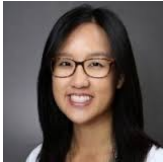




# TO THE CHURCHES IN HOUSTON

*HCPN: 50 DAYS OF PRAYER*



## SATURDAY, UNITY IN THE CHURCH

God's mission accomplished through the unity of the Church • Luke 10: 27-35, John 17:20-23  
By: Marilyn Lee, Executive Director, Loving Houston

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**MAY 27, 2017**

In Luke 10, an expert in the law asks Jesus what he has to do to inherit eternal life. Now I'm not at all surprised at the first half of the answer: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind." To be honest, I probably would have stopped right there. So it's interesting to me that the second half of the answer – "Love your neighbor as yourself" – seems to be just as important as the first half.

Jesus' description of the neighbor is also very interesting to me. In His parable, He describes the neighbor as someone of a different cultural and ethnic background who has been attacked, beaten, left for dead, and passed over by religious leaders.

Here's why that description is interesting to me:

Across Greater Houston, we have immigrants and refugees. We have victims of trafficking and domestic abuse. Families are hungry. Many are homeless. 8-year olds are being recruited by gang members as they walk to and from school. Middle school students are walking across highways to get to and from school!

**These neighbors remind me so much of the neighbor in Jesus' story – and these are the neighbors we are called to love.**

What a blessing it has been to see the unity of Houston-area churches as they do just this! At our first Loving Houston luncheon, I saw a Presbyterian, an Episcopalian, and a Methodist huddled together in deep discussion about how their churches were caring for kids in Spring Branch ISD. Through Christ Together Fort Bend, churches of all denominations and backgrounds come together regularly to figure out how to care for students and staff in Lamar Consolidated ISD. What a beautiful picture of unity in the body of Christ!

It reminds me of what Jesus prayed for in John 17:20-23: that believers would be in complete unity as He and the Father are in complete unity – not as an end in itself but so that the world would know that Jesus was sent by the Father, and so that the world would know that God loves them. Praise God that His mission is indeed being accomplished by the unity of the church here in Houston!

## PRAYER

Dear Father, thank You for Your love. We pray that the Church in Greater Houston would be unified in our commitment to You and to our neighbors, so that every man, woman, and child in each of our communities will experience Your love through the Church and be able to grasp how wide and long and high and deep Your love is. In Your precious Son's name we pray, Amen.