

Love With Your Mind (P. Lisa Farewell)

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Preacher: Pastor Tom Kraft

[0 : 0 0] Good morning, everybody. Welcome to worship at Niagara Falls First and Pendleton Center United Methodist Church. This is the day that the Lord has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it.

This is the day This is the day That the Lord has made That the Lord has made Let us rejoice Let us rejoice And be glad in it And be glad in it This is the day That the Lord has made Let us rejoice And be glad in it This is the day This is the day That the Lord has made Let us pray Glorious Lord, we open our hearts and our lives to you Speak to us Reveal to us your love, your grace, and your will for our lives As we worship you through Jesus Christ our Savior Amen Now I'd like to invite you all to stand if you're able as we sing together

Faith of our fathers Faith of our fathers We will be true to thee We will be true to thee Till the day We will be true to thee Faith of our fathers Faith of our fathers We will be true to thee We will be true to thee That glorious word Faith of our fathers Faith of our fathers Holy faith We will be true to thee Till death Faith of our fathers Faith of our fathers Today Name

That comes from God We all shall land Be truly free Faith of our fathers Holy faith We will be true To live till death Faith of our fathers We will love Both friend and foe In all our strife And preach thee too As love knows how Thy kindly words And purchase life Faith of our fathers Holy faith We will be true To live till death The Lord be with you And also with you

Please be seated This morning I wanted to share one thing with you about next week When we have this car parade that we're going to be doing We're going to also be offering Holy Communion We'll be consecrating the communion elements in the worship service in the morning And then we will be distributing them later on Now it will be done safely One person whose hands are sanitized, gloved and such We'll take the bread and drop it in your hands So you'll come like you're supposed to with communion To receive it If you'd like to receive the juice We ask that you bring a cup We will have some But we would prefer if you bring your own cup And it will be poured into that cup So bring a cup for everybody in the car And remember you're going to be taking communion through the windows So don't be bringing cars that don't have windows that open You know what I'm talking about Because we'd love to celebrate communion with you Now it is appropriate to just take communion by one type So if you want to just take the bread That's completely theologically correct

[4 : 22] Or just the cup That's also correct And also if you don't want to take communion You can still come and enjoy the festivity of the day Just keep your windows rolled up when you go past the communion service Because there will be one on each side of the cars as you go by Thank you and may God bless you with this day So we do welcome you to worship along with us this morning And we ask that everyone just take a moment If you haven't done so already And fill out the friendship card If you just put your name on there We just want to know if you're there with us We're hoping that soon we'll be able to join together in person But until then we're gathering together digitally And we get to know who is actually here with us Celebrating and worshiping If we're not connected yet Put your email address on there And we can get connected with you And there's also a place on there for you to put your prayer concerns If you have any concerns that you'd like to have lifted up in prayer Those are given out to the pastors and the prayer team And then also there's a place for blessings

We want to be able to proclaim all the wonderful things that are going on in our lives How God has richly blessed all of us And so if you proclaim that That's actually projected in next week's worship service We also want to make sure that we're being disciplined in this time And so if you're on Facebook We invite you to the PCUMC Fellowship Group And along with that When you join that You are able to join in with all the other people that are on there In a large group of faith community But also they have music and devotion and prayer And it's just a wonderful time of community But we're also asking for people to serve in that ministry You could be a facilitator Or you could be someone who does the welcoming Or perhaps you have a gift of music Or you'd like to do some devotions Or maybe you're a writer And you would like to write some blogs Or share your faith story Or maybe you're a photographer You know with any of these things There's so many options If you're interested in that

Please contact Lori Jagow And then we also want to make sure That people are starting to get closer together as well in discipleship And so we're starting some small groups And so if you are interested in joining a smaller group Where people can discuss their faith And be able to support one another in that We invite you to get involved with that Contact the church And we will get you connected in that way as well So we do this morning have a link there for our children's bulletin You can download that if you have children with you And they can all color and fill that in as we go And we also have a link there for giving So if you would like to give digitally that is an option Giving is a practice that we do as Christians Some way that we offer ourselves back to God A reflection of gratitude And giving back to God What God's already blessed us with So you can give digitally You can also just mail in a check Whatever works for you

But we give with a sincere heart With gratitude and praise to God And this morning's offertory will be by Susan Wisawitz and Adrian Almeida And this morning's offertory will be by the Thank you.

Thank you.

[9 : 05] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[11 : 35] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[14:05] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

It says, Thank you.

you to make sure that you join us for worship. Next week will be my last week with you in junior church. Do you know why? You're going to see some things about why later in the service.

[19 : 34] But we're going to have a wonderful time with our new guest next week, and then you'll get to meet. It's a surprise. Don't tell anybody. It's a surprise. But when I introduce our new guest, I think you're going to be very, very excited. So we'll have one more week together. All of us will be able to share God's love and laughter and be filled with God's joy. We'll be filled to overflowing so much that we won't have anything else to do with all this love and joy and laughter except to give it away. So I want you to practice giving away God's love right now as you sing that song.

Can't keep this in. Gotta let it out. Gonna tell the whole world that your love is spinning me round and round. Yeah, it's turning me upside down. I can't believe the way you love me more than I can contain.

