relationship to husband and wife, read Ephesians 5:21-25; 1 Peter 3:5-7.
 - 1. Does this relationship take away women's rights? Why or why not?
 - 2. Do we love if we express disagreements to one another?
 - 3. Is it true that the way to a man's heart is through his stomach?
- B. In relationship to members of the family, Ephesians 6:4; 2 Timothy 3:16; also read Proverbs 1:8, 4:1,20; Colossians 3:20; Proverbs 27:11.
 - 1. Do we live if we fail to discipline?
 - 2. What about the statement, "Jesus won't love you if you do this or that"?
 - 3. Is a parent loving who says, "I will let my child decide religion on his own"?
 - 4. What obligation do parents have after the children are confirmed?
- C. In relationship to in-laws, read Ruth 1:14-18.
 - 1. What can love do for good relationship between in-laws?

II LOVE THROUGH PRAYER (Discuss this with 5 or 6 people around you.)

- A. Read Matthew 5:44; Romans 12:12 . Why would prayer be good when you have been hurt by a loved one? What does a family show through prayer?

- B. Read Ephesians 5:20. How does this fit into a family situation?
- C. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:17. What would happen if every member in the home were to do this?

III. LOVE THROUGH SERVING

- A. Read 1 Timothy 5:4. Which is better, action or words, in showing love?
- B. Read Proverbs 15:4; Proverbs 18:21. In what way can words be loving or harsh? How is this serving?
- C. Read Romans 12:9-15. Apply the thought of love in serving: sincerely, tenderness, patience, weeping, fervency, distribution, rejoicing.
- D. Read John 11:1-4. What made this a loving home?
- E. Read Matthew 20:20-28. In what way should such a situation apply to the family?

Conclusion: Read Psalm 128. What is essential to good home building?

LOVE—IN NATION, COMMUNITY, NEIGHBORHOOD

Introduction:

Read Romans 13:8-10. To whom are these words directed? Who is my neighbor? Also, read Proverbs 14:34. Can we equate love with righteousness?

I. LOVE IS CONCERN IN THE COMMUNITY

Read 1 Timothy 2:1-3.

- A. Should we pray for, ask for, plead for, give thanks for those we do not love?
 1. What is the result of this?
 2. In what way is this a blessing for us?
- B. “As a community loves, so a community lives!” Is this a proper statement?
 1. Is this true of our community?
 2. Could the church be more concerned about the community? Why or why not?
 3. What is “social gospel”?

II LOVE IS RESPECT IN THE COMMUNITY

A. For those over us.

1. Government: Matthew 22:21; Romans 13:1-7, Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13-18; Acts 26:8; Acts 26:25, 6
2. At work: Ephesians 6:5-8; 1 Timothy 6:1-2

DISCUSS: How do the words, “render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar’s and unto God the things that are God’s” fit into love for community? Is it loving when workers strike and cause hardships to others? Is it loving when workers are not paid enough and families suffer?

B. For those under us. Read Romans 13:4; Ephesians 6:9

1. What love responsibility does the government have to the people?
2. What love responsibility does the employer have to the employee?

III. LOVE IS SERVICE TO THOSE IN THE COMMUNITY

Read Galatians 5:13, 14.

- A. Is our welfare program in the nation a program of love?
- B. Does the person who refuses to work show love to his neighbor?
- C. What would you say to a person who criticizes our programs, government, neighborhood, but will not take part in working for, voting in, and helping carry out the community responsibilities?
- D. How much time should a Christian spend in service to the community?

Conclusion: Read Romans 13:8-10 once more; then add Romans 13:14.

THE GREATEST OF THESE IS LOVE - *Written by* Rev. Victor Roth
Published by Lutheran Women’s Missionary League



LOVE IN ACTION

Cast: Clara; Millie; four voices offstage; narrator offstage.

Scene: Table cluttered with kitchen tools: utensils, spices, bowls, two cookie containers, one larger than the other, cookie rack, Good News Bible, church directory and telephone.

(Clara enters, wearing apron; elderly, she walks stiffly. Carries full cookie sheet with potholder; she hums a hymn, puts cookie sheet on rack and sighs heavily.)

