

JULY 26, 2020  
EIGHTH SUNDAY  
AFTER PENTECOST



*The Spirit helps us in our weakness.*

### DAILY BIBLE READINGS

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

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52</b>	<b>Parables of the kingdom</b>
<b>Monday</b>	<b>1 Kings 3:5-12</b>	<b>Solomon's prayer for wisdom</b>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Romans 8:26-39</b>	<b>God's love in Christ Jesus</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Genesis 29:15-28</b>	<b>Jacob marries</b>
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Psalms 128</b>	<b>Happiness in daily life</b>
<b>Friday</b>	<b>2 Corinthians 12:1-10</b>	<b>God's grace is sufficient</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Psalms 119:129-136</b>	<b>The glories of God's law</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Matthew 14:13-21</b>	<b>Jesus feeds the five thousand</b>

### SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. **Romans 8:26 (NRSV)**

### PRAYERS AND BLESSING

#### A Prayer for the Week:

Come Holy Spirit, help us in our weakness and sustain us with faith that trusts your never-failing care through Christ our Lord. Amen.

#### Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, we thank you for daily food; as you restore our bodies with this meal, restore our souls with joy in your presence. Amen.

#### A Blessing to Give:

May you trust that nothing will separate you from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:39)



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### HYMN OF THE WEEK

*For by Grace You Have  
Been Saved*



### 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:

- When was there a time you felt too weak to work through a problem on your own?
- Do you find prayer easy or difficult? Explain.
- What makes it difficult to know God is with you?

### DEVOTIONS



*Read:* Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52.

Jesus tells five short parables: two about growth, two about valuing something very highly, and one about separating good from bad. There are details of these parables that have challenged Christians throughout the ages. However, Jesus asks the disciples if they “understood all this,” and without any sense of hesitation they simply say, “Yes” (v. 51). Perhaps there is a cautionary tale here. Solomon simply wants wisdom and is praised by God for such a humble request (1 Kings 3:5-12), yet the larger story in 1 Kings reveals that Solomon ended up wanting and claiming much more than a humble quest for wisdom. Instead of preserving the kingdom of Israel, the twelve tribes become split into two realms because of Solomon's failures. The Apostle Paul acknowledges our human frailty by noting that we do not know how to pray and that the Spirit helps us in our weakness. In the midst of seeking a life of faithfulness and wisdom, it is good to be reminded with much humility that our wisdom has its limits. Finally, what we need is a God who intercedes for us “with sighs too deep for words” (Romans 8:26). Recall when God has been with you during a time of personal weakness or difficulty. How did God help you then?

*Pray:* The Lord's Prayer.

### SERVICE



“We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose” (Romans 8:28). Sometimes when a person is going through difficult times, they can easily lose sight of God. Do you know of someone who is struggling? Reach out to that person in their time of need through an act of kindness by taking time to listen.

### RITUALS AND TRADITIONS



Many congregations are smaller today than years ago and may feel insignificant. The parable of the mustard seed teaches us that big things can happen from the smallest of things. Growing the church is reliant on being intentional about sharing our own faith story and passing on the rituals and traditions we know and love onto the next generation. Pray daily that you may sow seeds of faith that grow into something great.



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