Your love is spinning me round and round Yeah, it's turning me upside down I can't believe the way you love me more than I can contain I'm gonna turn around and give in
Your love is spinning me round and round Yeah, it's turning me upside down I can't believe the way you love me more than I can contain I'm gonna turn around and give in,
give it away Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh Oh, oh, oh, oh, I'm gonna give it away Oh, oh, oh,
oh, oh, oh, oh, oh Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, I'm gonna give it away Our ongoing prayer vigil
prompt comes from prayer team member Mary Ellen Schutz.

Pray that I may declare it fearlessly as I should. You know, we have our pastors Kathy and Scott coming in very soon.

I just ask in Jesus' name that you would remember to pray for them, that you would remember that they are in need of being held up in prayer by you.

We do have some prayer concerns to address this morning. We wanted to lift up Anna K. Anderson for her surgery this past week, along with several others within our church family who've had surgery this past week.

[23 : 28] We also want to lift up the Wagner family. Richard Wagner, who was the husband of Robin and the father to Robert and Riley, passed away suddenly a few days ago.

Now, with all of the requests on your heart, with all of those needs that God knows that you have, he invites us to join together with him in prayer.

And so let's do that. Let's turn to the Lord in prayer. Merciful Heavenly Father, we thank you for this time we have to share.

We thank you for your invitation to enter into the throne room with you, to join in with the prayer that is already going up, that is already happening in heaven for all of those who are in need here on earth.

We thank you, Lord God, that it is through prayer that we can impact our world in ways in ways that no one else can, that nothing else we do can possibly touch all of the circumstances of this world.

[24 : 47] It's through prayer, Lord God, we know that your power goes out through us into the world, that we join together with you.

And so we do join together with you, Lord God. we seek to pray as you would have us pray. So we lift up all of those who are in need.

We have many who are in need of healing, Lord God. People who are recovering from surgeries, people who are sick from one disease or another.

Some have cancers, others have other maladies that are troubling them. stealing the health from their bodies. And we pray in Jesus' name that each and every one would come to a place of healing in their spirits, their souls, and their bodies.

Make them whole, Lord God. as you know, they need to be made whole. Help them, Lord God, during this time of trouble to endure and to trust you.

[25 : 58] To trust you for the outcome. To trust you that you hold them in the palm of your hand. That you will never leave them nor forsake them.

We pray for all medical professionals, Lord God, and caregivers, family members, and friends who are caring for those in need of healing.

We just ask in Jesus' name that you would give them the patience and the compassion that they need. We lift up, Lord God, all of those who are grieving losses.

And there are so many different kinds of losses that people are experiencing in the world. There are losses of jobs, losses of loved ones, losses of a way of life that was familiar and comfortable and that helped people just get from day to day.

So many things have changed, Lord. we're missing loved ones who are gone from us now. We're missing being able to have a summer like we have had all the other summers of our lives.

[27 : 15] We are missing being able to be together. Father, we pray in Jesus' name that each one would find contentment in their heart in you.

That you would grant your peace which passes all understanding to guard our hearts and our minds in Christ Jesus. That you, Lord God, would be sufficient for us.

Your grace is sufficient for all of us. help us to rest in peace, to walk in peace, to live our lives in the midst of all of this in peace, knowing that you are with us no matter what.

Lord God, we pray for our government right now. We lift up all of those people who have been elected and appointed to make decisions to care for the well-being of the nation, to care for the well-being of the states and of the counties and all of the local governments, towns and the villages and the cities.

we pray, Lord God, that you would give them good guidance and good wisdom and that they would have hearts and minds to realize, to heed your guidance.

[28 : 52] We pray that even if they don't realize where it's coming from, that they would recognize that it's good and that it's what should be done.

it's the way that their governing should be happening. Help us, Lord God, to remember to pray for them.

Help us, Lord God, to put aside our sniping and griping, our seeking of division or being proven to be the one who's on the side of what's right while everyone else on the other side is wrong.

help us, Lord, to seek unity, the unity that can only come by your Holy Spirit. Help us, Lord, to enter into your presence and with your love and grace and mercy teach us to pray for those who need our prayers so desperately even though they may not know it.

Lord God, we pray that as these changes happen in our church that we remember that our church, Pendleton Center and Niagara Falls First, are not the only churches that are dealing with transitions of pastors, pastors, that this is happening all over our country, even all over the world in our United Methodist denomination.

[30 : 33] There are congregations everywhere who are grieving the loss of their pastors and excited about the new pastors who are coming in, wondering at all of it in the midst of this trouble that we're having where we can't be together and be close up.

Lord, we pray in Jesus' name for good, loving, patient transitions that each pastor going out would be at peace, whether they're retiring or moving to another church, and that each pastor going into a new church would have peace in their hearts, would have a vision for the future of the churches they're appointed to, and would come into their churches to find congregations of people full of love and acceptance and welcome.

Father, we pray in Jesus' name that all of the difficulties we've been facing with concerns over issues of race and equity and justice and over issues of the health and well-being of the physical people, the people of the nation and their physical being, we just ask in Jesus' name, Lord God, that you show us what to do.

Show each and every one of us who we are to be in the midst of all these troubles. Show us how we are to respond and let that response be from you.

Let us have the strength and the courage to respond as you would have us respond and not to fall prey to a bunch of people trying to push us in a direction you don't want us to go.

[32 : 46] Just be with us, Lord. Now we pray for Pastor Tom as he brings the message for us this day. We pray that all of our worship as we continue in prayer and singing songs of praise and continuing to pray and just enjoying your presence with us and knowing that we are connected even though we are far apart in our own homes.

