

July/August 2026 | Issue 58

# BRANCHES

A Mill Lake Church  
magazine

Blessed  
are the  
Pure  
in heart

8

*Inspiring Connections: A Growing Family. A Growing Faith.*

10

*Weaving Things Together For Good*

17

*How Do I Know the Lord's Will For My Life?*





**ALL ARE WELCOME**

sunday  
**JULY 05**  
&  
sunday  
**AUGUST 02**

## SUMMER **POTLUCK**

dinner will be in the lower  
auditorium following the  
10 am worship gathering

**bring a main dish & a salad**

## Park **Meet-up**

**Mill Lake Church Women**

**Wednesdays**  
**July 8 & 22 | August 5 & 19**  
**2-3:30 p.m.**

**Bring your chair and a refreshment!**  
**Mill Lake Park - Bevan Ave entrance**



Dear Friends –

I love God's creativity and attention to detail.

We need only look outside at the beauty that surrounds us to appreciate how much God values every bit of His creation—from the tiniest speck on a tree or flower to the magnificent grandeur of rivers and mountains.

Sadly, we don't always take the time to appreciate it.

A treasured memory I have of my friend Donna is how she taught me to slow down and take time to look—really look—at God's creation. Whether on ministry road trips or running errands together, we'd stop along a river or field just to be quiet and soak in the beauty of nature. We'd listen to the sounds of birds and the breeze rustling through the leaves on the trees, or the water gently flowing over river rocks. Those peaceful moments blessed and refreshed our souls.

Today, I'm thankful for that valuable lesson, which taught me to intentionally stop long enough to allow creation to captivate my thoughts. I wish I could say I take that time every day, but one thing is certain: I know when my soul needs it.

Over time, I've discovered that slowing down helps me notice more than creation. It helps me see God at work in the ordinary details of life—the connections, patterns, and themes He quietly weaves together in ways we might otherwise miss.

As I worked on this month's content, it struck me how God seemed to weave a common thread throughout this issue. Every article, book review, and feature reflects the idea of rhythm, reminding me again of His creativity and attention to detail.

As you read through these pages, see how many references to rhythm you can find. But may you discover more than a recurring theme. May you also be reminded of the importance of slowing down long enough to notice God's presence, His creativity, and His gentle rhythms at work in your own life.

Know you are loved,



*Ann Griffiths*

Editor



# BRANCHES

Issue 58

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Submit photos and media to  
Leah Cobb at [hello@milllakechurch.ca](mailto:hello@milllakechurch.ca)



*To Make the Hope of Jesus Known*

Join us on Facebook & Instagram  
**@MillLakeChurch**

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## WORSHIP EVERY SUNDAY AT 10 A.M.

You can also stream the service at  
[www.youtube.com/@milllakechurch4620](https://www.youtube.com/@milllakechurch4620)

Mill Lake Church is affiliated with the  
Evangelical Free Church of Canada

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● Regular Features ● Special Features

# LET'S CONNECT!

## ADULTS TOGETHER

**Bible Study:** Every Sunday, 9-9:45 a.m. at the church  
**Gospel Clarity (Mixed Bible Study):** Seasonal break. See you all in the fall.

## COMMUNITY GROUPS

Contact [office@milllakechurch.ca](mailto:office@milllakechurch.ca).  
Interested in joining a small group? Various groups meet throughout Abbotsford.

## PRAYER

**Afternoon Prayer:** Every Thursday, 1 p.m. with the Prayer & Care team in the church lower lounge.  
**Evening Prayer:** Meets monthly on Wednesdays, 7 p.m. Coming up: July 15 & August 19.

## YOUTH—GRADES 6-12

Seasonal break. See you all in the fall.

## MEN

Contact Dwayne Mitchell at [dwaynemit@gmail.com](mailto:dwaynemit@gmail.com).  
**Prayer Time:** Seasonal break. Resumes Tuesday, September 15, 9:30 a.m.  
**Breakfast Break:** Seasonal Break. Resumes Tuesday, September 8, 10:00 a.m. at JoJo's.  
**Bible Study:** Seasonal Break. Resumes Saturday, September 12, 9–10:30 a.m.  
**Ascent Discipleship:** Seasonal break.

## WOMEN

Contact: Ann Griffiths at [ann@anngriffiths.com](mailto:ann@anngriffiths.com)  
**Come to the Well Games Night:** Friday, July 17, 7-9 p.m. in the church lower auditorium  
**Summer Park Meet-up:** July 8 & 22 and August 5 & 19, 2-3:30 p.m. at Mill Lake Park (Bevan Ave entrance). Bring your chair and beverage.

## KIDS & TOTS

**Kids:** During July and August, our kids will stay with us throughout the services. Activity Bags will be available at Connect in the Lobby for kids Kindergarten to Grade 5.  
**Tots:** The Nursery will be open every Sunday during worship. Our MLTots is supervised for Babes n' Tots from Newborn to Age 4. Sign in at the table in the Lobby.

## FELLOWSHIP LUNCH

Come together for a potluck lunch the first Sunday of each month following the Worship Service. All are welcome. Bring a main dish and salad. Desserts & beverages are provided. July 5 & August 2.

# The Blessed Life

## The Heart That Sees God

***Why summer is the perfect time to draw closer, not drift further***

By Randy Lemke

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (Matthew 5:8).

