

P A N D E M I C F A I T H

A FAMILY DEVOTIONAL FOR LIFE DURING COVID-19





Many of us have been living in a new reality for the past 8 weeks.

We have practiced physical distancing to the best of our ability.

Our kids have continued their education through hours and days of screen time.

Parents have juggled platefuls of expectations and feel like they're not doing anything well.

Those who live alone feel even more isolated.

Many worship services have moved online and there are now deep divides among religious leaders over the "right" way to conduct worship.

Government leaders & virology experts are beginning the hard work of discerning the best way for us to take baby steps back to normal.

It is all an exercise of faith.

We are people of faith.

In the face of heartache, we have faith.

In the wake of confusion, we have faith.

In the turmoil of indecision, we have faith.

In the mundane every day, we have faith.

As we take our first steps to get back to normal, it is going to be hard to have restraint and to have patience.

And what do we turn to when things are hard? Faith.

Faith in Jesus.

Faith that is a free gift from God. Faith that comes to us in the rushing wind and the stillness of the Spirit.

Faith, no matter how small, can move mountains. It's going to be a hard process.

We are in this, with God, together.



SHARE

your highs and lows

What was the best thing that happened to you today? What was the worst thing that happened to you today? You can share more than one good thing or bad thing, but this is about connecting with one another and talking about your day.



READ

a Bible verse or story

Each day, there will be a few verses or a short Bible story to read for the day. What did you hear in the story? What was your favorite part? How does this story show God's love?



TALK

about how the Bible reading might relate to your highs and lows

Listen for how God cares for those in the story and how those in the story respond to God and even thank God! How can you respond to God? What are some things you want to say, 'thank you!' to God for entrusting to you?



PRAY

for one another's highs and lows

Pray with one another and for one another. Pray that each of you learn to listen to God when God is guiding you.



BLESS

one another

Trace the sign of the cross on one another's foreheads and say, "(Name), you are known and loved by God." Or, "(Name), you are a child of God." Or, you can make up something new each night! What are different ways you can bless one another and remind yourselves that you are protected by God?

WEEK 1

MAY 11

READING

Psalms 102:1-17

FAITH PRACTICE

Write two acrostic poems with your family using words that you feel - one sad feeling and one happy/grateful feeling.

MAY 12

READING

Exodus 13:17-22

FAITH PRACTICE

Make/draw a "pillar of cloud" and a "pillar of fire." Go on a walk around your neighborhood or a local park. Take turns leading your family by holding one of the pillars. As you pass it, share 1 way you have felt God leading you this week.

MAY 13

READING

John 15:1-17

FAITH PRACTICE

Abide means to stay somewhere. Every time God talks about abiding, it's with us! Who do you miss abiding or spending time with? Make a list! Mail a card, send a text, or call someone on this list! I bet they miss abiding with you, too.

MAY 14

READING

Proverbs 3:13-18

FAITH PRACTICE

Learn the words to “More Precious than Silver”

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DKmlrlzTHXY>)

MAY 15

READING

Philippians 4:10-14

FAITH PRACTICE

Make a list of the things you’ve been able to do since the pandemic began. Pray to God, giving thanks for each of those things, naming them out loud as signs of God’s sustenance in this season.

MAY 16

READING

Psalms 46

FAITH PRACTICE

Take some time at home to listen for God’s voice. Close your eyes and take 2-4 minutes as a family for prayer. Begin with saying this prayer, “Be still. Be still and know. Be still and know that I am. Be still and know that I am God.” In this season of stillness, take a moment to be still together and wonder how God is speaking to you in the silence.

MAY 17

READING

John 14:15-21

FAITH PRACTICE

Who has helped you on your faith journey? Reach out to them via text, Facetime, letter, or email.

W E E K 2

MAY 18

READING

1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-14

FAITH PRACTICE

Make a list of people you know impacted during this pandemic. Pray for them by name.

MAY 19

READING

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

FAITH PRACTICE

Start a list of all the things you are thankful for or joyful about using sidewalk chalk on your driveway/sidewalk. Leave pieces of chalk with a note for others to add what they are thankful for! Check the list before you go to bed and name the things as a prayer of thankfulness to God.

MAY 20

READING

John 16:22-24

FAITH PRACTICE

Research an organization that you want to commit to donating toward who are doing work that restores brokenness in our society.

MAY 21

READING

1 Samuel 3:1-10

FAITH PRACTICE

Take some time as a family and play the game "Marco-Polo".

MAY 22

READING

Numbers 6:24-26

FAITH PRACTICE

Write this verse out. Decorate it and make it pretty if you want! Put a copy by everyone's bed to read or hear before they nap or sleep.

MAY 23

READING

Matthew 28:20b

FAITH PRACTICE

Spend some time memorizing this verse today. Think of it when you're feeling anxious, scared, or alone.

