

Faith Bible Study Guide
For the Week of March 15, 2026
Fourth Sunday in Lent
“Tell Me Something Good: The Good News is...
Protection & Care for the Vulnerable”



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/ WORDS TO PONDER: Poem by Rev. Sarah Speed

Unwritten Agreement

*We have this unwritten agreement,
us members of humanity.
When the toddler at the coffee shop runs round the corner,
when her mom, at the register, looks up in panic,
we, the adults in the room, will pledge,
with quick smiles and silent head nods, to keep watch.
We will lean out of our seats.
We will put down our phones.
We will stand at the ready
to scoop up,
to offer words of comfort,
to make silly faces,
to keep an eye on the door.
And we will do this,
because we cannot ignore the instinct to care.
We will do this,
because we cannot ignore the child right in front of us.
We will do this,
because love always includes the least of these.*

OPENING PRAYER:

*Holy One,
Sometimes the simplest of your commands are the hardest for us to hear.
You say, “Love your enemy.” “Turn the other cheek.” “Care for the widow and the orphan.”
And we want to know: How? When? Where?
Today as we turn to your word, open up space in us to simply hear your truth for what it
is. Open up space in our hearts to dream new dreams, to imagine new realities, to draw
closer to you and closer to love. With hope for a better tomorrow, we listen, we pray.
Amen.*

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

1. Take a breath. Feel your body in the chair. How is it with your soul today?

Feel free to answer several questions (or briefly all)...

2. *Where have you witnessed—or offered—that quiet, “unwritten agreement” kind of care this week? What did it stir in your spirit?*

3. *When you hear Jesus say, “Let the children come,” who comes to mind today as someone being overlooked, dismissed, or unprotected? What do you feel in your soul as you hold them in prayer?*

4. *Lent invites honesty, not performance—so gently: where in your life are you feeling vulnerable, small, or in need of care right now?*

5. *The scriptures remind us, “remember—you were once...” What past experience of your own vulnerability is asking to be remembered today? How is it shaping your compassion (or resistance)?*

6. *Where might the Holy Spirit be nudging you to “leave something behind” this week—time, attention, resources, control—so that someone else can be cared for?*

Lent invites honesty, not performance.

Be the Word: Scripture Lesson: Matthew 19:13-15; Deuteronomy 24:17-22

Matthew 19:13-15 Common English Bible

Jesus blesses children

13 Some people brought children to Jesus so that he would place his hands on them and pray.

But the disciples scolded them. **14** “Allow the children to come to me,” Jesus said. “Don’t forbid

them, because the kingdom of heaven belongs to people like these children.” **15** Then he blessed the children and went away from there.

Deuteronomy 24:17-22 Common English Bible

Rights of widows, orphans, and immigrants

17 Don’t obstruct the legal rights of an immigrant or orphan. Don’t take a widow’s coat as pledge for a loan. **18** Remember how you were a slave in Egypt but how the LORD your God saved you from that. That’s why I’m commanding you to do this thing.

19 Whenever you are reaping the harvest of your field and you leave some grain in the field, don’t go back and get it. Let it go to the immigrants, the orphans, and the widows so that the LORD your God blesses you in all that you do. **20** Similarly, when you beat the olives off your olive trees, don’t go back over them twice. Let the leftovers go to the immigrants, the orphans, and the widows. **21** Again, when you pick the grapes of your vineyard, don’t pick them over twice. Let the leftovers go to the immigrants, the orphans, and the widows. **22** Remember how you were a slave in Egypt. That’s why I am commanding you to do this thing.

L: The word of God for all People.