Summer has a way of naturally relaxing our lives. Our routines relax, our schedules open up, and life takes on a different rhythm. For many of us, this is a good and welcome time. Rest and a new daily pace are a gift from God. In the midst of that 'goodness,' however, summer has a quieter pull we don't always notice. It creates a slow drift away from the things that keep us rooted in faith. Church attendance is more irregular. Bible reading gets squeezed out by warm-weather activities. Prayer becomes something we'll get back to in September. Before we know it, we've taken an unplanned holiday from God.

This summer, as we continue our journey through the Beatitudes, Jesus meets us with a word that is both an invitation and a gentle challenge: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (Matthew 5:8).

We've been walking this road together in *Branches* for six months now, and every step has been leading us deeper into the same Gospel reality—the truth that the blessed life is not about what we do on the outside; it begins with what God does on the inside.

We started by facing the poverty of our own hearts, stripped of self-sufficiency and discovering that it is the person who knows their need for Christ who receives the kingdom. We received an invitation to mourn our own sin and the deep brokenness it has caused, not just hardships. We found that God, rather than turning away from our grief, runs toward us with comfort and healing. We were challenged by meekness, the countercultural quality of a life no longer driven by pride or self-protection, but

quietly surrendered to God's hand. A hunger for righteousness confronted us with the recognition that we fall short of God's standard, that the world falls short, and that only Christ Himself can satisfy that ache and make us right before God. In June's issue, mercy and the staggering reality that we ourselves were the ones in debt, the ones who deserved judgment, and yet received forgiveness through the cross of Christ, challenged us.

Every beatitude has held up a mirror to our hearts and shown us the same thing—that we are more broken than we like to admit and more loved than we dare to hope. Now, with this seventh beatitude, Jesus doesn't let us look away. He goes straight to the heart itself, because that is where sin takes root and that is where salvation does its deepest work.

When Jesus said, "pure in heart," the Greek word He used was *katharos*. The word carried a rich meaning of clean, blameless, unstained. It was used to describe grain that had all its chaff removed. It also referred to metal that had been smelted free of impurities, and cloth that had been washed until no trace of dirt remained.

The word describes something genuinely pure, left behind after removing the impurities. A *katharos* heart is not a heart that has never sinned. It is a heart that has been dealt with, cleaned out, made honest before God. It is a heart that is undivided—not split between God and everything else, but singular in its deepest loyalty and love.

The prophet Malachi gives us one of the most beautiful images in all of Scripture for what this purification looks like. In speaking of God, he says, "He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; He will purify the Levites and refine them like gold and

silver" (Malachi 3:3). The picture is of a craftsman at work over intense heat. A refiner of silver would hold the metal in the fire until every impurity rose to the surface and then skim it away. The test for when the work was done was when the refiner could see his own face reflected clearly in the metal.

God is the refiner. We are the silver. The fire is not punishment; it is the purifying work of the Holy Spirit in our lives, bringing to the surface the pride, the self-reliance, the divided loyalties, the hidden sins, so they can be removed. The goal of all that refining is exactly what Jesus promises here—that God would see His own image reflected in us. And that we would see Him clearly. Purity of heart is not something we manufacture by trying harder. It is something God produces in us through the patient, sometimes uncomfortable, but always loving work of His Spirit.

The opposite of a pure heart is not simply a sinful heart; it's a divided one. James 4:8 speaks of double-minded people. Those pulled in two directions at once, wanting God but also wanting the things the world offers. And if we're honest, that is exactly where many of us spend much of our lives, not rejecting God outright, but giving Him a portion of our hearts while other things quietly claim the rest. Comfort. Approval. Ambition. Distraction. None of these is necessarily evil, but when they compete with God for the centre of our lives, the heart becomes cluttered, noisy, and spiritually short-sighted. This is why summer, for all its gifts, can be a vulnerable season. When the structure of our regular rhythms falls away, the things that fill the gap are not always God.

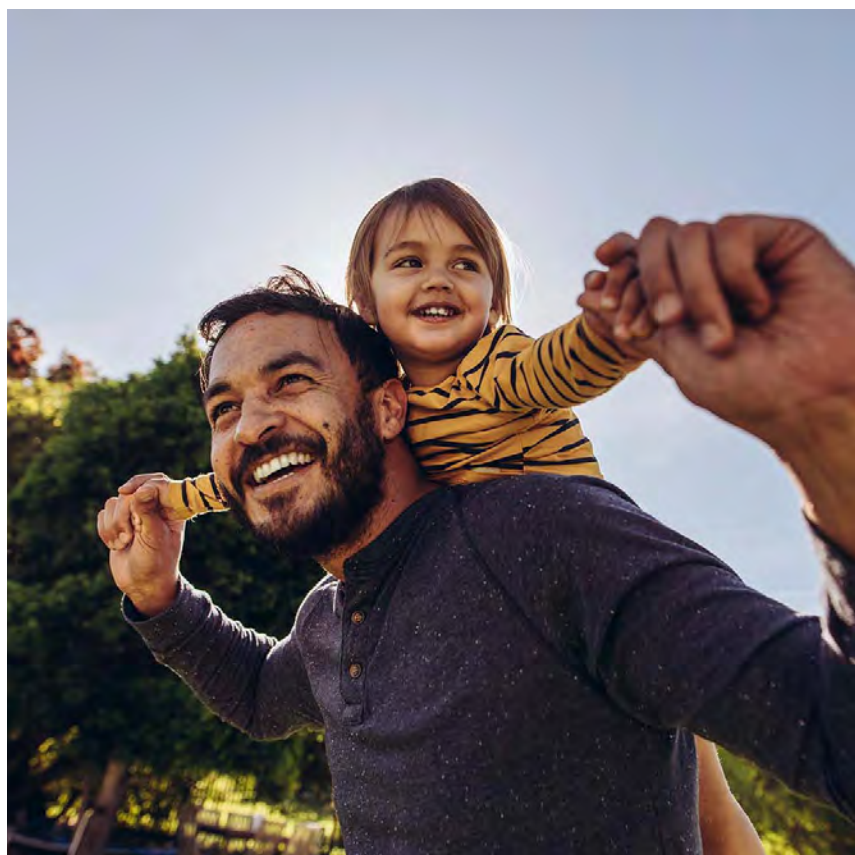
The promise attached to this beatitude is incredible: the pure in heart shall see God. Not just know about Him. Not just believe in Him from a respectful distance. But see Him. There is something deeply personal in that word. It speaks of closeness, of recognition, of a relationship where you look someone in the face and know them. The whole of Scripture moves towards this—from Moses asking to see God's glory in Exodus 33, to John's vision in Revelation 22 where the servants of God "will see His face." To see God is the ultimate human destination. And Jesus says it belongs to those whose hearts are undivided in their pursuit of Him.

