

JULY 2, 2017
FOURTH SUNDAY
AFTER PENTECOST

taking⁺ faith home

God rewards those who help disciples.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Matthew 10:40-42	Receiving and serving others
Monday	Luke 9:46-48	Welcoming the little ones
Tuesday	Matthew 25:31-41	Receiving Christ in others
Wednesday	Genesis 18:1-10	Abraham receives three visitors
Thursday	Romans 6:12-23	Slaves of righteousness
Friday	Hebrews 13:1-16	Show hospitality to strangers
Saturday	Psalms 89:1-18	God's covenant with David
Sunday	Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30	Rest for the weary

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

“And anyone who gives one of my most humble followers a cup of cool water, just because that person is my follower, will surely be rewarded.”

Matthew 10:42 (CEV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Lord, open our hearts to welcome you each day, and open our hands to serve others in love.
Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Lord God, thank you for blessing us with this food. As you serve and welcome us, help us to serve and welcome others. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May God bless you with a giving, caring heart. May you experience the full joy of serving others.



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JULY 2, 2017

HYMN OF THE WEEK

When the Poor Ones



taking⁺ faith home

CARING CONVERSATIONS



Discuss in your home or small group:

- Tell about a time when you needed help and someone was kind to you.
- In Matthew 10, Jesus is very candid about the sacrifice of being his disciple. It is not necessarily an easy life. How does God care for Jesus' followers, especially during difficult times?
- God asks us to show our thanks by being kind, helpful, and welcoming to others. What are some ways to do this?

DEVOTIONS



Read: Matthew 10:42.

Jesus said that anyone who gave one of his most humble followers a cup of cool water—just because that person was his follower—would be rewarded (Matthew 10:42). Even small acts of kindness to others do not escape God's attention! Put an empty water jug or pitcher on your table. During the week, discuss ways in which you have been able to help others. Each time someone shares, pour a cup of water into the jug. Conclude with this prayer:

Lord Jesus, thank you for serving us. Please make us always ready to serve others, in big ways and in small ways. Amen.

SERVICE



Jesus said that anyone who welcomes one of his followers welcomes him, and in turn welcomes God (Matthew 10:40). Extend a welcome to an individual or household from your congregation to join you for a meal in your home. Use portions of *Taking Faith Home* during your time together. Remember, that in serving your visitors, you are serving Christ himself!

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS



In Romans 6 the Apostle Paul states that in baptism we are joined to Christ's death and resurrection. Therefore, sin will not control or dominate our lives. One way not to let sin rule our lives is to confess our sins and, thereby, be freed from its power over us. Use Psalm 51:1-11 as a confession or use some other confessional, perhaps from the worship life of your church. Conclude with these words:

“As a disciple of Christ, I thank you for the forgiveness of all my sins. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.”



In addition to *Taking Faith Home*, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: www.milestonesministry.org

JULY 9, 2017
FIFTH SUNDAY
AFTER PENTECOST

taking⁺ faith home

Jesus invites us to bring our burdens to him.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30	Rest for the weary
Monday	Isaiah 40:28-31	God gives strength
Tuesday	Romans 7:15-25	The inner conflict
Wednesday	Jeremiah 31:1-26	God will refresh the weary
Thursday	Matthew 6:25-34	Do not worry
Friday	Luke 12:22-31	God knows your needs
Saturday	Psalms 145:8-14	The Lord is kind and merciful
Sunday	Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23	Parable of the sower and seed

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

"If you are tired from carrying heavy burdens, come to me and I will give you rest." **Matthew 11:28 (CEV)**

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Lord Jesus, we bring our burdens to you. Please give us rest and teach us your ways. Amen.
(Matthew 11:28-30)

Mealtime Prayer:

God, thank you for this meal. You are merciful, Lord! You are kind and patient and always loving. Amen. (Psalm 145:8)

A Blessing to Give:

May God take your burdens from you and give you rest. May God lift you up and show you great love. (Matthew 11:28; Psalm 145:13-14)



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JULY 9, 2017

HYMN OF THE WEEK

*I Heard the Voice of
Jesus Say*



CARING CONVERSATIONS



Discuss in your home or small group:

- Tell about a time when you felt worn out from the pressures or demands of daily life.
- Jesus invites those who are weary and carrying heavy burdens to come to him and promises to give them rest. How does your faith help you when you are weary?
- Tell about a time you served as the hands of Jesus to help someone who was going through tough times.

