

Wisconsin Conference United Women in Faith

(United Methodist Women)

Devotionals: 22 - 28 October 2023

John 13:34-35 - “Let me give you a new command: Love one another. In the same way I loved you, you love one another. This is how everyone will recognize that you are my disciples—when they see the love you have for each other.”

United Women in Faith: We’re a sisterhood acting in faith to tackle the hard work of the world without hesitation.

Our Mission: We seek to connect and nurture women through Christian spiritual formation, leadership development, creative fellowship, and education so that they can inspire, influence and impact local and global communities.

Our Vision: We are a powerful, fearless force driven by God’s love and united in sisterhood. With a focus on women, children, and youth, we act for justice and transform communities. We face the realities we see in the world, even when they are not the ones we would like to see. However, our goal is not to bear witness simply to harms but also to God’s love by acting boldly to change those harms.

Our Action: Bold action, like faith, takes courage. Our bravery is inspired by God’s love and our powerful commitment to improve the lives of women, children, and youth. United Women in Faith works for justice through compassionate service and advocacy to change unfair policies and systems that harm women, children, and youth—from racial and gender injustice to economic inequality, climate issues and more.

<https://uwfaith.org>

John 13:34–35 Reminds us to love as Jesus loved. Not tomorrow, God, not even just kind of ambiguous, generally in the future, God today help us to love other followers of Christ in a way that shows those who are not followers of Christ what the love of Christ looks like in action.

This is the distinguishing mark of a disciple of Jesus. This is how people will know that we are followers of Jesus, when they see our love for each other.

Jesus calls us to a life that values others, serves others, and loves others. Not only does He call us to live this way, but He also modeled it for us.

In John 13 Jesus is getting increasingly closer to the cross; His time is coming, and things are intensifying.

In the verses prior Jesus is sharing a meal with His disciples. He’s once again predicting His death and Judas’ betrayal. In John 13:30 Judas leaves to go betray Jesus.

Now Jesus shifts gears: He begins to explain to the remaining disciples what He expects during His absence. The disciples don’t really understand the gravity of the moment. But in the coming days they will begin to understand exactly what Jesus came to do and how everything is about to change. And the meaning of John 13:34-35 will take on a whole new life for them.

These words that Jesus say should carry with them some weight. We should lean in on what He’s about to say because it’s important that we understand AND live out this command. (John 13:34-35)

This passage should be one that every Christian has memorized and strives to live out daily. These are central to what God is calling each of us to do.

So, what is this new command? It’s love. Something John talks a lot about in his Gospel, especially at the end. The Greek

words for “love” appear only 12 times in John 1-12, but in chapters 13-21 we find them 44 times.

But this isn't any kind of love; Jesus tells us we are to love as He loved. ***Remember He's about to go to the cross, the greatest act of love.*** And it's to this extent that we are to love those around us. Jesus displayed His love for us by going to the cross. Therefore, we are to love those around us with the same sacrificial love.

Yet many Christians fail to actually live this way and look no different from the world around them. And I think the meaning of John 13:34-35 is a powerful reminder and challenge to follow the example of Christ.

Now, it's interesting the first and greatest commandment is to love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. And then the second commandment Jesus says is like it. “Love your neighbor as yourself.” So why does Jesus say here, “this is the distinguishing mark of my disciples, they love one another.”

John 13:34–35 describes what a disciple of Christ looks like. The distinguishing mark of a disciple of Christ is love for others. When we love God, we will have God's love for those around us.

Well, it makes sense, doesn't it? When we love God, when our hearts are tuned to God and God's heart, then we will have God's love for all people around us. And we will love just like Jesus said, just as He loves us, we will love one another. And then that love will mark Christian community. That love will mark the church and be a testimony to a watching world. Yet I fear, I'm guessing you might fear the same thing, that oftentimes that's not the testimony that we in the church give to the world around us.

Is this love and care and compassion for one another, this serving one another just like we see in John 13 as Jesus stoops to wash His disciples' feet. So, do we need to pray for this? Absolutely!

This verse calls us to love each one another.

Today Christians are known for a lot of things. But our love is not normally at the top of the list. But the meaning of John 13:34-35 challenges this. It's our sacrificial love that should be the distinguishing thing for followers of Jesus. We follow a God that gave up His life, not because we deserved it, ***but because we needed it.***

When we love people, particularly difficult and messy people, we are showing those around us that the love of Christ is in us. It's how we set ourselves apart from the world. If you love one another the world will know that you follow Jesus.