But this isn't only a future promise, though it certainly includes that. People with undivided hearts see

God now, in the ordinary moments of life. They notice His hand in things others walk past. They sense His presence in prayer. They hear His voice in the Bible in a way that feels alive and personal. They recognise Him in unexpected places. They see Him in a moment of unexpected peace in the middle of a hard day. This seeing is not a reward for earning God's favour. It is simply what happens when the clutter is cleared, and the heart has room to be still.

The good news about summer is that the slower pace that can lead us to drift can just as easily lead to depth. The very things that make this season what we look forward to: more time, fewer obligations, longer evenings, a change of scenery, are also the conditions in which a pure heart can be cultivated. A walk that becomes a prayer. A morning that starts unhurried with an open Bible. A conversation with a friend that goes somewhere real. Summer can be a season of extraordinary closeness with God, if we choose it. The question is not whether we have the time. In summer, most of us have more leisure time than usual. The question is what we do with it.

*Continued on next page*



*Continued from last page*

At Mill Lake, we don't want to take a vacation from God this summer. Take a holiday, absolutely—rest well, enjoy your family, take deep breaths. But don't mistake a change of routine for a break from your relationship with God. You wouldn't go two months without speaking to someone you love deeply. Your relationship with God is no different. In fact, it is more than a relationship—it is the source from which everything else in your life flows. We are only ever as fruitful, as peaceful, as genuinely alive as our connection to Him.

So, how do we pursue a pure heart practically? It starts with honesty. David, the man described in Scripture as having a heart after God's own (Acts 13:22), was far from morally perfect. What set him apart was his willingness to come back to God, to be honest before Him, to pray the kind of raw and searching prayers we find in the Psalms. "Search me, O God, and know my heart" (Psalm 139:23). The prayer that genuinely asks God to show us what is cluttering and dividing our hearts is one of the most powerful things we can do. It clears the noise. It turns our face back toward the One whose face we were meant to see. And when we pray that prayer, we are inviting the Refiner to do His work, to bring the impurities to the surface, to clear what is clouding our sight, to make us more wholly His.

This summer, I encourage every person in the Mill Lake family to press into Christ rather than 'vacation' from Him. Bring your Bible on holiday. Pray on the beach. Find a church to visit if you're away for a few weeks and let yourself be fed. Keep your heart in conversation with God, even when the rhythm of life feels different, because the promise of this beatitude is not just for one day in eternity. It is available now, in the middle of an ordinary summer day, to anyone whose heart is turned toward Him. You don't have to wait to see God. You just have to pursue a pure heart and look to Him.



***Pastor Randy** is Lead Pastor at Mill Lake Church, where he and his wife, Allana, and their five children have served for the past 24 years. Randy enjoys movies, books, music, and hanging out with his family. You may also want to ask him about his interest in fountain pens.*

# A Growing Family. A Growing Faith.

By Brody & Sarah Patton

Our prayers were answered on June 8, 2025, when our beautiful daughter, Maple, was born. We finally had a child to hold in our arms. Our family had started, and we were now a growing family.

After getting married on May 22, 2022, we've had the most blessed time of our lives. Having a family was something we always wanted, and we had a clear plan. We would do a lot of traveling and sightseeing for our first year and then have a family. So, we did.

In the late summer of 2023, we decided we wanted to have a child. Sarah became pregnant, and we were both overjoyed and anxious at the same time. We planned on sharing the news with our families at Thanksgiving, but we didn't get that opportunity.

On September 14, 2023, our excitement and joy changed to mourning and grief. After a miscarriage, our beautiful child was gone—too small to hold in our hands. We were in denial and angry and didn't understand why this had to happen to us. We tried again and again to conceive another child, but it didn't happen. Each month, we got angrier and more frustrated.

In the late summer of 2024, we visited some family up north. We went paddle boarding at the lake and opened up to them about the struggles we were having. They said they'd been trying to have a child for over five years and hadn't conceived. They told us about the frustration and anger they faced and that, instead of worrying about having a child, they focused on their marriage and relationship with God. If they were blessed with a child one day, that would be amazing. If not, it wasn't part of God's plan for them.



What they shared opened our eyes to something that anger and grief had blinded us to. Instead of trusting in God and His plan for us, we had tried to take matters into our own hands. We focused on what we wanted and not what God wanted for us. On that trip, we spent a lot of time praying, asking for guidance in our lives, and that we would seek His will and fully trust in Him alone.

