

Advent Reflection

December 9, 2020

LOVE

**1 John 4:7-12** NRSV

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

*Reflection by Nancy R.*

When I was about 9 or 10 years old, we attended a Methodist church near the apartment complex we lived in. At church, we were pretty engaged in activities. My brothers and I were involved in the youth and Sunday School classes. Mom and Dad were involved in the men's and women's fellowship groups. One day I heard a friend ask my Sunday School teacher why God gave up his only son to die on the cross. Her immediate response was "because he loves you," simple and to the point. I'm pretty sure it was during Lent when churches encourage children to commit themselves to Jesus Christ and get baptized. The teacher's response to my friend was a significant part of the reason I was baptized in that church.

When my husband and I started dating, I had a major accident; a head on collision. So there went my car, it was totaled. Even though it was just after our first date, a few days later he was helping me arrange new transportation. He had a personal truck and a work truck, and he offered his personal truck to me until I had a vehicle to drive. While we had known each other for a while, we had not been close friends. I asked him "How can you just give me your truck to drive?" His immediate response was "because I love you", simple and to the point. His response was a significant part of the reason I married him.

I've pretty much grown up in the congregation of First Christian Church. If I've learned anything through the people in our congregation – a family of believers – it is that God's love is abundant, no question about it. And because of the love of Jesus Christ shown through our congregation, I know (verse 12) "God lives in us and his love is made complete in us," He said, "because I love you," no question about it.