

Faith Bible Study Guide
For the Week of July 12, 2026
7th Sunday in Pentecost
“Set Your Mind: Finding Life and Peace in Christ”



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:

God's word is the lamp we need in the darkness, the guidance we need on wayward paths, and the hope we need when death and despair come calling.

OPENING PRAYER:

God of new beginnings and ancient stories, help us see ourselves in your stories, in your promises, and in your garden. Light our way with your word today, and guide us with your Spirit of love. 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?
2. If your mind had a "home screen" this week, what app would have been open the most? (Work? Family? Sports? Worry? Vacation? Food?)
3. What's one thing that has brought you life this week?
4. What's one thing that has been taking up too much space in your mind lately?

Be the Word: Scripture Lesson: Romans 8:1-11

So now there isn't any condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. ²The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death. ³God has done

what was impossible for the Law, since it was weak because of selfishness. God condemned sin in the body by sending his own Son to deal with sin in the same body as humans, who are controlled by sin. ⁴ He did this so that the righteous requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us. Now the way we live is based on the Spirit, not based on selfishness. ⁵ People whose lives are based on selfishness think about selfish things, but people whose lives are based on the Spirit think about things that are related to the Spirit. ⁶ The attitude that comes from selfishness leads to death, but the attitude that comes from the Spirit leads to life and peace. ⁷ So the attitude that comes from selfishness is hostile to God. It doesn't submit to God's Law, because it can't. ⁸ People who are self-centered aren't able to please God.

⁹ But you aren't self-centered. Instead you are in the Spirit, if in fact God's Spirit lives in you. If anyone doesn't have the Spirit of Christ, they don't belong to him. ¹⁰ If Christ is in you, the Spirit is your life because of God's righteousness, but the body is dead because of sin. ¹¹ If the Spirit of the one who raised Jesus from the dead lives in you, the one who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your human bodies also, through his Spirit that lives in you.

L: The Word of God for ALL People.

P: Thanks be to God.

Be rooted: [Bible Study]

Exegetical Reflection

Romans 8 opens with one of the greatest promises in all of Scripture:

"There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."

Paul writes these words after honestly admitting in Romans 7 that he struggles to do the good he wants to do. Instead of leaving us feeling defeated, Paul reminds us that God's grace always comes first.

When Paul contrasts **"the flesh"** and **"the Spirit,"** he is not saying our bodies are bad. Jesus Himself came in the flesh. Rather, Paul contrasts two ways of living:

- **Life according to the flesh** is living with ourselves at the center.
- **Life according to the Spirit** is living with Christ at the center.

Paul's invitation is to **"set your mind"** on the Spirit. This isn't about pretending life is easy or ignoring our struggles. It's about choosing the lens through which we see our lives. When our minds are centered on Christ, the Holy Spirit shapes our attitudes, decisions, relationships, and responses.

As we heard in Sunday's sermon, grief, fear, anxiety, disappointment, or comparison can easily become the loudest voices in our lives. Paul reminds us that while those realities are real, they do not have the final word. The Spirit of the risen Christ lives within us, giving us life, peace, and hope each day.

Discussion Questions

1. What words or phrases stood out to you as you heard Romans 8:1–11?
2. What do you think Paul means when he says, **"There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus"**? Why is that good news?

3. What is the difference between living with ourselves at the center and living with Christ at the center?
4. During Sunday's sermon we heard the phrase, **"What fills your mind will eventually shape your life."** Where have you experienced that to be true?
5. What are some things that compete for your attention and your thoughts every day?
6. Paul says that setting our minds on the Spirit leads to **life and peace**. What do you think that looks like in everyday life?
7. During the sermon we heard that grief is real, but it doesn't have to become our identity. How have you experienced God's presence during a difficult season?
8. If you could summarize Paul's message in one sentence, what would it be?

Be transformed: [Faith in Action Challenge]

- **Love God (Look Up)**

Begin each morning this week with a simple prayer:

"Jesus, help me set my mind on You today."