DEVOTIONS



In Romans 7:15-26, we hear of the Apostle Paul's struggles against sin. He wrote: "I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do, I do not do, but what I hate I do." In your home devotional times this week, join Paul in confessing your struggles against sin.

God of grace, we bring to you our sins.

For the times we have been impatient: **Please forgive us.**

For our failures to listen to each other: **Please forgive us.**

For the ways we have been unkind to others: **Please forgive us.**

For our selfish and uncaring attitudes: **Please forgive us.**

For our lack of honesty: **Please forgive us.**

Lord, what we want to do, we do not do, but instead we do what we know to be wrong. **Please forgive us.**
(Time of silence)

Jesus takes our burdens from us and gives us rest. Through him we have God's forgiveness. **Thanks be to God, through Jesus Christ our Lord! Amen.**

SERVICE



Do you know someone who is heavily burdened with sickness, grief, depression, or other troubles? Send them an encouraging card, note, or social media message featuring Jesus' words from Matthew 11:28.

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS



There are many ways to read the Bible. This week, read Psalm 145:8-14 as a *lectio divina* (divine reading). Read the text two times slowly, pausing after each reading. After the second reading, choose a word or phrase from the text that captures your attention. Focus on that word or phrase for awhile. Then read the text again and wonder how the text connects with your life today. Pause, again, for reflection. Read the passage a fourth time and spend some time reflecting on how this passage might direct your life to some action in the next few days. Conclude your time of prayer and reflection with verse 8:

"The Lord is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. Amen."



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JULY 16, 2017
SIXTH SUNDAY
AFTER PENTECOST

taking⁺ faith home

The Holy Spirit gives us our life in Christ.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23	Parable of the sower and seed
Monday	Leviticus 26:3-20	A rich and poor harvest
Tuesday	Romans 8:1-11	Living by the Spirit
Wednesday	John 5:24-29	Hearing Jesus' words
Thursday	Hebrews 4:12-13	The word of God is active
Friday	Isaiah 55:10-13	God's people will celebrate
Saturday	Psalms 65	God answers prayer
Sunday	Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43	Parable of the weeds

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

The Holy Spirit will give you life that comes from Christ Jesus and will set you free from sin and death. **Romans 8:2 (CEV)**

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Come Holy Spirit, give us our life in Christ. Make us like seeds that fall on good soil. Amen.

Mealttime Prayer:

From soil and seed you give us food to chew. May we grow up your works to do. Our praise and thanks we give to you. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May God's word take root in your heart. May the Holy Spirit set you free with life in Christ, and fill you with peace and joy.



JULY 16, 2017

HYMN OF THE WEEK

*Lord, Let My Heart be
Good Soil*



taking⁺ faith home

CARING CONVERSATIONS



Discuss in your home or small group:

- Is there something you would like to be freed from doing? Explain.
- Christ sets us free. What do you want to be set free from? What do you want to be set free to do in life?
- In Romans 8, life in Christ given to us through the Holy Spirit sets us free from sin and death. What does it mean to be set free from the power of sin and death?

DEVOTIONS



Read: Isaiah 55:10-13.

Just as the rain and snow water the earth to produce food, God's word accomplishes what it promises to do in our lives. All of us are tempted to wonder at times if God's Spirit is alive in us or not. This passage promises to accomplish in us more than we could want or hope (Ephesians 3:20-21). Consider the times you have worried about not living as God's good soil (Matthew 13:23) then use the words of Isaiah 55:10-13 as a prayer of thanksgiving for making your life the good soil that receives life in Christ as a gift of the Holy Spirit.

Conclude by praying the Lord's Prayer.

SERVICE



Enjoy some time working in the soil. Work with soil in pots or planters or in your garden or yard. You may volunteer some time to assist a neighbor or someone in your community to work in their garden or yard.

