

Faith Bible Study Guide  
For the Week of May 7, 2024  
6th Week After EASTER SUNDAY



**Be still [2 Minutes]:** As you hear these Centering Words, let us greet each other, greet the Holy Spirit, and begin with 1 minute of silence, breathing in the breath of God and allow the group to open themselves to the Holy Spirit today:

**CENTERING WORDS:**

The Holy One's steadfast love and faithfulness are shared with all. We are called to the greatest commandment: to abide in God's love and to love one another as God has loved us – not as servants, but as friend.

**OPENING PRAYER:**

God of Love, let your Holy Spirit come upon us – into our hearts, into our minds, and into our souls. Let your presence speak within us – in the languages we speak, in the ways we live and have our being. For we long to hear you, Gracious One, and to understand. We pray that you would abide in us, that we may abide in you, this day and all days. Amen.

**Be the Word: New Testament Scripture Lesson: John 15:9-17**

As the Father loved me, I too have loved you. Remain in my love. <sup>10</sup> If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I kept my Father's commandments and remain in his love. <sup>11</sup> I have said these things to you so that my joy will be in you and your joy will be complete. <sup>12</sup> This is my commandment: love each other just as I have loved you. <sup>13</sup> No one has greater love than to give up one's life for one's friends. <sup>14</sup> You are my friends if you do what I command you. <sup>15</sup> I don't call you servants any longer, because servants don't know what their master is doing. Instead, I call you friends, because everything I heard from my Father I have made known to you. <sup>16</sup> You didn't choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you could go and produce fruit and so that your fruit could last. As a result, whatever you ask the Father in my name, he will give you. <sup>17</sup> I give you these commandments so that you can love each other.

**L: The Word of God for all people**

**P: Thanks be to God**

**Be present: [Being mindful of others and sharing time]**

1. Take a deep breath. How is it with your soul?
2. Can you think of a time when a friend was really kind to you? What did they do?

**Be rooted: [Bible Study]**

**Verse-by-Verse Breakdown**

**1. Verses 9-10: Abiding in Love**

- Jesus commands His disciples to remain in His love, setting the condition that if they keep His commandments, they will remain in His love, just as He has kept His Father's commandments and remains in His love. This stresses the mutual relationship between love and obedience.
  - i. What does it mean to "remain" in Jesus' love and how it relates to keeping His commands.

**2. Verse 11: Joy Complete**

- Jesus shares these teachings so that His joy may be in the disciples and that their joy may be complete. This underscores the deep connection between following Jesus' teachings and experiencing profound joy.
  - i. Explore the concept of joy in the Christian life and how it is made complete in love.
  - ii. What is a personal experience where love leads to joy?

**3. Verses 12-13: The Greatest Love**

- Jesus reiterates the commandment to love one another as He has loved them. He defines the highest form of love as laying down one's life for one's friends, pointing ahead to His own sacrificial death on the cross.
  - i. Dig in into the sacrificial nature of love that Jesus describes.
  - ii. What are some historical / biblical examples of such love?

**4. Verses 14-15: Friends, Not Servants**

- By following Jesus, the disciples are not merely servants but friends, because He has shared with them everything He learned from His Father. This marks a significant shift from a master-servant dynamic to a more intimate, reciprocal relationship.
  - i. What do you think is the significance of being called friends by Jesus instead of servants?
  - ii. How does this relationship affect our understanding of discipleship?

**5. Verses 16-17: Chosen to Bear Fruit**

- Jesus emphasizes that He chose the disciples—they did not choose Him. He appointed them to go and bear fruit that will last, linking their mission to prayer and the assurance that the Father will give them whatever they ask in Jesus' name. This underlines both the privilege and responsibility of being a follower of Christ.
  - i. Explore the idea of bearing fruit in the context of love and what that fruit might look like today.

## **Be transformed: [Call to action]**

1. How can we practice abiding in Jesus' love at Faith UMC?
2. How does understanding that we are Jesus' friends change how you view your spiritual obligations, privileges and/or mission and ministries of Faith UMC?
3. What are some practical ways you can 'bear fruit' in our community?

## **Prayers & Concerns**

### **Celebrations...**

Yuki Lucia Matsumoto-Penton (granddaughter of Jane & Terry Matsumoto; parents: Kate & AJ born, 3/5/24)

Daniel Hiro Yuan (grandson of Diane & Brian Fujimori; parents Nicole & David born, 3/24/24)

Rev. Eric Iki, passed his Ordination interviews to be Ordained at AC in June (June 15 @1pm)!

