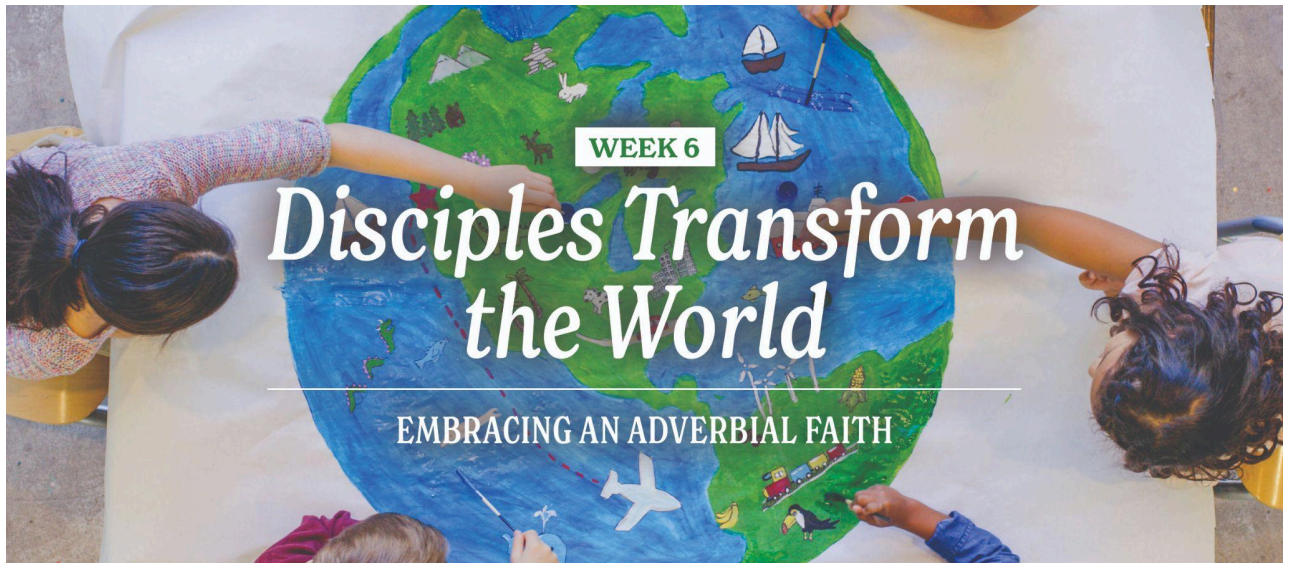


**Faith Bible Study Guide**  
**For the Week of May 17, 2026**  
**7th Sunday in Easter**  
**“Embracing an Adverbial Faith: Disciples Transform the World”**



**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:**

*Today we gather as disciples of Jesus Christ – formed by love, empowered by the Holy Spirit, and called to transform the world through compassion, courage, and service. No matter where you are on your journey this day, you are welcome here. As we enter into worship, may we quiet the noise around us and center our hearts on God’s presence. May this be a space where we are reminded that we do not walk alone. God meets us here – in our prayers, our silence, and our community with one another. Come, let us open our hearts to God’s love, listen for the movement of the Spirit, and study together with joy and boldness.*

**OPENING PRAYER:**

Gracious God, You call us to follow Jesus and be formed in his likeness. Open our hearts to Your Word, renew our minds, and strengthen our spirits. Empower us by Your Spirit to love boldly, serve joyfully, and lead courageously. May this time of study deepen our discipleship and prepare us to transform lives and communities. In Christ's name, 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. On a scale of one to ten (with one being the least, and ten being the most), how much belief do you have that God can transform the world? Why did you rate it that way?
3. How has following Jesus changed the way you see yourself and the world around you?
4. Talk about someone who has been influential in your journey of discipleship in Jesus Christ and how their witness, encouragement, and mentorship shaped your faith and made a meaningful difference in your life.

