

Can you believe it is our last Sunday of summer?

Fall starts Thursday. So how many of you are excited???

Fall is your season...you love sweaters, Crunchy leaves on the ground, and pumpkin flavored anything.

Our middle daughter Katie is a fall girl. She can't wait until the end of August every summer. Pumpkin spice coffee brings her incredible joy...and she learned a special thing. If you confidently ask a Dunkin' Donuts to make you a pumpkin spice coffee before it is on the menu they will make you one. If you ask... do they have it yet, they will say no if it is not the release day.

So each year when she gets her first pumpkin spice coffee...She is very happy. She LOVES Pumpkin Anything as fall begins. She's also the daughter who cleans my kitchen for me each night.

My husband Fred and I have three wonderful daughters. My youngest daughter has helped me step into a full time roll Emily makes dinner for us. My daughter Elizabeth spent a lot of time this summer helping me with administration help.

Katie loves to clean our kitchen.

I got her towel this summer that said " I love you more and pumpkin spice anything".... And I think that is what we are looking to understand better today. God is calling us-To be people to love deeply.

People who love others... more than pumpkin spice anything.

If you were here last week, you know we are in the middle of a three part series based on the mission of Harbor of hope.

Our church exists to help people find their way back to God.

The local church is the hope of the world. We are Gods hands and feet...But as John Emery reminded us last week.

Church is not only about us. We, with the power of the Holy Spirit, can become people who live fully, Love deeply and give freely.

When we do that-It is so different from what people are used to-they begin to wonder... what makes you and me different.

When we Love deeply-we can help people find their way back to God.

Before Jesus left the earth-He promised the Holy Spirit will return and give us power to go and make disciples.

I Love how John kicked off our series last week-

He reminded us the Holy Spirit produces fruit in our lives.

*“Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control...” GALATIANS 5:22-23*

So this week, we will look at the love that God gives us. And in His power we see we are able to Love deeply.

Next week we will look at what it means to give freely.

All three weeks were inspired with stories from the book of Acts. The book of Acts begins with the final moments of Jesus here on earth.

It is a fast-paced story how the church grew. How a small group of Christ followers who were filled with the Holy Spirit- changed the world.

God’s plan then is the same is His plan today... help people find their way back to him.

Last week, John reminded us of John 3:16, perhaps the most memorized phrase in the history of humanity, we see God, the Father, showing LOVE, GENEROSITY and LIFE.

So why do we help people find their way back to God?

So that we can live fully, love deeply and give freely. And while we’re at it...

Why live fully, love deeply, give freely? Because it helps more people find their way back to God. Which creates more life, love and generosity... The world needs more life, love and generosity.

When we live fully, love others deeply, and give of ourselves freely, we become attractive; we begin to have this aroma that draws people in.

As you look you’re life today-do you see yourself that way-

The aroma of Christ-like a pumpkin spice latte-  
Attracting the people around you to the amazing love of God.

John 3:17 – shows us the deep love of God  
*God came, not to condemn the world, but to save it.*

A world filled with a messy family- your spiritual brothers and sisters...we were never intended to be alone.

You're created by God who loves you so much... and we were made to be part of this family-this beautiful mess that we call the church.

And so again- I want to remind us of what John said last week.

When we love deeply- People begin to congregate around us; asking why (and HOW!) we're living the beautiful lives we're living.

The more people that come back into relationship with God, the more joy, love and generosity there will be in the world. And each and every one of us here today plays a role in this.

As I began to look at the passages we will look at today. I read something interesting- to help scripture become part of our soul-we should try to Read or look at each passage 6 times.

Some of you are listening right now, and taking notes that you look at later. Maybe a couple times this week-you will look at this passage from Acts. There are great online options for reading Scripture.

My favorite is Bible Gateway because you can look at it in different versions. We use the new living translation of the Bible.

If you don't have a Bible, the blue books in the back of our worship area are a gift to you. Feel free to take one home with you.

