



*Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, and walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.*

Ephesians 5:1-2, NRS

September 21, 2024

Dear People of Grace,

Generosity is a journey, it's a spiritual practice that we learn and nurture within our hearts. It's just not in our human nature to give away what we have worked hard to acquire or to donate our precious time without compensation. It takes something as radical as Love to inspire us to share our time, our talent, and our treasure with others. As a community of faith, this is a journey we make together, a Walk in Love.

As we have lived with the Gospel of Mark this year, we have been brought into a world turned radically upside down. The laws and customs that had been in place for centuries were challenged, power and dominion have been questioned, and a culture hemmed in from all sides by oppression and subjection desperately seeks a way forward.

As it turns out, it is not clever politics, nor is it force, that cause society to change, but the simplest concept of Love. Jesus causes a revolution of thought and heart by daring to reach out to the outcast and teach others to do the same. He walks in love with the marginalized, with the poor, with the sick, and brings us along with him on his journey.

The most miraculous gift of Love is that it was there within us all along, all we had to do was find it, tap into it, and begin growing it. And look what happened? We learned to share, to give, to volunteer, to accompany others, to feed, to pray, to visit, to strive for change. The ministries of Grace Church are invaluable in our community as we feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and build community. This year as our Stewardship Campaign kicks off, we will be intentionally raising up the stories of how we *Walk in Love* with each other in our congregation. I invite you to share your stories of inspiration and connection with our shared ministry in New Bedford and with each other. I invite you to *Walk in Love*.

Grace and peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph J. Fogarty".