

rooted



FaithWestwood UMC

Summer Sermon Series / May 31 to July 26, 2026

Our summer sermon series, **rooted**, will focus on deepening our understanding of the nature of God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit while exploring our Wesleyan and Methodist roots.

This *modified* guide may be utilized by FaithGroups and/or Individuals.

This guide follows the **SOAP** Bible study method (**Scripture, Observation, Application, Prayer**) which is ideal for beginners and for mature Christians. If you would like to connect with a FaithGroup on-site and/or online, please check out the latest **GROW Catalog** on our website faithwestwood.com

Family Activities / see **INSERT**

Mission Offerings & Activities / look for the **"GOLDEN"** banner on **back page**



© 2026, Study Guide for Summer, May 31 to July 26, 2026.
By Rev. Cindi Stewart for FaithWestwood United Methodist Church
Mission Offerings & Activities by Caring Ministries Director Vikki O'Hara
Family Activities by Next Gen & Family Engagement Director Leah Dinoso

Week of May 31 /

Optional Ice Breaker: Describe a holy experience in your life.

Almighty God, open our ears that we may hear your Word; open our eyes that we may see your glory in our midst; and open our hearts that we might know your Spirit's presence with us in these moments. In the name of Jesus we pray, AMEN.

Nature of God: Holy – The calling of the prophet Isaiah is a very holy experience. As we explore the nature of God as holy, may we hear and claim the words of Isaiah in our day, “Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?”

Scripture: Isaiah 6:1-13 (NIV) /

6 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord, high and exalted, Seated on a throne; and the train of his robe filled the temple. **2** Above him were seraphim, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying.

3 And they were calling to one another: **“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory.”** **4** At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke.

5 **“Woe to me!”** I cried. **“I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the Lord Almighty.”**

6 Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. **7** With it he touched my mouth and said, **“See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for.”**

8 Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, **“Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?”** And I said, **“Here am I. Send me!”**

9 He said, **“Go and tell this people: ‘Be ever hearing, but never understanding; be ever seeing, but never perceiving.’** **10** **Make the heart of this people calloused; make their ears dull and close their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed.”**

11 Then I said, **“For how long, Lord?”**

And he answered: **“Until the cities lie ruined and without inhabitant, until the houses are left deserted and the fields ruined and ravaged, ¹² until the Lord has sent everyone far away and the land is utterly forsaken. ¹³ And though a tenth remains in the land, it will again be laid waste. But as the terebinth and oak leave stumps when they are cut down, so the holy seed will be the stump in the land.”**

Week of May 31 (continued)

Observation:

Which **words / phrases / verses** stand out to you?

Who is the **audience** for these verses?

What is the **context** of this passage?

What are the primary **themes**?

What is **God revealing** in these verses?

Application:

How do these verses **apply to your life** today?

What **truths / changes / actions** do these verses invite you to embrace?

Prayer Requests & Prayer: Holy God, help me to be holy as You are holy. AMEN.

Week of June 7 /

Optional Ice Breaker: Reflect on the first time you heard of God's love.

Almighty God, open our ears that we may hear your Word; open our eyes that we may see your glory in our midst; and open our hearts that we might know your Spirit's presence with us in these moments. In the name of Jesus we pray, AMEN.

Nature of God: Love – In John's first letter, we are reminded how love comes from God, and the nature of God is love! How does this love invite us to live in Christ, live without fear, and live loving our brother and sister?

Scripture: **1 John 4:12-21** (NIV) / ¹²No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us. ¹³This is how we know that we live in him and he in us: He has given us of his Spirit. ¹⁴And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. ¹⁵If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in them and they in God. ¹⁶And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them. ¹⁷This is how love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment: In this world we are like Jesus. ¹⁸There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. ¹⁹We love because he first loved us. ²⁰Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen. ²¹And he has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister.

Week of June 7 (continued)

Observation:

Which **words / phrases / verses** stand out to you?

Who is the **audience** for these verses?

What is the **context** of this passage?

What are the primary **themes**?

What is **God revealing** in these verses?

Application:

How do these verses **apply to your life** today?

What **truths / changes / actions** do these verses invite you to embrace?

Prayer Requests & Prayer: Loving God, help me to love as You love. AMEN.