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS



Find the words and music to the hymn *Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil* on the internet or in a hymnal. Read Matthew 13:1-23 and then sing or pray the words of the hymn. Reflect on how our lives of faith are dependent on the power of God's word.



JULY 23, 2017
SEVENTH SUNDAY
AFTER PENTECOST

taking⁺ faith home

God's Spirit makes us confident we are God's children.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43	Parable of the weeds
Monday	Matthew 7:15-20	A tree and its fruit
Tuesday	Romans 8:12-25	Life in the Spirit
Wednesday	Revelation 14:14-16	The harvest of the earth
Thursday	Colossians 1:9-14	Growing in knowledge
Friday	Galatians 5:16-26	Fruit of the Spirit
Saturday	Psalms 86	Save me Lord
Sunday	Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52	Parables of the kingdom

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

God's Spirit doesn't make us slaves who are afraid of him. Instead, we become his children and call him our Father. God's Spirit makes us sure that we are his children. **Romans 8:15-16 (CEV)**

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Gracious God, make us confident children of your love and mercy and faithful servants in your world. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

O God, thank you for putting food on our table, love in our hearts, and hope in our souls. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May you live and grow as a child of God's kingdom. May you belong to God, now and always.



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JULY 23, 2017

HYMN OF THE WEEK

*This is my Father's
World*



CARING CONVERSATIONS



Discuss in your home or small group:

- In Romans 8:15 and 23, Paul speaks of us as being adopted as children of God. Reflect on what it means to be adopted by God?
- In Romans 8:25, Paul talks about being people of hope who wait patiently. What do you wait for patiently with hope in Christ?
- In Romans 8:12-25, humanity and all creation suffer together. What does it mean to you that you are not being saved from creation but with creation?

DEVOTIONS



Read: Matthew 13:24-30.

Jesus tells the parable of the weeds and wheat. Since the first century church, one of the internal struggles has been the presence of false prophets or teachers of the faith. Instead of trying to separate the true from the false church, this parable argues that both will and should co-exist because to destroy the weeds would also destroy the wheat, the good fruitful community of faith. Reflect on how trying to judge and condemn others may have backfired in your own life or congregation. While this parable does not seek to promote indifference to sin and a false representation of the church, it does gladly acknowledge that God is in control and the fruits of the Christian faith will prevail. Offer the following prayer:

Dear God, help me to be faithful to your word and to resist the temptation to condemn others who differ from me, trusting in your grace, power, and truth. Amen.

SERVICE



Romans 8:19-22 tells us that all of creation suffers and waits for the revealing of the children of God. As humans we have been wasteful in our use of the environment and that has contributed to a "groaning" creation that affects us all. Learn about and select ways to minimize your use of water and energy, especially fossil fuels, as a way to help heal our fragile earth. Find new ways to protect our earth by reusing, reducing, recycling, and composting.

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS



Psalms 86:15 is a foundational verse to describe God's care for us. Write or read this verse in two or more Bible translations, reflect on this verse and recite it at the beginning and/or end of each day this week.



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JULY 30, 2017
EIGHTH SUNDAY
AFTER PENTECOST

taking⁺ faith home

The Bible offers Jesus' disciples both old and new insights.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52	Parables of the kingdom
Monday	Philippians 3:7-11	Nothing compares
Tuesday	Romans 8:26-39	God's love in Christ Jesus
Wednesday	1 Timothy 6:17-19	Lay up treasure
Thursday	1 Peter 2:4-10	Christ is a precious stone
Friday	1 Kings 3:5-12	The Lord makes Solomon wise
Saturday	Proverbs 2:1-8	Hidden treasure
Sunday	Matthew 14:13-21	Jesus feeds five thousand

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

So he told them, "Every student of the Scriptures who becomes a disciple in the kingdom of heaven is like someone who brings out new and old treasures from the storeroom." **Matthew 13:52 (CEV)**

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Dear God, bless us with your wisdom so that we may understand your word and live with faith, hope, and love each day through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Our hands we fold, our heads we bow. For food and drink, we thank God now. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May God's Spirit and eternal word shine on you, give light to your path, guide your steps, and fill you with hope as you await the presence of the Lord.