On September 18, 2024, almost a year to the day of the miscarriage, we learned that Sarah was expecting. This time we didn't get too excited. Instead, we prayed. We gave God the glory and believed that no matter what happened during the pregnancy, or the outcome, His plans and the work of His hands were perfect. We fully trusted in the Lord and placed the growth and development of our child in His hands.

May 28, 2025, was the expected arrival date of our baby. The pregnancy had gone very well. We thanked and praised God for it, but then our baby didn't arrive in May. We started an induction process on the 7th of June to help progress things. That night, we were doing a check-in, and the nurse noticed something was wrong. Our baby's heart was stressed and in critical condition. We were scared and anxious about what might happen. At that moment, we prayed to God and again trusted in His plan for our child and us. We knew our baby was in His hands.

Shortly after Sarah underwent an emergency C-section, our baby arrived in the early hours of June 8. Mom and baby were both healthy. We rejoiced and gave praise and glory to God for the entire journey leading up to that moment.

Between the miscarriage on September 14, 2023, and Maple's birth on June 8, 2025, our faith in God was severely tested individually and as a couple. But we got through it together, leaning on God and seeking His will in our lives. As a result, our family wasn't the only thing that grew in our lives. Our faith grew as we learned a lot about God and grew a deeper connection and faith in Him.

We continue to grow and learn more as our daughter grows. Raising Maple in Christ is important, and raising a Christ-centred family is what we feel God is calling us to do in our lives. We see the light of Christ in our daughter, with the way she puts a smile on people's faces and lightens any room.

God is the foundation of our family. Everything we have is from Him and through Him. We are focusing on digging our roots deeper and growing faithfully in Him as our family grows. Here are some verses that helped us trust in God during our trials: Proverbs 3:5-6; Isaiah 55:8-9; Philippians 4:6-7.



**Brody and Sarah Patton** have attended MLC for seven years and are now joined by their daughter, Maple. They're involved in Bible studies and regularly attend Sunday services. Brody works as the night shift Production Supervisor at Floform Countertops.



# Weaving Things Together For Good

By Elena Svet

In previous articles, I shared about the many transitions our family experienced during our first year in Canada. Looking back now, I can see a deeper thread running through our story, one that began long before we recognized it ourselves. Again and again, God made all things work together for good, placing us exactly where we needed to be long before we understood why.

I've served with Wycliffe since 2007, and Rodion joined in 2014. My first assignment took me to West Africa, where I worked with a local community to develop their alphabet and begin literacy classes in their own language. It was a remarkable experience to watch people read and write in their heart language for the very first time.

After we married in 2012, we moved to Russia, and our focus gradually shifted toward the post-Soviet region, where Russian is still widely used.

By 2018, our life looked settled and carefully built. We had two children, land of our own, and a house nearly finished. We could already picture the rhythm of that life: children playing in the backyard, friends around the table, familiar routines shaping our days. We were running a language school for children, something we loved, while staying actively involved with Wycliffe. I was training new workers to learn languages and adapt to new cultures, and Rodion was traveling to the Far East and the Caucasus. It was a life that made sense.

And yet, one evening, something shifted. I shared with Rodion what had been quietly growing in my heart: "I feel like it's time for us to move into full-time mission work." It did not seem logical for that season of life, but Rodion looked at me and said, "I've been feeling the same." In that moment, we

recognized it was not just a passing idea. God was calling us.

We sold our home and moved to the Caucasus\* in April 2019, unaware of how drastically the world would soon change. There, we began working with a Murtukh\*\* community, helping to manage a Bible translation project. Rodion also developed oral Bible storytelling, shaping Scripture into stories that could be remembered and retold. We were slowly building relationships across repeated visits and countless cups of tea. We treasured every trip.

Then, in early 2020, the world closed its doors. Borders tightened, travel stopped, and plans dissolved. Like everyone else, we found ourselves confined and uncertain, asking why God would bring us there only for the work to suddenly seem impossible.

Instead of stepping back, we looked for another way forward. Our translators had computers but lacked stable internet access. Step by step, we connected them through mobile internet. It was fragile and imperfect, but it worked. What had once depended on occasional travel became months of daily connection. Each day they listened to Scripture, retold it, and lived within its story.

Then one day, one of the translators asked a simple but profound question: "How can I follow Jesus?"

The Word had moved from sound to meaning, and from meaning to conviction. What we first saw as limitation had become immersion. What felt like interruption had become invitation. We barely had time to process that season when another wave came.

The war in Ukraine.



We began helping family and friends in every way we could. We created a small fund to support those who suddenly found themselves without resources, unable even to buy a ticket to leave. We stayed in constant contact with volunteers and churches in neighbouring countries receiving refugees. For several months, life narrowed into one purpose: to help as many people as possible.

In the middle of that intense and fragile season, something became clear.

Years earlier, when we felt the call to leave our stable life, it made no sense. It felt like stepping away from something good into something uncertain. But now, in the middle of a crisis, we saw it differently. If we had stayed—if we had chosen comfort over obedience—we would not have been in a position to help.

Within a week, sanctions made it nearly impossible to transfer money across borders. Sending support to Ukraine could even be considered a crime. If we had remained where we were, we likely would not have been able to leave the country ourselves. We would have been limited, almost unable to respond.

But God had already moved us. Before the crisis. Before the need became visible.

Just as during COVID, what looked like disruption carried something deeper. What seemed chaotic held a hidden direction. Once again, we saw the truth of Romans 8:28 unfold before our eyes: all things work together for good for those who love Him.

