

Love is an amazing thing.

Just when you think you know  
what it is,  
love demands change,  
difference,  
adaptation.

Think of couples  
head over heels  
in love with each other  
after many years of life together.

They are still in love  
because they accept each other,  
accept the human beings they were created to be,

and in the fullness of their difference,  
they find true love.

And think of those  
in relationships  
where one person  
or perhaps both  
never can accept the other  
seeking always to change the other,  
to be right.

True love has no place,  
no possibility.

Some are able to discover  
that in giving self

to another human being  
you enter into the unknown,  
and in that place,  
true love is found.

A love that starts with similarity  
matures into a celebration  
of difference,  
and true love blossoms,  
celebrating the other,  
accepting the other,  
and finding a common path  
for life.

Perhaps that's why  
"Come and see"

was the way the disciples  
were called.

When this strange lot  
of misfits  
came together,  
they came to the experience of God,  
going into the daily life of love  
in action  
among all the chances and occupations  
of life.

Jesus asks this group of fishermen,  
“What are you looking for?”

They don't reply

“we want the answer to life.”

They don't say

“We want your one truth.

We want a black and white world,

a simple roadmap

to make sense of our life.”

When Jesus asks them

what they're looking for,

this group of unlikely heroes

answers

“Where are you staying, Jesus?”

In Christ,

they see the opportunity

to enter into relationship,  
to live and move and have their being  
in the day to day actions  
of life.

They know that they must come together,  
without answers,  
without doctrine,  
without theology,  
and just follow him.

They know they must enter  
into the relationship  
for in the day to day life  
of being with Jesus  
they will come to know  
true love,

starting with similarities

but culminating in differences.

Peter, Andrew, James and John,

fishermen,

earthy men,

embrace Matthew,

a tax collector,

one so despised

he could not testify in court,

his word considered untrustworthy.

Thomas the twin,

Philip,

Nathanial and Thaddeus

all leaving their youthful lives,

with  
Bartholomew,  
and James son of Alpheus,  
only to be joined by a couple  
of political activists,  
Simon  
and one called Judas.

And you and me,  
all of us asking  
“Where are you staying Jesus?”

Where can we come and see?  
Where can we come and see this one love?

The goal of St. John’s Episcopal Church

is to be that place.

Where anyone can come and see,  
where the most unlikely of misfits  
are called  
to be disciples.

If we can learn to celebrate our differences  
and all the myriad ways  
we see and encounter God,  
then love will live among us.

If this parish  
can become a place  
where there is no fear  
to be the person God called into being

in your mother's womb,  
then  
this lot of disciples  
will be a family,  
a place of openness,  
honesty,  
and integrity.

Coming here,  
seeing Christ in each other,  
accepting the various viewpoints,  
and moving in our lives  
through prayer, study, and fellowship  
we will find the place Jesus stays.

We are well on our way.

We are marching to that place with Christ,  
and with brave hearts,  
we are casting down our nets,  
and answering the call  
to be disciples.

But the key remains  
the true love of God in Christ.

And just when we think  
we understand,  
true love will ask of us  
change,  
difference,  
and adaptation.

All else  
is just similarity,  
a shallow shell of love.

We want more.  
We want true love.

And so, when Jesus turns to us and asks  
“What are you looking for?”

Let us respond, “Rabbi . . .  
where are you staying?”  
And hearing him say “Come and see,”  
we will go.  
We will go.