JULY 30, 2017

HYMN OF THE WEEK

*Seek Ye First the
Kingdom of God*



CARING CONVERSATIONS



Discuss in your home or small group:

- Name someone you think is wise. Explain why you think this is so.
- How can the ancient Scriptures speak so powerfully to each new generation?
- Read Matthew 13:31-33 and 44-52. Pick out a favorite parable and talk about what it means to you.

DEVOTIONS



Read: Romans 8:26-39.

This text is filled with comfort, hope, and affirmation. God helps us in our weakness. God's Spirit is present in our praying because we don't know how to pray as we should. No matter which direction we go, God will make it work for good. Nothing can separate us from God's love, nothing. Consider difficult times you have experienced or are experiencing now. Then, reread this passage and reflect on how these words give comfort and hope to you during those difficult times. As you pray, be attentive to how the Spirit of God is part of your praying.

Conclude by praying the Lord's Prayer.

SERVICE



In 1 Kings 3:5-12, Solomon prays for wisdom to deal justly with others as the king of Israel. Justice and mercy are hallmarks of God and the ministry of the church. This week pray for wisdom in your relationships with others that you may be a vessel of God's compassion.

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS



Plan a fun household activity reflecting one of Jesus' parables about the kingdom of God:

1. Plant seeds in indoor pots or in your garden. (Matthew 12:31-32)
2. Bake bread from basic ingredients. (Matthew 13:33)
3. Go on a neighborhood hunt for "treasure" or go geocaching. (Matthew 13:44-46)
4. Go fishing. (Matthew 13:47-48)



AUGUST 6, 2017
NINTH SUNDAY
AFTER PENTECOST

taking⁺ faith home

God's kingdom is filled with compassion, generosity, and abundance.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Matthew 14:13-21	Jesus feeds five thousand
Monday	Exodus 16:2-4, 9-15	God feeds the Israelites
Tuesday	2 Kings 4:42-44	Elisha feeds one hundred men
Wednesday	Isaiah 55:1-5	An invitation to abundant life
Thursday	Matthew 15:32-39	Jesus feeds four thousand
Friday	John 21:15-19	Jesus tells Peter to feed his sheep
Saturday	Psalms 145	The Lord is kind and merciful
Sunday	Matthew 14:22-33	Jesus walks on water

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

Jesus replied, "They don't have to leave. Why don't you give them something to eat?" **Matthew 14:16 (CEV)**

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

God, you satisfy our hungry hearts, filling us with your goodness and mercy. Send us out to feed the world with your love. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, the eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food in due season. You open your hand, satisfying the desire of every living thing. Amen. (Psalm 145:15-16)

A Blessing to Give:

May the Lord who is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love fill you with good things now and forevermore. (Psalm 145:8)



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AUGUST 6, 2017

HYMN OF THE WEEK

*You Satisfy the
Hungry Heart*



CARING CONVERSATIONS



Discuss in your home or small group:

- Tell about a time when you have felt hungry or lacked something important to your life.
- What does it mean to be satisfied and know that you have enough?
- How does it shape your life to know that God is filled with compassion, generosity, and abundance for you and all that God has created?

DEVOTIONS



Read: Matthew 14:1-21.

In Matthew, the story of the feeding of the five thousand is immediately preceded by King Herod's banquet that included the killing of John the Baptist. Herod's grand birthday party would have included a sumptuous feast and, of course, the dancing of Herodias' daughter, rewarded with John's head on a platter. Jesus' feast was simple, filling, and included healings and full stomachs for all, something that would have been highly unusual for Galilean peasants. Herod's rule displayed brute force mixed with celebration for a few. Jesus' rule displays compassion, generosity, and abundance for all people. Reflect on how the "kingdoms" of this age still remain in stark contrast to the kingdom of God and on what it means to be disciples sent out to feed the masses with the love of God.

Conclude by praying the Lord's Prayer.

SERVICE



Jesus sent out his disciples to feed the masses, a seemingly impossible task for his disciples. Jesus' directive to his disciples reflects his reign that is filled with compassion, generosity, and abundance. Help promote and work on a congregational food drive. Perhaps the food could be brought to the altar at a Holy Communion service, where the Bread of Life is surrounded with the "bread"—the food—that gives life to others.