Lord God just bless our worship and make our worship to be a blessing to you because that is why we came.

And now we pray together slowly so that all of our friends young and old can join us together. the Lord's prayer.

Our Father who art in heaven hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever.

[34 : 43] Amen. Shall we hear from the word of the Lord? Today's reading comes from Ephesians chapter 4 verses 11 through 24.

It was he who gave some to the apostles some to be prophets some to be evangelists and some to be pastors and teachers to prepare God's people for works of service so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

Then we will no longer be infants tossed back and forth by the waves and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men and their deceitful scheming.

Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the head that is Christ. From him the whole body joined and held together by every supporting ligament grows and builds itself up in love as each part does its work.

So I tell you this and insist on it in the Lord that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do in the futility of their thinking. They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts.

[36 : 09] Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity with a continual lust for more.

You, however, did not come to know Christ that way. Surely you heard of him and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus. You were taught with regard to your former way of life to put off your old self which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires to be made new in the attitude of your minds and to put on the new self created to be like God in the true righteousness and holiness.

This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. There's an old story that I've told before about a foreman for a contracting company and he built houses for years and years for his boss and always felt that somehow the boss didn't quite give him the compensation he thought was fair.

Well, he was working on his last house and the boss said to him, this is for a special friend and I want you to do a particularly good job on this. Well, the foreman was kind of frustrated and he thought, you know what, I can nickel and dime this thing.

I can cheat a little here, cut corners there, make things a little less there, maybe not even make it quite to code because then I can slip some of that money in my pockets. After all, that old man owes it to me.

[37 : 32] So he did. And it was probably the worst house he had ever built. Below any standards he had ever set didn't meet all the codes. And he put a little extra money in his pocket.

At the end of the job, the boss came, looked at the house which on the surface looks great and he said, you know, it's wonderful. I really appreciate you making this house so beautiful. And he took the keys and he said, here, it's my gift to you.

It's yours. I know I haven't treated you as well as I should over the years. So I just wanted you to go away with a special parting gift. Enjoy your new home. It's kind of ironic but a lot of times that's what it feels like in the building trades.

That somehow if we can just cut a corner, if we can just shave a little bit, maybe we can save a little, maybe we can make things go faster. The government has what they call building codes. They're very frustrating.

They're annoying. But they're designed to help us, not to hurt us. Just as God has codes and God has information for us to understand, designed to help us, not to hurt us.

[38 : 36] So we've been talking about loving God with all our heart, which means our relationships, with all our soul, which is our worship and prayer, and with all our mind. And next week we'll talk about strength.

What does it mean to love God with all your mind? Verse 12 says that this is about equipping people, equipping them for the works of service for God. And in verse 13 it says, then we will reach maturity, becoming mature, attaining the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

So we talk about how it's important to study the scriptures, to learn them. Listen to sermons. Go to Bible studies. Learn. Learn. Learn about your faith so that you can love God with all your mind.

And in some ways, it seems like this is the easy one. But as I thought about it, in some ways, I think it might be the hardest one.

Because our proclivity as people is to feel we already know most things. Especially about something like faith in God.

[39 : 43] We've read a book somewhere. Maybe even the good book. And when we read this book, we say, oh, well, that was written by ancient people years ago who aren't anywhere near as sophisticated as us.

What would they know about these things? And so for many of us, we feel we already know what we need to know. Sometimes when I'm on a mission trip with our teenagers, I talk about doing something I call Tennessee construction.

I'll describe it a little bit. Tennessee construction is when you go to a house that's in such disrepair, totally a wreck, that almost anything you do to it is better than what it would have been when you found it.

And because we don't have the time to go through every single inspection by every code person, by everything that happens, don't tell them I said this, sometimes we just do things.

Because we know that the condition for these people will be better than it would have been had we done nothing and waited to do it the way I might do it on my own home.

[40 : 53] But while we do this, in the back of my mind, I always have this little voice playing. It's Father's Day. You know what the voice is. It's my dad saying, Tommy, if you're going to do a job, do it right the first time.

Do it right the first time. Sometimes it's hard to have faith and to do it right the first time.

When we're trying to believe in a scripture that is so old and so well known that we sometimes wonder if it really is relevant to our life today.

So we work on the other things. We worship God and love God with all our soul. We go out and do things to worship him with all our strength. And we love God with all our heart, with our relationships.

But this one, it's a little harder. Second Timothy, you've heard me share this one before, says, all scripture is God breathed, useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness.

[42 : 00] You see, the Bible is the only thing that all Christians agree on. We have all these different denominations, all these different ways that people look at theology or look at our beliefs in God or look at our practices of how we worship and everything else.

And the only thing that all Christians agree on is that this is God's word. Written by people, but inspired or inspirited by the power of God, written through the power of the Holy Spirit.

And it's essential. Verse 14 says, And we will no longer be infants tossed back and forth by the waves, blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming.

We need an anchor. We need something we can sink down and hold on to in life and know is the truth. And the Bible gives us an anchor.

Especially when we have so many persuasive people in our culture who are all the time telling us all sorts of things that sound true. But often we find out they're just persuasive, cunning, crafty arguments.

[43 : 13] People scheming to get their way and somehow to cause people to follow their agenda. We call it alternate facts, fake news.

