



April Connection Guide

I Love You

## CROSSWORDS OVERVIEW

This ministry year we want to emphasize these important “CrossWords” in our vocabulary, letting the language and ideas of scripture shape our relationship with God and with others.

Month	Relational Words	Worship Words	Related Psalm
September	I’m listening	Illumination	Psalm 119: 9-11
October	Bless you	Blessing	Psalm 103
November	Thank you	Thanksgiving	Psalm 136
December	<b>Advent</b>		
January	Help	Supplication	Psalm 86
February	I’m sorry	Confession	Psalm 51
March	Why?	Lament	Psalm 13
April	I love you	Praise	Psalm 95
May	What can I do?	Service	Psalm 116

We  
are  
here

## WHAT’S IN THIS GUIDE

In each monthly guide you will find resources that can be used in many ways: personal reflection, small group discussion, or family devotions.

There are four main sections:

- CrossWords in Scripture – Read and respond to biblical texts related to the theme of the month
- CrossWords in Our Tradition – Learn more about our church’s related teachings
- CrossWords in Community – Engage and discuss with a group using prompts and questions
- CrossWords in Action – Put the word into practice with action prompts and adventures for all ages

## THIS MONTH – I LOVE YOU

### LOVE

*“Praise him, praise him, all ye little children, God is love, God is love.”*

On Friday mornings here at Georgetown I hear these words echo through the walls and into my office. The Little Lambs care providers are leading children in song as their moms gather for small group time.

There is something about these simple lyrics, *and that tune*, that connects directly to my brain stem and to my earliest days of church life. And, while simple, I have yet to find a more important expression of the Christian walk of faith: *God is love* and his little children respond. The Bible is the sweeping narrative of this dynamic.

And what does our praise look like? We worship with our words and songs to be sure, but also with our whole lives. How we love creation, our neighbors, and even our enemies become an expression of praise to our maker.

So in this guide you’ll find this dynamic explored in our theme for the month: “I love you”. We consider God’s love for us, our love for God, and our summons to love others in the same fashion as God has loved us.

While love is a precious diamond with an endless number of brilliant facets, the essence might be as simple as “Praise him all ye little children, *God is love.*”

~Eric

## CROSSWORDS IN SCRIPTURE

### BIBLE READINGS FOR THE MONTH OF APRIL AND YOUR RESPONSE

<b>Apr.</b>	<b>Text</b>	<b>Your one sentence takeaway</b>
1	Luke 7:36-50	
2	Zephaniah 3:14-17	
3	Psalms 95:1-7	
4	Luke 10:25-37	
5	Mark 12:28-34	
6	1 Corinthians 13	
7	Song of Songs 8:6-7	
8	1 John 3:16-18	
9	1 Peter 4:8-11	
10	Colossians 3:12-17	
11	Romans 12:9-21	
12	John 15:9-17	
13	1 John 4:7-21	
14	Lamentations 3:22-23	
15	Romans 8:35-39	
16	Ephesians 4:1-4	
17	Matthew 5:43-48	
18	Psalms 63:1-8	
19	Proverbs 17:9-17	
20	Proverbs 3:1-4	
21	Psalms 103:1-8	
22	John 13:1-17	
23	John 13:31-34	
24	Psalms 117	
25	Ezra 3:10-12	
26	Deuteronomy 10:12-22	
27	Hebrews 13:1-5	
28	Hosea 11:1-11	
29	Galatians 5:13-15	
30	1 Peter 1:17-23	

## CROSSWORDS IN OUR TRADITION

### *OUR WORLD BELONGS TO GOD, PARAGRAPH 5, 10, 11*

5. God holds this world with fierce love. Keeping his promise, he sends Jesus into the world, pours out the Holy Spirit, and announces the good news: sinners who repent and believe in Jesus live anew as members of the family of God—the firstfruits of a new creation.

10. Made in God’s image to live in loving communion with our Maker, we are appointed earthkeepers and caretakers to tend the earth, enjoy it, and love our neighbors. God uses our skills for the unfolding and well-being of his world so that creation and all who live in it may flourish.

