

MARCH 11, 2018  
FOURTH SUNDAY  
IN LENT



*Faith is a gift from God.*

### 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	1 John 4:7-21	God is love
Thursday	Isaiah 12:1-6	Thanks to God, our Savior
Friday	Galatians 2:15-21	Saved through faith in Christ
Saturday	Psalms 107:1-3, 17-22	Thanksgiving for deliverance
Sunday	John 12:20-33	The grain of wheat that dies

### SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God—not the result of works, so that no one may boast. **Ephesians 2:8-9 (NRSV)**

### PRAYERS AND BLESSING

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

Lord Jesus, thank you for being God's light in our world. Thank you for all you have done in us and through us. Amen. (John 3:19-21)

#### **Mealtime Prayer:**

Each meal we eat is a reminder of your love for us. Thank you, God! Amen.

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

May God, who is rich in mercy, grace, and love, make you alive together with Christ.



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HYMN OF THE WEEK

*What Wondrous Love  
Is This*



### CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home or small group:

- Talk about something you love to do.
- Tell about a time you felt you were not in control of what was happening around you.
- We want to have control in most everything we do, including our faith, but Ephesians 2:8-9 makes it clear that faith is a gift. How does that influence how you think, judge, and live as one who believes in the power and grace of God?

### DEVOTIONS

*Read:* John 3:14-21.

In the Gospel of John, the word “world” refers to that which is opposed to—even hates—God (See John 1:10; 3:19; 12:31; 14:22-24; and 15:18-20). Martin Luther called John 3:16 “the gospel in miniature.” C.S. Lewis stated that the reason God created us was so that God could love us. Reflect on what it means that God loves the world that is hostile to God.

Finish these sentences: “Today God showed me love by . . .” and “Today I can show God’s love to others by . . .” Then recite John 3:16.

*Pray:* **Dear God, thank you for your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who shows us your love, a commitment to us that we cannot fully understand but that blesses us with hope and purpose in the world you love. Amen.**

### SERVICE

We were “created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life” (Ephesians 2:10). Acts of service are not simply an obligation but “a way of life.” List or talk about the gifts you have been given to serve others. Now list or talk about how those gifts are used to care for others. Give thanks to God for this way of life.

### RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

It is a Christian tradition to begin a meal by offering a word of thanks as a mealtime prayer. It was more common in past generations to also offer a prayer at the end of the meal, a prayer that could include words similar to Psalm 107:1.

Begin the meal with this prayer: **Each meal we eat is a reminder of your love for us. Thank you, God! Amen.**

Finish the meal with: **O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever. Amen.**



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)