Week of June 14 / VBS Sunday

Optional Ice Breaker: Describe a VBS experience as participant or volunteer!

Almighty God, open our ears that we may hear your Word; open our eyes that we may see your glory in our midst; and open our hearts that we might know your Spirit's presence with us in these moments. In the name of Jesus we pray, AMEN.

Nature of God: VBS – At Rainforest Falls, we have been exploring the nature of God! We celebrate the week of learning & growing with God our Creator!

Scripture: passages in Revelation (for this week, read the following verses & more)

Revelation 7:17 (NIV) / ¹⁷ “For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; ‘he will lead them to springs of living water.’”

Revelation 21:18, 21, 23-24 (NIV) / ¹⁸ The wall was made of jasper, and the city of pure gold, as pure as glass. / ²¹ The twelve gates were twelve pearls, each gate made of a single pearl. The great street of the city was of gold, as pure as transparent glass. / ²³ The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp. ²⁴ The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it.

Revelation 22:1-2 (NIV) / **22** Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ² down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

Week of June 14 (continued)

Observation:

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What is **God revealing** in these verses?

Application:

How do these verses **apply to your life** today?

What **truths / changes / actions** do these verses invite you to embrace?

Prayer Requests & Prayer: Heavenly Father, help me to trust in your heavenly promises. AMEN.

Week of June 21 /

Optional Ice Breaker: Reflect one of the “guys” who profoundly influenced your life!

Almighty God, open our ears that we may hear your Word; open our eyes that we may see your glory in our midst; and open our hearts that we might know your Spirit’s presence with us in these moments. In the name of Jesus we pray, AMEN.

Nature of Christ: Prophet – Peter proclaims how the Holy and Righteous One who was put to death is the one God raised up as the prophet. How does the prophetic witness of Christ continue to inspire people to engage in mission & ministry in his name?

Scripture: Acts 3:11-25 (NIV) / ¹¹While the man held on to Peter and John, all the people were astonished and came running to them in the place called Solomon’s Colonnade. ¹²When Peter saw this, he said to them: “Fellow Israelites, why does this surprise you? Why do you stare at us as if by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk? ¹³The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus. You handed him over to be killed, and you disowned him before Pilate, though he had decided to let him go. ¹⁴You disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked that a murderer be released to you. ¹⁵You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this. ¹⁶By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus’ name and the faith that comes through him that has completely healed him, as you can all see.

Week of June 21 (continued)

¹⁷ “Now, fellow Israelites, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did your leaders. ¹⁸ But this is how God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, saying that his Messiah would suffer. ¹⁹ Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, ²⁰ and that he may send the Messiah, who has been appointed for you—even Jesus. ²¹ Heaven must receive him until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets. ²² For Moses said, ‘The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you must listen to everything he tells you. ²³ Anyone who does not listen to him will be completely cut off from their people.’

²⁴ “Indeed, beginning with Samuel, all the prophets who have spoken have foretold these days. ²⁵ And you are heirs of the prophets and of the covenant God made with your fathers. He said to Abraham, ‘Through your offspring all peoples on earth will be blessed.’”

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Application:

How do these verses **apply to your life** today?

What **truths / changes / actions** do these verses invite you to embrace?

Prayer Requests & Prayer: Jesus, thank you for your prophetic witness. AMEN.

Week of June 28 /

Optional Ice Breaker: Reflect on a time you experienced healing in the name of Jesus.

Almighty God, open our ears that we may hear your Word; open our eyes that we may see your glory in our midst; and open our hearts that we might know your Spirit's presence with us in these moments. In the name of Jesus we pray, AMEN.

Nature of Christ: Priest – The writer of Hebrews proclaims how Jesus is “our apostle and high priest” and whose faithfulness is greater than that of Moses! As Jesus holds the nature of this priestly office, how do we believe and trust in his mission and purpose?

Scripture: Hebrews 3:1-14 (NIV) / 3 Therefore, holy brothers and sisters, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, whom we acknowledge as our apostle and high priest. ² He was faithful to the one who appointed him, just as Moses was faithful in all God's house. ³ Jesus has been found worthy of greater honor than Moses, just as the builder of a house has greater honor than the house itself. ⁴ For every house is built by someone, but God is the builder of everything. ⁵ “Moses was faithful as a servant in all God's house,” bearing witness to what would be spoken by God in the future. ⁶ But Christ is faithful as the Son over God's house. And we are his house, if indeed we hold firmly to our confidence and the hope in which we glory.