**Psalm 96**

- Sing to the LORD a new song;  
sing to the LORD, all the earth.*
- <sup>2</sup> *Sing to the LORD, praise his name;  
proclaim his salvation day after day.*
- <sup>3</sup> *Declare his glory among the nations,  
his marvelous deeds among all peoples.*
- <sup>4</sup> *For great is the LORD and most worthy of praise;  
he is to be feared above all gods.*
- <sup>5</sup> *For all the gods of the nations are idols,  
but the LORD made the heavens.*
- <sup>6</sup> *Splendor and majesty are before him;  
strength and glory are in his sanctuary.*
- <sup>7</sup> *Ascribe to the LORD, all you families of nations,  
ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.*
- <sup>8</sup> *Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name;  
bring an offering and come into his courts.*
- <sup>9</sup> *Worship the LORD in the splendor of his<sup>[a]</sup> holiness;  
tremble before him, all the earth.*
- <sup>10</sup> *Say among the nations, "The LORD reigns."  
The world is firmly established, it cannot be moved;  
he will judge the peoples with equity.*
- <sup>11</sup> *Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad;  
let the sea resound, and all that is in it.*
- <sup>12</sup> *Let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them;  
let all the trees of the forest sing for joy.*
- <sup>13</sup> *Let all creation rejoice before the LORD, for he comes,  
he comes to judge the earth.*
- He will judge the world in righteousness  
and the peoples in his faithfulness.*

**Romans 12:1-8**

So, brothers and sisters, because of God's mercies, I encourage you to present your bodies as a living sacrifice that is holy and pleasing to God. This is your appropriate priestly service. <sup>2</sup> Don't be conformed to the patterns of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds so that you can figure out what God's will is—what is good and pleasing and mature. <sup>3</sup> Because of the grace that God gave me, I can say to each one of you: don't think of yourself more highly than you ought to think. Instead, be reasonable since God has measured out a portion of faith to each one of you. <sup>4</sup> We have many parts in one body, but the parts don't all have the same function. <sup>5</sup> In the same way, though there are many of us, we are one body in Christ, and individually we belong to each other. <sup>6</sup> We have different gifts that are consistent with God's grace that has been given to us. If your gift is prophecy, you should prophesy in proportion to your faith. <sup>7</sup> If your gift is service, devote yourself to serving. If your gift is teaching, devote yourself to teaching. <sup>8</sup> If your gift is encouragement, devote yourself to encouraging. The one giving should do it with no strings attached. The leader should lead with passion. The one showing mercy should be cheerful.

## **Matthew 28:16-20**

*<sup>16</sup> Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus told them to go. <sup>17</sup> When they saw him, they worshipped him, but some doubted. <sup>18</sup> Jesus came near and spoke to them, "I've received all authority in heaven and on earth. <sup>19</sup> Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to obey everything that I've commanded you. Look, I myself will be with you every day until the end of this present age."*

*L: The Word of God for ALL People.*

***P: Thanks be to God.***

## **Be rooted: [Bible Study]**

### **Framing/Big Idea**

Transformed by God's mercy, disciples join Christ in transforming the world, offering their gifts, witness, and service for God's mission to all nations.

### **Why does being a Transforming Disciple Matter?**

Following Jesus is not simply a belief. It is a way of life shaped by God's love and sustained by the Holy Spirit in community. It becomes visible in everyday choices of love, service, leadership, and care for others.

To be a disciple, an apprentice of Jesus, means responding to God's forgiving, saving, and renewing love through a living and transformative relationship with Christ. It means learning from Jesus with mind and heart: listening to his words, practicing Jesus' example, and allowing the Spirit to shape us into becoming the people God calls us to be.

John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist movement, described our experience of God's grace in three rhythms:

1. Preventive grace awakens us to God's love (John 6:44).
2. Justifying grace reconciles us to God through Christ (Romans 5:1).
3. Sanctifying grace continually renews our hearts and lives (Philippians 2:13).

Disciples also form other disciples. God's call to form disciples is an invitation to grow together in what we learn, in the experiences that shape us, and in the ways we embody Christ's love through our choices, relationships, daily living, and care for those in need. Discipleship is a shared journey, lived out in community across our homes, churches, workplaces, neighborhoods, and throughout the world. This invitation also calls us to witness to our faith story, to welcome others into God's love and hope revealed through Jesus Christ, and to offer them a community where they can belong, be nurtured in faith, discover their spiritual gifts, and be equipped and empowered for service and leadership in the world.

### **Anchored in the Word**

Scripture reminds us that discipleship does not end with personal transformation; it leads us outward into God's mission for the sake of the world.

Psalm 96 calls God's people to declare God's glory among the nations, a reminder that transformation is not a private experience but a public witness grounded in praise. Psalm 96 shows that praise naturally leads to proclamation, as God's people are called to make God's saving work known beyond themselves. God's people are invited to sing, tell, and declare, bearing witness to God's saving work in ways that reach beyond the sanctuary and into the world.