11. Together, male and female, single and married, young and old—every hue and variety of humanity—we are called to represent God, for the Lord God made us all. Life is God’s gift to us, and we are called to foster the well-being of all the living, protecting from harm the unborn and the weak, the poor and the vulnerable.

### *HEIDELBERG CATECHISM, Q & A 4*

Q. What does God’s law require of us?

A. Christ teaches us this in summary in Matthew 22:37-40:

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the greatest and first commandment.

And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”

### *BELGIC CONFESSION, ARTICLE 14, THE MARKS OF THE TRUE CHURCH (EXCERPT)*

As for those who can belong to the church, we can recognize them by the distinguishing marks of Christians: namely by faith, and by their fleeing from sin and pursuing righteousness, once they have received the one and only Savior, Jesus Christ.

They love the true God and their neighbors, without turning to the right or left, and they crucify the flesh and its works. Though great weakness remains in them, they fight against it by the Spirit all the days of their lives, appealing constantly to the blood, suffering, death, and obedience of the Lord Jesus, in whom they have forgiveness of their sins, through faith in him.

### *WORSHIP – CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH POSITION STATEMENT - [Link](#)*

Worship is an ascription of worth, adoration, and praise to God; includes confession of sin and surrender to the true God; is a God-initiated engagement of God and the worshiper, as well as a corporate engagement among the worshipers; strengthens and is strengthened by the Christian community and its shared memory; and reflects the mighty redemptive acts of God.

When God's people worship with pure hearts and in authentic community, effective evangelism is a natural result. The basic pattern for Christian worship includes gathering as a covenant community, proclamation of the Word, celebration of the Lord's Supper, and going to serve in the world. Authentic worship has an intrinsically sacramental character and is enriched by the diverse backgrounds of participating believers.



- *In what ways does God display his “fierce love” for creation and humankind? How have you experienced God’s love firsthand in your life?*
- *What are the most natural ways for you to express your love for God? Do you find this expression in singing, writing, praying, speaking with others, serving...?*
- *What are some key characteristics of God’s love for creation and humanity? How can we “put on” these characteristics when in relationship with others?*

**THE DECISION TO LOVE – PASTOR MARC**

Philippians 2:5-11

*In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:*

*Who, being in very nature God,*

*did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;*

*rather, he made himself nothing*

*by taking the very nature of a servant,*

*being made in human likeness.*

*And being found in appearance as a man,*

*he humbled himself*

*by becoming obedient to death—*

*even death on a cross!*

*Therefore God exalted him to the highest place*

*and gave him the name that is above every name,*

*that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,*

*in heaven and on earth and under the earth,*

*and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord,*

*to the glory of God the Father.*

I was a junior in high school. We were crammed into a dark and musty church basement for an educational film on dating. At the time, I would have rather been someplace else. I made the best of it by sitting next to my girlfriend who would later become my wife. That night, the speaker said something I will never forget; "love is not a feeling, love is a decision." I knew then what I know now, namely, that love is both a feeling and a decision. His point rang home though, that *love is more than a feeling*.

When we say "I do" in marriage or in professing our faith, most of us have no idea what we are doing. Granted, we *think we do*, but with a few years and a little mileage, we begin to realize how little we knew about love when we spoke those three letters. Yet, the thing that gives those words adhesive power in our lives *is the decision we made*. Even in death or divorce, most people regret the pain, but many don't regret the decision they made to love.

Christ has made the decision to love. This part of Philippians 2 has been called the Kenosis (emptying) hymn. Many believe the early church sang it to celebrate Jesus' emptying himself (to quote the song) "of all but love." Such emptying meant being *like* a slave, such humility meant being limited in ways that God's Son would have to choose for it to be so. Christ's decision to empty himself is the full expression of "I love you".

When this love hits home for us, when we realize we are loved *that much*, it is hard for us not to love him back. In this season of thinking about Jesus' emptying, we hear our Lord's decision to love. As people who are naturally

inclined "to hate God and our neighbor", loving is going to take a decision on our part. Making that decision may take a lot of emptying on our part. *Love is not only a decision, but it is a commitment.* Loving God, loving neighbor, and even loving enemies begins by choosing to do so. Love is not just a feeling, it is a decision.