P: **Thanks be to God.**

Be rooted: [Bible Study]

The Series at a Glance

Lent

ASH WED	1ST SUN IN LENT	2ND SUN IN LENT	3RD SUN IN LENT	4TH SUN IN LENT	5TH SUN IN LENT
The good news is... all are invited	The good news is... so good it catches us by surprise	The good news is... great love for God and neighbor	The good news is... together, the impossible is possible	The good news is... protection and care for the vulnerable	The good news is... rooted in justice, mercy, and faithfulness
<u>Luke 14:15-24</u> <i>(Parable of the wedding banquet)</i>	<u>John 2:1-11</u> <i>(Wedding at Cana)</i> <u>Matthew 13:31-32</u> <i>(Parable of the mustard seed)</i>	<u>Luke 7:36-50</u> <i>(Woman with the alabaster jar washes Jesus' feet)</i> <u>Matthew 25:35-40</u> <i>("Whatever you did for the least of these, you did for me")</i>	<u>Mark 6:32-44</u> <i>(Feeding of the 5,000)</i> <u>Ephesians 3:20-21</u> <i>("By the power at work within us [God] is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine")</i>	<u>Matthew 19:13-15</u> <i>(Jesus blesses the children)</i> <u>Deuteronomy 24:17-22</u> <i>(Care for the alien, the orphan, and the widow)</i>	<u>John 8:2-11</u> <i>(Jesus refuses to condemn a woman caught in adultery)</i> <u>Matthew 23:23</u> <i>("You have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy, and faithfulness.")</i>

Holy Week

PALM / PASSION SUNDAY	MAUNDY THURSDAY	GOOD FRIDAY	EASTER SUNDAY
The good news is... inspiring us to act	The good news is... even Judas gets his feet washed	The good news is... revealed through nonviolence	The good news is... alive in the world
<u>Mark 11:1-11</u> <i>(Triumphal entry into Jerusalem)</i>	<u>John 13:1-35</u> <i>(Jesus washes the disciples' feet)</i>	<u>Luke 22:47-53; Luke 23:33-38, 44-46</u> <i>(Judas' betrayal; Jesus heals the servant's ear after his disciples draw swords; Jesus forgives those crucifying him)</i>	<u>Matthew 28:1-10</u> <i>("Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers and sisters to go to Galilee; there they will see me.")</i>

Focal scriptures Matthew 19:13-15; Deuteronomy 24:17-22

Theme connections

In many modern contexts, it may seem sweet that Jesus welcomed little children; however, in Jesus' setting, spending time with children would have seemed wasteful or useless. When Jesus blesses a crowd of children (after the disciples rebuke them and try to send them away), he once again reorients socially-constructed hierarchies to center the vulnerable. Throughout his ministry, Jesus emphasized the last, the least, and the lost, building upon the mandates of the Hebrew scriptures to care for the immigrant, widow, and orphan among you. Deuteronomy repeatedly reminds the Israelites, "you were once slaves in Egypt." Their memory of oppression should impel them to provide for anyone under-resourced or cut off from the protection of a household. Similarly, Jesus uplifting children is a reminder that we were all once children and we have all been vulnerable at some point in our lives, relying on the protection and care of others. If we're truly living out the good news, then anyone vulnerable will not only be protected from harm, but cared for so they have the chance to thrive.

Considerations for this week

We decided early on in our planning that a series focused on the "good news" should emphasize Jesus' preferential care for the vulnerable. While children, immigrants, widows, and orphans are explicitly named in this week's focal scriptures, our sub-theme is meant to be good news for all, since each of us has been vulnerable at some point in our lives. The challenge for preachers this week will be to convey the subversive nature of Jesus welcoming children and lifting them up as

the “greatest in the kingdom” (Matthew 18:4).²⁰ Words that might sound cute to us today would have likely felt destabilizing and perplexing to the disciples. Additionally, preachers may face the challenge of preaching the biblical mandate to care for immigrants in settings where immigrant rights are tensely politicized. As we were developing these resources, immigrants in the US were increasingly the target of political attacks, and now, at the time of publishing these materials, immigrants are being aggressively targeted. Adults and children, regardless of legal status, are being extracted by Border Control Agents from their homes, cars, churches, and schools and placed in detention centers without due process. In light of these events, many churches have been compelled to put biblical mandates into action. We know that protection and care for the vulnerable is not always our reality, but if we’re to truly live out the good news, then the vulnerable must be protected and cared for. This is inherent in embodying the Gospel and must become apparent by our actions.