God's love is the foundation of discipleship. It begins not with our effort, but with love freely given. Scripture proclaims: *"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who*

*believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life” (John 3:16).*

God’s love is expansive, reaching toward the entire world God loves. Discipleship begins in grace and moves outward in response to that grace.

When we embrace this love revealed in Jesus Christ, we are drawn into a lifelong journey of growth and transformation. This journey is dynamic, reshaping us from the inside out. As the apostle Paul reminds us: *“Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect”* (Romans 12:2).

Paul reminds the church that this renewed life is lived for the sake of others. Transformed lives lead to offered lives, as disciples present themselves and their gifts for building up the body and the service of God’s mission in the world. Through the renewing work of the Holy Spirit, disciples are formed in character, shaped to reflect Christ’s love, patience, and courage.

Discipleship is not only about being formed; it is also about being sent. Formation leads somewhere. Jesus gathers his disciples and entrusts them with God’s mission to the world.

Jesus commissions his followers: *“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age”* (Matthew 28:19-20).

The Great Commission is not an optional task for a few, but the shared vocation of all who have been formed by Christ’s love. The Great Commission reveals the heart of Christian discipleship: formed by love, sustained by Christ’s presence through the Holy Spirit, and sent to participate in God’s transforming work among all nations.

This means discipleship is both personal and communal: we grow in holiness through prayer, scripture, worship, and acts of mercy. We share God’s love by inviting, embracing, transforming others.

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*“The gospel of Christ knows of no religion but social; no holiness but social holiness.”—John Wesley*

Throughout this series, we have explored faith not simply as something we believe, but as something we live. The disciples gathered on the mountain with worship and doubt standing side by side, and yet Jesus still called them to go. These questions invite us to reflect on how grace, transformation, service, and witness continue shaping our lives as disciples today.

1. Before we reflect on Wesley’s understanding of grace, notice how the disciples meet Jesus on the mountain carrying uncertainty, grief, and doubt. And yet Jesus still calls them. Grace is already at work before they fully understand, before they feel ready, before they are certain. Wesley called this prevenient grace: God moving toward us before we even know how to respond. Discipleship begins not with perfection, but with willingness to keep showing up. John Wesley spoke of prevenient, justifying, and sanctifying grace.
  - Which of these rhythms of grace do you most recognize in your journey of discipleship, and how has it shaped your daily life?
2. In the sermon, we reflected on how Psalm 96 connects worship with witness. The psalmist does not simply say “sing,” but also “tell” and “declare.” Worship spills outward into the world. Resurrection creates a new song—one of hope, grace, and belonging—and disciples carry that song into relationships, service, justice, and community. Psalm 96 calls God’s

people to sing, tell, and declare God's glory among the nations.

- Where do you see worship and witness coming together in your life or in the life of your congregation?
3. Paul reminds us that discipleship is never one-size-fits-all. The body of Christ is formed through many different gifts and callings. Some teach, some organize, some nurture, some advocate, some invite. Transformation happens when ordinary people offer their whole selves—skills, compassion, questions, and courage—to God's work in the world. In Romans 12:1-8, Paul reminds us that transformed lives are offered in service through diverse gifts.
- What gifts has God entrusted to you, and how might they be used to help transform lives or strengthen the church's witness locally or globally?

Transformation in Romans is not just about believing differently—it is about learning to see differently. The renewing of the mind reshapes our fears, assumptions, habits, and priorities. Throughout this series, we have asked not only what we believe, but how we live: boldly, joyfully, courageously. The Spirit continually forms us into people who embody Christ in everyday life. Romans 12:2 calls us to be transformed by the renewing of our minds.