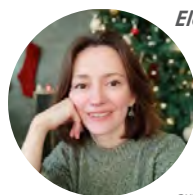
We also saw how deeply God cares for the Murtukh\* people. He knew access to these communities

would become more difficult. Through a quiet call years earlier, He invited us into something that would outlast those barriers. Through COVID, war, and relocation, the work did not stop. In many ways, it grew stronger. Learning how to work online sped up the translation, relocation helped us meet people who were interested in supporting the ministry. So, in many ways, the work grew stronger.

Looking back, the pattern is unmistakable. In moments that feel uncertain or senseless, God is not absent. He is present. More than that, He is already ahead of us, weaving things together for good. Perhaps that is where trust begins—not in having answers, but in knowing who He is.

*\* The Caucasus is a geographical region spanning parts of Eastern Europe and Western Asia. It is situated between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea, comprising parts of Southern Russia, Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. The Caucasian languages comprise a large and extremely varied array of languages spoken by more than ten million people.*

*\*\*The name has been changed for security reasons.*

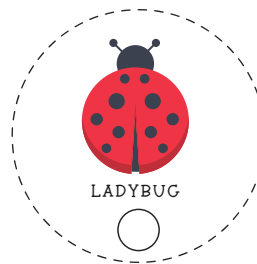
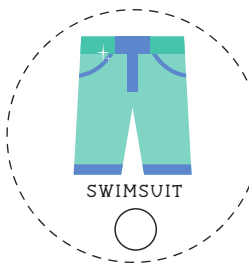
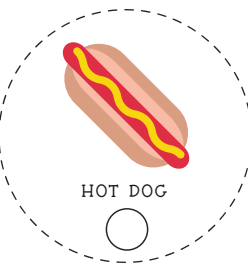
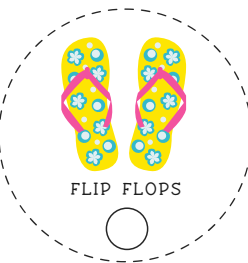
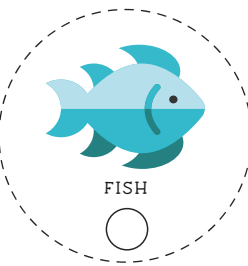
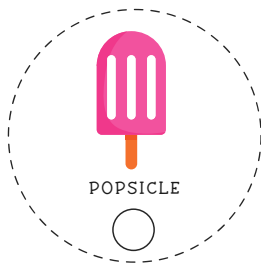
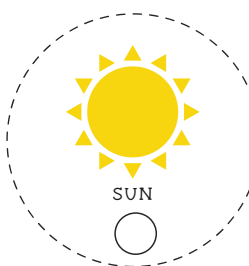
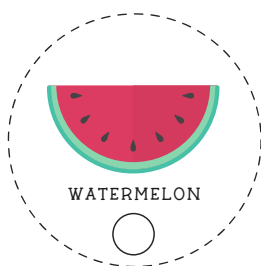


**Elena Svet** is a mother of three and serves with Wycliffe Bible Translators alongside her husband, Rodion, supporting Scripture translation for a language community in Eurasia. She is also a trauma-informed counselor and coach, helping individuals navigate transition, identity, and personal growth. Her family moved to Canada in 2023.

Check out this Scavenger Hunt and Bucket List for some intentional family fun this summer!

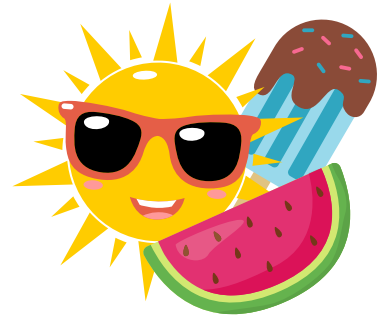
# SUMMER

## Scavenger Hunt



# Summer

## Bucket List



- |                                                  |                                                 |
|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> GO TO THE ZOO           | <input type="checkbox"/> GO BERRY PICKING       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> HAVE A PICNIC           | <input type="checkbox"/> MAKE CHALK DRAWINGS    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BUILD A FORT            | <input type="checkbox"/> GO BOWLING             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> HAVE A MOVIE DAY        | <input type="checkbox"/> GO TO A CARNIVAL       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FLY KITES               | <input type="checkbox"/> HAVE A DANCE PARTY     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> MAKE HOMEMADE PIZZA     | <input type="checkbox"/> MAKE A BIRDHOUSE       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BUILD A SANDCASTLE      | <input type="checkbox"/> GO CAMPING             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> GO TO A BASEBALL GAME   | <input type="checkbox"/> TIE DYE SHIRTS         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> GO ON A ROAD TRIP       | <input type="checkbox"/> GO TO THE AQUARIUM     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> HAVE A BBQ              | <input type="checkbox"/> HAVE A CAR WASH        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> GO MINI PUTTING         | <input type="checkbox"/> GO TO THE BEACH        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> HAVE A GARAGE SALE      | <input type="checkbox"/> PLAY FRISBEE           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> GO STAR GAZING          | <input type="checkbox"/> GO TO A CONCERT        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> GET ICE CREAM           | <input type="checkbox"/> HAVE A SLEEPOVER       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> GO TO A DRIVE IN MOVIE  | <input type="checkbox"/> GO ON A HIKE           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> RUN IN THE SPRINKLER    | <input type="checkbox"/> HAVE A GAMES NIGHT     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> MAKE A LEMONADE STAND   | <input type="checkbox"/> GO FOR A BIKE RIDE     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PAINT ROCKS             | <input type="checkbox"/> GO CANOEING            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> GO TO A PARK            | <input type="checkbox"/> VOLUNTEER SOMEWHERE    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> DANCE IN THE RAIN       | <input type="checkbox"/> GO TO A SPLASH PAD     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BAKE A CAKE             | <input type="checkbox"/> MAKE PAPER AIRPLANES   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PLANT A GARDEN          | <input type="checkbox"/> GO FISHING             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> GO TO AN AMUSEMENT PARK | <input type="checkbox"/> DO SCIENCE EXPERIMENTS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> GO BIRD WATCHING        | <input type="checkbox"/> GO TO THE LIBRARY      |



# *Abiding Through the Summer: Staying Connected to God in Every Season of Life*

Source: [www.robinrevispyke.com](http://www.robinrevispyke.com)

By Robin Revispyke

There's something about summer, isn't there?

