

**Presley Zimlich**

Just thirty years ago, twenty years ago, who would believe we would be here this afternoon doing this?! Thirty years ago who would believe today, in our lifetimes, that marriage equality would be the law of the land. It is miraculous really... but marriage equality hasn't come easy. We have had to reluctantly confront our cultural biases and predispositions that being gay was somehow abnormal, even shameful. For far too long our society, as well as the church, have treated people who are gay with scorn and prejudice, sometimes resulting in violence. The church is in need of forgiveness for that. But today, I rejoice that we have finally come to our senses. I rejoice that we gather here this day in the presence of God to celebrate the love and commitment between these two good men. Let me say, Steven and Day, on behalf of the church, we are honored that you would ask our blessing on your marriage. We are honored, and God is honored, because I believe with all my heart that God rejoices with us this day. Perhaps God is saying... "It's about time."

But dear friends, this is the way Love is, right?... miraculous... and unpredictable, and overflowing with possibility. Paul, the apostle, speaks of it in his letter to the church in Corinth. He says that Love is all about making allowances; making room for the other... that Love is always trusting, and that

Love can endure all things... even prejudice and scorn and violence... that Love will only settle for the truth... and perhaps just as important, Love is patient... But the bottom line is that there is nothing that can stand against Love. Love in the end will prevail... Love will prevail with grace, and gentleness, and joy. So we gather today to bear witness to the power of Love. I can't imagine where I'd rather be.

The Presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church is fond of saying that "if it's not about Love, then it is not about God." And another way to put that is: if it is about Love, then it is about God. So in the name of God we are here gathered because we love you Day and Steven, and we celebrate the Love you have for each other... and we are here to witness the promises you make that this Love is for a lifetime... So not only is this an important day for the two of you; but it is also an important day for us... because you are witnesses to the power of Love, and we are going to count on you to show us, teach us, as if we are seeing it for the first time, what Love looks like. We humans have to see to believe... That is the purpose of the sacraments of the church: they are outward and visible signs of the most profound truth among us. Marriage is a sacrament, bearing witness to the truth that Love and commitment are of God... and that it will endure, and that it will restore our world.

Love is, in truth, our vocation, brothers and sisters... Our vocation so that others can see its grace and its power, and its strength... because it is Love that will bring sanity and meaning to a world half off its rocker... It is Love that lasts when all other things pass away. The only reason any of us are here on this earth is to Love... and that is why we gather today in the midst of high praise as people of God... we gather to name what is true and beautiful; we gather to name what makes us human made in the image of God.

We just read from Matthew's Gospel, and from Paul's letter to the Corinthians... both of these passages are testimony to what love looks like in our world... but these writers could go on; the list is infinite.... Because there are infinite ways to speak of Love... Love is not the end of things, but always possibility.... So my prayer for you today, Steven and Day, is that you enter into the rich possibilities of Love with courage and grace... and may you be able witnesses to Love's enduring strength in a world so hungry for it.... and finally may you know Love's joy.... You have waited for so long; we have waited.... But, my brothers, the wait is over. May God bless you and keep you forever... but for now, let us rejoice!