*Thank you dear Lord  
for making the decision to love us;  
through thick and thin  
through our spiritual sickness and health, through our days of wondering and wandering.*

*You O Lord,  
are sturdy, faithful, and reliable.  
You have made a lasting commitment to us, and this decision has been so costly for you.*

*Thank you for emptying yourself  
for our sake.  
And thank you for loving your world enough to die for it.  
We love you Lord.  
Amen.*

## GOD LOVES US

### *HOW DEEP THE FATHER'S LOVE FOR US – STUART TOWNEND*

How deep the Father's love for us, How vast beyond all measure, That He should give His only Son To make a wretch His treasure.	Behold the man upon a cross, My sin upon His shoulders; Ashamed, I hear my mocking voice Call out among the scoffers.	I will not boast in anything, No gifts, no power, no wisdom; But I will boast in Jesus Christ, His death and resurrection.
How great the pain of searing loss – The Father turns His face away, As wounds which mar the Chosen One	It was my sin that held Him there Until it was accomplished; His dying breath has brought me life –	Why should I gain from His reward? I cannot give an answer; But this I know with all my heart – His wounds have paid my ransom.
Bring many sons to glory.	I know that it is finished.	

[Video](#) - The story of the writing of the song



*"I'd been meditating on the cross, and in particular what it cost the Father to give up his beloved Son to a torturous death on a cross. And what was my part in it? Not only was it my sin that put him there, but if I'd lived at that time, it would probably have been me in that crowd, shouting with everyone else 'crucify him'. It just makes his sacrifice all the more personal, all the more amazing, and all the more humbling." – Stuart Townend*



### GOD'S LOYAL LOVE

In the [Bible Project's Character God Series](#), they examine the biblical idea of "Khesed". Khesed is a difficult word to translate. It describes a relational and active love that God has for his people.

[Video](https://youtu.be/5TzWZYiF6aw) - <https://youtu.be/5TzWZYiF6aw>

[Study guide](#)

### THE PRODIGAL GOD (EXCERPT) – TIMOTHY KELLER

*"But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him."* – Luke 15:20

The younger son comes within sight of the house. His father sees him and runs--*runs* to him!

As a general rule, distinguished Middle Eastern patriarchs did not run. Children might run; women might run; young men might run. But not the paterfamilias, the dignified pillar of the community, the owner of the great estate. He would not pick up his robes and bare his legs like some boy. But this father does. He runs to his son and, showing his emotions openly, falls upon him and kisses him.

This almost surely would have taken the younger brother by surprise. Flummoxed, he tries to roll out his business plan for the restitution. The father interrupts him, not only ignoring his rehearsed speech, but directly contradicting it. "Quick!" he says to his servants. "Bring the best robe and put it on him!" ...

[The father] does not wait for his younger son on the porch of his home, impatiently tapping his foot, murmuring, "Here comes that son of mine. After all he's done, there had better be some real groveling!" There's not a hint of such an attitude. No, he runs and kisses him before his son can confess. It's not the repentance that causes the father's love, but rather the reverse. The father's lavish affection makes the son's expression of remorse far easier.



- *What are some key attributes of God's love for his creation and his people?*
- *In what ways does God's love bring you hope and comfort?*

## WE LOVE GOD

### ON THREE MEANINGS OF THE TERM WORSHIP – DR. JOHN D. WITVLIET

[Video](https://youtu.be/IYgzek_dMvI) - [https://youtu.be/IYgzek\\_dMvI](https://youtu.be/IYgzek_dMvI)

The English language is impaired when it comes to worship! We have one word to refer to three distinct meanings. Any entry on the term "worship" for a new dictionary on modern Christian usage would need to have at least three definitions.

#### 1. We worship in all of life.

We are called to offer our work, our leisure, our family life, and every other aspect of life to the Lord. Our whole lives are a sacrifice of praise to God. This is the sense of the term as it is used in Romans 12:1 ("which is your spiritual worship").

#### 2. We gather for events, ritual practices, or liturgies called "worship services."



This is the sense in which the term worship is used in John 4: “You worship on this mountain.” This use is synonymous with the term liturgy. (Liturgy does not refer to the words on the page of a bulletin, but rather to the sum total of “what happens when people show up on Sunday morning.” And every congregation, whether they are “high church” or “low church,” has a liturgy—whether it is written out or not.)

