

Walk Steady Together

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[0 : 00] Okay, let's turn to the book of 2 John as we prepare to hear God's word for us this morning. And let me first begin with the word of prayer as we prepare to hear God's word to us.

Father, we are grateful that we have your word. We have the words that are given by the Holy Spirit to your apostles, to these men who guarded this deposit of truth that Jesus Christ, their Lord and our Lord, entrusted to them.

We thank you today that we get to hear from these men who saw and knew Jesus himself and whose lives were transformed by Jesus. We are so grateful, Lord, for this wisdom.

And so now we pray, give us eyes to see, ears to hear, hearts to understand. Your wisdom, your kindness, your love that has been given to us so that we ourselves may become like you, Father.

We may become like our Lord Jesus Christ that we may keep in step with your spirit. Lord, I pray, open our eyes and let us receive all this truth with glad hearts.

[1 : 18] Amen. Amen. Amen. Well, what we're going to do is begin by reading a letter from a man named John, the Apostle John.

And as I read this, I want you to listen carefully. And it's so quick for us to listen carefully, to immediately listen for what is the content, what is the truth being delivered to us.

But I want, as you're listening for that, to also listen to the tone. I want you to listen to the manner in which John is writing this letter. Because John, by now, he is an old man.

He is writing to men and women who are much younger than him, men and women whom he thinks of as his children. And John is writing with the mindset of a father.

Father, that's something we're going to see in this letter. Now, sometimes that word father can carry a lot of baggage with it for some of us. Perhaps you grew up with a father who showed very little interest in you.

[2 : 19] Or maybe he was overindulgent of you. Or he was harsh and severe toward you. But John, the way he writes, he is writing as a better kind of father.

And as I read this short letter, I want you to think of this as a letter from, you know, if you don't have a father that you can look up to, I want you to think of this as a letter from the father that you wish you had.

I want you to notice John's tone, his wording, his expression. So here's what John writes in this short letter from the Bible, commonly known as 2 John.

The elder to the elect lady and her children, whom I love in truth. And not only I, but also all who know the truth.

Because of the truth that abides in us and will be with us forever. Grace, mercy, and peace will be with us.

[3 : 20] From God the Father, and from Jesus Christ the Father's Son, in truth and love. I rejoiced greatly to find some of your children walking in the truth, just as we were commanded by the Father.

And now I ask you, dear lady, not as though I were writing you a new commandment, but the one we have had from the beginning, that we love one another.

And this is love, that we walk according to his commandments. This is the commandment, just as you have heard from the beginning, so that you should walk in it.

For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. Such a one is the deceiver and the antichrist.

Watch yourselves, so that you may not lose what we have worked for, but may win a full reward. Everyone who goes on ahead and does not abide in the teaching of Christ does not have God.

[4 : 29] Whoever abides in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house or give him any greeting, for whoever greets him takes part in his wicked works.

Though I have much to write to you, I would rather not use paper and ink. Instead, I hope to come to you and talk face to face, so that our joy may be complete.

The children of your elect sister greet you. This is the word of the Lord. So at this point in his life, John, he is an old, old man.

And at this point, he is the last living apostle of Jesus Christ. All the rest, as far as we know, have been martyred for their faith. And so John occupies a special place among these churches that he is writing to.

And yet, with that special place, John isn't writing as though he has the authority of a powerful tyrant or as an exalted sage.

[5 : 44] He doesn't write with that sort of authority. Instead, he writes with the authority of a wise and loving father. If you have your Bible open to 2 John, you'll notice that John is writing not as a man who is disinterested.

He's writing as a father who is deeply affected by his children in the faith. John is writing not as a man who is indulgent, but as a father who is stern in a firm and protective way.

He is writing not as a man who is severe, but as a father who is tender toward his family. Now, the reason I'm drawing our attention to the manner in which John writes this letter, the reason is the manner that he writes is consistent with the message that he is writing.

We are not always consistent with the message we are speaking and the manner in which we speak it, but John is. He is telling us to love in truth, but he's not only telling us how to do it, John is also showing us how to love in truth, how to love each other as God calls us to do it.

John is both telling us and he is showing us that real love, it is not a squishy, sentimental, merely emotional thing.

