

MARCH 14, 2021
FOURTH SUNDAY
IN LENT



God loves the whole world.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

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

Sunday	John 3:14-21	God so loved the world
Monday	Numbers 21:4-9	The serpent of bronze
Tuesday	Ephesians 2:1-10	Faith is a gift from God
Wednesday	Deuteronomy 10:12-22	The essence of the law
Thursday	1 John 5:1-5	Faith conquers the world
Friday	Zephaniah 3:14-20	The song of joy
Saturday	Psalms 107:1-3, 17-22	Thanksgiving for deliverance
Sunday	John 12:20-33	The hour has come

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.”

John 3:16 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

God of steadfast love, help us to remember that you hate nothing that you have created and that you love the world through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, you who fed the Israelites in the wilderness, we thank you for feeding us today with this food and nourishing us with your love. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May God who loves the world shine brightly on you with the light of Christ.



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HYMN OF THE WEEK

Christ Be Our Light



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:

- Talk or think about something you really love to do.
- How do you show love for others?
- God created the whole world and loves it. What does that say about the kind of God we have?

DEVOTIONS

Read: John 3:14-21.

These words from Jesus are part of a conversation he is having with Nicodemus who had come to see Jesus by night. There is a contrast here between those who love the darkness (initially Nicodemus) and those who “come to the light” (v. 21). Nicodemus would eventually be drawn to the light by defending Jesus in front of the Pharisees (John 7:51-52) and preparing Jesus’ body after his crucifixion (John 19:39). In the Gospel of John, following and believing in Jesus can be a journey of coming to the light and gaining eternal life, as Nicodemus does. Darkness cannot choose light; it must be overcome by the light. The judgement of which Jesus speaks is remaining in the dark. Eternal life is having the light of Christ overcome the darkness that prevents us from seeing and loving Jesus. How has the light of Christ helped you in challenging times or times of darkness?

Pray: **Merciful God, we thank you for your love for us that calls us out of darkness and to the light of Christ that we may not perish but have eternal life. Amen.**

SERVICE

Numbers 21:4-9 records that God sent snakes among the people of Israel to punish them. But after Moses prayed for the people, God directed Moses to make a bronze snake and put it up on a pole. When anyone who had been bitten looked at the snake, they were healed. The symbol of a snake on a pole is associated with medicine and health care. This week, plan an act of thanks and appreciation for a doctor, nurse, or medical worker in your community.

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

Martin Luther referred to John 3:16, the *Scripture Verse for this Week*, as “the gospel in miniature.” “*For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.*” This week, light a candle and read the *Daily Bible Reading* each day, then say the *Prayer for the Week* and a word of thanks for how God shows love to you and the world. End by saying: **Remember that you are God’s, and to God you shall return.**



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