Clara: Oh, my! One batch of cookies and I'm beat! You're getting old, Clara. Getting old? Ha! Admit it, gal, you're already there. Never thought I'd last this long. The Lord must have some use for me yet. Well, I got the cookies baked. Now when Millie comes tomorrow, I'll have something besides graham crackers for her. She always puts on the dog when she invites me over. Itty-bitty cakes and stuff. Well, I do admit, they're delicious. But the cookies will do and I'll have a little can to take to Dora when I go to see her. *(Glances at the cluttered table.)* But before I clean up this mess, I'll have to take a little rest. *(Picks up Good News Bible and reads Philippians 2:1-5 aloud.)*

(Closes Bible.) Lord, that's a picture of Millie. She's a saint. Always taking up a collection for some good cause, working herself to death organizing things, leading large groups in prayer. Only you, Lord, would know how many offices she's held. Now she's in charge of redecorating the sanctuary at church and raising money for food for the poor. Oh, I wish I had talent like Millie. I could never talk to people at meetings like Millie does.

(Clara sighs, props her elbow on the table, head on hand, closes her eyes and falls asleep.)

Voice 1: Clara, I never told you how much it meant to me when you came every day while I was so sick.

Voice 2: Dear Clara, you taught me to pray when I was in despair.

Voice 3: I was in one of your Sunday School classes. I'll never forget what I learned there about Jesus' love.

Voice 4: I was so lonely before you became my friend.

Voice 1: You brought soup and casseroles and you even cleaned my house.

Voice 2: You taught me to trust in my Savior.

Voice 3: You are always so cheerful, but I know you haven't had an easy life.

Voice 4: You were never too busy to hear my problems.

(The offstage voices begin to overlap, interrupting each other, finally all speaking at once.)

Voice 1: If it hadn't been for you...

Voice 2: Your prayers sustained me...

Voice 3: Now Jesus is always with me wherever...

Voice 4: Thank you for telling me about Jesus...

Voice 1: Thank you for...

Voice 2: My faith is...

Voice 3: Everyone knows you love...

Voice 4: Jesus has helped...

(Voices cease as a doorbell rings in the distance.)

Millie: *(Offstage.)* Clara! Clara, are you in there? It's Millie, Clara.

Clara: *(Waking with a start.)* What a strange dream! All those voices. I wonder what they were saying. They all talked at once.

Millie: *(Louder, still offstage.)* Clara! It's Millie!

Clara: Oh, my, come in, Millie. The door's not locked. I didn't hear you. I must have dozed off.

Millie: *(Enters fashionably dressed.)* I'm so sorry I woke you, dear. But a nap at ten o'clock in the morning? Really! Here, I've already written a complaint to the Elders about the condition of the church lawn and I'm on my way to a meeting about church kneelers. I'm determined to get them installed this year. *(Picks up cookie from sheet.)* Oh, you've made cookies. May I have one? *(She has already nibbled.)* Why, they're very good! And just as I was beginning to like graham crackers. *(Giggles.)*

Clara: Millie, you're a wonder. I don't know how anything would get done at church without you.

Millie: Well, I try to do my part. But Clara, that's not what I came to talk about. Tina Rogers called me right before I left the house. You know Tina and Don Rogers, don't you? They're that young couple with the three grubby little kids who always sit up front on Sundays. The baby usually cries and has to be taken out. Or the middle one has to go to the bathroom during the sermon. One day the oldest one tore a page from the hymnal. I trained my children better. They would never do anything like that.

Clara: Yes, of course I know the family. It's hard to keep three children quiet in church.

Millie: Yes, well, they live in that house in back of us that is such an eyesore. *(Still nibbling cookie.)*

Clara: But why did Tina call you?

Millie: I don't really know. I guess she found my name in the church directory and knew I lived close, but I really don't know what she expected me to do. Anyway, she said her husband fell off some kind of scaffolding this morning at that bank construction site. She seemed to think I could do something. Really, I could hardly hear her. The kids were screaming and she was hysterical. Anyway, I told her I was just about to leave for this committee meeting but I would stop by and tell you about the accident. I surely didn't want to get involved with those grubby kids dressed like this...well, do you think you...?

Clara: Yes, of course. *(Gently nudges Millie toward the door.)* You go on to your meeting and I'll call Tina right now.

Millie: Oh, I knew you'd think of something. You're a dear. *(Exits.)*

(Clara is already thumbing through the director and dialing.)

Clara: Tina, I just heard about your husband. Do you know how he is? Oh, my, I'm so sorry. Tina, can you hear me? Tina, listen to me. Give the phone to Sissy so I can talk to her while you put the baby back in his crib. It won't hurt him to cry a little. Hurry, Tina. I need to talk to you.

Sissy, are you there? Sissy, listen to me like a big girl. Your mommy needs you to give her a big hug and tell her you love her. Listen to me, Sissy. Try not to cry. Sissy, I'm coming to see you and I want you to get out all your dolls and line them up very neatly on the floor in front of the baby's crib so he can watch you. When I get there, I want you to tell me about every single doll. *(Pause.)* Yes, Teddy, too. *(Pause.)* Well, maybe I can fix up the rip in his tummy. Yes, dear. Now get out all the dolls and let me talk to your mommy.