MAY 24

READING

John 17:1-11

FAITH PRACTICE

Try a new way to pray for the next week!
Some ways to try:
Write out the prayer,
Set a timer for 5 minutes and pray for whoever comes to mind,
Roll some dice and pray for the number of people you rolled,
Color a picture, knit, crochet, cross-stitch and spend that time praying,
Go for a walk and pray for everyone you pass

W E E K 3

MAY 25

READING

1 John 3:17-18, 23-24

FAITH PRACTICE

What is one way you can put your love of others into ACTION today? Consider making a donation of essential items to your local food pantry. Or pick up a gift card to a local ice cream place/coffee shop to surprise a delivery driver, grocery store clerk, or healthcare professional! Say a prayer for that person or place.

MAY 26

READING

Luke 5:17-26

FAITH PRACTICE

Make or write get well cards to 4 people from your congregation -- your pastor should have names of people who would like a card.

MAY 27

READING

1 Kings 19:11-13

FAITH PRACTICE

Talk as a family about the ways that you "Talk without using words". Someone in the group records what actions contain what meaning. Do you think God talks to us through more than just words? How does God communicate with you?

MAY 28

READING

Joshua 24:15

FAITH PRACTICE

Make art of this verse (or find a printable online!) to post in your main living area of your home.

MAY 29

READING

James 2:12-17

FAITH PRACTICE

Set 3 SMART Goals (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-Bound) for how you can put your faith into action in ways that make the world a better place. Look them up on a map or globe!

MAY 30

READING

Acts 2:1-4

FAITH PRACTICE

Have a campfire or light candles and discuss where you have seen God this week.

MAY 31

READING

John 7:37-39

FAITH PRACTICE

Try to name all the sources of water in your area. Say a prayer for their protection and restoration, giving thanks for how they sustain life.

W E E K 4

JUNE 1

READING

Genesis 1:1-2:4a

FAITH PRACTICE

Plant seeds in a garden and tend to this new creation as a family.

JUNE 2

READING

John 3:16-17

FAITH PRACTICE

Jesus died for all, even the people who disappoint us, make us mad, and hurt our feelings. Who has done these things to you? Have you done these things to other people? Remember that God loves us, even when we aren't at our best. God loves us, always.

JUNE 3

READING

Luke 3:23-28

FAITH PRACTICE

Ask your parents for stories about your family members. Or, ask your kids for stories about your grandkids. Or, ask your friends for stories about their family members. Did you learn anything new about the family you were born or adopted into?

JUNE 4

READING

Matthew 14:22-33

FAITH PRACTICE

Have you ever doubted that God was with you? You're in good company with Peter!

Look up videos of people walking on oobleck. Make a small amount at home (<https://www.thebestideasforkids.com/how-to-make-oobleck/>). Have fun figuring out when you can stay on the surface & when you sink!

JUNE 5

READING

Ephesians 3:16-21

FAITH PRACTICE

Bake Challah bread, which requires lots of measuring, and will expand in length, depth and width. Use this or a similar recipe:
<https://www.kingarthurflour.com/recipes/classic-challah-recipe>

JUNE 6

READING

John 6:1-14

FAITH PRACTICE

Eat some challah! If you have dietary restrictions, eat some bread that is safe for you to eat.

JUNE 7

READING

Matthew 28:16-20

FAITH PRACTICE

Look up some different ways to explain the Trinity (apples, water, clover, etc.). God is really hard to understand, so all of these examples get it a little bit wrong, but they help us get closer to understanding God. Which one do you like the best? Why?

W E E K 5

JUNE 8

READING

Psalms 8

FAITH PRACTICE

Go on a walk and pray for every piece of creation you can see by name.

JUNE 9

READING

Matthew 3:1-12

FAITH PRACTICE

Who taught you about Jesus? Send a thank you card. Who have you taught about Jesus? Send a thinking of you card, text, e-mail, or phone call.

JUNE 10

READING

Jeremiah 29:11-14

FAITH PRACTICE

It's hard to believe God's got good plans when we're struggling to experience them! Plan, prepare, cook, and make a meal together, praying over every step. See how long it takes to produce one simple meal. Then pray for reassurance that, in God's ultimate plan, God is preparing something wonderful for you.

JUNE 11

READING

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

FAITH PRACTICE

There is a time for everything! Make a list of things you want to do this summer, especially things you want to do when it's safe to gather in large groups again!

JUNE 12

READING

Exodus 1:8-22

FAITH PRACTICE

This passage mentions Shiphrah and Puah, Hebrew midwives. This is the only time they are mentioned, but God worked through them to keep Moses safe. Look up a lesser known woman in the Bible & learn more about her and her story. For young ones, we recommend Grit and Grace: Heroic Women of the Bible by Caryn Rivadeneira.