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS



There are many kinds of fasts. Fasts can be cleansing and very healthy to the body. In honor of the feeding of the 5,000 men (plus women and children) in Matthew 14, decide on a fast that eats simple and healthy foods without overeating. Choose the food items and amount to be consumed and the length of the fast, then each day of the fast read Matthew 14:13-21. Use the "Mealtime Prayer" from this *Taking Faith Home* with each of your meals.



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AUGUST 13, 2017
TENTH SUNDAY
AFTER PENTECOST

taking⁺ faith home

Jesus has the power to help and to save.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Matthew 14:22-33	Jesus walks on water
Monday	Job 38:1-11	God halts the waves
Tuesday	Psalms 107:23-32	He stilled the storm
Wednesday	Matthew 8:23-27	Jesus stills the storm
Thursday	Genesis 7:11-8:5	Noah saved from the flood
Friday	Romans 10:5-15	Anyone can be saved
Saturday	Psalms 85	A prayer for peace
Sunday	Matthew 15:21-28	A woman's faith

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

At once, Jesus said to them, "Don't worry! I am Jesus. Don't be afraid."
Matthew 14:27 (CEV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Lord Jesus, please take hold of us when we are afraid. Keep us from taking our eyes off you.
Amen. (Matthew 14:29-31)

Mealtime Prayer:

You who walked upon the sea, come and join our meal, we plea. Thank you for your care this day;
lead us, Jesus, in your way. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the Lord Jesus take hold of you when you are afraid. May he give you faith to trust in him.



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AUGUST 13, 2017
HYMN OF THE WEEK
Day by Day



taking⁺ faith home

CARING CONVERSATIONS



Discuss in your home or small group:

- Talk about a time when you found yourself out of your "comfort zone" or "sinking." How did you feel?
- Matthew 14:29-30 tells us that Peter stepped out of a boat to walk on water, but he soon became scared because of the wind and waves. What are some "winds" or "waves" in your life at the moment?
- How does Jesus help us when we are in trouble? In what ways has he calmed the "winds" or "waves" of your life?

DEVOTIONS



Read: Matthew 14:31.

Peter was sinking, but Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. In your home devotional times this week, reflect on or discuss your fears or concerns. Then say these words:

"Take courage. Jesus is with you. Do not be afraid."

Give your worries to Jesus in prayer.

SERVICE



Romans 10:15 states, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news." Although this text is often associated with preachers and missionaries, it also can be directed to anyone who has blessed another with the message of the gospel. Think about someone who has shared the good news of Jesus Christ with you. Send that person a note of thanks and include the words of Romans 10:15.

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS



Jesus came to the disciples in the middle of the night and calmed their fears. Bedtimes are special opportunities to reflect about one's life in prayer. This week, pray that Jesus will come and remain with you during the night and calm any "storms" that may be experienced by you and your loved ones. Make Psalm 85:8 part of your nighttime prayer:

"I will listen to you, Lord God, because you promise peace to those who are faithful."



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AUGUST 20, 2017
ELEVENTH SUNDAY
AFTER PENTECOST

taking⁺ faith home

Let all people praise God.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Matthew 15:21-28	A woman's faith
Monday	2 Kings 5:1-14	The foreigner, Naaman, is healed
Tuesday	Isaiah 56:1-8	God's saving power is everywhere
Wednesday	Acts 14:19-28	God opens the door to Gentiles
Thursday	Acts 15:1-21	Believing Jews accept the Gentiles
Friday	Romans 11:25-36	God saves Jews and Gentiles
Saturday	Psalms 67	Tell the nations to praise God
Sunday	Matthew 16:13-20	Peter's confession of Christ

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

Let the nations celebrate with joyful songs, because you judge fairly and guide all nations. **Psalm 67:4 (CEV)**

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

O God of the nations, give us joyful songs that we may praise your goodness and mercy forever. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Lord, we give you praise and gratitude for food and drink and family too; and also for a roof above, but most of all for your great love. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the Lord be gracious to you and bless you. May God's face shine upon you and give you peace. (Psalm 67:1)



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AUGUST 20, 2017

HYMN OF THE WEEK

*Praise to You, O God
of Mercy*



CARING CONVERSATIONS



Discuss in your home or small group:

- Tell about a time you have felt left out.
- Read Matthew 15:21-28. Jesus and his disciples appear to exclude the Canaanite woman. Does this seem fair to you? Explain.
- Jesus said that the Canaanite woman had great faith. How would you describe the "great faith" of this woman?