I like this one the other day. I heard on the news they were trying to make it sound that the coronavirus is spreading like wildfire in all these states that have opened up. That may or may not be true, but the fact they used was this.

They said, there are a record high number of coronavirus cases in these states. It keeps going up. And I thought, yeah, because it can't go down.

If you add one more, it's a record high. And then one more is another record high. They weren't talking about hospitalizations. They weren't even talking about real things that would help us to understand what's going on.

They were just making something up that would make their agenda work. We confuse sometimes intelligence. The intelligence of this world, the craftiness and cunning of people in our culture, we confuse that with the wisdom of God.

[44 : 26] Descartes said, I think, therefore, I am. Now we know I am, if we've read the Bible, is the name of God. I think, therefore, I am God.

I am the center of all things. The Greek philosophers that were around in the time of Jesus believed that if they exercised their mind completely, that they could find the ultimate truth of the universe.

Verse 17 talks about it. Paul says, I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do in the futility of their thinking.

In the futility of their thinking. Because they believe the goal is to win the debate and to be better than the other person. I am superior because I have more intelligence.

We've come to believe that, especially with modernism, which is based on the idea that our mind is the central issue of the universe.

[45 : 33] Not God. Us. We even see it in churches. You ever have people quote scriptures at you to where you can feel as if they're trying to intimidate you and make you feel that somehow you don't know what you're supposed to know?

You know, Mark chapter 18, verse 54 says, there is no Mark chapter 18, verse 54. But if we don't know, we feel foolish.

And even the ones who do know and are speaking the truth, are they speaking it to build us up as it talks about in this passage? Or are they building on using it to make us feel less than?

We confuse the goals of the intelligence of this world with the wisdom of God. First Corinthians chapter 1 says to us this, where is the wise person?

Where is the teacher of the law? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom didn't know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe.

[46 : 53] Just hear that? They just called me foolish. I should feel insulted. But I don't. Because you see, God has given us a message that is intended to be so simplistic that anyone can follow it.

Anyone can understand it. In the most basic of understandings, the Christian faith is about us trusting in God, believing in God, having a relationship with God, and thereby believing that God loves us and accepts us in spite of the fact that we're broken people.

And we become at one with God and we find the salvation of God. It's really that simple. That's not sophisticated or complicated enough for some people.

I tell you and insist on it in the Lord that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do in the futility of their thinking. Because verse 19 says, they have lost all sensitivity, given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity and they are full of greed.

They begin to live on passions, self-preservation, an animalistic life because they've lost sensitivity. And the sensitivity is a sensitivity to God.

[48 : 11] So that all we see is what will benefit us. Do you remember in a previous week I was talking about King David?

And you probably know the story if you've read the Bible at all. That King David was the great king, a man after God's own heart. But then he decided that his wife was not attractive enough or something.

And that his other wife was not charming enough or something. And that his third wife, three wives, was not enough. And so he decided to take another man's wife.

And then have that man killed. He actually thought he got away with it. Until one day a man named Nathan came into his court and he said, you know, there's a guy in our kingdom and he only had one little lamb.

It was like a pet to him. Like his little pet dog. And the neighbor, who had hundreds and hundreds of sheep, decided that he wanted to throw a party for his friends.

[49 : 18] So he took that man's one little lamb and used that for his feast. David was furious. He said, that man should be killed.

He should repay that other man four or fivefold. Isn't it fascinating? We can hear what Nathan is telling us.

We know what the story is about. But David wouldn't even recognize the problem. Because he was trusting in his own clever ways.

Verse 22 says to us that you were taught with regard to your former way of life to put off your old self. Put off your old self, which is corrupted by sin.

It's broken. Living for the wrong goal. Because people are caught up with the agendas of this culture around us, which is designed by the one who is the prince of the air, the one who was tossed down to earth and is trying to corrupt all of us so we all end up in the lake of fire with him.

[50 : 26] Remember? Verse 18 says, They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts.

They become servants of darkness, servants of Satan. Of the ancient devil. Because of what? Because of their ignorance. Because they weren't smart enough.

Because they weren't clever. Because of the hardening of their hearts. Somebody asked me, am I just going to preach old sermons?

I've only got three or four weeks left. Am I just going to preach a bunch of old sermons and just repeat the stuff I have? Well, here's the fascinating thing. In the last few weeks, including this week, I read the scripture that I've read many times and I've even preached on before in other circumstances.

And God says, oh, I'm going to show you something you've never seen before. And I'm like, what? What? 35 years I've been reading this, preaching on this, talking about this, and now you're showing me a new thing?

[51 : 33] You see, the point is, there's always a new thing. It may seem that these are old words, but they're living words. Living words. And I learned something new.

And this is what I learned. Loving God with all our mind has nothing to do with our head. It's nothing to do with our head.

It's nothing to do with our brain. Deuteronomy chapter 6, which is where this all began, the Shema of the Jewish faith, that says, hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one.

Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. I know what you're saying. There's one missing, right? That's right. Jesus added a fourth one because he knew that the people of his culture of his day, the people that were the philosophers, the people that thought they were so clever and so sophisticated, thought that they didn't need God because of their minds.

So he said, love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength in the 12th chapter of Mark. But do you notice, all of those begin with love the Lord your God.

[52 : 44] Love the Lord your God. It doesn't begin with our mind. It doesn't begin with our heart. It doesn't begin with our soul. It doesn't begin with what we do. It's all about love.

