

*Sabbath Moments*  
*A Service of Healing and Wholeness*  
Sunday, May 4, 2008, 6pm  
Southport Presbyterian Church  
The Toney Chapel

*Loving God and Loving One Another*

**“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”**  
(Jesus’ words, from Matthew 22:37-40)

The dreaded words having been uttered, More was given one final opportunity to speak – a chance to plead for mercy customarily given to convicts after sentencing. But More did not ask for mercy; instead he offered forgiveness:

“More have I not to say, my lords, but that like as the blessed Apostle St. Paul, as we read in the Acts of the Apostles, was present, and consented to the death of St. Stephen, and kept their clothes that stoned him to death, and yet be they now both twain holy Saints in heaven, and shall continue there friends forever, so I verily trust, and shall therefore right heartily pray, that though your lordships have now here in earth been judges to my condemnation, we may yet hereafter in heaven merrily all meet together, to our everlasting salvation.”

(St. Thomas More, as quoted in *The King’s Good Servant But God’s First*)

**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.**

(1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 13:4-7, 13)

The poor have no need of our pity. The poor need our help and assistance. What they give us is more than we give them. Christ said: “I was hungry, and you gave me to eat.” He hungered not only for bread but for love that makes one understand that one is loved, is known, is somebody for someone. He was naked not only in reference to clothing but also in reference to human dignity, because of the injustice that is done to the poor, who are disdained simply because they are poor. Christ knew the abandonment of those in prison, those who are rejected, those who are not wanted, those who walk through this world devoid of all help.

(Mother Teresa, as quoted in *Teresa of Calcutta: A Pencil in God’s Hand*)

**What is pure love? [...] It is steady, orderly, and without feverishness. In the words of Gertrude More, it is courageous, humble, constant, not worn out with labors, not daunted with difficulties. [...] Love] does not mean pious effervescence. It means bravely sticking things out when we are tired, disheartened, and worried; and it means doing this because**

**we look beyond it all, because we are trying to respond to the love of God, seeking and serving Christ in our fellow human beings.**

*(From *The Ways of the Spirit*, by Evelyn Underhill)*

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 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.**

So faith, hope, love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

*(1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 13:13)*

**God be with you as you enter a new week.**