

December 6 | Sunday

Love: God's Love

Psalm 36:5-10; John 3:16-17



07 | Mon – In love and mercy, God redeemed them | Read Isaiah 63:7-9, Psalm 136

Isaiah used the Hebrew word *hesed* to express God's steadfast, covenant love, and the Hebrew *ahav* to show His deeply-felt affection for His people. Human feelings come and go, but God's love is utterly dependable—it "endures forever." Ask God to help you experience His love as more than just a nice idea.

08 | Tue – God's love saves us | Read John 3:16-17

Verse 16 is probably one of the most well-known verses in the Bible, reminding us that Christmas is not just about a little baby. God's purpose was to demonstrate that His love is strong enough to save us. Have you ever imagined God angrily "watching you like a hawk," just waiting to catch you doing something wrong? How can verse 17 reshape any unloving mental images you might carry about how God looks at you?

09 | Wed – "Remain in My love..." | Read John 15:9-13

Jesus spoke these words to his followers just hours before his arrest. He wanted them to understand that the cross was not just an unhappy accident, but it was a great display of His love for them...and for us. Jesus laid out the plan. "The Father loves me," Jesus told them, "and then I have loved you. Now, you go and love each other in this same way." How can you live out this kind of committed, steady love towards others?

10 | Thu – Who started it? | Read 1 John 4:7-16

Two big themes emerge from these verses. First, our spiritual journey does not start with our own initiative. "*This is love: not that we loved Him (first) but that He loved us and sent...*" Secondly, "*no one has ever seen God but if we love one another, God lives in us and His love is made complete...*" Sometimes you experience the greatest awareness of God's love when it is passing through you on its way to others.

11 | Fri – The love demonstration | Read Romans 5:1-8

Love is a wonderful thing but Paul bases our ultimate security, not on feelings of being loved, but on an event. The vital proof of God's love is the *fact* that Jesus died for us when we did not deserve it. Remember this fact, during difficult times, when it is easier to think that God doesn't really care. He does. More than you know!

12 | Sat – How wide and long and high and deep... | Read Ephesians 3:14-19

Paul uses geometric terms to describe God's love as bigger than we can comprehend. What a paradox [*a statement or proposition that seems self-contradictory but in reality expresses a possible truth*], what a paradox when Paul prays for us to really know this love that surpasses our understanding. The result of that 'knowing' is our being filled up with God's fullness. Put that on your Christmas list and see what happens!

December 13 | Sunday – Joy: God lifts up the lowly | Read John 3:16-21



Hastings United Methodist Church