

WEDNESDAYS IN LENT

Holden Evening Prayer @ 7:00

What's love got to do with it?

Perfect love casts out fear.

"What's love got to do with it?" Tina Turner sang in her hit song back in 1971. "What's love," the song asks, "but a sweet, old-fashioned notion?" With all the love talk and love songs and miss-use and over-use of the word "love," it seems like a good time to ask this question—not in the cynical way the song does—but in a thoughtful, deeper and theological way. The first letter of John tells us *there is no fear in love but perfect love casts our fear*. Instead of being cynical, during Lent we'll be fearless and ask *What's love got to do with us, our neighbor, our physical world, our enemies, speaking the truth, the church and God?*

On the Wednesdays in Lent, from March 13th to April 10th, we'll gather in song, prayer, and meditation on scripture to see what "love" has to do with anything and everything.

Week I, March 13th *What's love . . . ?* Jeremiah 31:1-4; 1 Corinthians 13

We begin by asking what is love? "Is love a fancy or a feeling," one English poet asked. Even Shakespeare had much to say on what love is. We will need a definition and salutary description of what love is as we start out on our fearless Lenten journey so we know love neither as a fancy or a feeling, but, perhaps, as an "immortal truth," and "ever-fixed mark" that cannot die.

Week II, March 20th *What's love got to do with us and creation?* Genesis 1:26-31; Isaiah 40:26-28; Jonah 4:9-11

God loves what God has created. The palmist declares that the "earth is the Lord's and all that is in it." We often forget that we are not "owners" but "stewards" of everything that God has created which includes the earth and every living creature on it. We are accountable as stewards for how we have "loved" what God has created.

Week III, March 27th *What's love got to do with us and our neighbors?* Leviticus 19:1-3; 9-18; Luke 10: 25-37

In the first letter of John, he writes that to love one another is "the message" we have all received from the beginning. But it is a message and lesson we seem to need to learn over and over again. Perhaps this is so because we are confused about what "love" is and too narrow in answering the question about who our neighbor is.

Week IV, April 3rd *What's love got to do with us and our enemies?* Deuteronomy 10:12-22; Luke 6:27-38

How can we love when we don't feel loving? In scripture, love is more than a feeling; it is a decision to serve another person's interest. Only with God's help can we hope to serve the needs of those we fear, dislike or even hate.

Week V, April 10th *What's love got to do with speaking the truth and loving as we have first been loved?*

Ephesians 4:1-16; 1 John 4:7-21;

In Sunday school, one of the children's favorite songs is "It's about love, love, love." The refrain goes on to repeat what the first letter of John tells us, *'cause God loves us we love each other* or as John puts it, "In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us . . ." This is the truth. We are back to where we began, we have been loved with an everlasting love and love is not so much a feeling but something we put into action.

