

JANUARY 29, 2023
FOURTH SUNDAY
AFTER EPIPHANY



God is wisdom, power, and joy.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

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

Sunday	Matthew 5:1-12	Sermon on the Mount
Monday	Micah 6:1-8	True obedience
Tuesday	1 Corinthians 1:18-31	Message of the cross
Wednesday	Luke 6:17-26	Sermon on the Plain
Thursday	1 Samuel 17:31-49	David and Goliath
Friday	Exodus 4:1-17	Moses' miraculous power
Saturday	Psalms 15	Life of the blameless
Sunday	Matthew 5:13-20	Salt and light

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

For Jews ask for signs and Greeks desire wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to gentiles, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. 1 Corinthians 1:22-24 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

God of wisdom, power, and joy, help us to see and believe that in Christ and his crucifixion you have established an eternal kingdom that will bless us now and always. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, with this gift of food strengthen us to show fairness to all, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with you through Christ our crucified and risen Lord. Amen. (Micah 6:8)

A Blessing to Give:

May Christ the crucified one free you to live in peace and joy.



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HYMN OF THE WEEK

*Goodness is Stronger
than Evil*



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:

- How would you describe someone who is wise and powerful?
- Where we see weakness and foolishness, God can see strength and wisdom. How is this good news for us?

DEVOTIONS



Read: Matthew 5:1-12.

This passage is called the Beatitudes, a description of true bliss, holiness, and joy. It begins the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7). These words open Jesus' first public preaching and set the stage for Jesus' God-giving and life-saving work. It is a startling opening statement. Jesus reverses standard understandings of who is blessed in life. When things go well it is easy for us to say, "I am blessed." However, Jesus extends blessings not to the well-off, but to those who are poor in spirit, those who mourn, the meek, and others. Jesus says they are blessed and experiencing some form of God-given bliss now and will also experience a reward in heaven. In society we often struggle for power, recognition, and wealth. Jesus knows that God's standards are not the same. True glory, true wisdom, true joy in life is to experience daily life with a deep-seated compassion based on justice, kindness, and humbleness (Micah 6:8).

Discuss: Where in your life have you seen or experienced compassion based on God's standards?

Pray: **God of justice and mercy, open our eyes and our hearts to see the true joy of a life lived in relationship to you and in care of others through Christ Jesus, the crucified one. Amen.**

SERVICE



Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings for this week, how might you bless someone by doing an act of kindness?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS



Micah was a great prophet in Israel who lived long before Jesus was born. A prophet is a teacher and one who proclaims God's will. The people asked him what God required of them. Micah told them the Lord requires them to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God (Micah 6:8). Each day this week take time to sit in silence and consider your actions towards others. Ask yourself, "Where did I show justice, kindness, and mercy?" Then light a candle and pray: **Dear God, give me the desire to seek justice, kindness, and walk humbly each day with you and with all people. In Jesus' name, amen.**



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