It is written in the NLT...Another version I love is called The Message. If you've never read one book of the Bible-I encourage you before the fall is over and we begin the season of winter- ask God to help you read book of Acts. It is fast-paced and exciting- and filled with stories of how God moved in those early years of the church...if you have read Acts before, read it again...read it 6 or more times, letting the truth wash over your soul until you believe it.

Jesus gave this strong word- this mission statement- For these believers, this family, we call the church.

In Matt 22:37 Jesus said,  
*Love the Lord your God With all your heart, Soul, mind and strength and Love your neighbor as your self.*

What does that look like? How do we Love deeply?

Acts 2 The Believers Form a Community

*42 All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals including the Lord's Supper, and to prayer. 43 A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders. 44 And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had.*

Wow. Amazing!

Before we had Katie- my oldest daughter Elizabeth had her last Christmas as an only child.

She wanted to sister more than anything in the world. There was no Christmas present that was more important, than Christmas being over so January could come... and her little sister Kate would be here. If I could go back in time and ask her... "DO you want to share everything forever?"... She would have said yes.

Things changed as they grew older.... sharing is hard.

We will talk more about that next week.

But that's what I thought of when I look at this young church.

They were devoted to what the most important things were.

The word of God, The Lord's supper- We call it communion... every week we take a moment and remember the great love of Jesus for each of us.

...And they prayed.

We are praying as a community ...(every Tuesday night....)

It is beautiful... the church is beautiful...

But it's also hard, And messy.

Loving deeply is hard when it seems like life is not fair. We are grownups and we know- Life is not fair.

So what do we do when we are part of the family and things get hard? How do I love deeply... how do you?

The early church was made of people-like you and me.

In between Acts chapter 2, and Acts chapter 6. Something changed.... Complaining entered the building.

The Choosing of the Seven

**6:1** *In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Hellenistic Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food.*

If we are honest- this still happens today. In your own family, and in our family called Harbor of hope. Mistakes happen. There is not always fairness... some people seem to get more attention than other people.

In the book of Acts chapter 6...these friends of Jesus- the disciples..11 of who had spent three years with Jesus- are now trying to help this family of God stay together. They are also trying to help people find their way back to God.

**2** *So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables.*

They know they have been called to share the good news- we call the Gospel...So They come up with a plan.

**3** *Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom.*

We will turn this responsibility over to them

**4** *and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word."*

This summer things have changed at Harbor once again.

One of the roles where I now serve is  
I am part of a team at Harbor the cares for our community.

And this verse from Acts chapter 6 is the foundation why we have the compassionate care team.

Because from the beginning days of the church- there have been people who care well for others. They love deeply. As I say those words you might realize you are one of those people.

Next week we will spend the entire weekend looking at ways each of us can use our gifts for the kingdom of God.

This week we want to highlight ways you can help the city.  
Laura, our local partner director, and her team are at a table  
In the café lots of opportunities... you can take an hour or two this week or next

and help a local partner.

Our compassionate care team also has a table in the café today. you can stop and see how you can help our community.

There are people need meals, people need rides, maybe you just want more information about what the compassionate care teams do... join us for lunch next week following our second service... we will meet in the common room... you can hear about our Acts chapter 6 group of people want to care well for others.

*5 This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit;*

And they pick 6 more people..

also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism.

*6 They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.*

This is how we love deeply today.

When we are People-filled with faith, with the Holy Spirit...

We go out and do what God asked us to do. And simple things change the world. (Card story)

*7 So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith.*

I love the end of verse seven- Priests- People who knew God's word... but had missed the point... became obedient to the faith.

They begin to live fully, Love you deeply, and give freely.

John reminded us last week. We have to get this part right.

To Love deeply we must know who we are. I am a loved child of God....so are you..You are loved...

To believe truth, one thing I do is listen to music. I love that John wrote a song so we can remember to love deeply...

There many Christian songs to listen to over and over until I believe them. Once I'm has a very simple line,

It says I am loved. I will often think of that line when life seems crazy, so busy, too hard.. And I begin Forget who I am.

That simple line will reminds me of the truth.

I'm not called to try harder, I'm called to rest and the love of my heavenly father... who says to me...and says to you

I AM Loved.