The rhythms change. The days feel longer, the routines loosen, and life takes on a different pace. Whether you're chasing grandbabies, adjusting to a quieter home as an empty nester, or simply trying to keep everyone fed and somewhat organized through the heat and busyness, summer can feel both beautiful and a little disruptive. And in the middle of it all, our time with the Lord can easily drift. We find ourselves too busy to abide and stay connected to God.

Not intentionally. Not because we don't care. But because life shifts, and before we know it, what once felt steady begins to feel scattered. That's why the invitation to abide and stay connected is so meaningful, especially in seasons like this.

Jesus says in John 15:4, "Abide in me, and I in you." Not strive. Not perform. Not hustle to earn closeness with Him.

Simply abide.

To abide means to remain, to stay connected, to dwell. It's not about adding more to your to-do list—it's about anchoring your heart in Him, no matter what your days look like.

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And friend, that's really good news because whether your home is full and noisy or quiet and still, whether your schedule is packed or unpredictable, abiding is always available to you.

## **What It Really Means to Abide in Christ in Your Everyday Life**

Abiding isn't reserved for quiet mornings with a cup of coffee and a perfectly open Bible (though those moments are sweet when they come). It's meant to flow into the ordinary parts of our lives. It's what keeps us grounded when emotions feel all over the place, steadies us when plans change or expectations go unmet, and reminds us who we are, especially in seasons where our roles are shifting.

For the mama whose house is suddenly quieter...  
For the grandma pouring love into the next generation...  
For the woman wondering what this next season holds...

Abiding keeps us rooted in truth. Jesus goes on to say in John 15:5, "Apart from me you can do nothing." Now, that might sound a little strong at first, but it's actually freeing because it means we were never meant to carry life on our own.

When we abide in Him, we receive what we need: peace when we feel unsettled, wisdom when we



feel unsure, and strength when we feel weary. And maybe most importantly, we are reminded that we are never alone.

### **The Challenge of Summer Rhythms**

If we're honest, summer can make abiding feel harder. The routines that once supported our quiet time may not be there in the same way. Early mornings might turn into slower starts. Evenings might stretch longer. Travel, visitors, and spontaneous plans can interrupt the structure we depend on.

And suddenly, we find ourselves thinking, I'll get back to my time with God when things settle down. But what if abiding isn't about waiting for things to settle? What if it's about learning to meet God right in the middle of the beautiful, messy, unpredictable days? Because the truth is—He's already there.

### **Simple Ways to Abide Through the Summer**

Let's keep this practical and grace-filled. Not perfect. Not rigid. Just real. Here are a few gentle ways to stay connected to God during these summer months:

#### *1. Start with small, intentional moments*

If your usual quiet time feels out of reach, don't abandon connection—adjust it. Maybe it's a few minutes on the porch before the house wakes up. Maybe it's a Scripture you read slowly while sipping your coffee. Maybe it's a whispered prayer while making breakfast.

Abiding doesn't require hours. It begins with intention.

#### *2. Carry Scripture with you*

Choose one verse for the week and let it stay with you throughout your day. Write it on a sticky note. Save it on your phone. Speak it out loud while you're driving or walking.

Let God's Word become part of your rhythm, not just a separate activity.

#### *3. Turn everyday moments into conversations with God*

You don't have to wait for a quiet room to pray. Talk to Him while folding laundry. Invite Him into your thoughts while running errands. Thank Him for the sunset, the laughter, even the small, ordinary gifts of the day.

Abiding is as much about awareness as it is about time.

#### *4. Release the pressure of "perfect" spiritual routines*

This one matters more than we realize. Sometimes we hold ourselves to expectations that don't fit the season we're in—and when we can't meet them, we feel like we're failing. But God isn't measuring your performance. He's inviting your presence.

Let go of what it "should" look like, and lean into what is possible right now.

#### *5. Stay connected to community*

Abiding isn't meant to happen in isolation. Reach out to a friend. Stay engaged in your small group. Listen to a podcast that points you back to truth.

We need each other—especially in seasons that feel a little unstructured.

#### *6. Create gentle rhythms instead of rigid routines*

Routines can be helpful—but rhythms are sustainable. A rhythm says, I will meet with God in a way that fits this season. Maybe it's morning. Maybe it's evening. Maybe it shifts day by day.

The goal isn't consistency in timing—it's consistency in connection.

### **A Gentle Reminder for This Season**

Friend, wherever you find yourself this summer—busy or quiet, joyful or a little uncertain—you are not behind, and you are not alone. God isn't waiting for you to get everything just right before He meets with you. He is already present. Already near. Already inviting you to remain in Him.

Abiding is not about doing more; it's about staying close. And in that closeness, you will find everything your heart truly needs. So as the days unfold, as

*Continued on next page*

Continued from last page

schedules shift, and as life moves in its own summer rhythm, I encourage you to stay connected, stay rooted, and keep abiding because He is holding you in the midst of it all.

