



Work in Progress Update

February 1, 2005

Dear Friends:

I wanted to share some thoughts with you as our new year begins about this passage from John 17: **“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”**

So, what do I see when I ask what “love one another” looks like at Neighborhood Ministries? Are there places where we are living this out so that others will know we are his disciples?

Last weekend a white man from our staff married a Mexican girl. Standing up for him were four of his friends: his best man is Guatemalan, the other three were Native American, Trinidadian and African American. The Native American young man brought some of his family members to the wedding and then the reception. Because he is new to events in our setting, he was expecting that this white man’s wedding would be culturally uncomfortable. He was surprised when he and his guests felt very at ease with everyone. He said that it reminded him more of a Mexican wedding but with some other ethnic themes as well.

Upcoming Events @ The Neighborhood Center:

- ◆ AZ Intersivity Students and Staff Work/Study Weekend: Feb 18-20
- ◆ Neighborhood Ministries Golf Classic: March 21, 2005 Sign up at www.nmgolfclassic.org
- ◆ Phoenix Urban Leaders @ The Neighborhood Center: April 21
- ◆ Parents Spring Store: April 23

For more information, see www.neighborhoodministries.org or call 602-252-2552

He finally had to ask, “What kind of a community are you?” The groom told him that we are all a lot of colors but family to each other because of what God is doing in our lives. We love each other above our

differences and have gotten used to each other.

Every week we welcome 600+ kids to our programs. They are all kinds of colors and races. What if we, as their leaders, hadn’t found ways to live together, to love each other, to be family over and above our differences? How could we break up racially-based fights, or ask for reconciliation, or attempt to believe these children and young adults could build friendships when they are always asking each other, ‘where are you from?’. How could we say we are representing Jesus if we haven’t learned to love one another?

Our city is the same way. With many partners, we are attempting to reach this city for Christ and His Kingdom. Jesus tells us that there will be one way our city will recognize us as being associated with him; one way we can be recognized, all of us, as being

followers of His ... “love one another as I have loved you”. The way he loved us, we must love one another.

I really don't know how to challenge us to love one another for the sake of our whole city. I just know we are supposed to. And we need to practice it where it is the most unlikely. I believe that people really notice when the usual barriers between us are removed.

There is an African American man in our community who has been homeless for 25 years. He is crippled from a drug induced stroke. He has lovingly forced himself on us. He belongs to this family now. A few days ago a professional white man and our immigrant Spanish-speaking pastor drove with this man from Phoenix to San Jose, California to drop him off at a treatment center. He is hungry to get well. I have to wonder, did anyone notice this very mixed band of brothers? And if they had, would God get the credit for their unusual commitment of love?

How do we love each other in our city to elevate Jesus? How do we make him known, make Him famous? His love and capacity to unite us can carry us beyond all the pitiful ways we separate ourselves from each other.

We are concerned for the welfare of our city. We want our city transformed, healed, with people made whole. We want our city to encounter Jesus. We want this because we are daily living among the poor and dispossessed that live here. Our hearts break for the things that break God's heart. How will our city encounter Jesus? Well, that will have to happen through us. For we, collectively, are the hands and feet of Jesus. Together, we are the body of Christ. And Jesus prayed for us, that our city would believe in Him. He prayed to the Father that we also would be ONE, just as He and the Father are one, that in our oneness, BECAUSE OF OUR ONENESS, the city would believe.

My prayer is that Jesus will show us how to love one another so that our city will know that we are his disciples. Will you pray with me to bring down the dividing walls? Will you build unity wherever you walk? Will you help tear down our fortress mentality? Will you help us to humble ourselves under his mighty hand, so that Jesus could be lifted up?

Thanks for praying with us for our city.

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kit Danley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large loop at the end of the last name.

Kit Danley
President

If you would like to receive my prayer email letter, please send an email to info@neighborhoodministries.org and ask to be put on the list.