⁷ So, as the Holy Spirit says: “Today, if you hear his voice, ⁸ do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion, during the time of testing in the wilderness, ⁹ where your ancestors tested and tried me, though for forty years they saw what I did. ¹⁰ That is why I was angry with that generation; I said, ‘Their hearts are always going astray, and they have not known my ways.’ ¹¹ So I declared on oath in my anger, ‘They shall never enter my rest.’ ¹² See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. ¹³ But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called “Today,” so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness. ¹⁴ We have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original conviction firmly to the very end.

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Application:

How do these verses **apply to your life** today?

What **truths / changes / actions** do these verses invite you to embrace?

Prayer Requests & Prayer: Jesus, thank you for your priestly witness. AMEN.

Week of July 5 /

Optional Ice Breaker: Reflect on how Jesus has helped you to reshape your priorities.

Almighty God, open our ears that we may hear your Word; open our eyes that we may see your glory in our midst; and open our hearts that we might know your Spirit's presence with us in these moments. In the name of Jesus we pray, AMEN.

Nature of Christ: King – The Apostle Paul proclaims how to have the same mindset of Jesus Christ and his humility. As Jesus is exalted to the highest place as Lord, how might we best glorify him as the Lord of Lords and King of Kings?

Scripture: Philippians 2:5-11 (NIV) / ⁵In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: ⁶Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; ⁷rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. ⁸And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross! ⁹Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

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Application:

How do these verses **apply to your life** today?

What **truths / changes / actions** do these verses invite you to embrace?

Prayer Requests & Prayer: Jesus, thank you for being the true King of Kings. AMEN.

Week of July 12 /

Optional Ice Breaker: Reflect on your first experience of the Holy Spirit.

Almighty God, open our ears that we may hear your Word; open our eyes that we may see your glory in our midst; and open our hearts that we might know your Spirit's presence with us in these moments. In the name of Jesus we pray, AMEN.

Nature of Holy Spirit: Power – After being released from prison, Peter and John lead a powerful and bold prayer, and they were filled with the Holy Spirit. How do we claim the power of the Holy Spirit to speak the word of God boldly?

Scripture: Acts 4:23-31 (NIV) / ²³ On their release, Peter and John went back to their own people and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said to them. ²⁴ When they heard this, they raised their voices together in prayer to God. "Sovereign Lord," they said, "you made the heavens and the earth and the sea, and everything in them. ²⁵ You spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of your servant, our father David: 'Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? ²⁶ The kings of the earth rise up and the rulers band together against the Lord and against his anointed one.'

²⁷ "Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed. ²⁸ They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen. ²⁹ Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. ³⁰ Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus." ³¹ After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.

Observation:

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What is **God revealing** in these verses?

Application:

How do these verses **apply to your life** today?

What **truths / changes / actions** do these verses invite you to embrace?

Prayer Requests & Prayer: Spirit, thank you for blessing me with your power. AMEN.

Week of July 19 /

Optional Ice Breaker: Reflect on how the Holy Spirit's presence has brought you comfort and/or peace.

Almighty God, open our ears that we may hear your Word; open our eyes that we may see your glory in our midst; and open our hearts that we might know your Spirit's presence with us in these moments. In the name of Jesus we pray, AMEN.

Nature of Holy Spirit: Presence – As Jesus promises the Holy Spirit to his disciples, he proclaims how the nature of this Spirit is its presence of peace. How might you need to claim this peace in your life right now?

Gospel: John 14:25-29 (NIV) / ²⁵“All this I have spoken while still with you. ²⁶But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. ²⁷Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. ²⁸You heard me say, ‘I am going away and I am coming back to you.’ If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. ²⁹I have told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe.”

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What is **God revealing** in these verses?

Application:

How do these verses **apply to your life** today?

What **truths / changes / actions** do these verses invite you to embrace?

Prayer Requests & Prayer: Spirit, thank you for blessing me with your presence.
AMEN.

Week of July 26 /

Optional Ice Breaker: Reflect on how the Holy Spirit has helped you in your journey.