Verse 15 says, Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is Christ.

Speaking the truth in love. The Greek word agape. You've heard me use that before. Not speaking the truth lovingly. Not speaking the truth with compassion for the other person.

Not speaking the truth in the sympathies that we have for one another. speaking the truth in love. In other words, surrounded and embraced and filled by the love of God himself.

Because love reveals the truth. Not the reading. Not the studying. Those are all good things. Not going to college or even to seminary.

[53 : 51] Those are all good things. But the real truth we need, the one that Paul was talking about in Corinthians when he said that this wisdom is not the same as the foolishness of Christ.

Speaking the truth in love is not about being right. It's not about winning. It's not about even logic. It's about God. It's about love. It's about being in relationship with God.

You may have even heard somebody somewhere say that to be a Christian you have to have a personal relationship with God. I believe you have to have a personal one. You also have to have a corporate one with the rest of the church.

We'll talk about that as we go through this passage. But it's to be in relationship, to be in love with God. Anyone can speak the truth.

Anybody can speak the truth. And very well possibly even be persuasive enough to convince us that something is true that we may not even believe.

[54 : 57] But speaking the truth in love. Not with love. But with a sense where you care and are more concerned about the other person than you are about yourself.

More concerned about what God thinks and what God wants and what you do. That's something different. They won't care what we know until they know that we care. They won't care what we know until they know that we care.

Some wise person said that Godly wisdom you see comes from the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Because there's more wisdom that we'll get every time from the revelation God gives us than we'll get from any book we'll ever read.

A lot of the stuff that I get from the Bible I don't get from reading commentaries although I read them and I do learn things the greatest wisdom I get I get directly from God when he reveals that truth to me and he reveals it in the Holy Spirit.

Verse 20 and 21 says this however that is not the way you learned when you heard about Christ and were taught in him in accordance to the truth that is in Jesus.

[56 : 09] You see the way of life we learned through the Holy Spirit and we're not taught about him did you see what it said in verse 21 we're taught in him we're taught when he becomes in us and we become in him in the book of John Jesus said that you will be in me and I am in you we become one in the love of God verse 13 talks about it being the fullness of Christ to be filled up with Christ filled up with his Holy Spirit so that all the nonsense is pushed away and all that's left is God.

That's the goal good measure pressed down shaken together running over is a measure which God says he will give to us and in doing that not only do we experience God what we experience the unity of faith it talks about in verse 13 because we trust God but we also trust the God in each other.

Think about that. The goal is not that I have to worry about trusting that you have figured out something clever or trusting in your words or your comments or trusting even what you say and do but I can trust in the God that is in you because I guarantee you the old man and Adam the old person that's stuck with the temptations of Satan will sometimes say or do the wrong thing.

Now Satan can use that to drive a wedge between good people who love each other but not if they see the God in each other the Holy Spirit the power of God and when we do that we develop that unity.

I have a friend out at the lake it's very sad he dropped something very heavy on one of his fingers and he dropped crushed it and he's been talking to me about how his finger doesn't work and they have to do something about that finger or it could actually hurt his whole body.

[58 : 19] He's actually talking about having it taken off. Sounds horrible but he's willing to do that because it's better to forfeit part of his finger than to destroy the whole body.

Okay? That's love. That's agape love that's willing to make the sacrifice. Verse 16 says from Christ the whole body joined and held together by every supporting ligament grows and builds itself up in love as each part does its work.

Supportive. Even if it hurts. Even if it means a sacrifice. Not giving over to indulging in every kind of impurity and greed and sensuality but making the body stronger more powerful.

Some have been given to be teachers and some evangelists some apostles some prophets some pastors and each one is given a different revelation for what they need to know to do what makes the body work.

They've been given so that their people will have the works of service so that the body of Christ might be built up. It's all about body building not this kind of body building.

[59 : 39] Body building. Fixing the community of God in love. And the interesting thing is each person will have a different wisdom a different revelation revealed.

We have this idea that there's some universal wisdom we all need to somehow learn. Do you know some people are really good at reading books and understanding what it says.

Other people not so much but they're great at reading people. And somebody else is really absolutely incredible at being able to see when someone is hurting and respond to that. someone else is so passionate about sharing the love of God that has changed their life that they become evangelists.

All of these are needed. They're all good. There's nothing where one is better than the other. They are just what we need. It's not about something universal.

It's about what God reveals to us in his wisdom through love so that we can care for each other.

[60 : 45] God made us for his purpose to serve God and the God in others and not necessarily ourselves. You see we sometimes think the gifts are for us but none of them are for us.

In fact God made you've heard me say this before each of us dysfunctional lacking ability. Each of us there's something we cannot do. Yesterday it was kind of a strange little story.

We had a survey done. It cost us a few hundred dollars so we could get our property lines marked just perfect. So there'd be no concerns when we went to build a little shed we're putting on the side of our house. So at the same time some people were trying to be helpful to us and put in some blacktop on the apron of our driveway so that the water would run down to the lake and not wash away our driveway.

What a wonderful nice thing to do. Accepting that they went right over the top of the pin. You know the one that shows exactly where our property line is? So I'm like what? We just paid hundreds. And I'm out there starting to dig up their work.

Okay? Because I'm like freaking. I spent hundreds of dollars and I have to go get a neighbor of mine said I got something that might help you with this.

