

NOVEMBER 17, 2019
TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY
AFTER PENTECOST

taking[†] faith home

The judgment of God brings joy.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

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

Sunday	Luke 21:5-9	Suffering for Jesus' sake
Monday	Malachi 4:1-2a	The day of judgment
Tuesday	2 Thessalonians 3:6-13	Warning against idleness
Wednesday	Isaiah 26:7-15	The Lord can be trusted
Thursday	Romans 5:1-11	Christ died for the ungodly
Friday	Hosea 2:10-16	God courts Israel in the desert
Saturday	Psalms 98	Make a joyful noise
Sunday	Luke 23:33-43	Christ the crucified king

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

Let the floods clap their hands; let the hills sing together for joy at the presence of the LORD, for he is coming to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with equity.

Psalms 98:8-9 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Lord God of justice and mercy, free us from fear that we may speak of you with joy and gladness. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Thank you, Lord for the food that we eat. Help us to serve others with our hands and our feet. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May God give you faith in Christ to make a joyful noise to the Lord that you may break forth into joyous song and sing praises. (Psalm 98:4)



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HYMN OF THE WEEK

*Joyous Light of
Heavenly Glory*



CARING CONVERSATIONS



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

- Tell or think about a time when someone was judged unfairly. What happened?
- Has anyone ever judged you or misunderstood something you did? How did that make you feel?
- God's judgment leads to grace and mercy. How does that change our understanding of God as judge?

DEVOTIONS



Read: Psalm 98.

Psalm 98 is a psalm of praise, praising God for "coming to judge the earth" (v. 9). God's judgment is an act of vindication, of forgiveness that puts an end to blame (v. 2). It represents an act of "steadfast love and faithfulness" (v. 3). We often fear the idea of God as judge, but without divine judgment, evil knows no end. God's judgment puts limits on evil and destruction. Our lives are cleansed and so is the earth itself as it responds with joy. The psalmist sings, "Let the sea roar, and all that fills it, the world and those who live in it. Let the floods clap their hands; let the hills sing together for joy at the presence of the LORD, for he is coming to judge the earth" (vv. 7-9a). When Jesus tells his followers to be a witness to the faith when they are persecuted (Luke 21:13), shouts of joy and "singing to the LORD a new song" (Psalm 98:1) would be surprising—yet fitting—ways to testify to the goodness and steadfast love of God. In difficult times, have you been able to sing praises for God's goodness? Why or why not?

Pray: Righteous God, through Christ you judge all things that you may have mercy on all that you have created. For your justice and mercy, we sing your praises. Amen.

SERVICE



In Luke 21:5-6, Jesus and the disciples were in a beautiful temple. He told them that one day the temple would be destroyed as an analogy of what would happen in their own lives. It was a fearful time for the disciples, but Jesus told them that he would be with them always. Do you know someone who is going through a scary or fearful time? Think of something you can do to reflect the love of Jesus in your actions or words and reassure this person.

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS



"Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth; break forth into joyous song and sing praises" (Psalm 98:4). Use an instrument you play or make an instrument using basic supplies you have around the house. For instance, fold a paper plate in half, fill it with rice or dried beans and tape it shut. Or take a small, empty box and cut a round hole in the top. Wrap rubber bands around the box and over the hole to make a guitar. Think about God's creation, family, and friends and list what "marvelous things God has done" (v. 1) for you. After reading each item on the list, make a joyful noise with your instrument.



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