

Faith Bible Study Guide
For the Week of September 14, 2025
Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost
“From Fury to Mercy: A Different Kind of Power”



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: We come today to sit with a question: How does a God of justice, who sees the foolishness of a people and whose judgment makes the earth tremble, also show overwhelming mercy to the chief of all sinners? Let us quiet our hearts and allow God to move us from the trembling awareness of our failings to the confident joy of his forgiveness.

OPENING PRAYER:

L: “There is no God!” people say.

P: “I can do what I like!” everyone thinks.

L: “Who cares about God?” questioners ask.

P: “I’m here for me; I don’t answer to anyone!” the foolish think.

L: God looks for faith.

P: Will God find it?

L: God looks for care of the poor.

P: Will we provide it?

L: God looks for love.

P: Will God find it in us?

L: O God of heaven and earth, bless us with your mercy and grace. Enter our hearts and make us holy. Be our shepherd and guide us in your ways, that we might not wander alone. Hear our cries and gather us to yourself, that we may be one with each other, through the power of your Holy Spirit. Amen.

Be the Word: Old Testament: Jeremiah 4:11-28; New Testament: 1 Timothy 1:12-17

Jeremiah 4:11-28

At that time, this people and Jerusalem will be told: A blistering wind from the bare heights; it rages in the desert toward my people, not merely to winnow or cleanse.

12 This wind is too devastating for that.

Now I, even I, will pronounce my sentence against them.

13

Look! He approaches like the clouds;

his chariots advance like a tempest,
his horses swifter than eagles. How horrible! We're doomed!

14 Cleanse your heart of evil, Jerusalem,
that you may be saved.
How long will you entertain your destructive ideas?

15 A voice declares from Dan;
someone proclaims disaster from the highlands of Ephraim.

16 Warn the nations,
proclaim it to Jerusalem!
Armies are approaching from a far-away country,
raising their war cries against the towns of Judah.

17 They hem her in like those guarding a field, because she has rebelled against me,
declares the LORD.

18 Your own conduct, your own deeds have done this to you. This is your payment and how bitter it is,
piercing into the depths of your heart.

Anguish over looming disaster

19 Oh, my suffering, my suffering! My pain is unbearable;
my heart is in turmoil;
it throbs nonstop.
I can't be silent, because I hear the blast of the trumpet
and the roar of the battle cry!

20 Disaster follows disaster; the whole land is ruined.
Suddenly, my tents are destroyed, my shelter in a moment.

21 How long must I see the battle flags and hear the blast of the trumpet?

22 My people are foolish.
They don't even know me!
They are thoughtless children without understanding;
they are skilled at doing wrong,
inept at doing right.

23 I looked at the earth,
and it was without shape or form;
at the heavens
and there was no light.

24 I looked at the mountains
and they were quaking;
all the hills were rocking back and forth.

25 I looked and there was no one left; every bird in the sky had taken flight.

26 I looked and the fertile land was a desert; all its towns were in ruins
before the LORD,
before his fury.

27 The LORD proclaims:

The whole earth will become a desolation,
but I will not destroy it completely.

28Therefore, the earth will grieve and the heavens grow dark
because I have declared my plan and will neither change my mind

1 Timothy 1:12-17

12 I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength because he considered me faithful. So he appointed me to ministry 13 even though I used to speak against him, attack his people, and I was proud. But I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and without faith. 14 Our Lord's favor poured all over me along with the faithfulness and love that are in Christ Jesus. 15 This saying is reliable and deserves full acceptance: "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners"—and I'm the biggest sinner of all. 16 But this is why I was shown mercy, so that Christ Jesus could show his endless patience to me first of all. So I'm an example for those who are going to believe in him for eternal life. 17 Now to the king of the ages, to the immortal, invisible, and only God, may honor and glory be given to him forever and always! Amen.

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. What has been going on in your hearts, heads, and bodies this past week?
3. Share about a storm you remember (literal or metaphorical). Was it destructive, cleansing, or both?