Tina, are you there? You're going through a hard time now. Let me help you. I'm coming right over. Will you pray with me now? Heavenly and merciful Father, we need your care and mercy always, but especially now. Tina and Don Rogers placed their lives in your hands long ago. You blessed their home with love and children

and the Holy Spirit nourished their faith. For these great gifts we thank you. Heavenly Father, comfort Don in his pain and calm Tina's anxiety. We rely on Your promise that all things will work for good for those who love You. Give them the assurance of your unfailing love. This we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

Tina, I know you want to go to the hospital to be with your husband. Are you calm enough to drive? Good. Keep Sissy busy lining up her dolls. The baby will quiet down when he starts watching her. Now, get yourself dressed. I'll be there in 10 minutes. Try not to worry. I'll take care of little Joey when he comes home from kindergarten. *(Pause.)* Now, Tina, I've bathed enough babies in my lifetime! *(Pause.)* Please don't worry about a messy kitchen. I've seen enough of them in my lifetime, too. Sissy will help me find whatever I need. Three-year-olds are very good helpers. They know just about everything. No more talk now. I'll be there soon.

(Clara hangs up, takes off her apron.)

Clara: No time to change clothes. Who cares what I'm wearing? Cookies. I'll take some for the children. *(Empties contents of cookie sheet into small container. Hesitates.)* Oh, well, Dora doesn't need cookies. She ought to go on a diet...I'll take her roses instead. *(Hesitates again, then resolutely puts all the cookies into the larger container, snaps on the lid and picks it up.)* Millie did say she's getting to like graham crackers. I'll take the whole batch along. *(Exits.)*

Narrator:

If you are rich and see another person in need, yet close your heart against the other, how can you claim that you have love for God in your heart? My children! Our love should not be just words and talk; it must be true love which shows itself in action. 1 John 3:17-18 TEV

So let us not become tired of doing good; for if we do not give up the time will come when we will reap the harvest. So then, as often as we have the chance, we should do good to everyone, and especially to those who belong to our family in the faith. Galatians 6:9-10 TEV

Amen, Jesus, let it be so!

LOVE IN ACTION - *Written by Dorothy Kohr*
Published by Lutheran Women's Missionary League
December 1988



WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?

A Sketch Based on Luke 10:25-37

Characters: Narrator, four women

Narrator: Jesus told a parable one day to teach a young lawyer who had asked, “Who is my neighbor?” This sketch will retell the parable using a modern day example of that same query. When Jesus told the lawyer the parable, the lawyer was to answer his own question. Jesus used the teaching story of the “Good Samaritan.” As the parable is read in parts throughout the sketch, think about the same question.

The sketch opens with a woman sitting, dejected, discouraged and crying.

Narrator: There was this woman who had been beaten and wounded by life. She may have recently become a widow, lost a child, been shunned by her friends, fought with her husband, contemplated divorce, or felt extremely lonely and useless. No matter what life had given her, she was hurting. She needed help. Who would be her neighbor and friend?

Enter Neighbor #1. She immediately notices her neighbor’s tears. She goes over and puts her arm around the lady.

Neighbor #1: Look, I’ve felt like you, too. I’ve cried and been so upset. I know just how you feel. It’s an awful feeling, believe me, I know. Once I cried and moped around for a week. I really can sympathize with you. Why, if I were you, I’d try to get out. Just being away for awhile makes one feel better. In fact, I took a trip to Chicago. I don’t know if I ever told you about that trip. I really forced myself to go, but it did me a world of good. The train trip was so nice, even though there were so many people. And I had to stand part of the way. But just getting away was good. You really should get away. Take my advice, I know.
(Pause) You look so morbid. How about smiling a little, too? You certainly aren’t helping yourself looking that way. It’s just amazing what a smile can do, and talking with someone really helped me. What’s on your mind? Why are you so blue?

Woman: Well, I just feel... *(Interrupted by Neighbor #1)*

Neighbor #1: I know how that is! It seems no one is concerned these days. Always hurrying and so busy. Never seems to be time to stop and talk and listen. I’m so glad I could stop and visit with you today.

Woman: *(Sniffing)* I just don’t know what to... *(Interrupted by Neighbor #1)*

Neighbor #1: It sure does seem in my life that troubles never end. I know how lost you feel. There’s always a brighter day, though. Believe me, I know. Now you start being positive! Get yourself out of this house and visit someone. Smile a little. Oh,

my, look at the time! (*Looks at watch*) I must hurry! You know how that is. Nice talking with you. (*Exit*)

Narrator: *Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him he passed by on the other side.* Luke 10:31 This last friend actually just passed by the hurting person. She was always the authority, but never the listener and healer.

