

Augustana College
Chapel of Reconciliation

Hydrogen is: God's Love

Autumn Dockter

January 21, 2005

I am going to start this morning with a chemistry lesson. What do you know about hydrogen? It is the most abundant element on Earth. Hydrogen was discovered by Henry Cavendish in 1766. Its symbol (H), weight (most just round it 1), and electron configuration (1s) are simple to remember and most students will pick up on hydrogen right away.

Hydrogen is a part of the most complex compounds, studied in all areas of chemistry and when in its gaseous state, is explosive.

When I was preparing for today, I was struggling about what to talk about. I knew that if I prayed it would just come, I'd been told that by so many people. For some reason the idea that God's love is like hydrogen-the most abundant thing on Earth kept popping into my head. Chalk it up to being a nerd, but this analogy struck me. It is everywhere, coupled with other things to make something wonderful. Like hydrogen, God's love goes unnoticed at times but as in 1 Corinthians 13:8 says Love never ends.

God's love is simple and complex just like hydrogen. Psalm 100:5 "For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations." It is easy to forget that God's love cannot be lost. Tough days, weeks in our lives leave us feeling empty and alone. It is not because God's love has left us, it is because we refuse to recognize its presence. Everyone feels they are unforgivable, unlovable at times but no matter what our transgressions, God will be here, forgiving and loving. There is nothing we can do to make Him stop loving us.

Psalm 100 is my favorite text. In it so many fundamentals of Christianity are touched. I have been making a joyful noise since I was little and my brother would be happy to show you tapes. But is that joyful noise always made recognizing it is to spread God's love and joy? Is there a connection made, a reaction? Needing feedback and support, it is hard to remain joyful and persistent when we are not sure if our efforts are appreciated. We need to remember Psalm 100:3 Know that the Lord is God, It is he that made us and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture. God created us to do his work. We are his instruments that he has made to Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing.

We see love in parents' action, in friend's reaction, in the way you treat others. It can be huge and grand like the aid given to tsunami victims as well as introducing yourself. I have been extremely blessed in my life to see God's love in many ways, expected and unexpected. My mom was sick my sophomore year and there were times when I thought it could not be any worse that nothing could help me. I saw God's love in my professors, their genuine concern for my family and me. I saw His love in my friends, talking to me daily, making themselves available whether I needed to be angry or just push it away for awhile. The most important place I saw God's love shining through was in my family. My mother's attitude, my father's strength, and my brother's maturity will always amaze me. It is God's love that gives us the strength to make it through the tough times.

It is important that we recognize the importance of God's love and its presence in our lives. It is important to recognize the importance of hydrogen too but I hope that you go away with this: And now faith, hope and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

Amen.

WANT TO JOIN OUTREACH? Are you looking for a new activity for spring semester? It is not too late to join an Outreach team! Outreach is a ministry of the Augie chapel. Teams of students reach out to congregations in South Dakota, Iowa, Minnesota and Nebraska. They lead worship services, bring youth programming or share liturgical dance. In Outreach, you can live out your faith by serving others, while building close friendships with your team and having fun. Team members have a once weekly meeting, with one outing a month. Contact the chapel at 274-5403 to sign up! Registration forms (available on the Narthex table) are due Friday, Feb. 11!

BREAD DAYS are coming up soon, Feb.7 and 8. It is a great experience in getting to know your state government and getting together with other concerned people. Many of the church groups are co-sponsors, including the Association of Christian Churches of South Dakota, which includes about nine denominations, probably yours. Rev. Jeff Eisele will lead the Bible Study. Bread for the World staffer, Tammy Walhof, will speak about hunger in America. Questions...email Nancy Olson at S10AndyW@aol.com

CAMP RALLY - To prepare people who might be interested in working at a camp for the summer, Campus Ministry is sponsoring a rally to teach camp songs, beginning guitar, camping skills, etc. It will be held on **Sun. evening, Jan. 23rd at 8 pm. In the chapel.** (The Camp Fair will be Wed., Feb. 9th in the Student Street.)

GETAWAY weekend is now taking registrations. The Getaway is a weekend retreat on Feb.18-20. Questions - Molly Rothwell...4964. Scholarships are available to early registrants. Cost is \$45 if submitted by Jan. 27th.

CHAPEL CALENDAR

Sunday	Worship, 11 am - Born Anew Outreach Team
Monday	Worship, 10 am - English - Beth Boyens, Angie Lucas
Tuesday	Network Prayer, 10 am
Wednesday	Holy Communion, 10 am - Traveling Mercies Blessing
Friday	Worship, 10 am - Allison Fornander, Senior Speaker