Almighty God, open our ears that we may hear your Word; open our eyes that we may see your glory in our midst; and open our hearts that we might know your Spirit's presence with us in these moments. In the name of Jesus we pray, AMEN.

Nature of Holy Spirit: Paraclete – As the Apostle Paul shares about sufferings and hope, he proclaims how the nature of the Spirit provides help in weakness. How do we allow the Holy Spirit to work for the good of those who love him?

Scripture: Romans 8:18-28 (NIV) / ¹⁸I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. ¹⁹For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. ²⁰For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God. ²²We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. ²³Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies.

²⁴For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? ²⁵But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently. ²⁶In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. ²⁷And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God. ²⁸And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

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Application:

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What **truths / changes / actions** do these verses invite you to embrace?

Prayer Requests & Prayer: Spirit, thank you for blessing me with your help. AMEN.

Mission Offerings & Activities

5/31 - Peace with Justice Sunday. Our United Methodist Social Principles call us to love our enemies, seek justice, and serve as peacemakers in resolving conflict. Your generous contributions to this Special Sunday collection support programs that witness to God's demands for a faithful, just, and secure world. Give generously to support programs which promote peace and justice in our lives, our communities, and our world. **Activity:** Be sure to pick up a brown paper bag (or bags) and fill with the supplies indicated so we have all the supplies and resources to offer a fantastic "Rainforest Falls" Vacation Bible School program this year!

6/7 - Helping Hands. Our Helping Hands Fund offers short-term financial assistance to people in our own church family facing an unexpected financial need. **Activity:** Remember to bring at least four (or more) items from the green "Four or More" list each month to help meet the increasing needs of those in our community facing food insecurity. Items may be placed in the canvas carts in the foyer near the elevator and outside the church office. **Activity:** Continue adding new and gently used household items for *The Furniture Project* to the collection tubs in the foyer and inside the west entrance, under the coat rack.

6/14 - VBS Sunday. Give generously on VBS Sunday which supports all the activities necessary to make our Vacation Bible School so fun and enriching for kids from FaithWestwood and the surrounding community. Those who attend learn how much God loves every one of them! Putting on such an impactful program takes many resources, and your gift today helps us to cover the costs of curriculum and supplies that make our VBS such a special and transformative week for the kids.

6/21 - Pantry Garden. Our expanded FaithWorks Pantry Garden seeks to meet the challenge of making fresh garden produce available to our pantry clients. As we face ever-increasing food insecurity in our community, we especially look forward to serving the needs of our soon-to-be neighbors at Millard Landing senior affordable housing, located near the intersection of Oaks Lane and Q Street.

6/28 - Outside the Walls. This offering helps to cover the costs of materials and supplies for September's Outside the Walls weekend. **Activity:** Don't forget to donate your gently used (clean and folded) **SPRING AND SUMMER** clothing for the *Iglesia Clothing Closet* which serves the greater south Omaha community. Just place clean and folded clothing in the wooden collection box inside the West Entrance.

7/5 - Helping Hands. Our Helping Hands Fund offers short-term financial assistance to people in our own church family facing an unexpected financial need. **Activity:** To volunteer as shoppers, food distributors, and re-stockers (second Wednesday and Thursday and Fourth Saturday) contact: <https://tinyurl.com/FWPantryServe>

7/12 - Iglesia Comunitaria. Our sister United Methodist Church in South Omaha, Iglesia Comunitaria, will use these funds to assist with their greatest current needs, including their own Helping Hands fund, which offers short-term financial assistance to those in their congregation who may be facing an unexpected financial need. **Activity:** Volunteer (spring to autumn) to serve in the Pantry Garden with a variety of tasks throughout the growing season. Contact: Nancy Vogel.

7/19 - Outside the Walls. Help our Missions Committee to cover the costs of materials and supplies for September's Outside the Walls weekend. **Activity:** Please DONATE gently used "gift" items and SHOP the Greater Love Gift Shop (open on Sundays, Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays).

7/26 - CMS Partnership. Today's mission offering will provide funds to purchase the supplies to be included in the "Welcome Bags" we assemble each year to welcome back every teacher and staff member at Central Middle School. These bags will be assembled after our TACO Sunday churchwide luncheon on Sunday, August 9, and distributed to the school on Monday, August 10.