

SEPTEMBER 9, 2018
SIXTEENTH SUNDAY
AFTER PENTECOST



The kingdom of God breaks into our daily lives.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

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

Sunday	Mark 7:24-37	Jesus heals the Gentiles
Monday	Isaiah 35:4-7a	The return of the exiled
Tuesday	James 2:1-17	Faith without works is dead
Wednesday	Luke 18:1-8	The widow and the unjust judge
Thursday	Hosea 12:2-6	Return to your God
Friday	Mark 9:14-29	Jesus gives a boy speech
Saturday	Psalms 146	Praise for God's help
Sunday	Mark 8:27-38	Taking up the cross

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert. **Isaiah 35:5-6 (NRSV)**

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Dear God, thank you for your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who comes to bring your reign of mercy and healing for our daily lives. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Lord, as we thank you for much, bless those who have little. Give us hearts that care and hands that share. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the Lord lift you up, watch over you, and uphold you now and always. (Psalm 146:8-9)



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HYMN OF THE WEEK

*Have Thine Own Way,
Lord*



CARING CONVERSATIONS



Discuss in your home or small group:

- What is something that you experience as a challenge or limitation in life?
- How do you help others who experience challenges or limitations?
- In Isaiah 35:4-7a God promises to save us and to bring healing and hope to our daily lives. How do you see God bringing healing and hope to your life and to others around you?

DEVOTIONS



Read: James 2:1-17.

This text shows the character of the people of God. God's reign in our lives makes a difference on how we treat others and how we are to be treated. As God treats us with mercy, so we are to treat others in ways that show mercy instead of dishonor, or mutual care instead of a standard that shows privilege to some over others. As verse 13 makes clear, there is judgment for not showing mercy. God's justice is to be taken seriously. And at the same time the great message of the Bible holds true: mercy triumphs over judgment. Instead of letting mercy lead us to indifference, it leads us to acts of love. This shows the power of a living faith that does works of compassion. Talk about how God has shown you mercy through others. How have you shown mercy to others?

Pray: Lord, help us to open our hearts and minds to show mercy and acts of kindness to others. Amen.

SERVICE



Psalm 146:7 says that God gives food to hungry people. Caring for the hungry is an important way to show God's compassion for those in need. Help your congregation's outreach to those who are food insecure. It can be surprising how many people that includes within your own community. Make a financial contribution to an organization that helps to feed the hungry.

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS



Mark 7:24-30 is a shocking text that shows a rougher side of Jesus' dialogue with someone in need. The woman's persistence in response to Jesus' words was itself an example of faith. Christian rituals and traditions provide disciplines that sustain us through the rocky times of life and faith. What are some rituals and traditions that have encouraged you as a follower of Jesus? Recommit yourself to these Christian practices that present God's word and Holy Spirit to keep you going day after day.



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