

Service Sunday Resources 2018

Scripture Focus

1 John 4:19-21 (The Message)

We, though, are going to love—love and be loved. First we were loved, now we love. He loved us first. If anyone boasts, “I love God,” and goes right on hating his brother or sister, thinking nothing of it, he is a liar. If he won’t love the person he can see, how can he love the God he can’t see? The command we have from Christ is blunt: Loving God includes loving people. You’ve got to love both.

Calls to Worship

By Katinka Kalusche BVS Unit #318

One: We are gathered to worship together, full of the joy we feel about God’s love for us.

All: He who loved us first, has called us to love and care for one another.

One: With God’s help, we can overcome hatred and anger.

All: We seek God and ask for guidance, knowing that we can love because of this grace.

One: God’s love is the beginning and the end; it is the **A**lpha and **O**mega.

All: Praise God for peace and hope.

One: Come, oh beloved children, let us rejoice and sing a new song.

By Emily Tyler, BVS Unit #265

Leader: We come together to worship.

People: In a spirit of love, and with the hope of transformation.

Leader: God, you loved us first,

People: so that we could be your hands and feet.

Leader: Transform our hearts

People: so that we may have the strength and grace to love all.

All: Amen.

By Ben Bear, BVS Unit #277

One: When we learn the names, faces, and stories of strangers around us,

All: we share God's love with the neighbors we see.

One: When we make environmental and political decisions based on the well-being of future generations,

All: we share God's love with neighbors we may never meet.

One: When we call out hateful words and actions towards women,

All: we share God's love with our sisters.

One: When we raise our voices against racial injustice,

All: we share God's love with our brothers.

All: May we continue to show our love for God as we demonstrate our love for all God's people.

By Grey Robinson, BVS Unit #318

*Adapted from pg. 530 of *Common Prayer*

Leader: O Lord, let my soul rise up to meet you

People: as the day rises to meet the sun.

Leader: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

People: As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever.

Leader: Come, let us sing to the Lord.

People: Let us shout for joy to the rock of our salvation.

Leader: Overwhelm us with your love

People: which casts out every fear.

Leader: Overwhelm us with your love

People: which is revealed to us by your son.

Leader: Overwhelm us with your love

People: which shows us how to love one another.

Leader: Overwhelm us with your love,

People: for you are a loving God, we worship you.

All: Amen.

Prayers

By Kelsey Murray, BVS Unit #317

Dear loving God,

Your love is so abundant and bold that we come to you this morning asking for ways that you might help us show others love. It's hard to love others sometimes. It's hard to love others we disagree with or don't see eye to eye with. It's hard to put these things aside and just show love. But we were first loved and now we need to show that love.

We ask for your grace this morning in showing people love. God we ask that this week you help us show love to all people. As we go from this place, we ask that you help us remember that we are all loved by you, and that we are all called to love. We ask this in your loving name, Amen.

Grey Robinson, BVS Unit #318

God,

We confess to you our human weakness, our human stubbornness, to not forgive and love one another, for lashing out in anger and hatred to our brother and sister. O God,

we say that we love you, yet we ignore the suffering of others. We say that we love you, yet strike back at our brothers and sisters with vengeance. Help us love you better by loving our neighbor. Help us show to others the love you gave to us. Help us open our eyes to the people around us, and fill our hearts with loving compassion. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

By Katinka Kalusche, BVS Unit #318

Gracious God,

We truly thank you for the never-ending love you have for us. We are both grateful and thankful to be your beloved children. You have called us to love one another, and we are only able to love because you have loved us first. It sometimes can be challenging and frustrating to try to show love, especially regarding people we have a hard time getting along with. However, you want us to face this challenge and you want us to live as your witnesses. We ask you for your guidance and example to truly love. Be with us through your patience and your never-ending loving kindness. In your son's name we pray. Amen.

By Emily Tyler, BVS Unit #265

Loving and grace-filled God,

Your love is transforming our lives into followers who know how to love; to love even those that are the hardest to love. This is not an easy request, but by your grace, we continue to be transformed each time we fall short. Thank you for continuing to call us back to you, and sending Jesus Christ to serve as an example of your agape love. Please continue to bless our work, that it may glorify you. Amen.

By Grey Robinson, BVS Unit #318

Heavenly Father,

Overwhelm us with your love and make us anew in your spirit. We long to be loving people, just as you continue to love us. Touch our hearts and our hands to not only feel your love, but act out your love in service. Amen.