Enter Neighbor #2. She looks at her friend crying and then goes and looks out the window.

Neighbor #2: My, what a beautiful day outside. It just seems ages since we've had a nice day. I was going downtown to a sale and just thought I'd stop by for a few minutes. Is that a new dress? (*Admires woman's dress*) It sure looks nice on you. (*Suddenly sees tears*) Why, you're crying. Now, dear, what's the problem? It can't be all that bad on such a beautiful day. Are you sick? Can I call a doctor for you? I go to a very nice doctor; maybe you should try him. In fact, I was just there last week. We had such a nice visit. My doctor always has time to talk. Even though I had to wait a long time just to have my blood pressure checked, I enjoy my doctor. He has such nice magazines in his waiting room. Want me to make an appointment for you? I'd be glad to call.

Woman: No, I'm feeling fine. Just that these days are so long; I really am upset with myself and my life. guess I just need a good friend to talk to...

Neighbor #2 admires flowers sitting on table.

Neighbor #2: These certainly are beautiful flowers. Did you grow them? (*Looks out the window*) My, the sky is blue today. It hasn't been so nice in months. Oh, I'm sorry, what were you saying? (*Continues to look around the room*)

Woman: I just feel so down. Things don't seem to get better. I've been so lonely. No one calls or stops by...

Neighbor #2: Speaking of calling, did you hear about Barbara receiving a call from St. Louis? She was so excited. I guess she won a trip. Sure wish something like that would happen to one of us. Wouldn't that be nice?

Woman: Yes, it would. But then I don't feel like doing...(*Interrupted by Neighbor #2*)

Neighbor #2: With so much going on, I wouldn't be able to go on any trip even if I did win one. Seems there is so much to do. After I go downtown, there is a meeting of our Mission Circle. Always something. Guess I'd better be on my way. Please call me sometime soon. (*Exit*)

Narrator: *So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.* Luke 10:32 And so our hurting friend was passed by again. She is still

in need of someone to help her. This last person only looked on her neighbor seeing her dress, but not her needs. She was obviously too occupied with her own needs and desires.

Enter Neighbor #3. She notices her friend's depression and tears at once. She goes over, sits down next to her and quietly begins to talk.

Neighbor #3: It seems as if this is an unhappy day for you. It hurts me to see you so “down.” I know you’ve been through a lot lately and it must be difficult to stay on top of things. It’s comforting to know that our Savior never lets us down. He understands our feelings. He promises to strengthen us and give us His peace.

Woman: Thank you for reminding me of Jesus. Seems as if I really had forgotten His promises. I’ve been so lonely and upset. I just can’t get myself out of this state. I know I should go to the Savior, but it sometimes seems so useless.

Neighbor #3: I apologize for not coming more often to visit and look in on you. I haven’t forgotten about you. You are in my daily prayers.

Woman: That’s so good to hear. I was beginning to think that no one cared anymore.

Neighbor #3: Even if it seems your friends are neglecting you, your Savior isn’t. He says, “I will be with you always,” and He tells you “to cast all your cares upon Him, for He cares for you.” In our Mission Circle, we have been studying about a fulfilled life with Jesus. It’s been such an uplifting study. I have an idea, why don’t you come with me tonight? We’ll stop for supper and then go to the meeting. Perhaps you will even decide to come with me from now on.

Woman: You’ve been so kind to listen and remind me of my Savior’s love. I think I would enjoy going with you tonight. I can’t make any promises about next week, though.

Neighbor #3: I’ll just be happy to have you come tonight. *(Pause)* I’ll be in touch before next weeks study. Come on, let’s go to that little cafe and while we’re eating I’ll fill you in on our study so far. I would be happy to share what I’ve learned about my life with Jesus.

Both exit.

Narrator: *But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion; and went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring oil and wine; then he set him on his own beast and brought him to an inn and took care of him. And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the inn keeper, saying, “Take care of him and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.” Then Jesus asked the lawyer, “Which of these three, do you think, proved to be neighbor to the man who fell amount the robbers?” He said, “The one who showed mercy on him.” And Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.”*

Who is your neighbor? Who is hurting from life? Can you help someone? Think back to the three women and how they dealt with a friend in need. Did you learn something? Are you ready to act? Remember the words of Jesus, "Go and do likewise."

Prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus, You are indeed our greatest neighbor. You have given us the best example possible - You gave up Your life for us!

We ask that You would make us more aware of others and their needs. Make us sensitive to the feelings and wants of those around us. Forgive us for the times we have failed to be the neighbor we should have been.

