

SEPTEMBER 6, 2020
FOURTEENTH SUNDAY
AFTER PENTECOST



Christians seek reconciliation with other Christians.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

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

Sunday	Matthew 18:15-20	Seeking reconciliation
Monday	Ezekiel 33:7-11	God's judgment seeks repentance
Tuesday	Romans 13:8-14	Love for one another
Wednesday	Exodus 12:1-14	The first Passover
Thursday	Psalms 149	A new song of praise
Friday	Galatians 5:13-15	Love fulfills the law
Saturday	Psalms 119:33-40	A prayer for understanding
Sunday	Matthew 18:21-35	A parable about forgiveness

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

"For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them." **Matthew 18:21-35 (NRSV)**

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Almighty God, teach us your ways that we may live together in peace and see Jesus in the face of others. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, in the midst of violent storms and droughts we encounter in the world, we thank you for this gift of food and for those who have brought it to us. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the Lord Jesus strengthen you to love your neighbor and be at peace with all.



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HYMN OF THE WEEK

*Forgive Our Sins
As We Forgive*



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:

- Think or tell about a time you felt badly treated by another individual or a group.
- What makes it hard to openly face conflict with someone?
- For Jesus and the church, we are to pursue others with love and grace. Does knowing this help you to resolve differences with others? Why or why not?

DEVOTIONS

Read: Matthew 18:15-20.

All relationships experience conflict, even in the church. Jesus is aware of this and lays out a plan of action: out of love, be direct. It is the way of life of the people of God announced by Paul in Romans 13:10: "Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law." Being right is not good enough. Having your own way is not good enough. Be loving, be merciful, and pursue what is right; face conflict through a personal conversation to resolve the issue. But if the person who has hurt you does not repent, this is not an excuse to treat them badly. Treat them as Jesus would treat a Gentile or tax collector. He pursued them with his love. Jesus is present in all our relationships, even the stressful ones (v. 20). We are to seek them out with love and mercy. When have you been wronged by the harsh treatment of another? Did you face it directly with the other person to resolve it? Did you treat them as Jesus would? Explain.

Pray: **Lord Jesus, when I am with others, remind me that you are present strengthening us to love one another anew each day. Amen.**

SERVICE

"Love your neighbor as yourself" (Romans 13:9b) sums up the commandments. Who is your neighbor? It may be the person next door or someone in the community. Loving others, even when they are different from you, fulfills the law and motivates us to action. How does knowing this motivate you to show love to a neighbor?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

Next Sunday is the beginning of a new Christian education year for many congregations. Psalm 119 is a lovely text that promotes learning God's will and word. Pray for all teachers and students involved in Christian education and mention those you can by name. Conclude with: **Teach me, O Lord, the way of your statutes, and I will observe it to the end. Give me understanding, that I may keep your law and observe it with my whole heart. Amen.**



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