[7 : 08] Real love is shaped around a backbone. It is formed around a backbone of truth. And so over the next three weeks, we will be looking closely at this letter, at 2 John, as well as at 3 John as well, another short letter that John writes.

We're going to learn how to love in truth. Now, as for today, we are here to learn what God is calling us to do.

First, today, he is calling us to walk steady together. He is calling us to walk steady together. We are challenged to walk alongside one another through life.

Steadfast and persistent. We are to remain together in the bonds of love. That's what the church is meant to look like. It is meant to be bound together by the Holy Spirit.

We love in truth. We walk steady together. So how do we know whether that's happening? How do we know whether we are walking steady together?

[8 : 16] Because you and I, we might have very, very different ideas of what that means. So on the one hand, I've met people who seem to think, they think of themselves as, they almost seem to think of themselves as groundhogs, right?

They emerge from their burrows once every few months or once or twice a year, and they appear in church just often enough to keep their membership active, to, you know, say hi to a few people they like, and then they disappear into their holes again for a while.

And then there are others who seem to think that walking steady together means you have to attend every single last church activity available to you, and if anyone else is failing to do that, they are just a sinner, and you complain about them.

We can't look to one another. We can't look to our culture's ideas. We can't look to our own feelings and our own selfishness to know what real love for the church looks like. We have to turn to God's word.

We allow him to shape our love. What does it look like to have a real love for the church? Well, based on what John says in this letter of 2 John, let me challenge you with five questions about the way you love.

[9 : 24] Five questions about the way you love. First question. Do you persistently love the church? Do you persistently love the church?

I want you to notice in the first two verses that language of family love that John is using. The elder to the elect lady and her children, whom I love in truth, and not only I, but also all who know the truth, because of the truth that abides in us and will be with us forever.

First, John calls the church that he's writing to, he calls that church, the elect lady and her children. What he's doing is he's using this family language to portray himself as a father figure to them.

He's writing to them as part of his family. He appeals to them and addresses them as those whom I love in truth. And then he assures them even further that all who know the truth, well, they love them too.

Everyone who knows the truth loves them too. And why does John see them as family? It's because of the truth that abides in us and will be with us forever.

[10 : 47] What is this truth that dwells within us? What is this truth that makes us a family? It's this message that John explains more fully in 1 John chapter 1.

John writes, this is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him is no darkness at all.

If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another and the blood of Jesus, his son, cleanses us from all sin.

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

John is telling us that God is light and in him is no darkness at all. God reveals everything and knows everything and no evil thing, not even the slightest corruption due to sin, due to rebellion against God, nothing corrupted corrupted can enter into God's presence.

[12 : 18] We cannot be with God. We cannot have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness. Our only hope is to be cleansed from all sin by the blood of Jesus, his son, this Jesus who died on a cross as a sacrifice for sin.

For every one of you who confesses your sin, every one of you who repents and turns away from that sin and believes that only Jesus can cleanse you from all unrighteousness.

This is the truth that dwells within us. This is the truth that makes us a family. That gospel message, it is the backbone around which the muscles and sinews of love are anchored and built.

You must know this truth. You must know this truth well. This is the truth that makes us a family. Only by knowing this truth, only then can you truly perceive the church.

Only then can you truly see Squamish Baptist Church as your truest family. Do you persistently love the church?

[13 : 31] You can only do this if you know the truth that binds us together. If you know Jesus Christ as a person, as your Lord and Savior, and if you know the work of salvation that Jesus accomplished when he died and rose again.

This is so important because if we are not bound together by truth, then we will be bound together for reasons that are merely practical or accidental.

What's going to happen is we will start seeing one another as merely useful. Just useful. Now haven't you perhaps approached the church in this way?

Perhaps in your past you have looked at the church this way. You came to the church because you perceived that, well, you had social needs. You had needs for love and needs for friendship.

or you perceived that your family had religious needs. They needed a personal chaplain or they needed a club or a ministry for your children or teenagers to be a part of.

[14 : 42] You found the church useful. But have you ever found our church to be delightful? To be delightful.

Do you persistently love Squamish Baptist Church and those who are part of our church? Do you persistently love them the way John loves this church that he is writing to? Think about this for a moment.

