

NOVEMBER 3, 2019
TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY
AFTER PENTECOST

taking⁺ faith home

True worship includes justice for the needy.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

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

Sunday	Luke 19:1-10	Jesus visits Zacchaeus
Monday	Isaiah 1:10-18	Justice is needed, not sacrifice
Tuesday	2 Thessalonians 1:1-4, 11-12	God will relieve their troubles
Wednesday	Psalms 51:10-19	Sacrifice acceptable to God
Thursday	Romans 12:9-21	Marks of a true Christian
Friday	Leviticus 19:32-37	Living a holy life
Saturday	Psalms 32:1-7	The joy of forgiveness
Sunday	Luke 20:27-38	Jesus speaks of the resurrection

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

[L]earn to do good; seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, plead for the widow. **Isaiah 1:17 (NRSV)**

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Holy and righteous God, give us hearts to sing your praise and to love our neighbor now and always. Amen.

Mealttime Prayer:

Come Lord Jesus, be our guest, and let these gifts to us be blessed. Make our home your dwelling place, full of love and faith and grace. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the Lord be your hiding place, preserve you from trouble and give you a glad heart. (Psalm 32:7)



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HYMN OF THE WEEK

To Be Your Presence

taking⁺ faith home

CARING CONVERSATIONS

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

- Do you go to worship regularly? Why or why not?
- What are some of your favorite parts of a worship service?
- How does worship of God motivate you to care for others?

DEVOTIONS

Read: Isaiah 1:10-18.

The problem in Isaiah 1:10-18 is not that the people have quit going to church; God has quit going. God refuses to see and to hear the people's ritual acts of reconciliation in the temple (vv. 11-14) instead of genuine acts that would include care for the needy (v. 17). The familiar story of Zacchaeus the chief tax collector is traditionally seen as a story of repentance because the translation has him state, "Look, half of my possessions, Lord, I will give to the poor" (Luke 19:8). However, the original Greek is present tense, not future: "I do give to the poor." This translation would fit well with Isaiah 1 where God wants real justice to make for real worship of God. Although the people grumble against Zacchaeus, Jesus may be acknowledging that Zacchaeus does truly worship the God of Israel and "too is a son of Abraham" (Luke 19:9). Isaiah, Jesus, and perhaps even Zacchaeus want people to worship God with lives that love both God and neighbor, not lives that profess love of God then go out to ignore or abuse one's neighbor, especially those who are powerless. How does worship on Sunday impact your relationships with others the rest of the week?

Pray: **God of justice and mercy, may our care for others be a way to express true worship of you and love for you. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.**

SERVICE

The scripture verse for the week from Isaiah tells us to "do good, seek justice, and rescue the oppressed." It highlights orphans and widows. In Biblical times, these are two groups who would have had less access to food and shelter. In contrast today, there are many organizations that help and support people in need of food and shelter. Nevertheless, there are some who still need assistance and encouragement. Do you know someone who is recently widowed? In what ways can you reach out to them?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

The characteristics of being a Christian are listed in Romans 12:9-21. This reading tells how we are to treat friends and strangers. Draw an outline of a cross on a sheet of paper. Write the words: *love, honor, be kind, care for, rejoice with, and feed them* inside the cross. Hang it in a visible place this week as a reminder that we are to be like Jesus and treat others as he would.