John said last week

What the "try harder" solution does is it confuses the EFFECT with the CAUSE.  
The truth is God says who we are..

Col 3:12 says we are

God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved,

Please say that with me again – church we are

Col 3:12 says we are

God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved,

Question- Do you love deeply? If not, why not?

How can we Become people Love deeply?

When I came to harbor- I knew this is an area that God needed me to growing.  
Loving Deeply is hard.

What does loving deeply at Harbor look like?

**3** *Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom.*

Loving deeply happens when we are full of the spirit and full of wisdom

If you had a rubber band in your hand- Pulling me tight would separate the two fingers that we're holding it. One hand would point to grace, one hand would point to truth. Which hand is easier for you.

The tension is where we should live. Love that is full of grace, but does not have truth... leads to enabling other people to live lives

Where you feel their pain of the mistakes they make. I'm excited that one of our journey group this year Will be led by our compassionate care team. Dr. Henry cloud has taught me a lot. The class is called boundaries.

And love without boundaries, Causes pain. It empties us. It keeps the people we love from becoming all the God intended for them.

To love deeply, we need to be full of the spirit in full of wisdom.

On the other side we have truth.. And when we speak truth without love, We injure people.

Only Jesus-perfectly-loved with grace and truth.

It is his power in us, that helps us Love deeply...Helps us Love with grace and truth.

What do you think happened between acts chapter 2-Where everyone is sharing everything they have... the next chapter 6...What people have become us AND them? Widows who are Greek or Hebrew...

I think that is what happens when we spend time together. From far away-We all look easy to get along with. The more time we spend with each other, At least many of us to think I Rather just be alone.

Because hurt people, Hurt people.

And answer is to be so loved by God-that we can love others.

What keeps us from loving deeply?

1. Fear
2. A wrong understanding of who we are
3. We are tired-

Loving deeply will always be hard.

I know some of you sit here today...You have been wounded.

People you have loved, have hurt you. For many of us this is happened to little children. In fear, we've decided we won't be heard anymore because you won't give anyone access to our hearts.



The God has a plan for our life-For us to live in the truth of His love- where we love deeply. II Tim 1:7 God has not given us the spirit of fear-you get this love Power and a sound mind.

The loving deeply-is very different from being abused. We can forgive people, and love people... and still have good strong boundaries.

In fact- loving in the spirit and with wisdom... is only possible with boundaries. So if this is an area has been hard for you, Consider joining our Boundaries Journey group in October. Where you can learn skills that lead to wisdom.... Where you can connect with people., so that you can be known and you can be loved.... And so that you can no others and you can love others.

Another reason we have a hard time loving deeply is that we do not have a correct understanding of who we are. We are who God says we are. If people have spoken lies over you... don't believe them.

We are God's loved children, Scripture says we are dearly loved... created to do what only we can do...God has a special role for each of us.

To understand who we are Christ, come to church.. hear the word...Put on the garment of praise, For the spirit of heaviness the keeps you from thinking that you are not enough. Find songs that speak truth...And listen to them until you believe them.

Finally, Some of us struggle to love deeply because we are just so tired.

I have found as a mom. Many times when my children need me give me present, it is often the time of day when I'm tired.

A beautiful promise is found in the book of Isaiah

He gives power to the weak and strength to the powerless.

If you need God's power to love- ask Him

Matt 7:7

*Keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you.*

But know that without rest , you will be too tired to be effective.

Sabbath is a gift- 24 hours every week- to stop being slaves, This gift changes us.

My encouragement to you today, during the quiet time of communion... is to ask God to help you love deeply.

Ask Him to show you how to rest, what to stop doing.

My prayer, is that Harbor would be a community of believers who are loving deeply...that we like- Stephen.... are people full of faith and of the Holy Spirit;

Steven Lived a long time ago... but even today they're people Full of wisdom, full of the Holy Spirit who find loving deeply hard to do.

In fact the more you read scripture the more you will realize that is just stories of people like you and me need the power of the Holy Spirit to do what God is asked them to do.

Two my favorite preachers today are father and son.