Commentary:

Commentary on Matthew 19:13-15; Deuteronomy 24:17-22 by Rev. Dr. Brian Blount

For the Children

For children, we would do anything. Children are the closest thing to a miracle in most of our modern human lives. They are blessings we indulge with the best of our energy, support, protection, attention, and acceptance. We not only welcome them into our company—we make them the center of our attention. We watch what they do. Marvel at how they grow. Attend to what they say. *(continued)*

Commentary on Matthew 19:13-15; Deuteronomy 24:17-22 by Rev. Dr. Brian Blount *(continued)*

It was not always so. In Jesus’ time, in the company of adults, particularly adults with a sacred agenda, children were an invasive distraction. Humble in both physical stature and emotional maturity, children occupied one of the lowest rungs of social status. Leaders like Jesus were not expected to climb down to their level, and parents ought not to presume lifting them up into his presence. That was the attitude of Jesus’ disciples. They mirrored the ethos of their time when Jesus so desperately wanted them to challenge it—by treating children the way they would treat him.

Earlier, Matthew 18:1-5 records an incident where Jesus warns that only those who humble themselves like children will receive entry into the reign of God. He follows up that startling revelation with the even more striking declaration that in welcoming the lowly child, one welcomes Jesus himself. Just a brief time later in Matthew 19:13-15, the disciples attempt to bodyguard Jesus, pushing away every child in range of Jesus’ sacred space. In rejecting the children, they are rejecting Jesus.

So Jesus rebukes, not the parents and their children, but his dull disciples. They refuse to entertain the radical truth about God’s reign that Jesus is trying so desperately to teach them. The reign of God belongs to children and everyone who, like children, is not granted polite society’s respect and acceptance.

The children, then, are a metaphor for all who lack societal status, who so-called decent folk find distasteful and undesirable. The migrant worker. The immigrant. The alien. The homeless. The powerless. The undocumented. Harking back to Deuteronomy 24:17-22, where God commands the people to care for the socially downtrodden because they themselves had been beaten down in Egypt, Jesus issues a clear, if not controversial, command for his followers. They are to live as an *ekklesia*, a “church.” And this church is to exist in this world as a refuge of radical welcome.

In this season of Lent, the good news is that God, through Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection, extends the same radical welcome even to us. Because we are all lowly sinners, we are all unworthy of acceptance in God’s reign. And yet, God promises to receive us as if heaven is our home. Jesus wants his church to offer the same hospitality—to greet those of the lowest stature with the grandest welcome.

Sanctified Art Guiding Q's

1. Refer to other passages where Jesus draws attention to children: Mark 9:36-37, Matthew 18:1-5, Mark 10:13-16. Jesus welcomes and blesses children, says the kingdom of heaven belongs to them, and also invites his adult listeners to be humble like children.
 - Why do you think Jesus focuses on children?
 - What gifts do children bring to the world and to the church?
 - What lessons can adults learn from children?21
2. In *True to Our Native Land**, Michael Joseph Brown provides context for the reality of children in first century Israel. He writes: "We should dismiss ideas of childhood bliss when we read this passage. Childhood in antiquity was difficult. Fifty percent of children died before the age of five. They were the weakest members of society. They were fed last and received the smallest and least desirable portions of food. They were the first to suffer from famine, war, disease, and natural disasters. Many, some say more than 70 percent, would have lost one or more parents before reaching puberty. A minor had the same status as an enslaved person, and it was not until adulthood that they would be considered a free person."22 [*True to Our Native Land: An African American New Testament Commentary, edited by Brian K. Blount, Gay L. Byron, and Emerson B. Powery, (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2024). 120]
 - How do you feel reading about these difficult realities? How do these realities differ from attitudes toward children in your culture and society? In what ways are these realities still present?21
 - Who do you think God wants us to care for and protect?
 - What are the good things God wants for the world?