Think about relationships in which we approach one another merely as useful. Imagine a young man who asks a woman to marry him because he finds her merely useful.

You know, he likes her family connections. He likes her family wealth. He likes her social status. He likes the idea that she could bear him children and that's all. Do you sense what a shallow and sad relationship that is?

Can you imagine how the woman must feel when she finds out how hollow his love really is? Perhaps you have a relationship with a family member or a friend or a colleague and it is someone who you realize they merely find you useful to them.

[15 : 57] That's all. You feel the pain of being seen this way. The dehumanization of that. How much better if that young man I was talking about were to see his fiancée not merely as useful but as delightful?

And how much better is it to see our church, the elect lady and her children, as delightful? Is that the way that you see our church?

That is the way Jesus Christ sees our church. He delights in his church. Do you persistently love the church?

That is the first of five questions about the way you love. And the second question is this. Do you have persistent hope for the church? Do you have persistent hope for the church?

The apostle John has hope for the church that he is writing to. Look at verse 3. Grace, mercy, and peace will be with us from God the Father and from Jesus Christ the Father's Son in truth and love.

[17 : 08] I want you to notice John is not making a request for grace, mercy, and peace from God. Not here. Rather, John is assuring the church that grace, mercy, and peace will be with us.

That confidence that he is speaking with, that hope he is speaking with, it is not because John puts a lot of stock in the human capacity to be gracious, merciful, peacemakers.

No, John's confidence is that God the Father and Jesus Christ, the Father's Son, they will be the ones who give grace.

They will be the ones who show mercy, who make peace. That is why John has persistent hope for the church. It is hope and confidence in God. Well, what about you?

When you look at our church, do you look with eyes of hope? That's what we do when we look at the ones we love. In 1 Corinthians chapter 13, the apostle Paul writes, love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

[18 : 25] this is not a mere platitude. This is not an empty wish based on a blind optimism, a naivety.

When Paul writes that verse in 1 Corinthians 13, if you read the rest of the letter, he knows full well the church that he's writing to. He knows that this church in the city of Corinth, it is a dysfunctional, it is a disobedient mess.

If you think your church is bad, read 1 Corinthians. It is a mess. Paul gives them a hard time in his letter. Yet he begins the letter of 1 Corinthians by addressing this screwed up, this sinful church, and here's how he does it.

Here's what he says. to the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours.

Paul is speaking, and he starts out this letter to this screwed up church, he's speaking with persistent hope for it and for the people there that he knows.

[19 : 39] John, the apostle John in 2 John, he speaks with the same hope for the church that he is writing to. And you and I are meant to speak with the same hope to the church that we love.

You know, it is so easy to have a dream for the church, to have this ideal of what the church ought to be like.

We all have that, don't we? What happens is that soon we find there is a huge gap between our expectations, between that dream, and between the reality of what the church really is like.

And I've seen so many professing Christians abandon the church when they find that real churches have bad leaders, real churches have sinful members.

Or maybe they remain in the church grumpy, cynical, writing off others, writing off themselves as a lost cause. If this is you, it is well past time to repent of your hopeless, despairing heart.

[20 : 50] Think of Paul, think of John, these apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. These men, they knew, they understood the heart of Christ. They knew what his heart was like. They know what his church is called to be like.

They long for the church to be that way. These men also knew and understood the same sin. They saw clearly the same wickedness, the same dysfunction in the church that you see. And yet, Paul and John, they never gave up hope for the churches they loved.

They looked at them. They knew all that the Father had in mind. They knew all that the Son had in mind. They loved them. They hoped for them. Who are you to abandon the church that Christ has loved? Do you have persistent hope for the church?

That is the second of five questions about the way you love. Here's a third question. Do you persistently enjoy the church?

Do you persistently enjoy the church? And this builds on those previous two questions about love and hope. Let's say you truly love our church so that you delight in it.

[21 : 58] Let's say that you have hope for our church because you trust the Spirit is working to make us like Jesus Christ. Then, if you have that love and you have that hope, you will surely find that you enjoy our church.

You enjoy your family here. That's why John writes in 2 John, verse 4, I rejoiced greatly to find some of your children walking in the truth just as we were commanded by the Father.