Sally & Ken's 54th Anniversary (1/31/24)

Kainoa Kent Barajas born to Lauren & Carlos (2/4/24) - (Great-grandma is Jane Kiyohara!)

### **Prayers for healing and wholeness...**

\*Mutsuko Nishi (Henry's mom)

\*Claretta Foster

Jack Hamada

The Sasaki Family; Jordan Sasaki, Sally, Ken,  
& Jason

Jerry Osaka

\*Victoria Dela Torre

\*Diane & Destiny Ueda-Banda

Audrey Goto

Tak and Irene Ryono

\*Ralph Ichikawa's brother, Jim (Tio)

\*Alice Kajiya

\*Faye Toma

\*Virginia Flood - Stage 4 Cancer

Jason's friend, Kaitlyn Sabedra

Glenn & Millie Shimizu

\*Faith Tanaka

\*Sam Kobayashi

\*Nancy Matsushima

Dan Yamashita

\*Sumi Maruya

\*Chic Miyake

\*Winnie Osaki

\*Postal Worker, Dexter

\*Alveena Fukuhara

\* Harry Lum

\* Kyle Ichikawa (Ralph's son)

\*Maxine Butcher

\*Florence Uchida

Deron Tokishi (brother of Sheri Tong)

Fred Endo (father of Sharon Ann Endo)

Ireland Bone (health)

**\*\*Faith Families, multiple illnesses within our group of young families—pray for healing and wholeness.**

### **Prayers for Grieving Families...**

\*Sumi Maruya, (passed on Wednesday morning, 4/17) - HER CELEBRATION OF LIFE WILL BE HELD ON FRIDAY, MAY 17 AT 11AM. A RECEPTION WILL FOLLOW; HER BURIAL AT GREEN HILLS WILL BE AT 2PM

\*VIRGINIA FLOOD PASSED AWAY YESTERDAY MORNING, (4/27). PLEASE HOLD THE FLOOD FAMILY IN YOUR PRAYERS

**\*STAN KANJA, FRIEND OF BARBARA TAMURA PASSED AWAY THIS WEEK. PLEASE HOLD BARBARA AND THE KANJA FAMILY IN YOUR PRAYERS.**

**\*Preston Akiyama (husband of Masako, passed on 4/15/24) A SERVICE FOR PRESTON WILL BE HELD THIS SUMMER WHEN HIS FAMILY IS TOGETHER**

\*Kyoko Nakahara, (Kelly DeGracia's mom)

\*James Kawamoto

\*Nelson Mark (husband of Alice, father of Darrell, passed on 3/10/24)

\*Frances Yonemori (Florence Uchida's sister, passed on 3/12/24)

\*Kurt Kuniyoshi (passed 3/xx/24)

\*Bing Duck Pang (father of Stanley, passed 3/11/24)

\*Bernice Kashiwai (mother of Kent/Nicole Morita-Kashiwai)

\*Lori Takayesu (Georgine Morita sister)

\*Pat Hiroshima (Harriet Tateyama's sister-in-law)

\*Takako Takao (mother of Jerry, passed

2/22/24)

\*Charles Kvitky (husband of Lily; passed week of 2/11/24)

Greg Kubo (passed away on 2/3/24)

Henry Uepi Isama'u (passed on 1/24/24)

\* Elaine Suzuki (Ralph's sister)

Gene LeFebvre (Andy's mentor and friend)

Rev. Margaret Finney

### **For our hurting world...**

Japan Earthquake / Volcanic Eruption in Sakurajima (near Kagoshima)

People of the Holy Land

Families rebuilding after natural disasters

Election year

Covid (and for those who are sick, ailing, in need of God's love and healing)

The United Methodist Church (General Conference)

### **And Know that He is God:**

#### **Commission & Benediction (based on John 15:9-17)**

Keep Christ's commandments, abide in Christ's love.

Go forth in peace and justice!

Love one another, go forth to serve:

Go forth in love!

Share in Christ's mission, bear fruit that will last:

Go forth as-Christ's friends, rejoicing!

Let us go forth in peace to witness to our community and world,  
that Christ is alive! Amen.