As many of you know, I live about a half an hour away... so I use my commute listen to podcasts and sermons.

One of my very favorite communicators is named Andy Stanley.

He's the son of Dr. Charles Stanley. Both men have been used by God to preach the word and help people find their way back to Him.

Quite a few years ago, they had a falling out. And they could've done what most of us would do when we find it hard to be in relationship with somebody. They could've stopped talking to each other.

But they didn't. Andy Stanley has been honest in sharing his story of how during the season where he and his dad could not see eye to eye. They struggled to be in relationship.

Both men felt convinced they were doing what God wanted them to do. The disagreement was so strong- they could not serve together.

But they committed themselves to loving deeply.

What that looked like for them was meeting once a week.

Andy has shared that many of those meetings ended in the driveway at Andy's house with the two of them angry and in some cases and yelling at each other.

Two pastors...With influence... large congregations.. Fighting week after week.

But the beauty of their story to me, is that they did not give up.

They fought hard to be in relationship...Week after week they continue to meet... and slowly their relationship began to heal.

I'm sure from time to time there are things they still don't agree on.

That's what happens when two people do life together.

There will always be things we don't agree on.

But Harbor as a church, a messy family,-we agree about the most important things.

We're here for one reason-to help people find their way back to God.

So that all of us can live fully, love deeply, and give freely.

When we do that, people notice.

And they want to know why...

And we're given an opportunity to share the very good news.

Perhaps today you've never heard that good news.

Someone invited you to the bottom of the basement of a mill.

When you walked in here you notice something was different.

You can feel the peace that comes from being in the presence of the God who made you and loves you. Because God loves us more we can ever imagine.

Scripture says we can't go so low that we would be separated from a lot of God.

Nothing separates us from the love of God

I want to end today was some words from a different book in the Bible.

We've been looking at the book of Acts... the next book of the bible- is called Romans.

In Roman chapter 8- We see God's word to us... it's so clear I'm just going to read it to us. And if hearing these words helps you to see that you need Jesus to

become the Lord of your life...you realize that you are living a life that's not the abundant life God wants for you..  
a life where you're living fully and loving deeply and giving freely.

Come talk to me, or to John, or let us know on your connection card that you would like to talk to somebody. We love to talk to you... or pray with you.

### **New Living Translation**

#### ***Life in the Spirit***

**1 So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus .. 2b you belong to him,**

If loving deeply it's hard for you.. Welcome to the family.

Since the beginning of this messy family we call the church-It has been hard to love deeply. But the good news is Romans chapter 2 verse continues

**the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death.**

When we allow Jesus to be the Lord of our life, and we give access to the freedom that the Holy Spirit brings to us...when we as it says in verse six

**6 So letting ... Spirit control your mind leads to life and peace.**

God, through the power of the Holy Spirit, can give us His wisdom... and a life filled with wisdom, a life lead by the Holy Spirit...As a life where we love deeply... where there is peace.

**14 For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God.**

**15 So you have not received a spirit that makes you fearful slaves. Instead, you received God's Spirit when he adopted you as his own children. Now we call him, "Abba, Father."**

***Do not leave here today without knowing this amazing truth...***

***God has promised to be your loving father... we can call him***

***Abba.. the same simple term a baby would use.***

***As a good and loving father...his promise is he will help us.***

***Romans 8: 26***

**26**And the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness.

We are able to love deeply, Because God loves us first.

He loves us more than we will ever understand. There's nothing we can say, or think, or do that will ever separate us from Him.

Will you read verses 38 and 39 with me... go home and read it again until you believe it.

**38** And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. **39**No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Such an amazing promise... nothing. separates us from God's love.

When we believe that.

When we know we are loved...We love deeply.

Loved people are able to love others.

Maybe you would like to hear a little more about how to love people by donating your time to care for people.

Stop by one of the tables in talk to our teams in the café.

They can tell you about some of the opportunities to love deeply this week.

Harbor, Let's be the people God created us to be.

People who love deeply...so that we can help people find their way find their way  
back to God.

Will you pray with me?