Since creativity can be an outlet for communicating ideas, consider your childhood days, draw a picture of God caring for people.

- What does God look like?
- What is God doing in the picture?
- Who is included?

This video might provide additional cuteness and inspiration:

[youtube.com/watch?v=fPYyWhtTDmQ22](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fPYyWhtTDmQ22)

3. Matthew 18 opens with the disciples asking about who is the greatest.
 - What answer are they expecting?
 - Are they hoping to be praised or exalted by Jesus' response?
 - How do you think the disciples, who each held a certain level of privilege and status as adult males, felt when they were told to humble themselves to the status of a child?
4. In *The Moral Teachings of Jesus*, David P. Gushee believes that Jesus focuses on children largely because children are not status-seeking. He notes, "Better if we adults unlearn status-seeking by learning from our own children."23
 - What actions, practices, or prayers help you turn away from status-seeking and grabbing for power?
 - What actions embody the humility of a child?
5. In Matthew 18:6 and 18:10 Jesus offers harsh directives to protect and care for "the little Ones." Deuteronomy 24:19-21 includes specific instructions for how to care for "the immigrant, orphan, and widow" by leaving behind gleanings in the field.
 - In addition to those named in these scriptures, who are the vulnerable people groups in your community and church?
 - What acts of protection and care do they need?
6. "Protecting" the vulnerable from harm is an important step, but "caring" means working to make sure everyone has the opportunity to thrive.
 - What steps can your church take to not just protect vulnerable populations, but also provide care?

Be transformed: [Faith in Action Challenge]:

1. *Join us in Acts of Resistance:*
 - *De-Escalate War: Thursday, 3/19 - Sepulveda & Hawthorne, 5-6:30pm*
 - *No Kings: Saturday, 3/28 - March from Torrance HS to Torrance City Hall (10am); Rally (12pm)*
2. *Take some time to engage in Art as a spiritual discipline...*



Let the Little Children Come

by Carmelle Beaugelin Caldwell

Inspired by Matthew 19:13-15

11"x14" Acrylic, gold leaf, pen on paper

For my little niece, Angelina, whose art rests at the heart of this composition, and in whose joy we glimpse the Kingdom of God—alongside her sisters, Angelika and Ariana.

At the center of this work is a drawing made by my five-year-old niece, Angelina. I watched her joyfully scribble it in under three minutes, churning out drawing after drawing and handing each one to me with an eager smile. In this piece, she first drew a self-portrait (her wearing a crown), then graciously decided to include me (taking some creative liberties in giving me a third arm!).

I imagine the scene in Matthew 19: toddlers wailing, little ones slipping from their parents' arms, parents offering apologetic glances toward

the frowning disciples as the scene around Jesus grows increasingly disorderly and loud. Those of us who've participated in group infant baptisms and baby dedications (when one cries, the chain reaction begins!), have led children's sermon moments with restless kids squirming about, or had the joy of watching our little ones participate in a kids' choir performance that goes delightfully rogue, can easily relate.

The disciples, feeling the weight of being seen as serious leaders alongside their rabbi, Jesus, may have tried to preserve a sense of reverence by shooing away the parents bringing their children to him. Yet here, Jesus reorients his disciples (and us) away from the illusion of control and reminds us that it is the joyful, unruly, sincere presence of a child to whom the kingdom truly belongs. Just a chapter earlier, in Matthew 18, Jesus tells his followers that unless they become like little children, they will not even enter the kingdom. Surely the disciples thought Jesus couldn't mean that literally—right?

While I've been busy making art, Angelina has been busy *being* an artist. I surely could learn a thing or two from her about inheriting the kingdom. —Carmelle Beaugelin Caldwell

Look

Contemplate the gold shapes in the image. What do they represent to you?