Be rooted: [Bible Study]

Some Exegesis Notes on the Scriptures:

Jeremiah 4:11-28; New Testament: 1 Timothy 1:12-17,

- "Jeremiah 4 provides us with much to ponder on the nature of divine judgment. First, God's judgment causes us to take a sobering look at the consequences of our failures as human beings, speaking the plain truth about the outcomes of our shortsightedness. Second, judgment pushes us to take responsibility for these failings, to turn from our destructive ways and make right what we have made wrong. Repentance is simultaneously turning from evil and turning toward good. Finally, God's judgment makes us aware of the fact that human sinfulness is not simply about individual morality. Obedience to God's covenant is intimately connected to our relationship with others and to the created order.

When things are not right among humans, the whole earth groans. We are answerable not just to ourselves as individuals, but we are accountable to all our fellow human beings and to the earth from which we came. When we inflict violence on each other, we hurt the earth. When we abuse God's good creation, we damage ourselves. Knowing God, by the prophetic definition, means that we act justly with each other and live responsibly in relationship to all of God's creation." (Working Preacher: Frank Yamada on Jeremiah 4:11-12, 22-28
<https://www.workingpreacher.org/commentaries/revised-common-lectionary/ordinary-24-3/commentary-on-jeremiah-411-12-22-28#:~:text=Jeremiah%20provides%20us%20with,to%20all%20of%20God's%20creation.>)

Passage Element	What we want to emphasize	Some scholarly exegesis on 1 Timothy:12-17
Paul's conversion, his past as persecutor, blasphemer, violent (verses 13-14)	You contrast fury with mercy; you give vivid examples; you show how mercy transforms the storm.	Yang's work on pilgrimage / diasporic mission could help you see Paul's former life as a kind of alienation: before conversion, he is outside of the mercy, outside belonging. That connects with how many marginalized people live before they are acknowledged or seen. It can deepen the "before" so that the "after" (mercy, being trusted) is more felt. Also helps with understanding how ignorance/unbelief may be socially shaped (not just personal guilt).
Mercy, grace overflowing, "foremost sinner," example for believers (verses 15-16)	You already focus on mercy's power, its cost, its transformative character, its example.	These scholars can help you reflect on what example means in community. For diasporic / immigrant / minority churches, role models who have been radically changed are especially powerful. The "foremost sinner" line can be used to speak against social stigmas, shame, or feelings of unworthiness among people who feel judged or "other." It can also speak to how churches sometimes elevate "good" Christianity and ignore the messy, forgiven parts.
Doxology & God's character (v. 17) and the trust God places in Paul	You have imagery of the Potter reshaping, power of mercy, etc.	The doxology's attributes of God (eternal, immortal, invisible, only God) can be tied to what marginalized creatures (or powerless ones) experience: invisibility by society, seeming powerless; yet God is sovereign, unseen, but real. Scholars like Foskett or Wan who work with identity & invisibility may help you draw parallel: believers who have been "invisible" or thought "less than" are known by God, are appointed, are trusted. Also, trusting God for the "appointing" part may connect with community's hope and call.

Jeremiah's Storm – Fury Without Mercy

- Frank Yamada: Judgment is not only personal but communal and ecological. Human violence harms creation itself.
- Jeremiah's "hot wind" is destructive, exposing brokenness in society. Fury tears down but does not renew.
- Examples today: violence, political division, gun deaths, wars, Christian nationalism.

1. Where do you see "storms of fury" at work in our society?
2. How does Jeremiah's vision of destruction challenge us to take responsibility for sin not just as individuals, but as a community and as caretakers of creation?

Paul's Story – Mercy That Transforms

- Paul names himself: blasphemer, persecutor, man of violence. He acted "ignorantly in unbelief."
 - Yet God "appointed" him to service — God *trusted* him.
 - Mercy didn't erase Paul's past, but transformed it into testimony.
 - Sunggu Yang: In diaspora and mission contexts, God reshapes outsiders and failures into witnesses.
 - Asian American hermeneutics (Foskett, Wan): Paul's story speaks to those deemed invisible or unworthy — God sees, trusts, and appoints.
3. What difference does it make that Paul tells his own story of failure and mercy?
 4. How do you hear the words: "I received mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief"? What might that mean for people today who perpetuate harm out of ignorance?
 5. Paul was *trusted* by God for ministry — what does it mean to you that God trusts us, even with our flaws and past mistakes?