### **3. We engage in specific acts of adoration and praise, which we also call worship.**

This is how the word is used in Psalm 95 (“Come, let us bow down in worship.”) This narrow sense of the word comes closest to the early English word “weorthship,” which means “ascribing worth to.” When we praise people for a job well done, we are ascribing worth to them. Our instinctive response to God should be to praise, to worship, to ascribe worth. We do this often in our worship services and sometimes in other contexts (such as when we see a new baby or visit a national park).

Imagine these three meanings in (mostly) concentric circles. Worship or praise is one part of a worship service, which is but one part of the worship we render in all of life. We have one English word to speak of these three levels of meaning.

The problem comes when we start confusing which meaning of the term we are using at a given point. Consider some of the problems that this confusion generates: Sometimes we are so focused on the worship service (middle meaning) that we forget the importance of the worship that happens in all of life (broadest meaning). Traditionally, Reformed Christians have taken pride in pointing out this problem in some expressions of Christianity. The idea of worship in all of life is one of the main themes of Reformed Christianity.

But we Reformed Christians (historically) have a problem of our own. In our eagerness to point out how important worship in the broad sense is, we have sometimes minimized the importance of the worship service. Sometimes we have been reticent to build chapels on college campuses, for example, fearing that too much attention to worship services would diminish the emphasis on worship in all of life. Or we have thought that liturgy courses in seminaries really aren’t very important. Or we have called everything prior to the sermon in a worship service “the preliminaries.” These are subtle signs that this middle meaning of the term is suffering from inattention. What this fails to recognize is that these two kinds of worship (worship in the broad sense and worship in the liturgical sense) are mutually interdependent. The stronger one is, the stronger the other will be. We need liturgical events to keep our worship in all of life focused.

Recently, we have experienced a third problem in our use of the term worship. In many cases, we have so emphasized praise singing that we think that the primary or only purpose of the worship service (middle sense) is to worship (in the narrow sense). In fact, where most Reformed Christians used to think that the primary purpose of worship (middle sense) was to hear a sermon, now many think that the primary purpose is worship (in the narrow sense). And so praise team microphones have replaced pulpits as the central piece of liturgical furniture in a lot of churches. Quite often, our praise singing crowds out other acts of worship, such as prayers of confession, lament, creeds, and testimonies. In some churches, you might even hear a leader say, “Our worship time is over, and now it’s time for teaching.” Singing psalms and hymns and songs of praise is terrific! It’s non-negotiable. Once we’ve been united with Christ, we can’t help but praise! But praise is not the only thing that we do in a worship service. It is one part of our covenantal conversation with God.

I would prefer to have three different words to speak of these three meanings. But we’re stuck with one. All we can do is bear witness to each other about how important all three senses really are, and about how we need to keep all of them distinct yet related. We want to ensure that our life before God includes lots of all three!

*CLANGING CYMBALS OR GENUINE LOVE? – JENNA C. HOFF*

The other day, I visited a local garden conservatory, intermittently rolling (on my power wheelchair) and strolling (using my cane) down paths of vibrant flowers interspersed with soulful trees. Immersed in beauty, I was startled when a nicely dressed older gentleman sitting on a bench called to me as I passed him by.

“What’s your story?” he rumbled loudly, shooting a pointed stare at my cane. He didn’t give me a moment to reply before continuing, “It looks like you’re in need of a tune-up!” Without asking if I was open to being prayed for, he then began commanding God to heal my body in the name of Jesus. Once the man finished praying, he turned away from me. Our interaction was over, his Christian duty done, even though he hadn’t asked my name, taken a moment to learn anything about me, or shown even a pretense of interest in my life.

I presume he thought he already knew my entire story based on the fact I use mobility and communication equipment, seeing me only as a disabled woman whose sole need was for a Christian Hero to come along and convince God to heal me.

