

JULY 11, 2021
SEVENTH SUNDAY
AFTER PENTECOST



God's steadfast love and faithfulness.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

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

Sunday	Mark 6:14-29	The death of John the Baptist
Monday	Amos 7:7-15	Vision of setting a plumb line
Tuesday	Ephesians 1:3-14	Thanksgiving for blessings
Wednesday	Psalms 86:1-17	Save me, Lord
Thursday	Deuteronomy 7:7-11	A chosen people
Friday	Leviticus 26:1-13	Rewards for obedience
Saturday	Psalms 85:8-13	God speaks peace to the people
Sunday	Mark 6:30-34, 53-56	Jesus teaches and heals

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet; righteousness and peace will kiss each other. Psalm 85:10 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

God of glory and might, guide the rulers of the earth toward justice and mercy for the sake of peace in your world through Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, may we see in this food a banquet filled with your love that brings justice and peace to all the earth. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May our God and the Lord Jesus Christ bless you with love and faithfulness. (Psalm 85:10)



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HYMN OF THE WEEK

*Goodness Is Stronger
than Evil*



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:

- If you had a magic wand, what would you want to do or have happen?
- We like to have power, but power can be misused and be insensitive to others. Give an example of someone misusing their power.
- Jesus brings a power full of love and faithfulness. Where do you see that power in action?

DEVOTIONS

Read: Mark 6:14-29.

This story of the beheading of John the Baptist at a banquet hosted by King Herod presents an image of contrasts. This story comes between last week's Gospel reading about Jesus' disciples traveling without riches or power of their own and staying with others as guests. The Gospel reading two weeks from now is about Jesus' own banquet of feeding hungry souls on a hillside. Jesus treated the people with compassion like a shepherd caring for the sheep. Earthly powers represented by Herod bend toward corruption, greed, violence, and impulsive actions without thought of consequences. Jesus' rule brings people together in peace, feeds the multitudes out of love, and brings healing and an end to demonic powers. We are reminded that earthly powers and governments are not the rule that wins the day in God's universe. We are called to an ordering of life where *"love and faithfulness will meet; righteousness and peace will kiss each other"* (Psalm 85:10). How does Jesus' power in your life influence your thoughts and actions?

Pray: **Shepherding God, in a world that seeks to dominate and humiliate others, we thank you for your reign of love and faithfulness that will never let us go through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

SERVICE

In our forms of government, local, regional, and national representatives need to hear from us, especially about issues that relate to our moral resolve. How have you voiced your views on current issues?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

Psalm 85 talks about peace. Verse 8 states, *"Let me hear what God the LORD will speak, for he will speak peace to his people, to his faithful, to those who turn to him in their hearts."* Make a list or draw a picture of what brings peace to you. Then, read the verse slowly three times. Pause after each reading and wonder what God may be saying to you today. Close by praying the Lord's Prayer.



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