- What practices or choices help you stay open to the Spirit's renewing work in your everyday routines?
4. In the Great Commission, the central command is not simply "go," but "make disciples." Jesus calls ordinary, imperfect people into lives that invite, welcome, teach, and serve. In the sermon, we reflected on how discipleship spreads relationally: one invitation, one act of courage, one relationship at a time. (*TJ's story, the J-Mission Team*) The gospel moves person to person, table to table, story to story. Matthew 28:19-20 reminds us that disciples are not only formed but also sent to form others.
- How can you live out this commission in your congregation and community today?
5. Again and again, scripture reminds us that grace is not something we earn or achieve. Grace is God's faithful presence with us—in strong faith and fragile faith alike. Sometimes we recognize grace most clearly in hindsight: moments when God sustained us, guided us, or transformed us through relationships, service, or unexpected encounters.
- How have you experienced God's grace in your life and how this has shaped your journey as a disciple?
6. One of the surprising truths of discipleship is that transformation is mutual. We often enter moments of service or ministry thinking we are helping others, only to discover that the Spirit is reshaping us as well. God continually renews us through relationships, experiences, and encounters that stretch our hearts and perspectives.
- Reflect on a recent moment when you sensed the Holy Spirit reshaping your thoughts, attitudes, or actions.
7. At the close of the sermon, we asked: "How will we go?" Jesus sends disciples into the world not as spectators, but as participants in God's transforming work. To witness is not only to speak about faith, but to embody it—to welcome strangers, build relationships, serve compassionately, and help others discover that they too belong in God's beloved community. Jesus commissions his followers to "make disciples of all nations."
- Reflect on how you are being called to witness to your faith story, welcome others into God's love, and empower them for service and leadership.

### **Be transformed: [Faith in Action Challenge]**

As a disciple sent by Christ, prayerfully choose one way this week to participate in God's transforming work. Offer your gifts, voice, or resources in service to others—locally or

globally. This may include:

- sharing your faith story,
- encouraging someone in their calling,
- committing to a spiritual practice that renews your mind, or
- participating in Miracle Sunday as an expression of our shared mission to form disciples around the world.

Take one faithful step, trusting that God's grace is already at work.

**Prayers & Concerns / Announcements:**



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

**continued prayers for Healing and Wholeness**

Aidan Uyeunten	Faith Tanaka	Kay Saxton	Patty Kobayashi	<b>those in Community Living &amp; Homecare</b>
Rev. Alan Mark	Florence Nakakura	Kian Tehrani	Priscilla Kandel	Chic Miyake
Alice Kajiya	Frank Sato	Kiki Hashimoto	Rachel Delgado	Doris Kato
Ally Kubo	Rev. Gary Williams	Rev. Kim Montenegro	Raquel M.Martinez	Emma Horiuchi
Alvena & Tom Fukuhara	Gerri Shiraki	Kelsey DeGracia	Rose Ellison	Faith Tanaka
Amy Higa	Glenn & Millie	Kenny Medeiros	Ron Hamaguchi	Rev. Harry Fujimoto
Anthony Anderson, Sr.	Shimizu	Kyle Ichikawa	Rick Katsuki	Irene & Tak Ryono
Apolosi Lokotui	Gordon Mark	Larry Takumi	Ruth Hirata	Jane Kiyohara
Austin Maeda	Grace Tochihara	Layne Nakasone	Ruth Taira	Marion Antoku
Barbara Tamura	Grant Hanada	Linda Jung	Sandra Minjarez-Grange	Mary Jung
Betty Kobata	Harriet Tateyama	Liz Harner	Stan Miyasato	Nobie Shiokari
Bill Morris	Haru Yasunaga	Lucas Yniguez	Steph Matsunaga	Ruth Hirata
Brian Okumura	Harry Manaka,	Marion Antoku	Sue Hamada	Sets Asano
Cami Bruns	Sansei Rocker	Maddie Sakurai-Lopez	Sue Hasegawa	Sue Hasegawa
Chic Miyake	Harry & Ruth	Mae Nakakihara	Jennie Shitakubo	Jennie Shitakubo
Christine Keim	Takaki	Mary Jung	Fred Oshiro	Fred Oshiro
Claretta Foster	Hisako Shohara	Mary & Bob Keily (siblings)	Audrey Goto	Audrey Goto
Dan Segawa	Ingrid Peterson	Mary Marchand	<b>for our Worldwide Community</b>	
Dan Yamashita	Irene Munesato	Mary Tamura	<b>for the Leadership of our Country and our Churches</b>	
Deron Tokishi	Jack Honda	Maxine Butcher	<b>for the immigrants: migrants, refugees, asylees</b>	
Debbie Uyeshima Dillard	Jan Tanabe	Rev. Mike Hiranuma	<b>for our siblings in Christ who struggle and in need of God's care</b>	
Diane & Destiny Ueda-Banda	Jayne Watanabe	Mitchell Okumura	<b>for those who live in through wars, unrest, and violence</b>	
Dr. DoAnn Tsuneo Kaneko	Jehiel Vinluan	Miyoko Ahn	<b>for those suffering and rebuilding after national disasters and man-made catastrophes</b>	
Douglas Higa	Jennie Shitakubo	Mutsuko Nishi		
Elaine Yoshida	Joanne Sato	Nancy Matsushima		
Eleanor Nagai	Joelle Peelgreen	Noah Miyagawa-Sue		
Ernie Santiago	Jordan Sasaki	Oscar Phillip Bland Jr.		
	Joye Barker	Pam Fink		
	Juliet Koyanagi			
	Kaitlyn Sabedra			
	Karlynn Fernandez			