JUNE 13

READING

Micah 6:8

FAITH PRACTICE

Find some rocks & decorate with paint or permanent markers. (Check out The Kindness Rocks Project for inspiration.)

JUNE 14

READING

Matthew 9:35-10:23

FAITH PRACTICE

Weather permitting, go for a hike or walk today! Where do you think God calls you to go? Does that scare or excite you? Don't forget your Kindness Rocks! Hide them along your path for others to see or take home.

W E E K 6

JUNE 15

READING

Psalms 119:1-8

FAITH PRACTICE

This psalm is a LONG acrostic poem in Hebrew; every line of each stanza begins with the same letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Use the alphabet of your primary language to write out words that describe God. You just wrote a psalm!

JUNE 16

READING

Matthew 6:25-34

FAITH PRACTICE

Sit outside awhile and count how many birds you see. Remember that God cares for all of us, even all of the birds in the sky.

JUNE 17

READING

Ezekiel 34:11-16

FAITH PRACTICE

Learn the words to I Just Wanna Be a Sheep!

JUNE 18

READING

Exodus 16:2-15

FAITH PRACTICE

Do you give thanks to God for your food?
Try to pray before every meal for a week.
(If you already do this, write a new
mealtime prayer.)

JUNE 19

READING

Psalms 51

FAITH PRACTICE

This psalm is about confessing. Write down
ways you have made mistakes this week. If
it's safe, burn these papers or put them
through a paper shredder. Remember that
God loves us and forgives us when we mess
up.

JUNE 20

READING

Acts 4:32-37

FAITH PRACTICE

What is something you have lots of? How
can you share that with others?

JUNE 21

READING

Romans 6:1b-11

FAITH PRACTICE

Light a candle, fill a bowl with water, and
remember your baptism! Use your thumb
to put a watery cross on your own or
someone else's forehead and say, "Name,
you are a child of God forever."

WEEK 7

JUNE 22

READING

Psalm 88:1-89:2

FAITH PRACTICE

God values our honesty of both problems and praise. Write two haikus (3 line poems 5 syllables in the first line, 7 syllables in the second line, and 5 syllables in the third line), with the first one being honest a problem you're facing and the second being honest about praise you're offering to God.

JUNE 23

READING

Acts 8:26-39

FAITH PRACTICE

Everytime we are around or are using water is a chance to remember our baptism. Have a water balloon fight or take a relaxing bath today (whichever you need!) and remember that the Spirit who claimed you as a child of God at your baptism works in rushing winds AND in stillness.

JUNE 24

READING

Psalm 89:1-4, 15-18

FAITH PRACTICE

Make a playlist of your family's favorite songs and have a karaoke night.

JUNE 25

READING

2 Corinthians 5:11-21

FAITH PRACTICE

Who do you need to apologize to? Call, text, e-mail, or visit (if safe!) to say you're sorry & ask for their forgiveness.

JUNE 26

READING

Psalms 141:1-4

FAITH PRACTICE

We usually ask for God to listen to us when we pray. Add time to your prayers to listen to God. You might be amazed at what God tells you!

JUNE 27

READING

Acts 10:1-33

FAITH PRACTICE

Try 1 new fruit or 1 new vegetable today!

JUNE 28

READING

Matthew 10:40-42

FAITH PRACTICE

Make a welcome mat for your front door and organize a neighborhood event ie BBQ or block party (if possible)

WEEK 8

JUNE 29

READING

Romans 8:26-27

FAITH PRACTICE

Try a simple meditation exercise today. Sit quietly, with your eyes closed, in a comfortable position. Set a timer for 3 minutes. Breathe in for 7 counts, breathe out for 8.

JUNE 30

READING

Matthew 5:14-16

FAITH PRACTICE

As we prepare for the 4th of July, we are reminded of the joy the light of fireworks brings! Sharing cheer with others is 1 way we share Jesus' light with the world. Create a "fireworks" display in your front windows using paper, window paint, or streamers! Put "this little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine" around your fireworks. Bonus: Sing the song!

JULY 1

READING

1 Corinthians 12:1-11

FAITH PRACTICE

Make a list of things you are good at. Keep it somewhere you can read it on the days you don't feel like you're good at much.

JULY 2

READING

1 Corinthians 12:12-31

FAITH PRACTICE

Remember those good things you wrote down yesterday? How can you use these gifts to share God's love?

JULY 3

READING

1 Corinthians 13:1-13

FAITH PRACTICE

How can you show everyone you live with that you love them today? If you live alone, how can you show your friends & family that you love them today?

JULY 4

READING

Acts 9:1-18

FAITH PRACTICE

Play with sparklers or go to a fireworks show (if physical distancing regulations for your area allow). God spoke to Saul through loud noises & lightning crashes. How does God speak to you?

JULY 5

READING

Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

FAITH PRACTICE

Think of someone you can help today & help them. You're helping lighten their burden! You're showing them the love of Jesus!