

Sermon

Prelude: Teresa Clawson – Organist.

Hymn pg. 96 – O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing.

Welcome and Announcements – Phil Lehoux

Greet your Neighbor

Call to Worship

Invocation Prayer

Children's Chat:

The camp theme is "You belong". I'd like to start this off with a joke and then talk a bit about belonging. And God said to John, come forth and I will grant you eternal life, but John came fifth and won a toaster.

Basically what Jesus meant when he said this to John and all of the others was if we live our lives with God then we belong in

heaven. Now if we belong in heaven, do you think we belong here on earth?

Of course we do. God has us here for a reason, he has things he wants us to do to make the world a better place. Now have any of you ever felt like you don't belong?

If you went and asked everybody in this church if they've ever felt like they didn't belong, I am sure every person in here would say yes. Today we are going to talk about love. God's love is what helps us know that he belongs in our lives. For me, his love helps me to have faith in him and all he does more than anything else. No matter what we do God is there to save us. Can any of you tell me what he uses to save us? I believe it's his love. We can use that same love in our lives. God has it written in all our hearts that we belong where ever our heart tells us to go. People may not always agree with that, if your heart says it's right then don't pay them any mind. Unless it's your parents. When people are angry, rude to us or bully us, I believe we have 3 options. Be angry back, leave them, or love them. Anger brings more anger and before you know it your both in the principles office or worse. I believe that love is the answer to all problems, if we have the courage to stay calm when someone is treating us wrong we can see things more clearly. We can see that most of the time this person has something wrong that they need to deal with and it is not our problem. When we match their rudeness with rudeness we have made their problem ours. I don't know about you but I don't need anyone else's problems. When we respond in love and say I don't appreciate your

rudeness but I would love to help you with anything you might need help with, we turn our enemies in to our friends. There is the rare person who will respond poorly to our kindness and that is when leaving them is the best thing we can do. I believe in this case when we leave we are showing them love. Because then they get to see that what they do is making them alone. Never be afraid to leave a situation if you feel there is nothing you can do to make it better, leaving will probably make it better. I just want to let you know that just like everyone belongs in this church, everyone belongs in God's world, so no matter where you go remember that you all belong.

Prayer:

Please get quiet on the inside and quiet on the outside and let us pray. Dear God, please remind us that we belong wherever you tell us to go. Please remind us that everyone you put in our lives belongs as well. please help us to give everyone the same love, kindness and respect we show our friends and family. If we can do this our friends and family shall grow. Thank you God for everything! In Jesus Name we pray Amen.

Special Music

Scripture Reading: Psalms: 66: 1-9. 1 Corinthians 13.

Message: Love – Ashton McDonald

The Old Testament reading basically says to love God for he loves you more than anything. It goes on to say all of the great things that have happened to us is a result of God's love for us. When we praise God and show him that we have unwavering faith and gratitude, he will deliver all his promises and nothing can stand against us. This actually transitions perfectly into my favorite chapter in the bible which is 1 Corinthians 13. In this chapter Paul tells us that no matter how incredible our accomplishments are, they can only be of substance if we do them with love. When I was an infant (2 years ago), when things didn't go my way I threw tantrums that made me so blind I couldn't see, that if I waited a few days, things would have gone better than my earthly expectations. Now, that I have grown up I believe with every atom of my being that love is the answer to everything. It is easy to love people when they are kind to us. When someone welcomes us in their home and feeds us when we are going through a struggle our natural response is to love them, and do similar things for them and others. But what about when our boss screams at us from the top of his or her lungs because we put a comma where a period was supposed to go on an important document? This is where if you're like me our natural instincts will betray us, and we must turn to our supernatural God given instincts. It's not quite as easy to respond to such a berating by saying thank you for the criticism, I truly appreciate it and would love the opportunity to do a better

job next time. I am very appreciative of this job, please give me the chance to remedy this situation. I can tell you from experience that doing this is not easy, but it is what the bible tells us to do. Love your enemy, hopefully we will never have a boss that is our full time enemy. But at least for me, when someone is screaming at me they become my enemy at least for the moment. Fortunately for everyone involved I listen to Jesus and I love them. Now when we say something like what I just mentioned, that's grateful and comes from a place of love, unimaginable things happen. Don't be surprised if later on, when we are trying really hard to forgive them and give the situation to God, that our boss approaches us. Then apologizes and says, you know I really treated you poorly, I shouldn't have acted like that, you don't deserve that kind of treatment. I'm going through some stuff that has nothing to do with you and I let it leak into my other affairs. It's no excuse but let me take you to lunch and make it up to you. Now they may make it up to us and they may not. I cannot promise what people will do because we have our own often times unpredictable wills. But I can promise, that even if our aggressor doesn't take us to lunch or make it up to us. When we respond to people treating us poorly, from a place of forgiveness, compassion, gratitude, and most importantly love, the lunch that God is going to take us to is far better than any lunch imaginable. God blesses those of a meek nature, in this case to be meek is not be weak and scared, it is to be courageous and loving. It takes a strong person to be kind to someone who is hurting them. But as I said to the

children, in most cases when someone is treating us poorly it has a lot to do with them and very little to do with us. It is important to understand that people with these kinds of issues are sick and they do not know any better. Just as we wouldn't get mad at someone for having cancer we shouldn't get mad at anyone for having behavioral issues. We should treat them with love, compassion and empathy. Sometimes all we can do is pray for them and sometimes that's the most powerful thing we can do. I know from experience that when I genuinely love everyone I come across no matter how they treat me, God's blessings know no bounds. He not only blesses me, but he blesses those I am kind to and I pray for. Ever since I started loving my enemies I only have friends. Before we sing my favorite hymn, I'd like to end with this. God has blessed us with the holy spirit, it is in all of God's creations. This holy spirit connects us all to each other and gives us access to supernatural gifts. One of those gifts is love. When we open our hearts and let this love flow through us we have no choice but to spread it out in all of our affairs. I challenge each and everyone of you to love, love freely, love generously and watch your life become better than you could ever imagine.

Hymn: They'll Know we are Christians pg. 595

Joys and Concerns

Prayer Followed by the Lord's Prayer

Prayer Response

Offertory

Recessional Hymn

Benediction:

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let me bring love.

Where there is offense, let me bring pardon.

Where there is discord, let me bring union.

Where there is error, let me bring truth.

Where there is doubt, let me bring faith.

Where there is despair, let me bring hope.

Where there is darkness, let me bring your light.

Where there is sadness, let me bring joy.

O Master, let me not seek as much

to be consoled as to console,

to be understood as to understand,

to be loved as to love,

for it is in giving that one receives,

it is in self-forgetting that one finds,

it is in pardoning that one is pardoned,
it is in dying that one is raised to eternal life.