You know, perhaps some of the churchgoers were abandoning the truth, but John insists on enjoying those who are still walking in the truth, who are doing what we were commanded by the Father.

John is glad to hear that there are Christians who are maintaining a regular, consistent manner of life, who are holding fast to the truth of the gospel message that we heard earlier, the true story of Jesus Christ and his salvation.

John is enjoying the news that they are choosing to walk the pathway of suffering that leads to glory. They're choosing to follow the same pathway that Jesus walked to stay true and faithful to him despite any temptation, any persecution, any hardship, any suffering.

[23 : 17] That's why John says in 1 John 2, whoever says he abides in him, that's in Christ, whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.

What about you? How do you feel about people from our church? Do you enjoy our church? Or does the church just irritate you?

When you see people behaving sinfully or foolishly, do you just get annoyed? Do you just roll your eyes or sigh with contempt? Or, do you look with the same eyes that Jesus has for his church?

Do you look for goodness? Do you hunt out faithfulness? Do you long and hope and see righteousness? And do you savor the work of God and the lives of those you see?

Every last little piece of good news, every last little sign that God is at work among the people that you know here at our church. Once again, it is sometimes our own ideals, our own dreams that lead us to condemn the people that God has given us to enjoy.

[24 : 25] The German pastor and martyr Dietrich Bonhoeffer, he once wrote, he who loves his dream of a community more than the Christian community itself becomes a destroyer of the latter, even though his personal intentions may be ever so honest and earnest and sacrificial.

Did not Paul write that in 1 Corinthians chapter 13 that you can give all you possess to the poor, surrender your body to the flames, you can be honest and earnest and sacrificial, but without love, without that joy.

Let us look at one another with eyes of love, with eyes of hope. Let us enjoy each other when we see each other consistently walking in truth with faithfulness and integrity.

I don't know where you're at right now, but the next time I see you, I want to enjoy you. If you show up at concert or prayer tonight, I want to just enjoy you and I hope we enjoy one another as we sing and as we pray together.

Do you persistently enjoy the church? That is the third of five questions we are asking about the way you love. So that brings us to the fourth question.

[25 : 51] Do you persistently walk in the truth? Do you persistently walk in the truth? So let us turn from considering the speck in our brother's eye, let us turn to examine the log in our own eye because here the apostle challenges us us, we ourselves about whether the truth of the gospel has it become our backbone?

Has it become my backbone? Is it shaping the way that we live and the way that we love? In 2 John verses 5 and 6, John writes, Here John is speaking first, he first talks about a singular commandment, that we love one another.

That's this first singular commandment. Perhaps you could put it with a capital C commandment. And then John summons us to love one another in the family of God. We love God, we love his family.

But then John doesn't just leave us with that. He doesn't leave us with a nebulous idea of what love is. He doesn't leave us with an empty cup that then we fill with our own ideas of what love ought to look like.

John doesn't leave us to define for ourselves what love is because what we often do is we just sort of over the course of our lives we cobble together our own idea of love out of our own experiences.

[27 : 36] Oh, I felt loved when someone did that to me. That's what love must look like. Oh, I felt unloved when someone said that to me. That must not be love. We often end up with very imperfect one-dimensional distorted ideas of what love is.

John tells us this. He says, this is love that we walk according to his commandments. Our relationships, the expectations in all of our relationships which we all carry into them, they ought to conform to the commandments of God.

Then we know what love looks like. Whose commandments do we look to? If we look up to verse 4, we'll see that he's talking about the Father's commandments.

We obey what our Father has told us. So what John is telling us is that if you want to know what love looks like, if you want to know what real love is, you look at the commandments that God gives us in Scripture.

look at the truth that God's word tells us. Look at how he fleshes out what it looks like to love God and to love one another.

[28 : 53] Because you and I, we are far too quick. We are far too quick to hear that commandment to love and then to quickly move on from God's word and let our feelings and our culture dictate to us what love looks like.

We fill that word love with all of our own ideas. And enough, enough of the articles, enough of the images, enough of the memes that you see people share on social media, those thousands of bite-sized commandments that you get bombarded with every day about how we ought to behave towards one another.