Fuera ICE¹⁵

by Nicolette Faison

Inspired by Deuteronomy 24:17-22

16"x20" Acrylic, marker, paper on canvas

They keep taking my neighbors. Chicago and other cities associated with the Democratic party are going through a humanitarian crisis under a fascist regime. Cars are being left vacant on random blocks and parking lots. People are being disappeared while their children are being zip-tied at 3 a.m. We clergy and religious leaders have been shot with pepper spray and rubber bullets while demanding the freedom of our neighbors. No one deserves to live like this. This piece does not truly capture the pain I hold every day, between keeping track of what is happening in Gaza, resisting fascism, and dealing with yet another economic collapse under capitalism.

But let me tell you something good. . . I still believe in humanity. When I watched people in Gaza prepare basic meals to break their fast during Ramadan during a genocide, I saw something good. When local neighbors saw our public vigil for disappeared people and chose to join us for a time of lament, I saw something good. When Colin Kaepernick paid for the independent autopsy of one of the Black men recently lynched,¹⁶ I saw something good. The good is people still choosing to be empathetic and compassionate in times of crisis. That is what Christ calls us to be.

The stranger who enters foreign land is often forced to flee their own home. It is rare for people to risk their entire livelihood and their family for anything other than necessity. For that reason, each portrait has a halo deeming them holy, sacred, and divine. I used sparkling gold paper to break up each distinct image. Look deeply at these portraits. The top left is inspired by the Maasai people, a nomadic group that dwells across borders. The top right image is an indigenous woman and her child, a nod to Mary and Jesus. She has a red palm across her mouth which is a tribute to Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and "Two-Spirit" people. The bottom left is a slightly aging man from Mesoamerica. The bottom right is a woman in hijab, which is commonly targeted in Islamophobic spaces. Look at the people some consider to be a threat. Look at our neighbors. Migrants are sacred. Fuera ICE.¹⁷ —Rev. Nicolette Faison

Look

Look deeply at each portrait. What do you feel as you study each face?

¹⁵ The artist originally titled this piece, "F**k ICE," conveying the pain and emotions behind this work of art.

¹⁶ usatoday.com/story/sports/nfl/2025/09/19/colin-kaepernick-independent-autopsy-trey-reed/86244594007

¹⁷ "Fuera" can be translated to "out" or "away." ICE is an acronym for the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency, which began enacting raids in US cities at the time these resources were created (2025).

Prayers & Concerns / Announcements:



We lift up prayers for all of God's Creation.
Lord, hear our prayers.

Health concerns for healing and wholeness...

Rev. Alan Mark	Grant Hanada	Mary Marchand
Alice Kajiya	Harriet Tateyama	Mary Tamura
Alvena & Tom Fukuhara	Haru Yasunaga	Maxine Butcher
Amy Higa	Harry Manaka	Mitchell Okumura
Anthony Anderson, Sr.	Sansei Rocker	Miyoko Ahn
Apolosi Lokotui	Hisako Shohara	Mutsuko Nishi
Audrey Goto	Ingrid Peterson	Nancy Matsushima
Austin Maeda	Irene Munesato	Noah Miyagawa-Sue
Barbara Tamura	Jack Honda	Oscar Phillip Bland Jr.
Betty Kobata	Jayne Watanabe	Pam Fink
Bill Morris	Jehiel Vinluan	Patty Kobayashi
Brian Okumura	Jennie Shitakubo	Priscilla Kandel
Cami Bruns	Jerry Osaka	Raquel M. Martinez
Christine Keim	Joanne Sixto	Rev. Mike Hiranuma
Claretta Foster	Joelle Peelgreen	Ron Hamaguchi
Dan Segawa	Jordan Sasaki	Rick Katsuki
Danny Tokudomi	Joye Barker	Ruth Taira
Dan Yamashita	Juliet Koyanagi	Sandra Minjarez-Grange
Deron Tokishi	Kaitlyn Sabedra	Stan Miyasato
Diane & Destiny	Karlynn Fernandez	Steph Matsunaga
Ueda-Banda	Kay Saxton	Sue Hamada
Dr. DoAnn Tsuneo	Kian Tehrani	Susan DeGracia
Kaneko	Kiki Hashimoto	Susan Mizuki
Douglas Higa	Rev. Kim Montenegro	Susan Slade
Elaine Yoshida	Kelsey DeGracia	Takai Finau
Eleanor Nagai	Kenny Medeiros	Theresa Apicella
Emi Hino	Kyle Ichikawa	Tommy Sakaguchi
Ernie Santiago	Larry Takumi	Tseyli Mantooth
Florence Nakakura	Layne Nakasone	V'ghaniku & Shaun
Frank Sato	Linda Jung	Haynes
Fred Oshiro	Liz Harner	Victoria DelaTorre
Gerl Shiraki	Lucas Yrignuez	Walker Wilkerson
Glenn & Millie	Marisa Senzaki	Wayne Shimizu
Shimizu	Mae Nakakihara	Whitney Nakayama
Grace Tochiara	Mary & Bob Kelly (siblings)	Winnie Osaki
		Yukio Inouye

