

NOVEMBER 19, 2023
TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY
AFTER PENTECOST



Jesus calls us to action.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

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

Sunday	Matthew 25:14-30	Parable of the talents
Monday	Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18	Judgment of Judah
Tuesday	1 Thessalonians 5:1-11	Encourage one another
Wednesday	James 1:19-27	Hearing and doing the word
Thursday	James 2:14-26	Faith without works is dead
Friday	1 John 3:18-24	Love one another
Saturday	Psalms 90:1-12	God is eternal
Sunday	Matthew 25:31-46	The sheep and the goats

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

“His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’” **Matthew 25:23 (NRSV)**

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Eternal God, you know our frailty and limitations. Give us faith and courage to act with boldness for the sake of your love through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

For this food that nourishes us, for the people that support us, and for your goodness that renews us, we give you thanks through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Savior. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May you experience the joy of your God through Christ our Lord.



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HYMN OF THE WEEK

Rise Up, O Saints of God!



WEEKLY MILESTONES

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- What are some thoughts, principles, and beliefs that guide your daily life?
- How does the Christian faith help guide you in your daily life?

DEVOTIONS

Read: Matthew 25:14-30.

Jesus' parables, stories that teach a religious lesson, are powerful. They have a message for us. They get into our heads and make us think. In this reading, is God like the master who is "a harsh man, reaping where [he] did not sow" (v. 24)? Of course not. Parables are not necessarily stories that place God as one character and us as another. Just as the actions of the master lead to a definite action by the slave, so our God leads us to definite action. Followers of Jesus are gifted with valued contributions for the work of God's kingdom. God's grace and mercy blesses people through our actions. So act, not for personal benefit but for the joy of living in the grace of God. Christianity is not meant to be simply a philosophy that we think about but a life we experience with others and with God. It includes a "wise heart" (Psalm 90:12) that gives attention to what matters and what brings kindness and joy to the world.

Discuss: What gifts and opportunities has God given you to care for others and give witness to the love of God in Christ?

Pray: **God of abundance, your judgments are true and full of compassion for all that you create. Give us wise hearts to give you praise and serve our neighbor in love through Christ. Amen.**

SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings for this week, how might you serve others with acts of kindness that reflect the abundant love of God?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

The apostle Paul writes "encourage one another and build each other up" (1 Thessalonians 5:11). Think or talk about ways you can be affirming and encouraging to others. Name one person in particular and write a note to them to tell them a gift you have recognized in them, what you appreciate about them, and give words of encouragement to them. End the note with a blessing: Child of light, may God bless you with faith, hope and love, this day and always. (1 Thessalonians 5:5, 8)



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