Now may the Holy Spirit give us the courage and power to be that God-pleasing neighbor. Fill us with compassion, insight, and Your joy that we may care and share. In Your Name. Amen.

WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?

A Bible Study

The Parable of the Good Samaritan Luke 10:25-37

Begin your group study with a prayer for the blessing of the Holy Spirit. Then join in reading the Scripture, Luke 10:25-37, in unison, by groups, or individually.

THE SITUATION

We all know the parable well. We've heard it often and no doubt there are some who could repeat it from memory. Describe a neighbor. (To help you with your answer, consider the questions: What is a neighbor like? What does a neighbor do?)

Who do you think is your neighbor? (Give some specific examples from your own life.)

The lawyer asks a good question appropriate for all of us: "**What should I do to inherit eternal life?**" The question is similar to the one asked by the jailer at Phillipi, "**What must I do to be saved?**" Acts 16:30 Jesus certainly knows the answer to the question, but He doesn't give the lawyer the answer. Why?

There are situations where not giving an answer might be the best. Jesus responds to the lawyer by asking him a question, "**What is written in the law?**" For your group to discuss: How does the Law serve the Gospel? (It may be well for you to define clearly the Law and the Gospel.)

The lawyer knew that he was to love God above everything else, and he knew he was to love his neighbor as much as he loved himself. But perhaps to get at one of the fine points of the law, or to put Jesus on the spot, or to escape the inevitable answer to the question for his own life, the lawyer asks, "**Just who is my neighbor?**"

THE PARABLE

The Priest (maybe he had to attend an LWML Rally) and the Levite (his excuse no doubt was good, too) passed by the injured man - maybe their reason for hurrying was a good one.

How easy it is to find an excuse for avoiding an unpleasant task, a task that is not to our liking. Discuss: Your poorest effort is better than your best excuse!

The difficulty always arises when one is forced to look at his own life. It is easy for us to criticize the Priest and the Levite. It's easy to see the speck and not the log. (cf. Matthew 7:3) As you evaluate your own actions, can you illustrate several times when you have seen a neighbor in need but something else (of more importance) has come up, and you have had to (or wanted to) pass him by?

For example: You see a man with a cane having trouble opening a door. You realize he could use a helping hand, but you have no time... **or:** your next-door neighbor has a problem with gossip - you could help her, but are afraid she will just talk about you, too.

These are very personal answers. Please write them down and share them only if you feel free in doing so.

Jesus wanted the lawyer to confess his sins. Too bad that he did not confess and ask Jesus to forgive him. Jesus tells him, "**Go and do likewise!**" Jesus did not want him to think that it was possible for him to love his neighbor perfectly, and thus earn heaven for himself. Jesus rather wants to give him another opportunity to realize that he could never earn heaven by keeping God's law.

We often feel that we can please God by trying to do as He wishes. But sooner or later, we come to recognize that we can only fail in living up to His standards. When we come to the realization that we cannot fulfill God's ways completely, what is important for us to know and to experience?

At this point, you might want to look back at some of your "confessions" on the previous question. Maybe now you'd like to share some of your sins. Here is a very good time to talk about failures, make confession, and then hear the Good News from a brother or sister in Jesus Christ.

WHAT MEANING IS THERE IN THE PARABLE FOR US?

This parable teaches many lessons. It teaches that everyone in need of help is our neighbor. It teaches that true love for the neighbor will ask, "What can I do to help?" It teaches that to practice neighborly love, we must overcome prejudices. Above all, it teaches us that we cannot be saved by keeping the law of God. The way to heaven is through faith in Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Study these verses if you have extra time:

These verses of Scripture will help you see the two contrasts:

SIN

Leviticus 19:2

Matthew 5:48

1 John 3:8

James 2:10

and

GRACE

Ephesians 2:8-10

1 John 4:9

John 3:16

Romans 1:16

What additional neighbor needs can my society help meet?

What personal (individual) services might I provide for my neighbor?

In closing, you might want to ponder (or discuss) the following questions:

- What is my neighbor's need?
- Am I as anxious to provide for my neighbor's spiritual needs as I am in helping him find relief for his physical needs?
- To what extent do "mission work" and "charity" belong together?

WHO WILL WEAR THE CROWN

Room Devotion

This devotion may be used by an individual or by those sharing a room by alternating the reading of each section.

What's a good way to serve the Lord?

We can start with prayer - Change me, Lord.

What's another way to serve the Lord?

Live each day in humbleness.

We start with prayer - Change me, Lord.

What is still another way to serve the Lord?

Have compassion for others.

Live each day in humbleness.

We start with prayer - Change me, Lord.

