

OCTOBER 29, 2023  
TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY  
AFTER PENTECOST

taking   
faith  
home

*The challenge of loving one's neighbor.*

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS**

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

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Matthew 22:34-46</b>	<b>Loving God and neighbor</b>
<b>Monday</b>	<b>Leviticus 19:1-2, 15-18</b>	<b>Love your neighbor as yourself</b>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>1 Thessalonians 2:1-8</b>	<b>Paul's life and work</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Deuteronomy 10:12-22</b>	<b>The essence of the law</b>
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Romans 15:1-6</b>	<b>Please others, not yourself</b>
<b>Friday</b>	<b>1 Peter 4:7-11</b>	<b>Good stewards of God's grace</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Psalm 1</b>	<b>The way to happiness</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Matthew 23:1-12</b>	<b>Humble yourselves</b>

**SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK**

*You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.*  
**Leviticus 19:18 (NRSV)**

**PRAYERS AND BLESSING**

**A Prayer for the Week:**

Loving God, it is impossible to love as you love; give us hearts that can be changed so we may love others as you love us through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Mealtime Prayer:**

Dear God, we thank you for this gift of food; may it give us strength and courage to care for others for the sake of Jesus Christ, who cares for us all. Amen.

**A Blessing to Give:**

Through God's love, may you be freed to love your neighbor as yourself.



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**HYMN OF THE WEEK**

*Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with  
Your Love*



**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 do you show someone that you love them?
- In the Bible love is an action that cares for one's neighbor. Why are actions and not just words important to communicate love?

**DEVOTIONS**



*Read:* Leviticus 19.

Reading chapter 19 in its entirety gives a powerful context to the words, "love your neighbor as yourself" (v. 18). We are to be holy because God is holy. Holiness is not something we earn or create; it is our life lived reflecting the holiness of God. That holiness is best understood as God's power and steadfast love. Humans express God's love for a neighbor through just judgments and by not slandering, not profiting from the violation of another, and not hating or taking vengeance. In verses 33-34 the neighbor was first a fellow Hebrew. That same commitment to love the neighbor is given to foreigners also, for God's people know what it is like to be a foreigner. Because we are not up to the task of our own holiness, we are to correct one another when we miss the mark of reflecting God's steadfast love. Love is active and dares to correct when hate, slander, violence, and more detract from God's goodness and mercy. God's holiness and love extends to all through Jesus, the Son of God.

*Discuss:* Through what actions or words have you extended God's love to a neighbor?

*Pray:* **God of love and justice, remind us daily of your holiness that heals and cares for all people and creation through Christ. Amen.**

**SERVICE**



Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings for this week, how can you reach out to a neighbor or friend with an act of kindness?

**RITUALS AND TRADITIONS**



In Matthew 22:37-39, Jesus points out to the religious leaders that the greatest of the Ten Commandments are about loving the Lord your God and your neighbor as yourself. These laws are at the heart of the Old Testament message. God's law is about loving relationships. Write a list of words that you feel describe a loving relationship. Think or talk about why you chose those words.

*Pray:* **Lord God, may I delight in your law and meditate on your law both day and night that your love be seen in all relationships I have with others. Amen.** (Psalm 1:2)

