

AMMPARO

Accompanying Migrants with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities

AMMPARO LENT DEVOTIONS - TAPESTRY

Prepared and shared by the Virginia Synod Tapestry team.

DAY OF LENT	DAY OF WEEK	DATE	SCRIPTURE	WRITER	REFLECTION
1	Wednesday		Genesis 1:27-28	Lyndon Sayers	God entrusts us as stewards of the earth. Good stewardship includes maintaining borders in ways that welcome the stranger. Border walls scar the earth God created and called good. Created in the image of a loving God, how do we live as stewards filled with love?
2	Thursday		Exodus 12:49	Lyndon Sayers	The Word of God continually breaks down the divisions we create. Rather than seeing the world as a zero-sum game, God challenges us to see our flourishing tied together with our welcome of the stranger. What is one thing we can do today to make a stranger feel more welcome?
3	Friday		Exodus 22:21	Melissa Woepfel	In a passage of Scripture devoted to laws addressing social and religious matters, this verse is key: Protection of the stranger is of utmost concern to God. Just as God cared for the Israelites in Egypt, so God cares for all who are powerless in foreign lands.
4	Saturday		Exodus 23:9	John Wertz	The world often creates an us versus them dynamic between long-time residents and new residents. God reminds God's people that they were once resident aliens in Egypt and invites them – invites us – to treat all people with the same respect, honor and kindness we would like to receive.
5	Monday		Exodus 23:12	John Wertz	Sabbath is a gift God intends for all of creation, including God's people, their servants, resident aliens and even animals. By resting on the Sabbath, we create the possibility for those who serve others to find rest and renewal as well.

6	Tuesday		Leviticus 19:9-10	Karen Adams	We are bound through God to each other and all of creation. Though agriculture may not be (y)our profession, we are still bound to support one another through service and donation, and we are bound especially to the poor and the alien , through Christ Jesus the Lord.
7	Wednesday		Leviticus 19:33-34	Emily Edmonds	We are reminded that we have all been outsiders in some way. We all have experienced the pain and self-doubt of feeling unwelcome or unwanted. How beautiful it is to show love and welcome to those who may be experiencing the hurt of displacement so deeply in our midst.
8	Thursday		Leviticus 23:22	Taylor Walker	The well-being of the poor matters more to God than the accumulation of personal wealth. Our God is in the margins.
9	Friday		Leviticus 24:22	Taylor Walker	One law, one people, one kingdom, one God. To build the kingdom on earth as it is in heaven, we cannot accept laws that make human beings illegal.
10	Saturday		Numbers 15:15-16	Aaron Fuller	What are the implications on how we live that God compels us to regard the alien/immigrant as we regard ourselves, subject to the same law and worthy of the same grace?
11	Monday		Deuteronomy 1:16	Melinda Barnhardt	In the days of the tribal judges, God required that all people, citizen and alien, be treated fairly. What does it mean for us, in our time, that equal justice under the law still is not always the case?
12	Tuesday		Deuteronomy 10:18-19	Melinda Barnhardt	The disadvantaged and the stranger, typically vulnerable, are God's special concern. What is our role in loving them and redressing justice for them in our day?
13	Wednesday		Deuteronomy 24:14	Tim Crummitt	The Israelites had been slaves and aliens in a strange country before, and they knew what it was like to be persecuted. In Deuteronomy 24:14 they remind themselves that to hold back fair and equal pay for the alien and poor only helps to separate them from God.
14	Thursday		Deuteronomy 24:17-18	Sarah Lyon Hess	Martin Luther explicates in the Eighth Commandment of the Large Catechism to "cloak and veil [our neighbors] with our own honor." When we do what is commanded of us, we are living out the gospel. What ways can you "cloak" your neighbors with your own honor? For God has redeemed you.
15	Friday		Deuteronomy 24:19	Melissa Woepffel	We are to care especially for those who need protection. Many of us no longer do our own planting and harvesting, and yet we are called to care for those who don't have enough. How might we leave things behind for the sake of others?

16	Saturday		Deuteronomy 26:12	Tim Crummitt	Once again, God works through the Israelites to make sure that two things happen: One is that they do not make money a false idol. The second is that they realize everything is a gift from God. When we realize we do not own anything, we can see the need in the other and respond.
17	Monday		Deuteronomy 27:19	Sarah Lyon Hess	We are the alien. We are the orphan. We are the widow. We are humanity. And we are called. Called to reply against withholding justice. Reply against deprivation. Reply against obstruction. Reply against denial. Amen, we reply!
18	Tuesday		Job 29:16	Tim Crummitt	God has a preferential option for the needy and the stranger. We might claim that justice is blind. God, here in the book of Job, claims no such thing. The God of Israel works for those that the rest of society has ignored. Let us, too, be champions for the needy and stranger.
19	Wednesday		Psalm 94.6-7	Melinda Barnhardt	Inhumane treatment of society's most vulnerable is supreme evil, against which we can feel helpless. But God is present, the psalmist continues, reminding himself and us. God's love will bear us up and sustain us as we offer our hands in his service to the dispossessed.
20	Thursday		Psalm 146.9	Aaron Fuller	The verse suggests that those who are strangers or of lesser status are not the same as the wicked. What does it mean to regard those on the margins and different from us as something other than evil/wicked/enemy?
21	Friday		Jeremiah 7.5-7	Emily Edmonds	To act justly goes beyond not hurting others. It also means not allowing oppression to continue unchallenged. If we witness injustice in our midst and do not act, we are contributing to the continuation of that oppression by our silence.
22	Saturday		Jeremiah 22.3	Melissa Woeppel	Serving God and neighbor go hand in hand. To act with justice and righteousness is to know God. Whom do you know that needs to be delivered from oppression? How can we show justice and righteousness to others in our daily lives?
23	Monday		Ezekiel 22.6-7	Alyssa Kaplan	The prophet Ezekiel offers harsh words to his compatriots when they are living in exile. Ezekiel, in his writings, does the hard work of speaking truth to power and naming the sins of his community. How can we look inward, naming the sins of our institutions and communities?
24	Tuesday		Ezekiel 22.29	Alyssa Kaplan	Ezekiel calls attention to the ways in which his community had abused the foreigner, showing us that God always stands in solidarity with the marginalized. Who are our modern-day prophets calling our attention to the ways that we have not loved others as God loves?

