



Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, and walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. -Ephesians 5:1-2, NRSV

October 2024

Dear Holy Spirit Verona Church Family Member,

Each Sunday after announcements, I say these words from Ephesians: “Walk in Love as Christ loved us and gave of himself in sacrifice and offering to God.” It is not only the cue for our Music Director, Ema Mitrović, to announce the Offertory Hymn and the Usher to bring the bread and wine down the center aisle, but it is also that transition moment from the Liturgy of the Word to the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Something happens; we are changed from hearers of the Word to participants at the Table. We then break bread together and share God’s love.

This is our weekly practice – Eucharist. Our call is to receive that bread (and wine) and then walk in God’s love, be God’s love, enact God’s love. This is the hope as Christians, that the love we share at the table is then brought to all.

This year’s fall Stewardship Campaign theme is “Walk in Love.” My hope is that you will join me in that walk. Generosity is a journey; it’s a practice that we learn and nurture within our hearts. It just isn’t in our nature to give away what we have worked hard to acquire or to donate our precious time without compensation. It takes something as radical as Love to inspire us to share our time, talent, and treasure with others. This is a journey we make together, a Walk in Love.

People have walked this path of Love generations before us here at Holy Spirit Verona. We are marking our 95th year thanks to the generosity of those who have come before us. Each year at this time we ask that you make a “pledge” of support to help this tradition of spreading God’s love flourish. We ask that you **to make a pledge of your time, talent and treasure** (or a combination of these) to help us prepare for the following year. It is your pledge that determines what we can and cannot do each year.

Take note of these definitions:

Pledge – “to make a formal promise/**commitment** to give or do something”

Donation – “something that is given to a charity”

Gift – “a thing given willingly to someone without payment”

Lots of people give donations and gifts to the ministries of Holy Spirit Verona, but not all of them are in an on-going relationship with us. **Relationships require commitments** –

making a pledge (regardless of the amount) shows your level of commitment to the Holy Spirit Verona Church Family. **Consider filling out that attached forms** to help us prepare for 2025. Our **In-Giving Sunday will be Sunday, November 24** – please place the forms into our Sanctuary Baptismal Font between now and then. *The sooner your pledge is submitted, the easier it is for our leadership to plan for next year!*

We have been hearing the Gospel of Saint Mark in our Sunday lectionary this year and have learned about a world turned radically upside down. The laws and customs that had been in place for centuries were challenged, power and dominion were questioned. Jesus caused a revolution of thought and heart by daring to reach out to the outcast and teach others to do the same. He walked in love with the marginalized, with the poor, with the sick, and brings us along with him on his journey.

The most miraculous gift of Love is that it is there within us all the time; all we must do is tap into it, and everyone is changed because of it. In the coming weeks, we will once again hear stories from parishioners (old and new) who will share why they are committed to the work we do in this place. Our stories will intentionally raise up how we *Walk in Love* with each other in our congregation and beyond. Thank you for being a part of this journey!

May grace and peace be yours in abundance,

Father Jerry

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