

AUGUST 23, 2020  
TWELFTH SUNDAY  
AFTER PENTECOST



*Disciples do not conform to the world.*

### DAILY BIBLE READINGS

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

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Matthew 16:13-20</b>	<b>Peter's confession of Christ</b>
<b>Monday</b>	<b>Isaiah 51:1-6</b>	<b>Blessings for God's people</b>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Romans 12:1-8</b>	<b>Christ brings new life</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Exodus 1:8—2:10</b>	<b>Israelites are oppressed</b>
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Psalms 124</b>	<b>Thanksgiving for Israel's deliverance</b>
<b>Friday</b>	<b>1 Peter 1:13-25</b>	<b>A call to holy living</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Psalms 138</b>	<b>Praise God with all your heart</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Matthew 16:21-28</b>	<b>Take up your cross and follow</b>

### SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect. **Romans 12:2 (NRSV)**

### PRAYERS AND BLESSING

#### **A Prayer for the Week:**

Almighty God, in a world that can divide us from one another, we pray for your rule of mercy and grace that binds us together in faith and love through Christ, the Son of God. Amen.

#### **Mealtime Prayer:**

Dear God, we thank you for this meal and pray for all to have food to eat through your abundant and fruitful creation. Amen.

#### **A Blessing to Give:**

May you be transformed by the will of God to know and to do what is good and acceptable and perfect. (Romans 12:2)



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HYMN OF THE WEEK  
*Send Me, Lord*



### 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 is something you are tempted to do that you know is not helpful or right?
- What influences a person to do something wrong?
- How is the kingdom of Jesus different from other powers that want to shape your life?

### DEVOTIONS



*Read:* Matthew 16:13-20.

To be conformed to the world (Romans 12:2) is to be shaped by the powers of domination in an attempt to influence—or even control—people's thoughts, actions, and loyalties. In Matthew 16 Jesus and his disciples are in Caesarea Philippi, a place where many gods of the ancient world were recognized and worshiped, fickle gods that were seen as ruling human life rather arbitrarily. Jesus as the "the Messiah, the Son of the living God" (v. 16) will transform lives like the Canaanite woman and her daughter in Matthew 15. Jesus has the power to bind and to loosen lives (16:19) and Jesus intends to loosen lives from death to life, from sickness to health, from despair to hope, from broken relationships to a life of mutual forgiveness, from lives that are judged and condemned to lives that receive mercy. How does Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of the living God free your life to be a servant of mercy to others?

*Pray:* The Lord's Prayer.

### SERVICE



In Romans 12:6-8, the Apostle Paul lists a number of gifts that God has given people to support the work of the church like serving, teaching, encouraging, giving generously, leading, and being compassionate. Make a list of gifts you have been given and can use to support the church in the world. The entire faith community (body of Christ) is needed to do God's work. Take action by using one or more of the gifts you listed to help people in your community or the larger world.

### RITUALS AND TRADITIONS



Psalms 138 is a song of thanksgiving and praise: "I give you thanks, O Lord, with my whole heart" (v. 1a). Draw a heart on a piece of paper. Inside the heart write a list of things you are thankful for. Take the heart and put it in a visible place as a reminder to give thanks and praise for God's steadfast love and faithfulness.



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)