

09-14-25 FOR THE JOURNEY THIS WEEK

“Jesus understands that those on the fringe of the community are integral to what the community in all its fullness should be. Until they return, the community is incomplete...When one in our community goes missing, we are all affected. When one is restored, we are all better off for it. That is how it is in the household of God.”

Helen Montgomery DeBevoise



1 Timothy 1:12-17 + Luke 15:1-10

Questions for Reflection —

- When in your life have you ever felt lost or found yourself drifting or wandering away from the path of Christian discipleship? What helped you to know and experience the unconditional love and acceptance of God during and following such times? In the course of your spiritual journey whether closer to or further away from God, what has it meant to you to be part of the household of God, to experience fellowship and caring among siblings in Christ? How might we as a congregation foster expressions of God’s mercy, compassion, and understanding in our interactions with one another?
- Who is presently missing from our congregation? What folks have we not seen in a while? What would it mean for us to seek them out? How might we also reach out to those who may never have been part of a church community, to those who might feel condemned or judged by the institutional church? Who might feel outside the care or perhaps even the reach of God? What does extravagant welcome and radical hospitality look like in the face of societal fragmentation and divisiveness?
- What people might be considered to be among God’s “lost sheep” in our society? Who are the overlooked in your neighborhood, workplace, or school? In our country and our world? What populations are on the margins? How might we as a congregation join in God’s searching for those who are vulnerable, marginalized, or abandoned by society? What would it mean for us to offer full acceptance and inclusion in the life of our congregation to all people regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic background, political affiliation, socioeconomic status, or other differences?

Daily Household Prayer

Merciful God, we thank you for your boundless love and grace, which you extend to us freely and without condition. We rejoice that you welcome us, just as Jesus welcomed tax collectors and sinners, demonstrating your compassion and desire for all to be found. As we reflect on your unconditional welcome, we acknowledge that we all have fallen short and stand in need of your mercy and forgiveness. May we never become like the Pharisees who grumbled at your compassion but instead be humbled by your grace. We ask for your strength to be like the shepherd who leaves the ninety-nine to search for the one lost sheep. Give us the courage to reach out to those who feel lost, forgotten, and alone, sharing your unconditional love with them. Help us to see others with your heart, that we might celebrate with great joy every time a lost soul is found and brought home. In the name of your Son, Jesus Christ, who came to seek and save the lost, we pray. Amen.