

Sabbath Moments
A Service of Healing and Wholeness
Sunday, January 18, 2009, 6 p.m.
Southport Presbyterian Church
The Toney Chapel

The Love of God...

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. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.
(John 3:16-17)

...I often desired to know what was our Lord's meaning [in all the visions she had been shown]. And fifteen years and more after, I was answered in spiritual understanding, with this saying: "Would you know your Lord's meaning in this thing? Know it well: love was his meaning. Who showed it you? Love. What did he show you? Love. Wherefore did he show it you? For love. Hold yourself therein and you shall know and learn more in the same; but you will never know nor learn another thing therein without end."

Thus was I taught that love was our Lord's meaning. And I saw full surely in this and in all that before God made us he loved us; which love was never slaked, nor never shall be.

And in this love he has done all his work; and in this love he has made all things profitable to us; and in this love our life is everlastingly fixed.
(Julian of Norwich, from *Revelations of Divine Love*)

My beloved friends, let us continue to love each other since love comes from God. Everyone who loves is born of God and experiences a relationship with God. The person who refuses to love doesn't know the first thing about God, because God is love – so you can't know him if you don't love. This is how God showed his love for us: God sent his only Son into the world so we might live through him. This is the kind of love we are talking about – not that we once upon a time loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to clear away our sins and the damage they've done to our relationship with God.
(1st John 4:7-10, The Message)

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. [...] There are three things that will endure – faith, hope, and love – and the greatest of these is love.
(1st Corinthians 13:4-7, 13)

I Am With You Always

A poem by Irene Zimmerman

I am with you when you're running out of wine
at your child's wedding feast
and you know the shame of it will last forever.
I will be for you the Best Wine of all.

I am with you in your storm-tossed boat
when joy, hope, life seem lost at sea
and you come close to falling overboard.
I will still the storm, restore you to tranquility.

I am with you when your body is so bent
that friendly faces, trees, sky are lost to view
and all you see are feet hurrying by.
I will empower you to stand up straight again.

I am with you when men catch you in adultery
and your death is but a stone's throw away.
I am the Gate to the sheepfold. I will lay
my body down between your enemies and you.

I am with you when you claim you do not know me.
I have prayed that you may overcome despair
and bring the heavy burden of your sin to me.
I have forgiven you ahead of time.

I am with you when your dearest friend and brother
passes through the dark door of death,
leaving you disconsolate. I know the pain of loss.
I AM the Resurrection and the Life.

God is love. When we take up permanent residence in a life of love, we live in God and God lives in us. This way, love has the run of the house, becomes at home and mature in us, so that we're free of worry on Judgment Day – our standing in the world is identical with Christ's.

(1st John 4:13-16, The Message)

God be with you as you enter a new week.