What steps can you take this season to establish rhythms that help you remain connected with God?



**Robin Revis Pyke, PhD**, is a Christian life coach who has passionately served as a mentor for over twenty years. Her desire is to equip, encourage, and empower women to boldly pursue God's call on their life. Robin resides in Florida with her husband, Scott, and Yorkie, aRLo. For more, visit [www.robinrevispyke.com](http://www.robinrevispyke.com).



## PASTOR RANDY'S RECOMMENDED READING

### ***HAPPY LIES***

*By Melissa Dougherty*

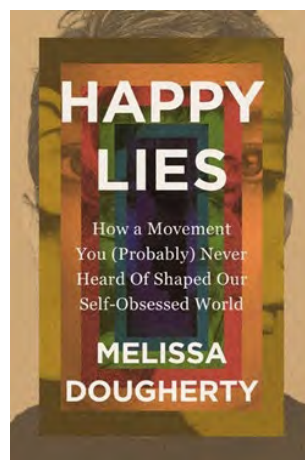
What does Jesus actually feel toward us—not just in our best moments, but in our failures, our sin, and our suffering? That is the question Dane Ortlund sets out to answer in this remarkable book. And the answer he finds in Scripture is both surprising and deeply comforting.

Drawing on Matthew 11:29, where Jesus describes Himself as “gentle and lowly in heart,” Ortlund leads readers through the Gospels and the Puritan writers to show that Christ's heart is not reluctant toward sinners, but tenderly and irresistibly drawn to them. This is not a book about what we must do for God; it is a book about what God in Christ has already done and continues to feel toward His people. *Gentle and Lowly* is accessible to new believers, yet rich enough to

nourish long-time Christians. The book especially suits people who are weary, struggle with doubt, or feel burdened by shame. Many readers have described it as one of the most spiritually refreshing books they've ever read.

For our Mill Lake family, this book offers reassurance and challenge: God is not finished with us. The years we are living right now matter profoundly for eternity. I recommend you read this book for some thoughtful, prayerful reflection.

This book not only helps you understand what happened, but why it matters—deepening both theological insight and personal devotion. Ideal for pastors, teachers, and church members alike, it invites you to slow down and behold the glory of Christ in His suffering, death, and resurrection. A deeply edifying resource.





GOT  
QUESTIONS?

# “HOW DO I KNOW THE LORD’S WILL FOR MY LIFE?”

## ***Got questions?***

*Here, we'll answer tricky questions you may be wrestling with. Find more in the upcoming issues of Branches!*

*If you have questions about the Bible, the church, theology, or faith in general, please send them to our Editor at [ann@milllakechurch.ca](mailto:ann@milllakechurch.ca).*

This is probably one of the most asked questions in the Christian life, and a sincere question that deserves a serious answer.

“Got Questions?” is a short feature in *Branches* and doesn't have space for an exhaustive answer to what the Bible teaches on this question. The aim here is to fly at a high altitude and give a broad picture of the issue so you can get on the ground and do a deeper search of God's Word.

There are two types of will in Scripture, distinguishing God's sovereign will from God's moral will. His sovereign will is when He does all things according to His will. Daniel 4:35 tells us, “He does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand.” And Psalm 115:3 says, “Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases.” His will cannot be frustrated. It will be accomplished with or without your conscious cooperation (Isaiah 46:10). You do not usually discover this will in advance; you recognise it in hindsight, looking back and seeing how God's hand directed your steps.

On the other hand, God's moral will is fully revealed to us. It is not waiting to be decoded by some special knowledge. God's moral will was given to us completely and clearly in Scripture (Psalm 119:105). We know that some things happen in this life that are not God's will. First John 2:17 says that “Whoever does the will of God abides forever.” The clear implication here is that some do not do the will of God.

I've found that most people who agonise over the question of God's will for their life are often searching for a third category. They want the secret, personalised blueprint for their career path and for their relationships. But the Bible never promises us that kind of specific, whispered guidance as a normal aspect of the Christian life.

The biblical heart of the matter is this—God's will for your life is primarily your sanctification, not your situation.

Paul speaks frankly in 1 Thessalonians 4:3 when he says, “This is the will of God, your sanctification.” The will of God is not primarily about which job to take or whom to marry. It's about who you are becoming. It's about being conformed to the image of Christ (Romans 8:29). Everything else, every circumstance, decision, and season is the context in which that deeper will is worked out.

I found this enormously liberating in my life. It means you are not searching for a needle in a haystack, hoping you stumble upon God's one perfect plan before making a catastrophic mistake. You are, instead, invited to walk in wisdom, rooted in Scripture, guided by the Holy Spirit, counselled by the church, and free to make prayerful, faithful decisions within the wide space of what God has not explicitly forbidden.

Knowing God's will, then, is saturating yourself in Scripture, because the Word renews your mind and shapes your desires (Romans 12:2). Cultivating genuine prayer, not to pull information from God, but to align your heart with His. Seeking wise, godly counsel because God rarely leads in isolation. And then, trust. Take a step. Walk forward in faith.

God is not playing hide and seek with His will. He is far more concerned that you love him, love others, and live with integrity than He is with which region of the country you live in.

Seek holiness. Walk humbly. Trust God's sovereign hand for the rest. And remember, as Billy Graham is attributed to saying, “the will of God will never take you where the grace of God cannot keep you.”