Those in community living & homecare...
Chic Miyake
Doris Kato
Emma Horiuchi
Faith Tanaka
Rev. Harry Fujimoto
Irene & Tak Ryono
Jane Kiyohara
Merion Antoku
Mary Jung
Nobie Shiokari
Ruth Hirata
Sats Asano
Sue Hasegawa

For those experiencing loss...

Lynne, Gilbert, and Erica Vinluan and family on the passing of Lynne's mother, Corinne Higa (2/14/26).

Stephanie & Darrel Inouye and family on the passing of Darrel's mother, Lorraine Inouye, (2/14/26).

Alice & Darrell Mark, on the passing of Nelson's sister, MalPina Chan (2/14/26).

Trish Ulrickson and family on the passing of Rev. Mark Ulrickson (2/25/26).

Tahoa Atu and family on the passing of Pastor Sione Salei John Atu (2/8/26).

Faith's United Women in Faith (UWF) are grateful for the many hands and hearts that made today's worship service — celebrating 66 years of our legacy possible.

We extend special thanks to Bishops Grant Hagiya and Bob Hoshibata; Rev. Keith Inouye and Rev. Ken Suhr; Michael Murata; the current clergy and staff of Faith UMC; the Faith UWF Board and the Okagesama De Worship Committee for their planning and generous support.

We are deeply grateful for your love offerings, which will support UWF ministries that empower youth, seniors, and women.



Celebrations:

- ALTAR FLOWERS: For Lynne Vinluan in the passing of her mother Corinne Higa from Barbara Matsukane on behalf the choir
- March Birthdays, Anniversaries, Milestones

For healing and recovery

- MADDIE SAKURAI-LOPEZ
- DAVE DELGADO'S MOTHER RACHEL AND TWO AUNTS
- REBECCA HONG'S FATHER, REV. HONG
- Andie Montoya's mother
- Aidan Uyeunten
- Chic Miyake
- Pam Fink (recovery)
- Diane Ueda-Banda
- Victoria DelaTorre
- Alvena Fukuhara & Tom
- Mary & Bob Kiely (siblings of Ann Kiely)
- Audrey Goto recovery
- Alice Kajiya
- Larry Takumi
- Harriet Tateyama
- Mae Nakakihara
- Mary Tamura
- Jennie Shitakubo
- Mitchell Okumura
- Douglas Higa (Lynne Vinluan's dad)
- Jehiel Vinluan
- Dan Yamashita
- Kenny Medeiros
- Apolosi Lokotui
- Susan Cordova (diagnosed with 3 types of cancer)
- Frank Sato
- Tseyli Mantooth
- Kim Foster & Claretta Foster: V'ghaniku Haynes: high risk pregnancy, 5 months, baby girl
- Deborah Benjamin
- Walker Wilkerson