We're in a culture awash with commandments. Let us look first and be shaped first by the timeless word of God, this word that has never conformed to any culture, that transcends every culture, every cultural moment, that transcends the frenzy and the fury and the chaos of our modern world and the seven billion gods that we surround ourselves with who are all telling us what to do and what love looks like and here's what you ought to do and here's what you ought to be like.

Oh, to be free of that. How I long for you to be free of that and to listen to the one voice that speaks loudest of all, your Father's voice, your Father's commandments. It is just as Jesus has told us to love God and to love our neighbor.

That is the summary of the whole law. That is all that God expects of you. That is all the commandments. All the commandments he gives you hang on those two. Love God, love our neighbor. But all of those other commandments, they are necessary to flesh out those two.

[30 : 27] Otherwise, we are going to warp love, redefine it to suit our own interests, corrupt the true love that God has called us to. Because his commandments of love, they remain.

They remain steadfast even when you and I change. Even when our own understandings change. Even as we mature. I don't know if you remember what BK told us two weeks ago.

He reminded us that we are serving and we are loving an unchanging God. An immutable God. A God whose word is firmly fixed in the heavens. And so if you want to know how to love, you must learn the truth of the gospel.

You must learn the commandments God has called you to obey. And you must, you must learn how to humbly depend on the spirit of God. Because the spirit, he is the only one who can empower you to obey them.

Trying to obey all God's commandments, trying to love the way that he loves without the spirit, it's like, it's like trying to push a train down the tracks. You can't make it move.

[31 : 36] You can only get a few inches before you're exhausted. Only the spirit can empower you to do it. And trying to love without this truth that guides you and directs you and shows you where the love is supposed to go.

It's like trying to move, it's trying to move that train without the tracks. You need those tracks that guide love along that show you where it's supposed to go. Otherwise, you end up with something that isn't love.

You end up off course. You end with a heap of wreckage. This is why BK has been so keen on showing us the attributes of God, of teaching us the doctrines of who God is, what he is like.

You know, sometimes we like to think, oh, well, you're a truth person. You care about doctrine. Well, I'm a love person. I care about just loving people. You don't get to choose between the two of them. You have to be both.

You have to care about truth. You have to care about love. And if you really do care about love, you will care about truth. If you're a Christian, if you don't care about true doctrine, then you are unserious about love.

[32 : 44] Either you're lazy or you're foolish about truly knowing how to love. So it's time to stop avoiding sound doctrine. It's time to start knowing the God that you claim to love.

And you know what? Here's the wonderful thing that God has done for us. God has made himself known.

God has shown us what perfect love looks like. He didn't have to do this. He could stay a distant God, a blind watchmaker, uninvolved with his creation. He does not owe us anything.

He certainly does not owe us to know himself, to know his very heart, to know what love looks like. this triune, Trinitarian God who in eternity is a father loving his son, giving him his spirit.

And yet, God, not only has he given us words on a page, not only has he given us the Bible, he has given us what these words point to, the one these words point to. He has given us his word in the flesh.

[33 : 44] He has given us his own son that he loves. He has given us Jesus Christ. Because Jesus, he not only proclaimed the truth, he did one better. Jesus embodied the truth.

Jesus told us in John chapter 14, I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

If you want to know what God is like, look at his son. If you want to know what it looks like to love people, open your Bible. Open it up to the Gospels.

Matthew, Mark, Luke, John. Study Jesus intently. Learn what he is like. Know his heart. If you want to know what it looks like to keep the commandments of love, look at how Jesus does it.

If you want to know what it looks like to proclaim the truth and embody the truth, listen to the Son of God. God. That's why the commentator Colin Cruz tells us, one cannot know the truth without knowing the person of Christ who first proclaimed it and also embodied it.

[35 : 04] Do you persistently walk in the truth? Do you persistently walk in the truth? That is the fourth question that you're facing today regarding the way that you love.

And so let's conclude with this final question. Are you taking your joy seriously? Are you taking your joy seriously?

Perhaps you are settling for less than the good life that God has for you. God wants your joy more than you do.

Do you believe that? He does. Notice that at the end of this letter, John speaks about how he is so eagerly seeking to complete the joy that he shares with his church.

