

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

taking faith home

Do justice and love kindness.

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	Proverbs 21:12-16	When justice is done
Thursday	Romans 12:9-21	Marks of a Christian
Friday	Isaiah 1:11-17	Rescue the oppressed
Saturday	Psalm 15	Life of the blameless
Sunday	Matthew 5:13-20	Salt and light

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? **Micah 6:8 (NRSV)**

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Merciful God, bless us with contentment that seeks only you and a life lived pursuing justice, kindness, and humility. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

We thank you for the gift of each day and the food that sustains us. Help us to show our thanks with compassion for others. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May you find peace and comfort in God, the source of true wisdom and strength.
(1 Corinthians 1:25)



HYMN OF THE WEEK

Blest Are They



taking faith home

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 has someone shown you kindness recently?
- What gets in the way of appreciating what God has done for us?
- What more can you want in life than God's mercy and kindness? Explain.

DEVOTIONS



Read: Micah 6:1-8.

God is pleading a court case against Israel. The people have turned from God, but God wonders how this could be. The guilt of the people is on themselves because God has done marvelous things for the people: brought them out of Egypt and slavery; given them leaders like Moses, Aaron, and Miriam; their enemies were conquered. With their guilt before them, the people wonder what is the appropriate penance: thousands of sacrifices? endless amounts of holy oils? sacrifice one's own child? Nothing will do but "to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God" (v. 8). In the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1-12) Jesus offers a similar path for faithful followers: poverty of spirit, humility, and mercy. The larger Gospel of Matthew cannot be understood without the content of the Beatitudes and the Sermon on the Mount. This is the path for us to be satisfied and blessed. This is the way of purposeful, intentional living as a disciple. What helps you live as a disciple?

Pray: Dear God, give us the simple joy of trust in you by living a life of purpose that seeks justice, kindness, and humility with you and all people, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

SERVICE



The word beatitude comes from a Latin word meaning blessed or happy. During the Sermon on the Mount Jesus says that things will be different in God's kingdom. Even those who mourn, are meek, or are hungry will be blessed. Make a list of people and organizations you know that bless those who mourn, are meek or hungry. In what ways can you help others experience God's kingdom on earth?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS



In Matthew 5:1-12, Jesus tells his followers they are blessed. The words to a popular children's song are "If you are happy and you know it clap your hands." Use the tune to this song but change the words to "If you are blessed and you know it say a prayer." Take time each day to sing this song. Read the blessings from verses 3-10, and pray for those described in the verses.