- Kiki Hashimoto (Sue Kunisaki -friend)
- Rev's friends: Stan Miyasato, Mari'a Cleverly, (Norma, Ashley)
- Susan Slade's friend, Sherrie-finished tx
- Raquel Martinez (Julie's goddaughter)
- Mrs. Davis (friend of Kim Foster)
- Rev. Alan Mark
- The Shimizus
- Winnie Osaki
- Nancy Matsushima
- Mary Tamura
- Ruth Hirata
- Faith Tanaka
- Irene & Tak Ryono
- Nobie Shiokari
 - ...many who are homebound and those unable to be with us... and so many other that we all that we miss their presence next to us in the sanctuary and our groups

Traveling Mercies

- Minister 'Ainise & Polyana 'Isama'u as they travel to Tonga to receive a special alumnae recognition from Queen of Tonga on behalf of their beloved mother who attended Queen Salote College
- Nargis Basu - Traveling to India for 3 months - SHE'S BACK!

World Concerns:

- All who struggle, suffer, experience pain and grief...
- US government and leadership (all of them); restoration of benefits, medical, food stamps, social security...
- War-torn countries, THE MIDDLE EAST, PALESTINE, SYRIA, IRAN, UKRAINE, SUDAN, MEXICO, VENEZUELA around the world...Natural disasters around the world...
- Immigrants, Refugees, Asylees losing rights and protections... ● Health Care system
- The homeless and impoverished
- Leadership (including clergy)
- All of God's children

Absent from the Body, Present with the Lord

- Lynne, Gilbert, and Erica Vinluan in the passing of Corinne (pronounced: Coreen) Higa (2/14)
- Stephanie & Darrell Inouye in the passing of Lorraine Inouye (2/14)
- Alice and Darrell Mark & Amanda Taketa-Mark on the passing of MalPina Chan (2/14)
- Service for Fred Matsuyama held on 2/27 (family & friends)
- Nichigo service for Pastor Becky's Mom, Miyoko Ahn will be held in March at West LA.
- Mary Tamura, grandmother of Kevin Tsutsui (1/31)
- Richard Chan (Jason's Friend, 2/18)
- Rev. Mark Ulrickson (2/25)
- The family of Pastor Sione John Atu

And Know that He is God: Closing Prayer & Blessing

May there always be work
for your hands to do.
May your purse always hold
a coin or two.
May the sun always shine
on your windowpane.
May a rainbow be certain
to follow each rain.
May the hand of a friend
always be near you.
May God fill your heart with
gladness to cheer you.

- An Irish Blessing

Further reading & research

Read "Being An Immigrant Is Not A Sin," by Luisa and Patrick Cabello Hansel. Working Preacher. February 19, 2019.

workingpreacher.org/theology-and-interpretation/being-an-immigrant-is-not-a-sin

(Note: In this reflection, Luisa and Patrick Cabello Hansel write: "One could even say that all of Genesis and Exodus, indeed most of the Bible is about God's immigrant people. The question for us as preachers may not be how to preach about immigration, but to ask ourselves and our congregations why we fear immigrants.")

Explore A powerful way to share the good news this Sunday is to draw attention to faith communities who are working to protect and care for vulnerable populations. Here are a few current (2025) US-based examples, though we encourage you to seek out examples relevant to your time and location: "Latter-day Saints church member raises more than \$300,000 for family of gunman in deadly Michigan chapel attack," by Bill Hutchinson. ABC News. October 2, 2025.

abcnews.go.com/US/day-saints-church-member-raises-300000-family-gunman/story?id=1261609

10 "How a small New Jersey church connects with migrant workers," by Lydia Griffiths. *The Presbyterian Outlook*. September 24, 2025.

pres-outlook.org/2025/09/how-a-small-new-jersey-church-connects-with-migrant-workers/

"As ICE descends on Charlotte, faith leaders draw on other cities' actions to aid immigrants," by Jack Jenkins. *National Catholic Reporter*. November 21, 2025.

nronline.org/news/ice-descends-charlotte-faith-leaders-draw-other-cities-actions-aid-immigrants

"How two small Kansas churches serve their towns," by Catherine Neelly Burton. *The Presbyterian Outlook*. October 2, 2025. pres-outlook.org/2025/10/caring-for-community/