By Kelsey Murray, BVS Unit #317

Holy and loving God,

We come to you this morning looking for ways to love. How can we spread your love and light to a world that so desperately needs it? What can we do daily to encourage others in love so they might see your light through us? Loving God, use us this week to love people. Use us this week to show others how boldly you love us. Use us this week to spread the love. We pray this in your holy and loving name, Amen.

Sendings

By Grey Robinson, BVS Unit #318

Leader: You taught us how to worship.

People: Now we go to praise you.

Leader: You taught us how to pray.

People: Now we go and pray to you.

Leader: You taught us how to act.

People: Now we go and show it to the world.

By Emily Tyler, BVS Unit #265

Leader: We came to worship.

People: We go now to serve.

Leader: We have been given God's agape love.

People: We go now to share it.

Leader: We are Christ's disciples.

People: We go now to show love to all.

By Grey Robinson, BVS Unit #318

Leader: You have shown us love,

People: Love on the good days; love on the bad days.

Leader: You have called us to love,

People: To love you and to love your people.

Leader: We are called to love on the good days and the bad days.

People: We go now, to love you, and to love people.

Reflections

By Katinka Kalusche, BVS Unit #318

The greatest gift God has given us is his incredible love for each one of us. God's love is kind and patient, it is never-ending and full of truth and grace. Knowing that I am a beloved child, I am able to love those around me. It truly is my understanding that God speaks to us through love. Being part of loving relationships and communities of all kinds, I feel God's love for each one of us. Not only do I receive love in relationships, I as well can give mine to others. Some days it can be a challenge to love everyone, but I know that God is with me to overcome my own insecurities and doubts about who is to

be loved. An important part of serving others is sharing God's love and the joy he puts in my heart, so I am more than happy about this amazing season of my life – serving through Brethren Volunteer Service.

By Pat Krabacher, BVS Unit #308

(A short reflection of two recent Childrens' Disaster Service (CDS) deployments to Texas in Sept 2017 for Hurricane Harvey, and N. California for the wild fires in Oct. 2017.)

On each CDS deployment 9 – 12 team members (who likely have not met each other before) are quick to learn from actual experience what no training can prepare you for. There are many changes encountered, woven into the experience is the grace and flexibility of each individual who must react with calmness and a smile, even when situations change radically and circumstances are not "like home".

Reflecting on these two challenging assignments, I tried to sense what they had in common - Wind, Rain, and Fire came to mind. Wind was the common denominator in both Texas and California – Harvey, a hurricane with 100+ mile per hour winds also had deluging rain and floods, while the wildfires in N. CA were whipped by the 70 mph winds into an inferno. Very different images and realities, but complete devastation sprang from the winds, rain, and fire.

Both deployments were complex, and many unexpected changes occurred, almost daily. In both TX and CA, we never served in the location originally identified as our deployment site. In TX, we worked in three "survivor" shelters, and in CA we worked in three "survivor" shelters – in Napa, and at a Local Assistance Center (which served 400 – 900 families each day) in Santa Rosa, Sonoma Co. In TX, we slept in hotel rooms and ate dinners out. In CA, we slept & ate in "survivor" and staff shelters and often did without a shower.

In both CA and TX we saw AMAZING generosity poured out all around us, ordinary Americans doing SOMETHING to help. Yes, we were loved by people who served us with

food, provided a place to lay our heads, and security guys sitting up all night out in the cold while we slept.

As we were loved, so we, too, were changed by that love. We learned about ourselves and we became a bit closer to the image of Jesus, as we loved the families we served.

Skit

By Ben Bear, Unit #277

1: I Love God!

2: Oh my gosh- me too!

1: It seems so easy right?

2: Well, when you're the creator of ice cream, kittens, porch swings, and thrift stores, it's pretty easy to be loved!

1: It's not always that easy though. Think of the cashier at the gas station in town.

2: You mean the guy with the weird glasses and crooked teeth?

1: That's the guy.

2: Ew. He is strange. I don't talk to him if I can help it.

1: Then you apparently don't love God as much as you think you do.

2: What?! Why do you say that?

1: Loving the oddball gas station guy is part of loving God. It's not optional.

2: Huh. I guess I never thought of it that way. This means I need to learn to love that lady at the bank that spits when she talks, doesn't it?

1: Yeah, but I think you can do it. Loving God isn't always effortless, but it's what we are called to do.

2: I suppose you're right. This doesn't sound like it will be very easy.

1: Yeah, but do you know what will make it easier?

2: What's that?

1: Buying ice cream from the gas station guy!

2: Yes! I just might need to practice loving God more often!