All You Need is Love

Easter 6A
John 14:15-21

Rev. Dr. Laura Blazek
St. Michael's Episcopal Church
Norman, OK
May 12, 2026

Have you ever had a song get so stuck in your head that the words just keeping running around your brain and eventually out your mouth as you to burst into song? That is what has happened to me all week after reading today's Gospel lesson. Randomly throughout the day I would start singing the Beatles song "All You Need is Love" (1967), including the orchestral musical responses. There might even have been a little dancing that made people look at me like I was crazy. Even now the chorus is running through my brain:

> All you need is love (do-do-do-do-do (orchestra response))
> All you need is love (do-do-do-do-do (orchestra response))
> All you need is love, love
> Love is all you need.

This idea is just as revolutionary now as it was then. The love we need is the unconditional love given to us by the Holy Trinity. We must extend that same love to others. In doing so, we show our love for God. Jesus' greatest commandment is love. Love God. Love one another. Everything we do should come from a place of unconditional love.

Unconditional love is hard to understand if you have never experienced it before. In our world, everything is often seen as a commodity to be exchanged- this for that. We tend to be wary of things that are freely given to us. We look for the catch. At our Pride Festival booth laden with bread 'loaves of love' and other goodies, everything was free. People who came to our booth were frequently incredulous that it was all free. Once they understood that we were genuinely there solely to be present with them in celebration of who God made them to be and to offer unconditional love one loaf of bread at a time, you could see a transformation within them. Smiles broke out. Those who were guarded visibly relaxed. Wariness turned to joy.

Acts of unconditional love don't have to be grandiose. In fact, I would say that often the smallest or simplest things speak the loudest. When a far-right religious group arrived at the Pride Festival with huge, harmful, anti-Pride signs, people from many different churches quietly used their bodies and even a rainbow umbrella as a shield to block the signs from view. When this

group began twisting words of scripture into words of exclusion and hurt, they were drowned out by whistles and singing. In the midst of all of this, our senior warden, Sandy Newton, quietly took some of our bread 'loaves of love' and gave them to both those celebrating Pride and those protesting. Both groups took the bread and ate, breaking bread together.

This is what Christ's love looks like. Crossing boundaries. Offering support. Being present for one another, even when we just sit in silence with each other. Inviting others to come and discover a new way of thinking and a new way of living that extends unconditional love to everyone without judgement.

Unconditional love is a love of action. It begins with God at creation and continues by sending his only son to us. It abides with us through Jesus as he lived and died as one of us. The Holy Spirit carries this love onward. God's love endures through us as we echo Christ's love in our daily lives. Christ's commandment to love is an invitation to become one with the Holy Trinity by joining in God's loving mission that began at creation. "This love transcends self-interest, prejudice, and parochialism; it embraces all people and creation." (Kim) Love like this seems crazy in a world that focuses on division, exclusion, and living only for oneself.

The love that Jesus calls us to share is revolutionary. Bishop Michael Curry coined the term "Crazy Christians" to describe believers who share acts of love, justice, and compassion even when it goes against societal norms. This is hard work. But we aren't alone in the work. In our Gospel lesson we hear of the coming of the Holy Spirit who will come along beside us. One of the Greek words used to describe the Holy Spirit is paraclete. The literal translation is "one called to another's side." However, it is a highly nuanced word whose meaning varies depending upon the circumstances. It is much like hearing a symphonic orchestra. When listening to an orchestra your ear may pick out the violins, then the French horns, or even the shimmering tone of the triangle. Together they create a beautiful symphony.

The Holy Spirit is just as complex. A single word can't fully describe who they are. They are more than just an advocate. They are with us always. They are a source of comfort and peace. They stand with us as an ally, support us in all that we do, and so much more. The Holy Spirit guides us and empowers us to carry out Christ's ministry of unconditional love.

This ministry is multi-faceted, but it all starts with the idea of coming alongside someone else whether to be an advocate, an ally, or a helper. Simply being present for someone speaks volumes about unconditional love. Sometimes, we just need the comfort of another human being beside us. Being present for someone isn't always as easy as it sounds. It means taking time to stop and really listen, even if it means listening to silence. Let the Holy Spirit work through you. Showing unconditional love to others is life-changing and soul-lifting for all parties involved.

Jesus and the Holy Spirit dwell within us. We are their faces and their hands in the world. The love of Christ that we share with others lets them feel the loving arms of Jesus enfold them, allowing them to know the healing power of His love. Acts of unconditional love changes lives--

one person, one heart at a time. As someone once said, “To the world you may be one person, but to one person you may be the world.”

People may look at us like we are crazy when we reach out in love expecting nothing in return. But the world needs this kind of craziness. The kind that respects the dignity of every human being and strives for true justice and peace through acts of unconditional love. Christ’s greatest commandment is to love. Love is indeed all we need.

Amen

Works Cited

Beatles, The. "All You Need is Love." By John Lennon & Paul McCartney. 1967. Record.

Kim, Yung Suk. *Sixth Sunday of Easter Commentary on John 14:15-21*. 10 May 2026. May 2026. <https://www.workingpreacher.org/commentaries/revised-common-lectionary/sixth-sunday-of-easter/commentary-on-john-1415-21-7>.