He writes in verses 12 and 13, though I have much to write to you, I would rather not use paper and ink. Instead, I hope to come to you and talk face to face so that our joy may be complete.

[36 : 13] The children of your elect sister greet you. What would make John's joy overflow? It is to come to you.

It is to talk face to face. John knows that these letters, as much as they have blessed not only that church, but us for the last 2,000 years, but John knows that those letters are a poor substitute for our presence with one another.

If you find yourself unsatisfied with a Zoom call or a Facebook live stream, well, guess what? John would not be satisfied with that either. He longs for more.

If you find yourself too easily satisfied with church over the internet, then God is calling you to something better. It is good. It is right to long to see one another, to talk face to face.

Now, some of you have serious health concerns and infirmities. It's not always possible for you, but that longing ought to be there.

[37 : 24] That longing ought to be present in your heart. If that longing to see one another face to face, to be present in body as well as in spirit, if that longing is not there, you are not taking your joy very seriously.

Not as seriously as God takes your joy. Here's why we're called to come together. Here's why we're called to talk face to face. In Hebrews chapter 10, it's written, let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another and all the more as you see the day drawing near.

Have you fallen into the comfortable habit of neglecting to meet together? Are you enjoying and preferring a hassle-free, anxiety-free life away from the family of God?

Have you bought into flimsy excuses such as, well, I just don't know anyone there anymore? Or, if I show up, people will ask why I've been missing for so long.

Consider what you are losing if this has become your habit. If this has become your habit, you are no longer considering how to stir up others to love and good works.

[38 : 49] You are no longer encouraging your fellow Christians and they are growing weary as they endure the hardships of life. You are denying your family the ministry of the Holy Spirit through you.

Your thoughts and your delight, they are no longer with the ones you claim to love. You are functioning like a limb severed from the body of Christ. You are functioning like a stone torn loose from the temple of God.

In all these ways, you have lost sight of the fact that the day of God's judgment is drawing near. In all these ways, you have neglected the joy you ought to share with God's family. This is true if you have lost your desire to meet together.

Are you taking your joy seriously? How good it is to know many of you, and I've just been so encouraged these last couple weeks, hearing of so many who are doing what they can to connect with one another during this difficult time.

I'm so grateful. I'm grateful that you've been making calls and visits to those who feel disconnected and discouraged, those who are infirm or unable to meet others.

[39 : 59] In these trying times, I'm telling you this, just keep encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the day drawing near, keep taking your joy seriously.

to love in truth. We, together as a church, we all must walk steady together as much as we are reasonably able to do.

Next week, we're going to focus in on verses 7 through 11. We're going to talk more about that backbone of truth that we must hold to. We're going to see the sternness of the Apostle John as he defends his family from false teachers who would pull them away from Christ and who would pull them away from one another.

But for now, John is stirring us up and speaking as a gentle and affectionate father, calling us, hey, walk in the commandments of love.

Keep going. Keep persisting. Walk steady together. The commandment of love that we love one another. So let us ask ourselves, do you persistently love the church?

[41 : 17] Do you have persistent hope for the church? Do you persistently enjoy the church? Do you persistently walk in the truth? Are you taking your joy seriously?

God has called us to love. He has called us to a better life than we ourselves have wanted. He knows what's good for us. Our Father loves us. And He has had such compassion on us by drawing us together to love and truth, to walk steady together.

Father, You have loved us. You've elected us. You have chosen us. As we learned last week, Your saving grace has been given to us. We did nothing to deserve it or earn it.

There is no merit in us, and yet You have adopted us and made us Your own, part of Your family. And this commandment to love, Father, is You simply telling us this, Be like me.

I want You to be like me. Be like my Son. I delight in Him and I love Him. I want You to be just like Him.

[42 : 27] Lord, let us become like You, showing the world what our God is like, showing the world what the family of God is like as we are drawn together in these bonds of love, as we walk steady together, as we love in truth.

Stir up our hearts toward love and good deeds. Stir us up to meet together tonight, to just gather, to sing, to pray to You, to enjoy one another. It is for not only our joy, but for Yours, that we come together in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and ask for these things in His name.

Amen.