Now you've got the picture. Give me one more way.

Be meek but strong.

Have compassion for others.

Live each day in humbleness.

We start with prayer - Change me, Lord.

What's another way to serve the Lord?

Be merciful, like God has been to us.

Be meek but strong.

Have compassion for others.

Live each day in humbleness.

We start with prayer - Change me, Lord.

What's another way to serve the Lord?

Give of our mites to all missions.

Be merciful.

Be meek but strong.

Have compassion for others.

Live each day in humbleness.

We start with prayer - Change me, Lord.

Is there still another way to serve the Lord?

Wear Christ's crown of thorns when persecuted.
Give of our mites.
Be merciful.
Be meek but strong.
Have compassion for others.
Live each day in humbleness.
We start with prayer - Change me, Lord.

Now give me one more way to serve the Lord.

Be pure in heart, do what is right.
Wear Christ's crown of thorns.
Give of our mites.
Be merciful.
Be meek but strong.
Have compassion for others.
Live each day in humbleness.
We start with prayer - Change me, Lord.

What's another way to serve the Lord?

Share our faith, the best we can.
Be pure in heart.
Wear Christ's crown of thorns.
Give of our mites.
Be merciful.
Be meek but strong.
Have compassion for others.
Live each day in humbleness.
We start with prayer - Change me, Lord.

What's the final way to serve the Lord?

Use our talents wisely. Give God glory.
Share our faith.
Be pure in heart.
Wear Christ's crown of thorns.
Give of our mites.
Be merciful.
Be meek but strong.
Have compassion for others.
Live each day in humbleness.
We start with prayer - Change me, Lord.

PRAYER OF COMMITMENT

Lord Jesus,
What a price you paid - for me. You wore the crown of
thorns - for me. What a life You lived - for me. All because
of Your love - for me.

**I love you, Lord Jesus. I want to wear Your crown of
thorns. I want to be like You. I want to be your servant.
I want to be different.**

Change me, Lord, I'm too selfish to change myself. Please
don't give up on me, Lord. You're my only hope. Use me to
bring Your blessings into the lives of those around me.
Enable me and equip me - starting today, to more fully reflect
Your example of a servant.

**To You, my Savior Jesus, be all glory and praise, today
and forever. Amen.**

LITANY OF OUR RESPONSE TO GOD'S LOVE

Lutheran women, one and all . . .
We have heard the Gospel call.
**We, by faith, have seen our Lord crucified and then
restored.**

Lutheran women, all acclaim . . .
We unite to praise His name.
We have seen Him pay the price, for our sins a sacrifice.

Lutheran women, young and old.
Yes, we know the challenge bold.
Help us take the Gospel light to a world in darkest night.

Lutheran women, all around . . .
God's abiding love will abound
**If we set an example in the home, and invite all those
who roam.**
**If we pray for sinners lost, and give our gifts for missions'
cost.**

Lutheran women, coast to coast.
Let us united be, in the Holy Trinity.

Lutheran women, in the Lord a mighty host . . .
**We are one in faith, in home, and love; working for our
Lord above.**

Lutheran women, everywhere . . .
**When our earthly work is done, we with our Lord in
heaven will be one. Amen. Amen. Amen.**

THE BENEDICTION

We go in peace. We are linked by love to serve the Lord, the
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
Amen.

(Format adapted from a litany written by Rev. Terry Dittmer for 1980 Youth Gathering)

Written by Ruth Dexheimer
Adapted by LWML Christian Resources Editors 2001

Name _____

Address _____

Phone number _____

Read together:

Dear _____, I promise to be a friend to you. I can
Love you because God loved both of us first. With His
Help, I will be kind, tenderhearted and forgiving
Toward you. With his help, I will try to
Encourage and support you in your
Christian life. I will thank God
for you and I will pray
For you.

Your friend in Christ,

Name _____

Address _____

Phone number _____

Read together:

Dear _____, I promise to be a friend to you. I can
Love you because God loved both of us first. With His
Help, I will be kind, tenderhearted and forgiving
Toward you. With his help, I will try to
Encourage and support you in your
Christian life. I will thank God
for you and I will pray
For you.

Your friend in Christ,



One in Christ

Based on Psalm 133

Leader: *O God, how precious it is for us and how pleasing it must be for You when Your children learn to live and work together in unity. (Paraphrase of Psalm 133:1)*

Group 1: Often we find ourselves in conflict with those around us and do not show evidence of You in our lives.

Group 2: *May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Romans 15:5-6)*

Group 3: *Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues, put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. (Colossians 3:12-14)*

Leader: It is in the measure that we do this that we begin to resemble You and to carry out most effectively Your purposes in our disjointed and discordant world.

