

Faith Bible Study Guide
For the Week of May 3, 2026
5th Sunday in Easter
“Embracing an Adverbial Faith: Serve Joyfully”



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:

“One of the principal rules of religion is, to lose no occasion of serving God. And since He is invisible to our eyes, we are to serve Him in our neighbour, which He receives as if done to Himself, in person standing visibly before us.”—John Wesley

OPENING PRAYER:

Today we study together, O God, with joyful noise – with words of praise and adoration spoken in the name of Jesus who brought your love song to us in person. You put new words in our mouths and new intentions in our hearts, especially a new understanding of power. Power shaped by love and righteousness, justice and mercy. We now know that power is not to be used to exploit or dominate, but to serve others as willingly as Jesus did. His life and death demonstrated how the love of power could be transformed by the power of love. We gather here today to celebrate your rule of love in our hearts as we experience it in Jesus and through the enabling gift of the Holy Spirit. 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. The adverb for this week is joyfully, which is paired with serving. Serving others can sometimes be seen as hidden work or menial labor. Whom do you know who seems to genuinely experience joy when serving others? Why do you think it brings them joy? Does that inspire you?
3. How about you? What have you done for someone that brought unexpected joy? Did you experience joy yourself?
4. How do you understand the difference between happiness and joy?

Be the Word: [Scripture Lessons: Psalm 100, 1 Peter 4:8-11]

Psalm 100

Shout triumphantly to the LORD, all the earth!

² *Serve the LORD with celebration!*

Come before him with shouts of joy!
³ *Know that the LORD is God—
he made us; we belong to him.^[a]
We are his people,
the sheep of his own pasture.*
⁴ *Enter his gates with thanks;
enter his courtyards with praise!
Thank him! Bless his name!*
⁵ *Because the LORD is good,
his loyal love lasts forever;
his faithfulness lasts generation after generation.*

1 Peter 4:8-11

⁸ *Above all, show sincere love to each other, because love brings about the forgiveness of many sins. ⁹ Open your homes to each other without complaining. ¹⁰ And serve each other according to the gift each person has received, as good managers of God's diverse gifts. ¹¹ Whoever speaks should do so as those who speak God's word. Whoever serves should do so from the strength that God furnishes. Do this so that in everything God may be honored through Jesus Christ. To him be honor and power forever and always. Amen.*

L: The word of God for all People.

P: Thanks be to God.

Be rooted: [Bible Study]

Serving joyfully reflects Christ's mission—offering our gifts, time, and presence with gladness, humility, and compassion for the sake of others.

Why does serving joyfully matter?

True service begins with joy—not duty, guilt, or obligation, but the deep gladness that comes from knowing Christ and being formed into the image of Christ. Scripture reminds us that joy is not just a feeling—it's a source of strength (Nehemiah 8:10). When we offer our time, gifts, skills, and presence with joyful hearts, we do more than meet needs; we restore dignity, build trust, and reflect the heart of Christ.

Anchored in the Word

Psalm 100 invites us to “*serve the Lord with gladness.*” Joyful service flows from gratitude and becomes the posture that sustains faithful service over time. It is a natural response to God's goodness, and it comes from a posture of obedience that transforms how we show up for others. Scripture teaches us that joy is not the reward for service, but the soil from which faithful service grows. Psalm 100:1 proclaims, “*Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth.*”

Joy is much more than a feeling. Joy is a response to who God is and God's work in the world, shaping how we live and serve.

Joyful service requires humility. Jesus embodied this kind of service when he knelt to wash his disciples' feet, a quiet act that gathers joy, humility, and love into one faithful response. “*So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to*

you” (John 13:14-15).

Jesus also models joyful service in Mark 10:42-45, teaching that true greatness comes not from power but from serving, *“The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve.”* This reveals that joy and humility are held together in faithful discipleship.

Jesus did not serve from a place of power, but from love. Jesus calls us to do the same: to serve one another with love, tenderness, and joy. In this humble act, Jesus shows that true service is shaped by love and sustained by joy, a joy that comes from knowing we serve in the strength God provides.