In all our relationships, especially as Christians, disciples of Jesus, God please help us to love each other as you have called us to love Jesus. As you have shown us how to love, help us to serve each other. Our love for God is shown by how we love those around us. And if you want to live out the John 13:34-35 meaning then you need to live in God's grace. You need to understand what God has done for you so that you can do the same for others.

We pray increasingly that we would think less of ourselves and more of others. That our concern in the church would be for others' good, not for our own. Our constant prayer is for our Loving God to deliver us (God's people) from gossip, from undercutting one another, from showing a lack of love for one another. Deliver us from competing with one another, with comparing ourselves to one another. Help us to, in a Philippians 2 kind of way, look to others' interests above our own. God, we pray, as we humbly ask that in our homes, in our churches, our jobs, our relationships, may John 13 love be evident in us every day. We pray together:

Lord, let our memory provide no shelter for grievance against each other.

Lord, let our heart provide no harbor for hatred of each other.

Lord, let our tongue be no accomplice in the judgment of another. - Celtic Daily Prayer

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

PRAYING TO OUR HEAVENLY FATHER —

YOU'RE NOT ALONE, LET US PRAY WITH YOU & FOR YOU

PRAYERS WILL BE ANSWERED

- **Ms. Sandy Wamser** will be having brain surgery to remove a tumor on 23 October 2023. Our hope and prayer is₂

for a successful surgery and a speedy recovery; especially healing from the Epileptic seizures. She is very grateful for your love, prayers, and support. Consistent prayers for Mr. Pat and the Family as they care for Ms. Sandy. Cards and notes can be sent to: **Mr. Pat and Mrs. Sandy Wamser, 3742 Pleasant Valley Road, West Bend, WI 53095.**

- **Bro. Bob Krell** is rooted in our hearts and prayers as we shower him and the Family with our love, care, and support. Bro. Bob is at home. He will be receiving in-home care to build up his strength. The Family is grateful for all your prayers and support. We continue to pray for Bro. Bob's healing, restoration, and strength. Thank you, God, for hearing and answering our prayer. Cards and notes of love and encouragement can be mailed to: **Bro. Bob and Mrs. Jean Krell, 804 Lenora Drive, West Bend, WI 53090.**
- **Mr. Michael Cahoon**, son of Mr. Jim and Mrs. Sandy Cahoon, has been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. Mr. Mike has completed his second round of chemotherapy. As Believers, we know prayer is the most powerful action you can take for loved ones facing health challenges. Don't hold back; let us pray without ceasing: "Let your love be close to Mr. Mike today. Let your presence fill him with faith and hope, knowing that your miraculous power and amazing grace is greater than any cancer or health issue; God is with Mr. Mike as he continues to fight the good fight. The odds are overwhelming; but loving God gives me hope. The opponent (cancer) was powerful; God gave me strength. I felt alone in the struggle; God gave me a team. I felt like a stranger; God sent cheering supporters. I felt confused; God showed me the game plan. I felt defeated; God's Words inspired me. I was defeated; God picked me up and put me back into the fight. I feared time was running out; God gave me a new beginning. The cancer cannot win against God's love; against the team of scientists, physicians, and nurses; against the support of my family and friends. You are the guide, you are the motivator, you are the healer, you are the Great I Am. Thank you for leading me to the win. May I now be a champion for others who feel what I felt, who need to know the Power behind every victory is you Gracious God. Amen. Cards and notes filled with prayers and hopes for miraculous healing can be sent to: **Mr. Michael Cahoon, C/O: Mr. Jim and Mrs. Sandy Cahoon, 1615 Beverly Lane, WI 53090.**
- **Mr. Robert (Bob) Kuhaupt** is still in the healing hands of our Great Physician. Healing God, be near Mr. Bob in his time of weakness and pain; sustain him by your grace, that Mr. Bob's strength and courage may not fail; heal him according to your will; and help him always to believe that what happens to him here is of little account if You hold him in eternal life, loving Lord and caring God. Amen. Please send your prayers of healing and support to: **Mr. Robert (Bob) and Ms. Joy Kuhaupt, Sussex Mills Apartments, W240 N6345 Maple Ave. #116, Sussex, WI 53089.**
- **Ms. Nancy Whitson** has returned home and is grateful for all your prayers and cards of encouragement and support. Please send cards and notes of encouragement to: **Mrs. Nancy Whitson, 922 Hickory Street, West Bend, WI 53095.**
- **Mr. Tom Damp** has been comfortable and safe in his home for years. This has been possible primarily due to home healthcare services. However, with significant changes in coverage from health insurance, availability of in-home health care personnel, and other life circumstances, Mr. Tom is having to make unexpected decisions; stay in his home or transition to assisted living. He asks for your prayers and care as God reveals, God's plan for his new season. Caring Father, we thank you for the opportunity we have as a church family to pray and care for Mr. Tom Damp. We ask that you bless him with the resources to keep safe from harm. Please surround this whole process with your wisdom and mercy, Lord. We pray for Mr. Tom's health and care in this whole process. In the name of Jesus I pray, amen. Card and noted can be mailed to: **Mr. Tom Damp, 1707 Sunset Ridge Drive, West Bend WI 53095.**
- No one enters this life a follower of Christ. If we are God's children, it is because we were born spiritually sometime after we were born physically. God uses our prayers as one of the means of drawing people, including our grandchildren, to God. We lift up prayers of healing and strength for **Mr. Ben Barth**, fiancé of Ms. Heather Wolf, granddaughter of Mr. Roger and Mrs. Mary Rogge. Mr. Ben has been given a new heart and new lungs but is experiencing kidney concerns. Cards of prayers for healing and restoration can be mailed to: **Mr. Ben Barth, 969 Tuscola Lane, West Bend, WI 53095.**
- We remain in prayer and support for **Mrs. Ann Cording**. Great Physician, you can heal us in a heartbeat. We pray for God's miraculous healing today. Take our pain away, according to Your will, in Your time. We're not promised a painless life on this earth, but You do want us to live a happy one. Send Your Spirit to help us see past our circumstances and onto Your calling on our lives. Sickness and injury can't stop God-placed dreams. Fill our hearts with hope as we wait on You to move in our lives and flow out from our hearts. In Jesus' Name, Amen. Cards and notes of love and care can be mailed to: **Mrs. Ann Cording, 1416 S. Silverbrook Drive, West Bend WI 53095.**
- **Mr. Don Walters** is still experiencing several medical challenges. We're keeping Ms. Joyce in our thoughts and prayers as well. Letters and notes of encouragement and love can be mailed to: **Mr. Don and Mrs. Joyce Walters,**