Group 1: How can our sinful selves ever hope to reflect the love You have shown us?

Group 2: *Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we, who with veiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into His likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, Who is the Spirit. (2 Corinthians 3:17-18)*

Group 3: *If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from His love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. (Philippians 2:1-2)*

Leader: Come, let us together bless His name, rejoice in His loving concern for us, declare His worth to all creatures, and walk in obedience to His will.

Group 1: So many times we have been reluctant to proclaim the wonders of Your love, hiding behind so many excuses.

- Group 2: *For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline. So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord.* (2 Timothy 1:7-8b)
- Group 3: *I am not ashamed of the Gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes.* (Romans 1:16)
- Leader: It is the same God who made heaven and earth, and all of us who dwell therein. Let us worship and serve Him together.
- Group 1: God has lovingly made those of us who serve Him, as He has made all people. Sometimes we think we are “more” chosen because we work more visibly in His kingdom.
- Group 2: *God has combined the members of the body and has given greater honor to the parts that lacked it.* (I Corinthians 12:24b)
- All:** ***There should be no division in the body.*** (I Corinthians 12:25a)
- Group 3: *Its parts should have equal concern for each other.* (I Corinthians 12:25b)
- Group 1: If one part suffers,
- All:** **every part suffers with it;**
- Group 2: If one part is honored,
- All:** ***Every part rejoices with it.*** (I Corinthians 12:26)
- Group 3: *You are part of the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.* (I Corinthians 12:27)
- All:** **WE ARE ONE IN THE BODY OF CHRIST!**

All Scripture references are taken from the *New International Version*.

ONE IN CHRIST *Written by Cheryl Shultz*
Published by Lutheran Women's Missionary League

RETREAT EVALUATION

Your answers will help in the planning of future events.

Please rate the following by circling a number on the scale. The number one (1) represents poor and the number ten (10) represents excellent.

Speaker	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Bible Study	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Theme Fulfillment	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Sketches	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Ice Breaker	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Quilt	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Fellowship Opportunities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Morning Walk	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Housing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Meals	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Location	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Please complete the following:

What I liked most about this retreat was

If I could change one thing I would

I would have liked more time for

Additional comments:

Thank you for your help!



YOU ARE INVITED!

to the
LWML Retreat

The Greatest of These is LOVE

Speaker: _____

Date: _____

Place: _____

Cost: _____

RSVP by: _____

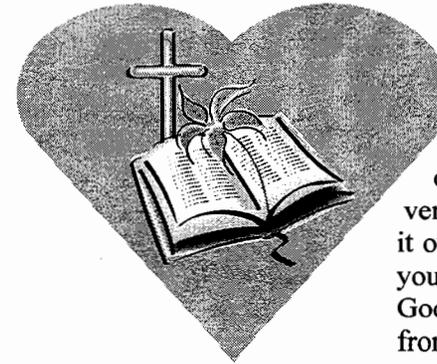
To: _____

*All Scripture references are taken from the
New International Version Bible.*

LOVE NOTES has been prepared for your daily enrichment as our Lord comes to you in love through His Word.

*Christian Resources Editors Committee
1999-2001*

LOVE NOTES—*Compiled by Barbara Burgess
Published by Lutheran Women's Missionary League*



LOVE NOTES FROM SCRIPTURE

Below you will find a verse of LOVE for each day of the month. Daily read the verse that follows the date. Read it over several times. Repeat it to yourself throughout the day. It is God's LOVE for you for that day from His Word.

1. *The LORD appeared to us in the past, saying: "I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with loving kindness."* Jeremiah 31:3
2. *And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself.* Matthew 22:39
3. *Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.* Deuteronomy 6:5
4. *For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.* John 3:16
5. *A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.* John 13:34
6. *By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.* John 13:35
7. *My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.* John 15:12
8. *Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.* John 15:13
9. *And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.* 1 Corinthians 13:13

10. *Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.* 1 Corinthians 13: 4-7

11. *May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.* 2 Corinthians 13:14

12. *And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge- that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.* Ephesians 3:17b-19

13. *Peace to the brothers, and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with an undying love.* Ephesians 6:23-24

14. *And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ-to the glory and praise of God.* Philippians 1: 9-11

15. *God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them.* Hebrews 6:10

16. *And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.* Hebrews 10:24

17. *For he received honor and glory from God the Father when the voice came to him from the Majestic Glory, saying, This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.* 2 Peter 1:17

18. *But if anyone obeys his word, God's love is truly made complete in him. This is how we know we are in him: Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did.* 1 John 2:5-6

