

A Word on Wednesday from Pastor Tonia

"Not Your Average Bear" 1/4/23

We love, because God first loved us. If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen. And this is the commandment we have from God, he who loves God should love his brother also. (1 John 4:19-21)

"If we could spread love as quickly as we spread hate and negativity, what an amazing world we would live in." So said Winnie the Pooh. Who made that bear so wise? What is this love we should be spreading like honey on warm bread?

Paul tells the Corinthians: "No matter what I say, what I believe, and what I do, I'm bankrupt without love. Love never gives up. Love cares more for others than for self. Love doesn't want what it doesn't have. Love doesn't strut, doesn't have a swelled head, doesn't force itself on others, isn't always 'me first,' doesn't fly off the handle, doesn't keep score of the sins of others, doesn't revel when others grovel, but love takes pleasure in the flowering of truth, puts up with anything, trusts God always, always looks for the best, never looks back, but keeps going to the end.' (1 Cor 13:4-8)

What a great New Year's resolution – and it comes with help. God doesn't ask us to do anything without sending the Holy Spirit in to assist. God asks us to support and encourage one another, to spread love. To refrain from putting down others and, well, spreading hate and negativity. We are to work together. To help each other. To love one another. We are Church together and together we are to feed the hungry and care for those in need. To offer a hand up, not push the other down. To offer help. To come along beside and make the task just a little bit easier to accomplish. How amazing the world would be if we came to the aid of one another and spread some love around.

Wouldn't some dialog, a little compromising, some compassion, an attempt at understanding, instead of gossip, negativity, and put downs, go a long way in making our family, our church, our community, our country, our world a more - amazing place? Pooh is quite the philosopher; he is definitely not your average bear.

Let us resolve to go into this new year doing our part in making this world amazing, by loving God and loving one another.

Please pray with me.

Lord, there are times I don't care so much for some people, times I don't agree with someone, days I don't feel like spreading love. Forgive me for making it all about me, and with the help of Your Holy Spirit, help me to take pleasure in the flowering of truth, put up with anything, trusting in You always, looking for the best, never looking back, and keeping going – all the way to the end. Help me to love others and to spread this love around by what I say and do.

Amen

I bid you peace