[62 : 00] And he came out with a metal detector. Who would have thought? Beep, beep, beep, beep, beep, beep, beep, beep, beep, beep, beep, beep, beep, beep, beep, right there. I know exactly where it is.

I didn't have that ability but he did and together we found the truth I needed to know. You see this is what we need. Each person does its part.

Just like in a home each room has its part. It's not about one part being better than another. Every room has its purpose, has its place and they're all designed to create a loving home.

It's not a head thing because we're not the head. It's not a head thing because we're not the head. Verse 15 says instead speaking the truth in love we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head that is Christ.

We're not the head. It's not a head thing. We're just parts. Of a body. The only one that's really smart is Jesus. The only one that really knows everything is Jesus.

[63 : 08] The only one that's really got the wisdom is Jesus. He is the head. We are the body and we work together to do what the head wants us to do.

Maturity is a strange thing. It says that we're going to become mature and what I've learned about maturity is that maturity is when you start to realize how much you don't know.

how much you really aren't aware of everything. You see when I was 18 or 19 years old I knew everything. My father he didn't know a thing.

But after a while I discovered maybe not so much. Tennessee construction is a great thing because it helps people to take a house that's really kind of a wreck and make it into a better house than it would have been even if it's not quite right.

Unless you have to go back to that house. Now usually we don't end up going back to a house but a few years ago we had to go back to one of the same houses we worked on and they wanted us since we did such a wonderful job they wanted us to fix this back room and when we went there the fellow who had worked on it before with me was standing there staring at this section that needed to come out because somebody had put it in incorrectly and it wasn't quite right and guess who did it?

[64 : 27] Yeah dad I hear ya if you're gonna do a job right do it right the first time. I remember to this day we're tearing out the wall and it's me I'm standing there holding up this wall wondering if it's gonna collapse on me while they're trying to put in a new beam because I didn't put the right one in in the first place.

It's only Tennessee construction. Loving God with all our minds means God has control over our mind.

God is in charge. The problem with intelligence is it makes us think we really are in charge we really are smart and we know what we're doing. King David thought he had it all together he thought he had the fixin he thought he had gotten away with things he had taken this man into this man's wife into his home and she was going to have a child and he thought he had gotten away with it and Nathan said to him you are the man you are the one who stole the little sheep from that other man and God is gonna punish you severely.

I'll give David credit because you see David was a man after God's heart he wasn't always the smartest he wasn't always the one who had things right he didn't even always do things right but he knew the right answer in that situation and he said I have sinned.

You're right. I'm wrong. There are several times David did that. Took the response people didn't expect.

[66 : 11] He could have had Nathan killed. He could have just covered it all up but he was wise in understanding God.

In the book of Romans in chapter 12 it says do not conform to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you'll be able to test and approve what God's will is his good pleasing and perfect will.

Verse 23 says that we have to have a new attitude in our minds and verse 24 gives us the goal. It says put on a new self created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness when we let God into our lives and we become filled with his love and his revelation speaks to us.

Word of God speak. Pour down me on me like rain. Touch my heart my soul and fill me fill me with the fullness of Christ.

Amen. Amen. Thank you.

[67 : 51] Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

[70 : 21] Nancy. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. I invite you now to take a moment to share with me in a prayer of confession before our God.

Dear God in heaven, I have sinned. I have focused too much on my concerns, on who I am, and not filled myself up enough with you.

Fill my heart, fill my soul, fill my mind that I might be yours in every way.

Forgive my sins. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Jesus wants to speak to you.

[71 : 30] Jesus wants to talk to your heart and pour out his love, his wisdom, his power, and especially his grace into your life today and forgive all the brokenness.

You've confessed your sin. And he says that if we confess our sin and believe in our heart that Jesus is Lord, we will be saved. In the name of Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven.

Glory to God. Amen. Amen. I heard an old, old story how a Savior came from glory, how he gave his life on Calvary to save a wretch like me.

I heard about his groaning of his precious blood's atoning. Then I repented of my sins and won the victory.

And won the victory. Oh, victory in Jesus, my Savior forever.

[72 : 56] He sought me and bought me with his redeeming blood. He loved me ere I knew him, and all my love is to him.

He plunged me to victory beneath the cleansing flood. I heard about his healing, of his cleansing power revealing, how he made the lame to walk again and caused the blind to see.

And then I cried, dear Jesus, come and heal my broken spirit. And somehow Jesus came and brought to me the victory.

Oh, victory in Jesus, my Savior forever. He sought me and bought me with his redeeming blood.

He loved me ere I knew him, and all my love is to him. He plunged me to victory beneath the cleansing flood.

[74 : 25] I heard about a mansion he is built for me in glory. And I heard about the streets of gold beyond the crystal sea, about the angels singing and the old redemption story.

And some sweet day I'll sing up there a song of victory. Oh, victory in Jesus, my Savior forever.

He sought me and bought me with his redeeming blood. He loved me ere I knew him, and all my love is to him.

He plunged me to victory beneath the cleansing flood. Amen.

Amen. Amen. The Lord be with you. And with us with you.

[75 : 43] Lift up your hearts. And with us with you. Lift up your hearts. And with us with you. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give our thanks to the Lord. It is right to give our thanks to the Lord. It is right and a good and joyful thing always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

All of the great thanksgiving. We say to give thanks to our God for what we are able to do when we're gathered together in worship, what we're able to do when we come to the table.

