

Week 1 - Turning toward God's Abundance

Greeting

The love of God poured into our hearts,
the saving grace of Jesus Christ,
and the abundant life of the Holy Spirit
be with you all.

And also with you.

Opening Prayer

O God, rich in mercy, full of kindness, out of your great love, you raise us up from sin and death and make us alive together with Christ. Write your word upon our hearts and restore in us the image of your love that, by your Spirit, our way of life may become the way of Christ, through whom we pray. **Amen.**

Silence

Word

Week 1 – Faithfulness

Reading: "The Things That Count" by Ella Wheeler Wilcox

Now, dear, it isn't the bold things,
Great deeds of valour and might,
That count the most in the summing up of life at the end of the day.
But it is the doing of old things,
Small acts that are just and right;
And doing them over and over again, no matter what others say;
In smiling at fate, when you want to cry, and in keeping at work when you want to play—
Dear, those are the things that count.

And, dear, it isn't the new ways
Where the wonder-seekers crowd
That lead us into the land of content, or help us to find our own.
But it is keeping to true ways,
Though the music is not so loud,
And there may be many a shadowed spot where we journey along alone;
In flinging a prayer at the face of fear, and in changing into a song a groan—
Dear, these are the things that count.

My dear, it isn't the loud part
Of creeds that are pleasing to God,
Not the chant of a prayer, or the hum of a hymn, or a jubilant shout or song.
But it is the beautiful proud part
Of walking with feet faith-shod;
And in loving, loving, loving through all, no matter how things go wrong;

In trusting ever, though dark the day, and in keeping your hope when the way seems long—
Dear, these are the things that count.

Gospel: Luke 4:1-13 *The temptation of Jesus*

4 Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, ² where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished. ³ The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread.” ⁴ Jesus answered him, “It is written, ‘One does not live by bread alone.’”

⁵ Then the devil^[a] led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. ⁶ And the devil^[b] said to him, “To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. ⁷ If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.” ⁸ Jesus answered him, “It is written,

‘Worship the Lord your God,
and serve only him.’”

⁹ Then the devil^[c] took him to Jerusalem, and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, ¹⁰ for it is written, ‘He will command his angels concerning you,

to protect you,’

¹¹ and

‘On their hands they will bear you up,
so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.’”

¹² Jesus answered him, “It is said, ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’” ¹³ When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time.

Silence for reflection follows the gospel reading.

Prayer

In Christ Jesus we meet the God who knows our weakness
and bears the wounds of the world.

Therefore, let us be bold as we pray,
trusting that God draws near to those in any kind of need.

Week 1 – Visio divina

Before approaching the image, prepare yourself for prayer. You may wish to close your eyes and ask for God to guide your sight and reflection.

- Look at the image as a whole. What do you notice? What are you drawn to or repulsed by? Where might you locate yourself in the image? Where do you locate God?
- What is your relationship to what you see here? How does it relate to your life right now?
- Where is God’s faithfulness in this image? Where are you drawn to emulate this faithfulness?
- Reflect once again on the image as a whole, and close your prayer by thanking God for the divine faithfulness you see in your life.



Temptation of Christ by Jacopo Tintoretto

Concluding Prayer

God of all compassion, gather our prayers in your mercy and grant to us what you know we need, that we may walk in the life and the peace of your Spirit, through Jesus Christ, our hope and our salvation. **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.**

Blessing

Christ Jesus dwell in our hearts through faith,
as we are being rooted and grounded in love,
strengthened by the Spirit,
and filled with all the fullness of God.
Amen.

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