OCTOBER 18, 2026
TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY
AFTER PENTECOST

taking faith home

We are a people of faith, hope, and love.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

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

Sunday	**Matthew 22:15-22**	**The question of paying taxes**
Monday	**Isaiah 45:1-7**	**Cyrus serves the Lord**
Tuesday	**1 Thessalonians 1:1-10**	**The example of faith**
Wednesday	**Exodus 33:12-23**	**Moses' intercession**
Thursday	**Psalm 99**	**Our Lord is king**
Friday	**Isaiah 42:1-9**	**The Lord's servant**
Saturday	**Psalm 96:1-13**	**Sing a new song**
Sunday	**Matthew 22:34-46**	**Loving God and neighbor**

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.
1 Thessalonians 1:2-3 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:
Dear God, use our gifts, our faith, our hope in you, to do labors of love for the sake of Jesus Christ and his reign on earth. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:
Dear God, we thank you for how you provide for us and for the hands that have brought this food to us today. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:
May God give you faith, love, and hope. (1 Thessalonians 1:3)

MILESTONES MINISTRY

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HYMN OF THE WEEK

Open Your Ears,
O Faithful People

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:

- When have you been proud of an accomplishment? What did it take to make it happen? Who helped you?
- God can use your efforts to accomplish God's will on earth. Does this surprise you? Explain.

DEVOTIONS

Read: Isaiah 45:1-7.

Cyrus is a Persian king. He is not part of God's chosen people through Abraham, Isaac or Jacob. Cyrus does not even know the God of Israel, and yet Cyrus does God's will by setting God's people free to return home from exile in Babylon. Isaiah lifts up the supreme power and authority of God's rule throughout the world. Apart from the Lord, there is no god. All that is, is God's. It is easy for us to forget that God can use others outside of the body of Christ to do God's will on earth. It is no wonder that Psalm 96 commands all the earth to sing to the Lord. In the midst of the tragedies that happen all too often around us, it is important to remember that we are a people of hope and trust in the God who holds all things together. The Apostle Paul wrote with thanksgiving for the Thessalonians' faith, love, and hope. As a chosen people, Paul gladly affirms that they do God's work of love on earth through their *"work of faith"* and *"steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ"* (1 Thessalonians 1:3).

Discuss: How does knowing of God's rule on earth give you hope? How does it encourage you to act with love and faith?

Pray: **God of power and might, we thank you for your glory that breathes hope and love into all corners of the earth through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings and theme for this week, how can you help and support someone as a way to do God's work of love?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

Psalm 96 is a song of praise to God. It tells of the sea roaring, the creatures and fields rejoicing, and the trees singing. In what ways do you praise God through sounds and music? Sing a favorite Christian hymn. Think or talk about what the words say about God.

Then say: **Sing a new song to the Lord! Everyone on this earth, sing praises to the Lord, sing and praise his name.**

MILESTONES MINISTRY

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