These are all prayers of thanksgiving that remember all that God has done for us. All that God is in our lives, in our world.

It recounts what has happened from the beginning of time. How God created everything that there is. How we praise the holiness of our God when we do the part that says, and so with your people on earth and all the company of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn.

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

[77 : 01] Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. And we do talk about how holy God is, how he was so holy and so wanted to restore relationship between us and him that he sent his son who came here to save us from our sins, to do miracles and wonders so that we would know who he is.

And then he suffered and died on the cross. We celebrate that at the table when we're able to come. We can't come today.

Next week. Next week we get to come to the table together. Pastor Tom told you about that earlier. And that is going to be an exciting and a wonderful time.

But we can remember now what God has done for us as he ascended into heaven. Jesus sits at the right hand of the Father for the purpose of sending us the Holy Spirit.

We can't have bread and juice today. But God pours out God's Holy Spirit whenever God sees fit to pour out the Holy Spirit. And we can ask for that today.

[78 : 20] So I'm going to ask you to just lift your hands if you want to. Fold your hands if you want to. Bow your heads. And just ask God for what it is that we all need as Christians.

The empowerment of the Holy Spirit so that we can go forth into this world and share God's love. You ready? We're going to pray for it now. God will bless you.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here. Even though we are gathered, Lord. Via an online media.

We are of one heart and one mind together. And we desire more of you. We desire to be with you. We desire you to fill us and empower us so that we can do the work of the church that you have called each one of us to do.

We thank you, Lord. We thank you, Lord. And even in the midst of our being apart, by your Spirit, make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world until Christ comes in final victory and we feast together at his heavenly banquet.

[79 : 34] Through your Son, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit and your Holy Church, all honor and glory is yours, Almighty God, now and forever. And together we say, Amen.

And now let's pray together as Jesus taught us to pray. Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen. And now the time has come to say farewell to Pastor Lisa.

Hello, Pastor Lisa. Thank you for coming to Pendleton Center Church and First Church. Hi, Pastor Lisa. It's a real pleasure for me to have this opportunity to send you good wishes as you move on to this new chapter in your ministry.

[80 : 53] Hi, I'm Louis Bobsing with a message for Pastor Lisa now that we're nearing the end of our time together. Pastor Lisa, we're so thankful for this ministry that you've had among us at Pendleton Center.

Hi, Pastor Lisa. Sean Mahalski here. I just wanted to send a quick message on behalf of myself and the Mahalski family. As I am not as great in order as you, I will read what I wrote.

We were deeply saddened at hearing that you were leaving us as pastor at PCUMC, but we are also happy for you as you take on this new challenge and opportunity to expand your ministry and continue the Lord's work.

It's been great to have you here. From the very first days that you came and started talking about spirit-led worship and then all the way to the time where you're doing children's ministry, which my grandson just loves and he loves to watch you and jumps around and everything else.

I will never forget your love for First Church and it was so obvious when you came to Niagara Falls that you loved being with us. It was a joy for us to have you come and share worship with us.

[82 : 00] And your love and your excitement for the Lord was a real inspiration for me and for all of us in the congregation. Many of us have discovered that you have an amazing knowledge of the Bible, but that knowledge wouldn't be worth anything if it weren't for your faith in God.

A faith that is rooted deep in your heart that guides your entire being. What an example for those searching for more fulfillment in their lives and what an example to the world of the joy that comes from such faith.

A joy that overflows in all that you do from your devoted prayers to teaching children to adults and leading those around you to know the love of Jesus through the Holy Spirit.

We're thankful for your friendship. We're thankful for the enthusiasm that you show during worship. We're thankful for the strong spiritual support that you've given to each one of us when we've come to you.

As a member of the prayer team, I'm especially thankful for all of the support that you've given to the prayer team, for your guidance, for the work that you've done to prepare us to function on our own.

[83 : 16] Going ahead, this is going to be very important. Our best wishes to you now as you move on to your new ministry. On a personal note, I want to thank you for the care that you gave to me and to my family when Michael was sick and during his last days.

Your prayers and your phone calls and your visits were very, very helpful for us and gave us a lot of comfort and courage during that difficult time. I also appreciated you sharing your trips to the Holy Land.

Now that I know what the eye of a needle was in Jesus' time and that Jesus probably worked more with stone than he did with wood. And last but not least, your Sunday devotionals.

And the last one where we talked about a Sabbath day's rest, where it's really not just a rest, but also rest plus focusing on God. Thank you so much for being here.

You have affected our family in many positive ways over these last many years. Your preaching, teaching, ministering, and fellowship have all meant very much to me and my family.

[84 : 24] Karen especially appreciated all of the healing prayers you have said with her. We each thank you for your part in helping us grow closer to God. Your new congregation is surely being blessed as you take over as the new shepherd of their flock.

We wish you the best in all that you do in the future and hope that we will see you from time to time back here at PCUMC. Godspeed and our prayers go with you.

Pastor Lisa, it goes without saying that you will be missed. I know that you will be loved by your new congregation as you are loved by this congregation. I want to thank you for the wonderful prayers.

It's obvious to me that you walk close to God. I want to thank you for helping me to realize the meaning of Psalm 55, 22. Cast your cares upon the Lord and he will sustain you.

He will never let the righteous be shaken. This has come to be my verse. May the Lord God be with you everywhere you go. And so I wish you every blessing as you move on to your new congregation.

