

Loving One Another - South Sudanese Worshiping Community at Messiah, Ralston

I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

Jesus gave the great commandment to love on the last night of his life, both as an invitation to a way of life—the way of compassion and service—and as a matter of identity. When we love, we identify ourselves as followers of Jesus. Love is a matter of both discipleship and identity.



That love is lived out in the South Sudanese Worshiping Community at Messiah Lutheran Church in Ralston.

There, Pastor David Mayen leads a small but energetic congregation of refugees

from conflict in South Sudan (there are now more South Sudanese living in Omaha than in anywhere outside South Sudan). Parishioners share their love not only for one another but for the community beyond their walls. In addition, they know what it is to experience the love of others for their own gathering. This community of faith exists because Messiah Lutheran has provided a physical home for them, as well as welcoming them fully into the life of Messiah. Additionally, the community has a pastor because of the efforts of St Michael Lutheran Church, also in Omaha. Pastor Mayen did his internship at St Michael, and that congregation has worked with the Nebraska Synod to create an innovative part-time call for him. That led to his ordination earlier this year, and makes it possible for him to spend more of his time with his community while he continues to work a job in the secular world.

In the intersection not only of individuals but congregations, discipleship takes place and Jesus' followers are identified—love happens, and Jesus' commandment is fulfilled.

The South Sudanese Worship Community at Messiah is a Mission Field Nebraska ministry. You can find out more about these ministries here: <https://nebraskasynod.org/about-us/nebraska-synod-partners/mission-field-nebraska/>

Throughout the season of Easter, the Nebraska Synod will continue lifting up various Nebraska Synod ministries and serving arms that have a connection to the upcoming worship text. The text referenced here is from John 13:31-35 the Gospel reading for Sunday, May 15, the Fifth Sunday of Easter.