Joyful service recognizes that we all have something to give to others and that joy deepens when our gifts are offered for the sake of the community. *“Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received” (1 Peter 4:10).*

Peter reminds us that God’s gifts are entrusted to us for the sake of others, and when we offer them freely, the joy of Christ is made visible in the life of the community. To serve joyfully is to live with open hands, journeying alongside the most vulnerable among us with compassion and hope. When we serve with joy, we reflect the goodness of God in ways that uplift others and renew our own hearts. Whether it’s a listening ear, a warm meal, or a word of encouragement, joyful service turns ordinary moments into sacred ones.

John Wesley Quote: *“One of the principal rules of religion is, to lose no occasion of serving God. And since He is invisible to our eyes, we are to serve Him in our neighbour, which He receives as if done to Himself, in person standing visibly before us.”*

Whispers of Grace/Reflection Questions

Take a moment to pause, breathe, and open your heart to God’s gentle guidance.

1. What words or images in Psalm 100 describe the spirit of joyful service?
 - How do you see joy bubbling up in the singer of this psalm?
 - Imagine God’s response to this hymn.
 - Based on this psalm, how could you define “joy”?
 - At times, we don’t “feel” joyful. How do you grapple with the invitation to do something joyfully even when your heart does not “feel” joy?
2. What attitudes or fears sometimes limit our joy in serving?
3. Where might God be inviting you to serve with renewed joy and humility?
4. In 1 Peter 4:8-11’s word of instruction for the early church, there are several tangible acts mentioned, with service explicitly mentioned twice (verses 10 and 11). How does the author of 1 Peter speak of service?
 - What is the attitude connected with service in this passage?
 - What is the result of this kind of service?
 - How often do you connect God being praised through your service?
5. What are three ways God has blessed you through the service of others? How can you extend that same kindness?
6. What is the cost of serving, but without joy? How could you check in with yourself the next time you feel called to serve, but don’t experience joy in that invitation?

Be transformed: [Faith in Action Challenge] “Love Boldly This Week”:

Choose one simple expression of joyful service this week.

- Offer a gift God has entrusted to you—time, listening, encouragement, skill, or care—for the sake of someone else.
- Serve quietly and humbly, without seeking recognition, trusting that God is at work through your offering.
- Pay attention to joy—not as a feeling you must create, but as the love of God that meets you as you serve. If possible, share your experience with someone in your group and reflect together on how God uses joyful service to shape both the giver and the receiver.

Prayers & Concerns / Announcements:

Celebrations

For healing and recovery

- **Ally Kubo (4/17 - surgery)**
- Patti (spinal cord surgery; Patty's sister-in-law)
 - Lyle (Alan's friend)
 - Beatrix & Daniel (Julie's friend)
 - Jan Tanabe
 - Christine Bone
 - Kaitlyn Sabedra
 - First Lady Racelder Grandberry Trimble
 - Rev. Gary Bernard Williams
 - Jeanette Davis (Rhonda Benware's mother)
 - DAVE DELGADO'S MOTHER RACHEL AND TWO AUNTS
 - Andie Montoya's
 - Mary & Bob Kiely (siblings of Ann Kiely)
 - Audrey Goto recovery
 - Alice Kajiya
 - Larry Takumi
 - Harriet Tateyama
 - Tseyli Mantooth •
- Kim Foster & Claretta Foster; V'rhaniku Haynes: high risk pregnancy, 7months, baby girl (due June/July) mother
 - Aidan Uyeunten
 - Chic Miyake
 - Pam Fink (recovery)
 - **Diane Ueda-Banda (4/27- surgery)**
 - **Victoria DelaTorre (4/21 - surgery)**
 - Alvena Fukuhara & Tom
 - Harry & Ruth Takaki
 - Mae Nakakihara •
 - Mary Tamura
 - Jennie Shitakubo •
 - 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) • Jan Tanabe
 - Mrs. Davis (friend of Kim Foster)
 - 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
 - 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

- Lynne and Gilbert Vinluan
- Rev. Allison Mark

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 - deportation status
- Mass Shootings (Shreveport)
- Military
- The Earth (Happy Earth Day)
- All of God's children

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

And Know that He is God: Closing Prayer & Blessing

Gracious and loving God, we close our time together with gratitude for the gift of service. You call us to serve joyfully, reflecting Your love in our actions and attitudes. May we be strengthened by Your presence and find joy in giving, helping, and sharing. Teach us to serve not out of obligation, but from a heart full of love. As we reflect on Your Word, shape our hearts to be more like Yours. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.