Interactions such as this have become commonplace in the three-and-a-half years since I began using a wheelchair. Comparatively, no one ever randomly approaches my husband (who doesn’t have disabilities) to pray for him. In the past two months alone, I’ve had six encounters with praying strangers (four with Christian faith healers who prayed for me on the spot as well as a young Muslim woman at a museum and an elderly Catholic nun on the city bus, both of whom said they would be praying for me). Of the six, only the Catholic nun left me with a feeling of gentleness and care. The way she talked to me and the gentleness of her spirit left me with a confidence that this was a woman who truly walks and talks deeply and humbly with God. The rest were forceful. As soon as it became obvious I wasn’t healed, they all awkwardly scuttled away, leaving me to my pain and disability.

To be clear, prayer itself isn’t the problem. Prayer is the way we talk to and build relationship with our savior. The prayers and love I’ve received from friends and fellow church members have carried me on days when I literally couldn’t carry myself.

It is love that makes the difference.

Nearly all of the prayers from strangers have been by people who briefly darted into my life, claimed a healing over me that did not happen, and then darted out just as quickly, without ever taking time to know me or show me love.

They don’t know I’ve had hundreds or even thousands of prayers offered by friends and strangers alike over the past almost 20 years (when I was in a disabling car crash). They don’t know that despite all these prayers, God has not (yet) chosen to heal me or remove this thorn from my flesh. They don’t know the heartbreak it’s been to make peace with the fact that I still live with pain and disability. They don’t know that aggressive prayer by strangers is like having salt rubbed in my wounds in the name of Jesus.

They also don’t know that my life is about so much more than my disabilities. The fact is, they don’t know me. It hurts to be unknown while being singled out only for my disabilities. And it is this feeling of being unknown that I want to use as a catalyst for change and personal growth.

It is a temptation we all face as we go about our daily lives, to superficially interact with others, skimming the surface while never really taking the time to truly know those God has brought into our lives. This feeling of being

unknown challenges me to self-reflect on the ways I, myself, run into people's lives, see them only through a stigmatized perception, and dash away, never having shown love.

When I greet a neighbor on the street, do I take the time to really see the person, or do I just say hello and rush on by? When I see a homeless man with a shopping cart, do I avert my eyes away from his poverty, forgetting this is someone's beloved son? When a newcomer enters my church, do I say to myself, "Someone else will greet her," before heading over to talk to my friends? When I mother my children, do I take the time to truly listen to them and deeply know them?

My heartfelt prayer is that the Holy Spirit will reveal the ways in which I am a clanging cymbal, as described in 1 Cor. 13:1: "If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal."

It inspires me to reflect on the many times I have quietly prayed for the needs of another who is in crisis. And then followed up my prayer by walking away without even small actions of gentleness and love during the person's time of need. And also to reflect on the times I have boldly told God the solution I wanted him to make happen for a problem, but then moved on without listening to what the Father wanted to say back to me.

Prayer is a conversation, and any good conversation should not be one-sided. Yet how many times have I scuttled away from an opportunity to know God's heart?

We are called to wholeheartedly know and love the people God brings across our paths, by following the example of Jesus, who literally laid down his life to save others. Jesus, who loved to pray and commune with the Father, never just prayed and then looked away and moved on. May we follow his powerful example of love in all we do, with all we encounter, in every prayer we pray.

#### ***FOLLOW THE PLATINUM RULE –LOVE MATTERS MORE (EXCERPT), JARED BYAS***

I once gave advice to two brothers who were not getting along. In their relationship, one of them found connection and intimacy through conflict. Getting into a heated discussion about their relationship with brutal honesty was the way to this man's heart. His brother was the opposite. He was so conflict-avoidant that if he was part of anything that smelled like a heated discussion, he started to retreat and disconnect from the person.

So they had developed a deeply rooted pattern over the forty years of their relationship together: the more one dug in for relationship in the way that made sense to him, the more the other one retreated. And the retreat caused the first one to dig in even more, which caused the other to retreat even more. It was a vicious cycle that had turned ugly, even though both desperately wanted a healthy relationship with the other.

The problem? The Golden Rule: "Do to others what you would have them do to you" (Matthew 7:12).

You heard me right. The Golden Rule has its limits. Consider a food analogy. What if I used the Golden Rule to feed my six-month-old baby and just gave him a beer and a bowl of spaghetti? I did to him what I would want him to do to me.

The Golden Rule is a good starting place. But without deep listening to the needs of another human being, we can find ourselves really hurting people with it.