5368 Woodlawn Summit, West Bend, WI 53095.

- **Mr. Chuck Rogge** is still on a journey of healing. He is grateful for the cards and notes of support. Please continue to flood the mailbox with love and support to: **Mr. Chuck and Mrs. Sue Rogge, 5011 Hwy. P, West Bend, WI 53095.**
- **Mrs. Janice Liepert-Kempf**, appreciates your continued prayers for healing and strength as she continues to struggle with illness. You can send emails of prayers and support to: alankempf33@gmail.com; or cards and notes to **Mr. Allan and Mrs. Janice Liepert-Kempf, 414B. South Pleasantview Road, Plymouth, WI 53073; phone number: 920.838.1830.**

We continue to celebrate our 175th year of service, commitment and Methodism in West Bend, Wisconsin.

“Honoring Our Past, Celebrating Our Present, Anticipating Our Future”

Let us pray: A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” John 13:34-35

Prayer: Dear Lord Jesus, this new commandment truly sums up so many commandments in one simple sentence. In your infinite wisdom you have given us these words, which are exactly what we need. Our love for others, not to mention our love for you, is so imperfect and falls so short.

And yet among your disciples this love should be obvious. Forgive us for not loving others as we should. Take away the judgmental attitudes, the pride, the inclination we have, to always think well of our own motives, opinions, and values while assuming that others do not have the same right. None of this is based on love.

Fill us with agape love, unconditional love that you have for each of us so that we might express it to others. Help us to love others with a willingness to sacrifice ourselves for their benefit, even as you gave yourself for us.

And let all people everywhere see this love, your sacrificial love Jesus, in us. Let our love for your people and the mutual love among us be obvious. We need you Lord Jesus to immerse us in your love so that it might overflow from us toward our brothers and sisters. And let the result of this love be to glorify your Holy name. Amen

Source: <https://prayer.knowing-jesus.com/John/13/34>

May I love as Christ loved so that in myself, I become nothing, in order that Christ may be seen in me, and I can show forth His love in my life, to Your praise and glory.

Pastor Clarissa & Bro. Martin