DEVOTIONS



Read: Romans 11:1-2a and 29-36.

From Romans 9 to 11, Paul has been dealing with a very difficult question: Has God rejected the Jews, God's chosen people? Paul points out that all people have been disobedient so that God could show mercy to everyone. However, Paul is unable to fully answer his own question and concludes with verses 33-36, a doxology that praises the mystery and unsearchable ways of God. Paul ends by simply trusting the mercy of God. Consider tough questions that you have for God. Bring them as prayer petitions then give thanks to God who is worthy of trust because of God's great mercy.

SERVICE



Initially the Canaanite woman who came to Jesus for help wasn't made very welcome. In today's world with lots of mobility and immigration, it is easy to be defensive about people who are different from us. Make a financial contribution or volunteer on behalf of an organization that seeks to provide safe welcome for immigrants or refugees.

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS



Praising God is an integral part of the Christian faith. Beyond our human understanding, including our understanding of God, the Bible encourages individuals and nations to praise God. Psalm 67 is an example of this directive. This theme is repeated in verses 3 and 5. As part of your daily routine this week, take time to praise God using Psalm 67. Try to commit verses 3 and 5 to memory:

"Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you."



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AUGUST 27, 2017
TWELVETH SUNDAY
AFTER PENTECOST

taking⁺ faith home

Jesus is God's Son.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Matthew 16:13-20	Peter's confession of Christ
Monday	John 1:43-51	The confession of Nathanael
Tuesday	John 11:17-27	Martha's confession of Christ
Wednesday	Matthew 27:50-54	The confession of soldiers
Thursday	Acts 9:20-31	Saul's confession of Christ
Friday	Romans 12:1-8	Christ brings new life
Saturday	Psalms 138	Praise the Lord with all your heart
Sunday	Matthew 16:21-28	Take up your cross and follow

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

Then Jesus asked them, "But who do you say I am?" Simon Peter spoke up, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."

Matthew 16:15-16 (CEV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Lord Jesus, help us to show that we believe you are God's Son through what we think, say, and do today. Amen. (Matthew 16:16)

Mealtime Prayer:

Son of God, come be our guest, our thanks to receive and these gifts to bless. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the Lord guide your way, bless you with God's steadfast love, and give you good courage to confess your faith in Jesus.



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AUGUST 27, 2017

HYMN OF THE WEEK

Open My Eyes Lord



taking⁺ faith home

CARING CONVERSATIONS



Discuss in your home or small group:

- Tell about a time when you had a different view from someone else.
- What are some of the different ideas people have about Jesus? Who do you say Jesus is?
- In the verses that follow Matthew 16:13-20, it is clear that Peter did not have the right understanding of Jesus as God's son. How can we still misunderstand who Jesus really is?

DEVOTIONS



Read: Romans 12:1.

The apostle Paul encourages Christians to offer their whole bodies in service to God. As part of your home devotional times this week, draw an outline of a body. Talk about how we can use different parts of our bodies (eyes, ears, hands, feet, etc.) to serve God and confess our faith in Jesus. Write your ideas on the paper. Display your drawing in your home and use it as a focal point for conversation, action, and prayer during the week.

SERVICE



Romans 12:6-8 lists a number of different gifts that God gives to God's people: telling others the good news (prophesy), helping others, teaching, encouraging, sharing or giving, leading, and showing kindness to others. Name the gifts you see in your family and friends. Talk about ways you can use these gifts to serve God in your family, community, and church.

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS



Peter confessed his faith by stating that Jesus is the Son of the living God. Because of this confession, Jesus called him the "rock" upon which he would build his church. Place a rock in your living space or in a garden to remember the confession of Peter and the church throughout the centuries. Write the words "Jesus is the Son of God" on the rock.



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