Before reaching for your phone, spend one minute in silence, inviting God to guide your thoughts.

- **Love Your Neighbor (Reach Out)**

Encourage someone who may be carrying a heavy burden. Send a text, make a phone call, or simply remind them:

"You're not alone."

- **Love Yourself Through God's Grace**

Whenever you catch yourself speaking words of shame or self-condemnation, pause and remember Paul's promise:

"There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."

Receive God's grace as freely as God gives it.

- **Live It Out**

At the end of each day, ask yourself:

- What filled my mind today?
- Did my thoughts move me closer to Christ or farther away?
- Where did I experience God's life and peace today?

Remember, discipleship is not about perfection. It is about choosing, day by day, to set our minds on Christ.

Prayers & Concerns / Announcements:



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

continued prayers for Healing and Wholeness

Rev. Alan Mark	Rev. Gary Williams	Kaitlyn Sabedra	Patty Kobayashi	those in Community Living & Homecare
Alice Kajiya	Geri Shiraki	Karlynn Fernandez	Priscilla Kandel	Doris Kato
Ally Kubo	Glenn & Millie	Kay Saxton	Rachel Delgado	Emma Horiuchi
Alvena & Tom Fukuhara	Shimizu	Kian Tehrani	Raquel M. Martinez	Faith Tanaka
Amy & Ramsay Higa	Gordon Mark	Kiki Hashimoto	Rose Ellison	Rev. Harry Fujimoto
Anthony Anderson, Sr.	Grace Tochiara	Rev. Kim Montenegro	Ron Hamaguchi	Irene & Tak Ryono
Apolosi Lokotui	Grant Hanada	Kelsey DeGracia	Rick Katsuki	Jane Kiyohara
Austin Maeda	Harriet Tateyama	Kenny Medeiros	Ruth Hirata	Marion Antoku
Barbara Tamura	Harry Manaka	Kyle Ichikawa	Ruth Taira	Mary Jung
Betty Kobata	Sansei Rocker	Larry Takumi	Sandra Minjarez-Grange	Nobie Shiokari
Bill Morris	Harry & Ruth Takaki	Layne Nakasone	Stan Miyasato	Ruth Hirata
Brian Okumura	Ingrid Peterson	Linda Jung	Steph Matsunaga	Sets Asano
Cami Bruns	Irene Munesato	Liz Harner	Sue Hamada	Sue Hasegawa
Christine Keim	Jack Honda	Lucas Yniguez	Sue Hasegawa	Jennie Shitakubo
Claretta Foster	Jacqueline Wong	Marion Antoku	Susan Mizuki	Fred Oshiro
Cory Williams	Jan Tanabe	Maddie Sakurai-Lopez	Susan Slade	Audrey Goto
Dan Segawa	Jayne Watanabe	Mae Nakakihara	Takai Finau	
Dan Yamashita	Jehiel Vinluan	Mary Jung	Tina Arguello	
Deron Takishi	Jennie Shitakubo	Mary & Bob Keily (siblings)	Tommy Sakaguchi	for our Worldwide Community
Debbie Uyeshima Dillard	Joanne Sato	Mary Marchand	Tseyli Mantoath	for the Leadership of our Country and our Churches
Diane & Destiny	Joelle Peelgreen	Mary Tamura	V'hraniku & Shaun Haynes	for the immigrants: migrants, refugees, asylees
Ueda-Banda	Jordan Sasaki	Maxine Butcher	Victoria DelaTorre	
Dr. DoAnn Tsuneo	Joyce Matsubara	Rev. Mike Hiranuma	Vincent Gomez	for our siblings in Christ who struggle and in need of God's care
Kaneko	Joye Barker	Miyoko Ahn	Wailana Bulkley	
Elaine Yoshida	Julie Inouye	Mutsuko Nishi	Walker Wilkerson	for those who live in through wars, unrest, and violence
Eleanor Nagai	Juliet Koyanagi	Nancy Matsushima	Whitney Nakayama	
Ernie Santiago		Noah Miyagawa-Sue	Winnie Osaki	
Faith Tanaka		Oscar Phillip Bland Jr.	Yukio Inouye	
Florence Nakakura		Pam Fink		
Frank Sato		Paul Mito		

for All Our Saints

Neal, Lylas, and Elaine and the Miyake family, on the passing of Chieko "Chic" Miyake (June 15, 2026)