**for All Our Saints**

The Osaka family and friends, on the passing of Jerry Osaka (4/16/26).  
 Rev. Derek & Pam Nakano and family, on the passing of Rev. Derek's uncle, Ted Nakano  
 Dave & Helen Wada and family, on the passing of Helen's mother, Kazuko Maruyama (4/10/26)

UPDATED 5.12.2026

**Prayers & Concerns / Announcements:**

Gratitude for the Keiro Bento Ministries loving run by Chris Medeiros and for the meal support from our Nichigo-J-Mission & Ping Pong Ministries, and yesterday, distributed by: the Tamura family, Nathan, T.J, Jason, & Kaira (with Chris organizational leadership)

**Celebrations**

**Herb Aoyama - turned 95 on 5/7**

**Pearl Shoho - 5/1**

**Sally Sasaki - 5/25**

## For healing and recovery

### **Church Members:**

- Darrell Iki
- Ally Kubo (4/17 - surgery)
- Jan Tanabe
- Christine Bone
- Audrey Goto
- Alice Kaiya
- Larry Takumi
- Harriet Tateyama
- Chic Miyake
- Pam Fink (recovery)
- Diane Ueda-Banda (4/27- surgery)
- Victoria DelaTorre (4/21 - surgery)
- Alvena Fukuhara & Tom (5/21 - surgery)
- Harry & Ruth Takaki
- Mae Nakakihara
- Mary Tamura
- Jennie Shitakubo
- Jan Tanabe
- Dan Yamashita
- Kenny Medeiros
- Frank Sato
- The Shimizus
- Winnie Osaki
- Nancy Matsushima
- Mary Tamura
- Ruth Hirata
- Faith Tanaka
- Irene & Tak Ryono
- Nobie Shiokari

### **Community:**

- Hisako Shohara (Jane Matsumoto's mother)
- Patti (spinal cord surgery; Patty's sister-in-law)
- Debbie Uyeshima Dillard (Susan's friend; thyroid cancer)
- Lyle (Alan's friend)
- Beatrix & Daniel (Julie's friend)
- Kaitlyn Sabedra
- First Lady Racelder Grandberry Trimble
- Rev. Gary Bernard Williams
- Jeanette Davis (Rhonda Benware's mother)
- Dave Delgado's family (mom, aunts, sister)
- Andie Montoya's Mom
- Mary & Bob Kiely (siblings of Ann Kiely)
- Tseyli Mantooth
- Kim Foster & Claretta Foster
- V'rhaniku Haynes: high risk pregnancy, 7months, baby girl (due June/July)
- Aidan Uyeunten
- Deborah Benjamin - finished her treatment (Kim Foster's friend)
- 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)
- ~~Mitchell Okumura (Sandy's brother)~~
- Douglas Higa (Lynne Vinluan's dad)
- Jehiel Vinluan
- Apolosi Lokotui
- Rev. Alan Mark
- Gordon Mark
- Those who are HOMEBOUND

### **Traveling Mercies:**

- Lynne Vinluan

### **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)
- Tom Hoang (free! MAY 17th at Faith)
- Mass Shootings (Shreveport)
- The U.S. Military
- All of God's children
- May - Mental Health Month; AANHPI Month
  - Care for families (impact)
  - Food insecurity

**Absent from the Body, Present with the Lord**

- Jerry Osaka (4/16)
- Ted Nakano (4/7)
- Kyle Wada's Grandmother, Helen Wada's mother passed away on 4/10, Kazuko Maruyama
- Susan Cordova (friend of Julie & Alan)

**And Know that He is God: Closing Prayer & Blessing**

Beloved, you have worshiped and studied together.

You may still carry questions.

You may still carry doubts.

But like the disciples on the mountain, you are still called.

So go now—

Go boldly.

Go joyfully.

Go courageously.

Go compassionately.

Go generously.

Go togetherly.

Go as disciples whose lives themselves become worship.

And as you go, remember this:

Christ does not send you out alone.

The Spirit goes before you.

The church walks beside you.

And the love of God surrounds you always.

In the name of the Creator, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.