



Love remains



A theme reflection for the 2022 One Great Hour of Sharing

***“And now these three remain faith, hope, and love. But the greatest of these is love.”
~1 Corinthians 13:13, NIV***

The Apostle Paul helped newly converted Christians at Corinth embrace the virtue of love. Love is an active decision—to think of others before one’s self; to work on behalf of others; to care for others with acts of kindness and advocacy. Christian community is less about “me” and more about “us.” Paul defines “us” broadly—it is not limited to one’s household or home church or immediate neighborhood. The church crosses boundaries, creating realities where differences in ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status, culture, and social location can be acknowledged and celebrated.

Paul taught that Jesus formed a group of diverse persons into a new kind of community—a community whose very fabric of communal life is woven with threads of love and service. For Paul, persons are called to think, live, and behave differently. The challenges at the Corinthian church are testimonies to the truth that living and loving in community can be difficult and messy at times. Living in love and living by love does not mean there are no tensions, disagreements, or conflicts—in human relationships, these are natural and expected. Paul reminds the Corinthians that love holds them together, no matter what. They are no longer mere individuals; rather, they are part of the body of Christ. They are connected in ways that defy individualism and selfishness. In the Judeo-Christian traditions, connection and unity are esteemed. A commitment to community does not erase differences—they are valued and embraced. It’s all about love.

What does love look like in community? International partners of the Global Food Initiative participating in educational opportunities and working together to establish food security. Brethren Volunteer Service volunteers serving with a new community for a year. Brethren pastors, leaders, and members sharing in meaningful conversations and reflection. Individuals joining in the work of Brethren Disaster Ministries to encourage people and rebuild homes affected by disaster.

The love that the Apostle Paul taught the Corinthians recognizes the connection between and among people, across geography, nationality, and ethnicity. Through your support, the Church of the Brethren cares for communities near and far away, embodying acts of service from a place of love that spans generations. Your gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing resurrect dreams and (re)construct spaces for new dreams to happen. When you give, you show that love is more than just a word; your generosity is the embodiment of our connection to sisters and brothers that extends across space and time.

Love is generous and compassionate. Love is action. Love goes the extra mile. Love responds to need. Love makes a difference. Love joins hands. Love works together. Love hikes up and down hills. Love is resilient. Love is big and small. And above all else, love remains.