Fury vs. Mercy – Two Ways of Power

- Jeremiah shows what happens when fury rules: destruction, devastation, exposure of brokenness.
 - Paul shows what happens when mercy rules: transformation, appointment, witness.
 - Mercy is not cheap: it costs us humility, patience, courage.
 - Contemporary witnesses: Nelson Mandela, Amish families at Nickel Mines, MLK and Rev. James Lawson's nonviolence.
6. In your life, where are you tempted to respond with fury? Where have you seen mercy bring transformation instead?
 7. How does our culture disciple us in rage? How might the church resist that by embodying Christ's mercy?
 8. Which kind of storm is shaping you right now — fury or mercy?

Be transformed: [Faith in Action Challenge]:

Living the Potter's Way

- *Jeremiah 18 and 1 Timothy together: God reshapes us, even when we resist or crack.*
- *Discipleship is costly — choosing mercy when vengeance seems easier.*
- *We are clay in the Potter's hands, vessels not of fury but of compassion.*

Practice / Application:

- *Think of one area of conflict in your life (family, work, church, community). What would it look like to respond with mercy instead of fury?*
- *This week, commit to one concrete act of mercy (forgiveness, listening, reconciliation, or advocating for someone marginalized).*

Prayers & Concerns / Announcements



*We lift up prayers for all of God's
Creation. Lord Hear our Prayers.*

continued prayers for Healing and Wholeness

Alice Kajiya	Diane & Destiny Ueda-Banda	Jordan Sasaki	Nancy Matsushima	those in Community Living & Homecare
Alvena Fukuhara	Dr. DoAnn Tsuneo Kaneko	Joye Barker	Noah Miyagawa-Sue	Chic Miyake
Amy Higa		Juliet Koyanagi	Oscar Philip Bland, Jr.	Doris Kato
Anthony Anderson, Sr.	Dr. Nguyen	Kaitlyn Sabedra	Priscilla Kandel	Emma Horiuchi
Apolosi Lokotui	Elaine Yoshida	Karlynn Fernandez	Raquel M. Martinez	Faith Tanaka
Arthur Kobashi	Eleanor Ngai	Kay Saxton	Richard Ueyuenten	Rev. Harry Fujimoto
Audrey Goto	Emi Hino	Kian Tehrani	Ruth Hirata	Irene & Tak Ryono
Austin Maeda	Ernie Santiago	Kiki Hashimoto	Ruth Taira	Jane Kiyohara
Barbara Tamura	Faith Tanaka	Rev. Kim	Sandra Minjarez- Grange	Marion Antoku
Betty Kobata	Florence Nakakura	Montenegro	Steph Matsunaga	Mary Jung
Bill Morris	Fred Oshiro	Kelsey DeGracia	Sue Hamada	Nobie Shiokari
Brian Okumura	Geri Shiraki	Kyle Ichikawa	Sue Hasegawa	Ruth Hirata
Cami Bruns	Glenn and Millie Shimizu	Larry Takumi	Susan Mizuki	Sets Asano
Carolyn Hyatt	Grace Tochiara	Layne Nakasone	Susan Slade	Sue Hasegawa
Chic Miyake	Grant Hanada	Linda Jung	Tam Kobayashi	
Christine Keim	Harriet Tateyama	Lori Conti	Tommy Sakaguchi	for our Worldwide Community
Claretta Foster	Haru Yasunaga	Lucas Yniguez	Tseyli Mantooth	for the Leadership of our Country and our Churches
Dan Segawa	Hisako Shohara	Marion Antoku	Victoria DelaTorre	for the immigrants: migrants, refugees, asylees
Danny Tokudomi	Ingrid Peterson	Mary Jung	Walker Wilkerson	for our siblings in Christ who struggle and in need of God's care
Dan Yamashita	Irene Munasato	Mary Marchand	Wayne Shimizu	
Derek Troester	Jack Honda	Mary Tamura	Winnie Osaki	for those who live in through wars, unrest, and violence
Deron Tokishi	Jayne Watanabe	Maxine Butcher	Theresa Apicella	for those suffering and rebuilding after national disasters and man-made catastrophes
	Jehiel Vinluan	Mutsuko Nishi	Kraig Nakano	
	Jerry Osaka			
	Joanne Sato			