That's why I endorse the Platinum Rule: "Do to others as I have learned from them they want done to them." They may very well thrive under an environment that I would suffer under. That's why true communication is at the

heart of what it means to love. We love well when we understand who someone is and behave according to who they are. We do not love well when we behave according to who we want them to be or who we assume they are because of who we are.



- *Have you ever met someone who was well intended, but whose encounter with you didn't seem very loving?*
- *In what ways are we sometimes like people who are "clanging cymbals", those who offer prayers but not care or love?*
- *What strategies or practices might we adopt to help us love others more faithfully?*

## RELATED MEDIA

### Books

- *The 5 Love Languages: The Secret to Love that Lasts* by Gary Chapman - [Link](#)
- *Crazy Love: Overwhelmed by a Relentless God* by Francis Chan - [Link](#)
- *You Are What You Love: The Spiritual Power of Habit* by James K. A. Smith - [Link](#)
- *Love Matters More: How Fighting to Be Right Keeps Us from Loving Like Jesus* by Jared Byas - [Link](#)
- *Love is the Way: Holding on to Hope in Troubling Times* by Bishop Michael Curry – [Review](#) - [Link](#)
- *Toughest People to Love: How to Understand, Lead, and Love the Difficult People in Your Life -- Including Yourself* by Chuck DeGroat - [Link](#)
- *Everybody Always* by Bob Goff - [Link](#)
- *The Prodigal God: Recovering the Heart of the Christian Faith* by Timothy Keller - [Link](#)
- *True Love: Stories* by Robert Fulghum - [Link](#)

## SCRIPTURE

[↑](#) Psalm 95: 1-2

"Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord;

let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation.

Let us come before him with thanksgiving

and extol him with music and song."

[↔](#) John 13:34-35 | "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

## ADVENTURE

Valentines aren't just for February! Send an "anytime valentine" to someone you love. Cut out hearts, use lots of pink and red, and maybe add some candy. Let someone know that you love them!

*Hosea 11:1-11*

It is 6am. My 3-year-old son crawls into my bed. He curls up all nestled deep into my chest and chin. It is as close to "carrying" a child as a man can have. He calls it "snuggling". I call it exquisite.

That was 15 years ago and that kid is now 6'7". I now fit under his wingspan, but daily we still speak "I love you"

And I wonder, can you ever say "I love you" too much? Can a child, or anyone else for that matter, hear it too often?

In the scriptures, love is powerful. In Hosea, God loves Israel like a husband loves his wife. In chapter 11, God loves Israel as a father loves his son. "Out of Egypt I called my son;" and the fatherly images continue as he not only takes them out of danger, but bends down, taking them by the arms, and teaches them to walk. Who has not seen such a picture in "real life?"

The God of the scriptures *bends down* to care, feed, and tend to his children. Even when they walk away - *even when they are unresponsive to his calls* - God keeps loving and calling because that's who God is. The God of the scriptures loves the world (*literally the cosmos*) enough to even give up his Son as the ultimate expression of love. Some expressions of love are stronger than death (Song of Songs 8:6).

In Mark 1:11, Jesus heard an "I love you" when he rose out of the Jordan. Here he *bent down* to take a baptism that he did not need, but that he wished to undergo in order that be with us in every way.

So today I find myself wondering what that must have felt like for the Father to say those words to his Son. Was the Father proud of his Son? Maybe Hosea 11 was one of Jesus' favorite texts. Maybe experiencing the love of his Father empowered him to begin to take on the role of stooping, bending, and loving just like his Father did. And then I wonder what it was like for Jesus to hear those words from above; could the Father or Son say or hear these words too much? Was it exquisite for them?

In the season of Lent, we keep our eyes fixed on the coming cross. The cross is God's deepest expression of "I love you". There God not only says it, but he shows it with open arms. And God has been saying it ever since. Today, listen for God's "I love you". And consider sharing that "I love you" with someone else today.

Lord, we love you.

In all our days - especially our forgetful ones! -

help us to remember that you love us:

as a mother loves her child, as a father loves his son.

In our moments of fear and loneliness,

remind us that you are the ideal parent with perfect, unflinching, and bending love.

Help us to love others with that kind of love.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.