The Kato family, on the passing of Doris Kato (June 28, 2026)

Jane Matsumoto and Shohara-Matsumoto family, on the passing of Hisako Shohara (June 27, 2026)

Dave & Helen Wada and family, on the passing of Helen's mother, Kazuko Maruyama (4/10/26)

The Yasunaga family, on the passing of Harue Yasunaga (May 29, 2026)

UPDATED 7.2.2026

The Shimizu family, on the passing of Wayne Shimizu

Prayers & Concerns / Announcements:

- Mary Tamura turned 102 (June 22)
- Graduations & Milestones
- V'hraniku & Shaun Haynes - Maliyah Joi born, (6/21)
- Return of our Asian Camp & JHC campers, counselors, and adult leaders!
- Celebrating the struggles, triumphs, and challenges of being a 250 years old

For healing and recovery

Church Members:

- Herb Aoyama*
- Vincent Gomez (Klinger family friend)
- Wailana Bulkley (Rhonda's friend)
- Cory Williams (Karen Matsuyama's friend)
- Eleanor Ngai (Julie's cousin)
- Joyce Matsubara
- Julie Inouye (surgery 7/9)*
- Jennie Shitakubo
- Ally Kubo (4/17 - surgery)
- Jan Tanabe
- Christine Bone
- Audrey Goto
- Alice Kajiya
- Larry Takumi*
- Harriet Tateyama
- Pam Fink (recovery)
- Destiny & Diane Ueda-Banda
- Victoria DelaTorre*
- Alvena Fukuhara & Tom
- Harry & Ruth Takaki
- Mae Nakakihara*
- Mary Tamura
- 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
- Alvena Fukuhara
- Paul Mito (surgery)

Community:

- 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
- Walker Wilkerson
- Kiki Hashimoto (Sue Kunisaki -friend)
- Rev's friends: Stan Miyasato, Mari'a Cleverly, (Norma, Ashley)
- Raquel Martinez (Julie's goddaughter)
- Mrs. Davis, Cheryl (friends of Kim Foster)
- Douglas Higa (Lynne Vinluan's dad)
- Jehiel Vinluan
- Apolosi Lokotui
- Rev. Alan Mark
- Gordon Mark
- Jackie Wong
- Those who are HOMEBOUND

Traveling Mercies:

- Vinluans - Memorial Service for Lynne's mother (Corinne Higa)

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... Nation's 250th Birthday
- War-torn countries, THE MIDDLE EAST, PALESTINE, SYRIA, IRAN, LEBANON, 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
- Ebola Virus outbreak (continent of Africa)
- Earthquake in the Philippines, Venezuela, Japan
- Graduates

Absent from the Body, Present with the Lord

- Ramsay Higa (7/10) - private family service, but you can send cards to the Hayashida family home or to Miki
- Doris Kato (6/28?)
- Hisako Shohara (Jane Matsumoto's mother) - Celebration of Life will be August 1st at Centenary UMC at 12:30pm

• Chieko "Chic" Miyake (6/15) - Private family services, but you can send cards to the Miyake family home or to Neal

- Harue Yasunaga (5/22)
- Kazuko Maruyama (4/10); Kyle Wada's Grandmother, Helen Wada's mother
- Jeff Corey

And Know that He is God: Closing Prayer & Blessing

Go now with this good news: there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Set your mind on Christ, walk in the Spirit, and receive God's life and peace each day.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you now and always.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

Amen.