[85 : 34] May you be an inspiration to them as you have always been to us. So my prayers will be with you that God will give you strength and wisdom as you lead your new congregation.

Bye. Good luck. We thank God for sending you to us. God has more plans for you and we pray that you will continue to be a blessing to others and we're going to miss you too, Romney.

And because of you with confidence I can say when God's love is in our heart and in our heart we can love everybody.

Bye Pastor Lisa. We love you. We miss you Pastor Lisa. Goodbye. Pastor Lisa on behalf of a very grateful staff and congregations at both First United Methodist Church and Pendleton Center United Methodist Church I want to present you with these gifts.

Thank you very much. Thank you Tom. Thank you everyone. What a blessing. And I'm going to lose this mask. Thank you all so much.

[86 : 56] It's been a pleasure and a privilege to serve this congregation for these almost eight years and there is an order of worship. We call it a litany and that means that I'm going to say something and you're going to say something back and we're going to go back and forth and thank one another for our time together and just set aside things that maybe need to be set aside on all of our sides and to just pray together if you would join me in this order of farewell is what it's called the order of farewell for a pastor and it's very touching and kind of a heartfelt thing so I'd ask you to join me together.

I thank you members and friends of Pendleton Center and Niagara Falls First United Methodist Churches for the love and support that you have shown me while I have ministered among you.

I am grateful for the ways my leadership has been accepted. I ask your forgiveness for the mistakes that I have made along the way that may have hurt you.

As I leave trust that I carry with me everything that you all have taught me. We receive your thankfulness offer forgiveness and accept that you now leave to minister at Elmany United Methodist Churches and we express our gratitude for your time among us.

We ask your forgiveness for our mistakes. Your influence on our faith and faithfulness will not leave us with your departure.

[88 : 47] I accept your gratitude and forgiveness and I forgive you trusting that our time together and our parting are pleasing to God. I release you from turning to me and depending on me as a pastor.

I encourage you in your continuing ministry here and I will pray for you and I will pray for your new pastors Kathy Stengel and Scott Johnson.

Lord, I just pray in Jesus' name knowing that you are the amazing God that you are that you would continue to let folks in this church know their leaders Lord God their pastors their lay leaders every single person to the youngest child Lord God I pray in Jesus' name that you continue to reveal yourself through amazing and wonderful works in their lives through amazing and wonderful works that you work through them in ministry in their community let them know Lord God let them hold on to the truth that no matter where we've been no matter where we're going to be going if we're going according to your calling you are with us and you will be greater than anything we can ever imagine you will make greater and more wonderful victories in our lives in every single circumstance and so we look to you God we trust you and we ask in Jesus' name that you continue to draw us closer to you and now if you will join me in a unison prayer that we'll pray together

Eternal God whose steadfast love for us is from everlasting to everlasting we give you thanks for cherished memories and commend one another into your care as we move in new directions keep us one in your love forever through Jesus Christ our Lord Amen water you turned into wine open the eyes of the blind there's no one like you there's no one like you into the darkness you shine out of the ashes we rise there's no one like you there's no one like you our God is greater our God is stronger

God you are higher than any other our God is healer awesome in power our God our God our God is greater in the sky there's no one like you there's no one like you there's no one like you there's no one like you our God is greater our God is stronger God you are higher than any other our God is healer awesome in power our God our God our God is greater our God is stronger

[92 : 58] God who are higher than any other Our God is healer Awesome in power Our God Our God And if our God is for us Then who could ever stop us And if our God is with us Then what could stand against And if our God is for us Then who could ever stop us And if our God is with us Then what could stand against What could stand against Our God is greater

Our God is stronger God who are higher than any other Our God is healer Awesome in power Our God Our God Our God is greater Our God is stronger God who are higher than any other Our God is healer Awesome in power Our God Our God Love the Lord your God With all your mind And we do that by putting God in us By allowing the Holy Spirit To transform our lives

So that we are in Christ And Christ is in us Pastor Lisa has given us the example Of someone who Christ is in Someone who the Holy Spirit Has poured that power and wonder in So I have no doubt That she loves God With all her mind And soul And heart And strength And so we pray for her Dear God in heaven Bless Pastor Lisa In all that she does And wherever she goes Fill her life With your spirit That all that she is And all that she becomes Will be about you Be with her family And bless them As she goes to serve you And help her to carry The congregations The people Of First United Methodist And Pendleton Center United Methodist With her always Wherever she may go May the blessings Of the Holy Spirit

Pour into her now And forever In the name of the Father And the Son And the Holy Spirit Amen Amen Amen I have always appreciated All of your prayers I have always Coveted your prayers Because without the prayers Of the saints There's nothing we can do We need to undergird One another in prayer I will continue to pray for you And I appreciate your prayers And now I will pray for you In front of you Right here One last time May the Lord bless you And keep you May the Lord make his face To shine upon you And be gracious unto you May the Lord lift up His countenance upon you And grant you love And joy And the peace That passes all understanding To guard your hearts And your minds In Christ Jesus That you may share That peace And that love And that grace Wherever you go

Go in his peace In the name of the Father The Son And the Holy Spirit God is greater I got it stronger I do my heart Over any other I got it see The awesome and power Our God Our God I got it greater I got it stronger God you are higher Than any other I got it see The awesome and power Our God Our God I got it

[98 : 06] Chad We are Thank you.