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## “First Watch” Touch Points for Evangel’s Prayer Vigil team

For the week of May 12, 2013

Share with others on the Prayer Vigil throughout the week, during our Connections time on Sundays, or using our FaceBook group “First Watch Prayer Vigil.” [www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=63044309096](http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=63044309096) .

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This series—aimed to support our “Stepping Out in Faith—for the Sake of the Gospel” initiative—is based on *The One Year Book of Praying Through the Bible* by Cheri Fuller (Tyndale House, 2003). We will focus on specific topics that relate to faith, witness and outreach. “The driving force behind this proposal is to increase our evangelistic witness and the impact on our neighborhood and community.” (From the overview document, available at [www.evbapt.org/docs/steppingOut.pdf](http://www.evbapt.org/docs/steppingOut.pdf) )

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### Love in Action

The king called in the man he had forgiven and said, “You evil servant! I forgave you that tremendous debt because you pleaded with me. Shouldn’t you have mercy on your fellow servant, just as I had mercy on you?” Then the angry king sent the man to prison until he had paid every penny. That’s what my heavenly Father will do to you if you refuse to forgive your brothers and sisters in your heart.

Matthew 18:32-35

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#### Prayer for the Week

Lord, you’ve forgiven me so many times that I’ve lost count. Each time I fail you, you scoop me up and put me back in right standing in you. When I owe a debt of forgiveness, remind me of the times you’ve forgiven me. Give me your heart for each person who wrongs or offends me. Help me to walk in forgiveness daily because daily you forgive me.

#### Notable Quote

Love has hands to help others. It has feet to hasten to the poor and needy. It has eyes to see misery and want. It has ears to hear the sighs and sorrows of me. This is what love looks like.

Augustine of Hippo (354-430)

#### Reflection

We live in a world that paints pictures of love. We love our families. We love our careers. We even say we love inanimate things such as a beautiful painting or a new pair of shoes. But that love can’t change our world. *Agape* love is Christ’s unconditional love, but *agapao* love is what others see as our actions reflect our love for Christ. If Christians truly demonstrated *agapao* love, then our world couldn’t help but be drawn to Christ.

The man who punished his servant in today’s verses failed to demonstrate *agapao* love. His own master could have thrown him into jail until he repaid a massive debt he owed, but instead, he had forgiven that debt. But somehow the man forgot all about mercy when he encountered the man who owed him a small sum. He extended no leniency and realized his error only when he was forced to assume his former indebtedness.

As Christians, we have been forgiven a debt so massive that we could never repay it. If you want to show Christ to a world that is seeking love, remember what Christ has freely given you, and then extend that mercy to others.

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#### PRAYER PROMPTS

- Pray for God to bless others through you as you show love in action this week.
- Apply this week’s thoughts in your prayers for our “Stepping Out in Faith...for the Sake of the Gospel” initiative. If you have not seen the materials on the initiative, they will be on the table in the lobby each Sunday through May. Pray for effective follow-up to the town hall and Church Council meetings of this past week; for the upcoming Council meeting with Gary Rohrmayer (Exec. Min. of Converge MidAmerica) on May 20; for the “Conversation with Council” session June 2 (on church governance); and for continued blessing as we commit ourselves to “Step Out...”
- Prayerfully reflect on the lessons from Sunday’s worship service, the music, Scripture, and Pastor Dave’s message “Jesus, Keep Us Near the Cross”\* from Matthew 27.
- Pray for the ministry of Vacation Bible School, directed this year by Bridgette Ecklund. Pray specifically for enough volunteers and for God’s blessing on Bridgette as she organizes this year’s program.

\*A podcast of the sermon will be posted on the website by Monday, along with pdf versions of the PowerPoint notes and sermon outline

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Touch Points is e-mailed every Friday and normally posted on the website ([www.evbapt.org](http://www.evbapt.org)) by Saturday.

Printed copies are available in the lobby on Sunday.