for All Our Saints

Keith Tokuhara and family, on the passing of his wife, Mary Sutton Tokuhara. A Celebration of Life is scheduled for October 4, 2025 at 2:00pm. RSVP with Church Office.

The Hirayama family, on the passing of Ted Hirayama. A Celebration of Life will be held for Ted on Sunday, October 5, 2025 at 2pm. Private family service.

Carol Hashiro and family, on the passing of her husband, Mike Hashiro (7/25/25). A Celebration of Life is scheduled for September 20, 2025 at 2:00pm. RSVP with Church Office.

Brian Uchida and family, on the passing of Florence Uchida (7/29/25). A Celebration of Life is scheduled for November 1, 2025 at 10:00am. RSVP with Church Office.

The Hirano family, on the passing of Helen Hirano. (8/10/25)

Carol Tondo and family, on the passing of her mother, Yoko Murakami (7/14/25).

Amanda Taketa-Mark and family, on the passing of her grandmother, Llynda Taketa (7/21/25).

The Kawamura family, on the passing of Bess Kawamura.

The Kato family, on the passing of Tak Kato.

The Akiyama family, on the passing of Masako Akiyama.

UPDATED 9.10.2025

* Note change for Doris' Award, December 7, 2025

- Pearl Iizuka (9/11)
- Tam Surgery today (9/9)
- Audrey Goto recovery
- Scarlett Bone
- Diane Ueda-Banda (to monitor health, but relieved for now)
- Students starting the new school year (and preparing to start the new year)
- Kraig Nakano
- Tseyli Mantooth
- Kim Foster
- Ireland Bone and all (college) students
- Helen Ryde, Vernon Randall (Rev. Allison's friends)
- Alice Kajiya (broken clavicle)

Birthdays:

Jason Sasaki (9/14)

Danny Hirata (9/18)



FAITH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Marketplace

Saturday, September 27, 2025
9 AM - 2 PM

Featuring our first *ReHome Goods* Sale! Recycled | Repurposed | Regifted Goods

FAITH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH - 2115 WEST 182ND STREET, TORRANCE CA



WHEN WE NEED IT

Drop-offs will be accepted the week of September 22–26.



Monday – Friday
10 am – 2 pm and 6:30 am – 8 pm



**PLEASE DO NOT DROP OFF ANYTHING BEFORE THIS WEEK,
OR ON EVENT DAY.**

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WHAT WE NEED

- * Collectibles: Sports cards, Pokeman cards, Beanie Babies, Hot Wheels, Bobble heads...
- * Authentic designer items: purses, accessories...
- * Asian dishes, dolls, kimonos
- * Vintage and Antique goods
- * Plants
- * Sports equipment, tools
- * Clean toys, puzzles, games
- * Pots, pans, kitchen utensils
- * Denim apparel, clothing "NWT"...

WHAT WE DON'T NEED



- * NO Stuffed animals
- * NO Old clothes
- * NO Broken appliances
- * NO Large furniture
- * NO Books
- * NO Perfumes, lotions, soaps



WHAT WE REALLY NEED

YOU to sign up for a workshop!

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And Know that He is God: Closing Prayer & Blessing

Read together 1 Timothy 1:17:

"To the king of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen."

Closing Prayer:

God of mercy, we confess that fury often feels easier than forgiveness. Yet you have shown us a different way of power: the way of mercy. Reshape us as your clay, transform us as you did Paul, and send us into the world as witnesses of your mercy that heals and renews. Amen.