25	Wednesday		Zechariah 7.10	Daniel Hess	The widow, the orphan and the alien are the special objects of God's care. Will we ignore God's call to render true judgments and show kindness and mercy to one another? Or, rather, will we love and care for the widow, the orphan and the alien as God as loved us?
26	Thursday		Malachi 3.5	Tim Crummitt	In the Large Catechism, Martin Luther writes that we should "cover the sins and infirmities of our neighbors, to justify their actions, and to cloak and veil them with our own honor." God calls us to defend those who cannot defend themselves, to work against oppression.
27	Friday		Matthew 2.13-14	Taylor Walker	Our savior took refuge in another land when his safety was at risk. What country could Jesus, Mary and Joseph take refuge in today?
28	Saturday		Matthew 25.35	Emily Pilat	A powerful verse with a clear meaning: Support those who require care and compassion. How can we answer the call to tend to those who are in need, with no restrictions?
29	Monday		Mark 2.27	Lou Florio	The Sabbath is for our benefit, an act of mercy and love offered to us by God. Observance of the Sabbath should reflect what we have received and reach into our week, made tangible in community. God intends this blessing to extend to all, including the alien within our gates.
30	Tuesday		Luke 10.36-37	Daniel Hess	The good Samaritan story calls us to ask ourselves, "Who am I in the story? Will I keep my distance and pray empty prayers? Will I turn a blind eye and justify myself with my busy schedule? Or will I be part of the answer to prayer, making time to stop and show mercy to those in need?"
31	Wednesday		Acts 16.37	Matt Leonard	Paul calls to attention the hypocritical language and actions of the magistrates of the land. This is where we should look and take a stand like Paul to call out the injustice to our brothers and sister who don't feel welcome in spaces open to all citizens.
32	Thursday		Acts 17.26-27	John Wertz	Regardless of the color of our skin, the language we speak or our cultural identity, we are all children of God. We are all part of the same family of faith. All searching for our place in the world and seeking to understand what it means to be a child of God in our context.
33	Friday		Romans 12.13	Emily Edmonds	A single verse with a clear message. When you see a stranger or someone different from you, do not merely tolerate their presence. Instead, we are charged to give hospitality to strangers, and that means allowing them into our lives and our spaces.

34	Saturday		Romans 13.1-2	Lou Florio	Obedience is not passive. Paul goes on to argue that the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. How can we work together with elected leaders to best meet the needs of all individuals in our community, including migrants? God's justice and mercy remain intertwined.
35	Monday		Ephesians 2.14-18	Alyssa Kaplan	When we construct divisions and walls between our communities, we are failing to honor Jesus' act of radical love on the cross. God came to earth to tear down our oppressing walls. May we repent for the walls we construct and join the divine project of tearing them down.
36	Tuesday		Philippians 3.20	Karen Adams	"Citizenship" is also translated as "commonwealth" – our common good, hope, future. Here again, hear again, the promise that our Savior has redeemed us with eternal life and glory with him in the Father's kingdom.
37	Wednesday		Hebrews 13.2	Matt Leonard	Extending hospitality to strangers is just another way for us to extend the reach of God's love. We don't know what each other is going through in our everyday lives, but we can take a moment out of our lives and extend the love of Christ to all we meet.
38	Thursday		1 Peter 2.11-12	Karen Adams	God knows our sufferings in this world and makes all things new and beautiful and righteous, "with liberty and justice for all." Our good deeds stand as beacons of God's goodness against the evil in this world.
39	Friday		1 Peter 2.13-14	Karen Adams	We are encouraged to stand firm in our faith and faith-filled practices and to live as good citizens in this world, even with obedience to civil authorities and civil laws. However, this does not prohibit civil disobedience or challenges to civil injustices and wrongs.
40	Saturday		Revelation 7.9-10	Melinda Barnhardt	"Just as "we are all the same at the foot of the cross," stained by sin and division, we become clean and as one through Christ's blood. In this joyous vision of the end time, the deathly separateness of division is overcome: all tribes and peoples are united before his throne."