



Live your faith 26 July – 1 August 2020

Read, pray, reflect and live your faith this week



 This week's Bible readings 1 Kings 3.5-12 • Psalm 119.129-136 • Romans 8.26-39 • Matthew 13.31-33,44-52

Secrets of the kingdom

Notes on the Bible readings

- This week's Gospel reading is a selection of Jesus' descriptions of what God's kingdom is like; each one is a pictorial image. The first two images are of very small items: mustard seed, showing that what flourishes from the seed is what is important; and yeast, used to demonstrate again the way the kingdom starts small but has a mighty and wide-ranging effect.

- The next two are examples of expense and worth, used not as a morality tale but as a teaching point, to direct the reader to consider the huge value of the kingdom in comparison with anything else life might offer.

- And finally, the image of a net that scoops up everyone. It speaks of the separation of good from evil that will happen at the end of the age, and of the persistence of evil until then.

- Both Old Testament readings express a longing to know God's will. Jesus speaks of the kingdom, rule, or will of God being accessible to those who seek it. The kingdom of God is on offer to people of all genders, classes, cultures, ages and levels of faith; is this the message we proclaim in our church communities?

Images of the kingdom

Make a collage that represents the kingdom of heaven. You could use pieces of magazine or newspaper, fabric, pens, coloured paper or card, etc.

FREE [worship at home](http://www.rootsontheweb.com) resources, including up-to-the-minute reflection on this week's Bible reading, available at: www.rootsontheweb.com

Questions for reflection

- ▶ What secrets are within this image?
- ▶ What hidden gems do you see in your daily living?
- ▶ How might we make the kingdom of heaven more visible?



A prayer of approach

*O God, mere words cannot convey what a privilege it is to be heirs to your kingdom. As we explore your word, help us to learn about new treasures as well as old. May we see the amazing things you can do in our lives. We are part of your kingdom, and we come to you in awe and wonder.
Amen.*

A prayer for others

*Lord, you took so much care to describe your kingdom in ways everyone could understand, including us.
Your kingdom come, O Lord,
your will be done.*

*We pray today that you will pass on to us that gift of making ourselves accessible.
Keep us from being a stumbling block to those who would seek you;
from using language that puzzles; from actions that confuse;
from anything that keeps us apart from your people around us.
Your kingdom come, O Lord,
your will be done.
Amen.*

A personal prayer

*Lord, I pause before you
to contemplate the things I see as valuable in my life.
Help me to hold them lightly
and to be ready to give them up at the sound of your call.
Amen.*

Live your faith

Have a go at making some bread this week. As you add the yeast, thank God for his kingdom here on earth. If it turns out well, share your bread with some friends or neighbours.



Saturday 8th August from 12 noon.

It has been such a long time since we have come together as a Church family. We thought it might be fun to hold a picnic at the Countryside centre (adjacent to the BBQ area where we have met in the past). In order to comply with regulations, we have to limit the number to 30 people and

respect social distancing between households. Please bring your own chairs, rugs, picnics and rinks (the café is scheduled to be open serving for outdoor consumption only through a hatch). Penny will need to keep a check on numbers so please call her on the number below if you intend to come, she will then let you know of any updates and arrangements.

We humans are very clever about how and what we seek as treasure. Some people endanger their lives to plumb the depths of the seas to recover treasure from sunken ships. Some people spend every weekend going to car boot sales and flea markets. Some people comb beaches or rubbish dumps or city parks with metal detectors to find things of great value.

We can't use a metal detector to find the kingdom of God¹ What we need is a wide and understanding heart. Such a heart does not take us to a place or to things but leads us to seek and treasure the people who mediate for us God's loving and abiding presence. This divine presence is the kingdom of heaven among us.

Our actions and ways of relating to people reveal our true values. To be faithful disciples, we must be willing to give our all to encounter God's presence in the goodness we share with others and in their goodness extended to us. We also encounter God's presence in our self-giving response to the needs of others. In everyday experiences and encounters such as these, we find lasting treasure – the kingdom of heaven among us.

Daily Readings for week commencing 27 th July 2020		
Monday	1 Samuel 10: 1-16	Luke 22: 24-30
Tuesday	1 Samuel 10: 17-end	Luke 22-31-38
Wednesday	1 Samuel 11	Luke 22-39-46
Thursday	1 Samuel 12	Luke 22: 47-62
Friday	1 Samuel 13: 5-18	Luke 22: 63-end
Saturday	1 Samuel 13: 19-14:15	Luke 23-1-12
<p><i>Pray for those in need...</i>Sally, Katie-Louise, Pam, Sue, Bryn, Evelyn, Shane, Pat, Heather, Dorothy Lily, Cathy and Joyce.</p> <p><i>Please remember those who mourn the loss of loved ones at this time...</i>Kitty, Philip and Cyril.</p>		