19. *How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should*

be call ed the children of God! 1 John 3:1

20. *This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.* 1 John 3: 16

21. *Dear children, let us not love one another with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.* 1 John 3: 18

22. *Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God.* 1 John 4: 7

23. *This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.* 1 John 4: 9-10

24. *Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.* 1 John 4: 11-12

25. *God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God is in him.* 1 John 4:16b

26. *There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.* 1 John 4: 18

27. *We love because he first loved us.* 1 John 4: 19

28. *And he has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother.* 1 John 4:21

29. *Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Father's Son, will be with us in truth and love.* 2 John 3

30. *I ask that we love one another. And this is love: that we walk in obedience to his commands. As you have heard from the beginning, his command is that you walk in love.* 2 John 5b-6

31. *Keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life.* Jude 21

RETREAT REGISTRATION

The Greatest of These is LOVE
(dates)

Name (print) _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone number _____

I will be attending the entire retreat one day only

Amount enclosed _____

RETREAT REGISTRATION

The Greatest of These is LOVE
(dates)

Name (print) _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone number _____

I will be attending the entire retreat one day only

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RETREAT REGISTRATION

The Greatest of These is LOVE
(dates)

Name (print) _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone number _____

I will be attending the entire retreat one day only

Amount enclosed _____

RESERVATION CONFIRMATION

Date _____

Dear _____
We have received your reservation and \$ _____ (deposit/
amount of retreat) and are pleased that you will be attending the

The Greatest of These is LOVE Retreat.

Plan to arrive by _____ so we can give you your room as-
signment and materials and you can settle in before we begin our
activities for the evening promptly at _____ P.M.

Please remember to bring your Bible, comfortable clothes and
shoes.

_____ Retreat Committee

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Date _____

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shoes.

_____ Retreat Committee



The Greatest of These is LOVE

BULLETIN INSERTS

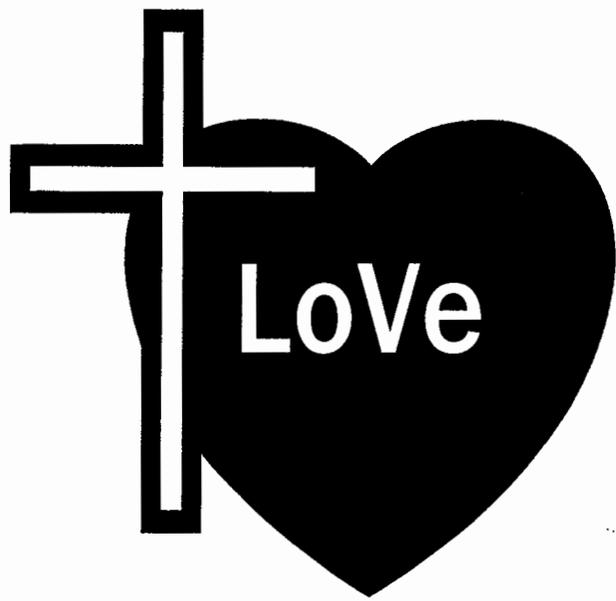
The following are bulletin “blurbs” for use in your church bulletin. Begin using them about four weeks before the deadline for reservations to your retreat. Insert the needed information in the appropriate blank spaces.

WEEK ONE: The (name of sponsoring group) is sponsoring a weekend retreat on (dates) at (location of event). The theme for the retreat is *The Greatest of These is LOVE*. (name of speaker), retreat speaker, will lead participants through the many aspects of *love* as found in Scripture and show how we can reflect them in our lives. There will be opportunities for fun and relaxation as well. Cost: _____. Reservations should be sent to: _____.

WEEK TWO: *The Greatest of These is LOVE* retreat will provide a chance to grow in God’s Word, learn more of what love means and opportunities for fellowship, crafts, and so much more. The dates are: _____. Send your reservation in today!

WEEK THREE: Ladies, the deadline draws near for the (name of group) retreat, *The Greatest of These is LOVE*. Don’t miss an opportunity for spiritual growth as well as getting to know your sisters in Christ. A variety of activities are planned for your enjoyment as well. Send your reservations in now!

WEEK FOUR: Have you sent in your reservation for: *The Greatest of These is LOVE* retreat? The deadline is this week! Join your sisters in Christ and hear speaker (name of speaker) as (he/she) leads you into God’s Word and the knowledge of what true love is. There will be time for relaxation out-of-doors, getting to know others, crafts and singing . Don’t miss this very special weekend. When: (dates) Where: (place/location) Cost _____. Send your reservation to: (name of person, address, etc. or phone number).



Retreat!

The
Greatest
of These
is LOVE

Speaker:

Date:

Place:

Cost:

Contact:

Deadline:



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Love