

Rev Eva Cavaleri
Upper & Middle School Chapel Talk
Mar 11/12, 2015
Love and Good Will for All

The command to love others is found in all major religious traditions. It is important and mentioned time and again, and yet: what does it mean to love each other in a way that honors this command?

You'll notice that we'll hear two readings on love from the Christian tradition. It is no mistake that both Mr. Simons and Mr. MacMillan are reading them. While you may associate these men with enforcing rules, both are motivated by love and care for each of you. I invite you to hear their words as not only coming from sacred scripture, but from themselves and their deepest motivation.

Readings:

1 Corinthians 13:4-13

Matthew 22:36-40

<http://www.upworthy.com/a-bunch-of-skeletons-kiss-hug-and-dance-in-a-super-heartwarming-video-about-love>

Now that we've seen this video, take a moment to notice how you feel. I hope it has created a feeling of wellbeing and love within you. It's powerful, isn't it? That sense of expansive, abundant and shared love that everyone can claim? I hope that watching this tapped into an even stronger experience of love that resides within you – that place within yourself where you feel connected to the source of love. Perhaps you can locate that in the feeling of love that you share with you family or close friends – the feeling of being safe, protected, nurtured and like there's always enough. That is a place that I trust we can all find. Let's take a moment to connect to it and breathe with it.

The question now is: what to do with it now that we have it within us? Is it there to just stay within ourselves? I wonder what it would mean to share it or extend it others. While *doing* things, like helping a neighbor by shoveling snow or going out of your way to do things for a friend when they're feeling down is important, I'm

thinking of something a little different. I invite you to share this feeling of good will and love with others.

Imagine that circle of friends/family in a circle around you, you can see them there and feel the good will and love that you share together. Now I invite you to extend that circle of care to include:

People here at SSM that you know and see each day, teachers, coaches, those who serve your food in the dining room...

People here that you may find difficult to like, even those you would call your enemies

Expand your circle further to encompass those further away, throughout Minnesota, or even farther so that people you may not even know personally may benefit for the good will and love that can expand from your heart.

Sometimes students share powerful experiences during senior speeches, when they make themselves vulnerable and share important information about their life, or maybe a friend shares something personal or painful with you, or someone you care about is sick, or you look at your phone and learn that there has been a tragedy in a far off place or a natural disaster. All of these moments are important, and often we may find ourselves just moving past them without stopping or really noticing what's happening. I invite you to pause. Pause and breathe and notice what is happening. Breathe, and find within yourself that feeling of love and good will. Then, use your imagination to extend it to that person or place, surrounding that situation with your love and good will. This is a powerful action and place from which to act. What follows next is up to you to decide. Perhaps a thank you or an acknowledgement to the person who is sharing with you. I trust that you will know what the best next step is. May it begin with the act of love.