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## ***Additional Recommended Reading***

*Just Do Something: A Liberating Approach to Finding God's Will* by Kevin DeYoung

# ***Rest, Solitude, and Holding Fast to God's Promises***

By Anne Kerhoulas

Source: [www.christianunion.org](http://www.christianunion.org)



The semester winds down; celebrations, endings, farewells, and fatigue sweep us into the early summer days.

The summer had arrived. But the flash flood of the semester left me cleaned out, leaves and branches in my hair, and trying to reorient myself to where I had landed.

June always felt like a surprise. Surprise! The turning of a season. Surprise! You are another year older. Surprise! You have neglected your spiritual life. Surprise! You don't actually know how to slow down.

I worked in college ministry for almost six years, and the first few summers were unbelievably challenging. I found myself showing up for our annual staff conference feeling apathetic, undisciplined, and certainly unprepared to lead younger women in their faith. But it turned out I was rarely the only one. Colleagues struggled too, but students also rarely came back to campus exclaiming about their summer filled with rich community, deepened love of the Word, or fuller joy in Christ. No, summers were a desolate place through which students and I staggered.

As my second summer approached, I found myself dreading the downtime, the lack of rigorous structure, and the relational solitude, but also knowing I couldn't continue at the sprinter's pace of the semester. A classic Catch-22. I needed rest. I needed solitude. I needed to take a stop-ulcers-meds.com. But I was afraid of what and who I would find apart from my identity-giving tasks of preparing Bible studies and having discipleship meetings. The cycle of weeknights teaching on campus, mornings in the office, and ongoing emotional care were taxing. And yet it gave me tangible meaning. Who was I when I wasn't doing those things? And for my students, who were they when their Google calendars were empty, they moved home to mom and dad and felt their student rhythm screech to a halt? Though I said it regularly to them, we were not so different.

It wasn't until the third summer that I got serious about figuring out why I dragged through the off-season. Sure, there were the obvious snares of my identity being too closely-knit to my work, the challenge of actually slowing the train down (objects in motion tend to stay in motion, after all), and struggling to know how to practically use my time with so little structure. But those were only the lid to the box. As I started to pray, think, and ask the Lord about why this should be so tough, He answered by helping me see unhealthy habits that landed me with my annual June surprise.

## **Solitude**

Calvin famously began his Institutes with, "Nearly all wisdom we possess, that is to say, true and sound wisdom, consists of two parts: the knowledge of God and of ourselves." Though this might sound like a welcome dive into self-discovery or the spiritual validation that our Enneagram number really is critical information, Calvin is suggesting that to know God, we must know the depravity and desperate state of our fallen nature. We need to know our sinfulness to know God's righteousness. But the fast pace of the academic calendar invited me to ignore stillness and solitude, thinking I could slow down later. It is all too easy to be too busy to come face to face with the reality of our sinfulness.

Solitude is a faithful friend. It is something Christians must pursue regularly, not just when it is forced on them by a season change. Solitude

forced me to watch myself wrestle with sinful patterns that had become so ingrained in my daily rhythm that I stopped questioning them. It was, and is, uncomfortable. It was painful to see myself. And yet, as Calvin reminds us, it is essential for our salvation to see our ugliness so we might see the splendor of Christ and the staggering gift of grace.

The author of Hebrews exhorts us, “to lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith” (Heb 12:1-2). But how can we run the race God has set for us when we are too busy running our own course? We must be people who actively slow down (stop even) to fix our eyes on Jesus, who both created and will complete our faith. When we are still enough to catch a glimpse of the splendor of Christ and our need for Him, we find the hope and desire to strip off the extra weight that clings to us.

### **Postponing emotional pain**

Each semester brought emotional bumps. From bearing burdens with another sister to being wounded by them myself, knowing and being known will inevitably cause some pain. When I am hurt or upset or sad, I know I have a tendency to postpone my emotions simply because I have other stuff to do; another meeting to attend, another lesson to prepare—I am the queen of compartmentalizing. But this is not wise. Ignoring emotional pain does not make it go away. It buries it and makes it more difficult to dig up and understand when you finally return to it. It's easy to pretend to be okay; it's hard to allow yourself to feel grief, betrayal, loneliness, or anger.

Rather than letting a few months' worth of emotional processing surprise you, commit to creating space to be honest with how you feel, to bring your hurts to the Lord, and to pursue reconciliation quickly. As 2 Corinthians 5 reminds us, God reconciled himself to us so that we would take up the ministry of reconciliation. When we ignore emotional pain, we deny ourselves and our community the gift and practice of reconciliation and choose to harbor anger, resentment, and bitterness. We create a home for disunity. And it will eventually catch up with us.

Summers were hard because I found myself trying to unravel a bundle of emotions that seemed

indecipherable. I needed to unlearn the habit of compartmentalizing my emotions and pursue a faith that was presently embodied—a faith that didn't deny the necessity of communication, honesty, forgiveness, and reconciliation. If we are in Christ, we have infinite hope for reconciliation, but we must choose to show up for it.

### **Connection**

A few years ago, a friend told me at a coffee date that she really wanted to be my friend—wanted to see me more, talk about difficult things, and deepen our love for one another. Maybe that sounds like a strange proposition—friendship in our culture is often nothing more than surface-level shared interest, but friendship should (and can) be so much more. Our relationship did grow. It flourished. In the busyness of life, I knew she was someone I could call on, be honest with, and who would show up for me. I think about that conversation a lot. Her intentionality in wanting to pursue a friendship with me made me want to be a better friend, made me want to check in with her, follow up on how a hard week had been, and pray for her—all trappings of genuine Christian friendship.

One of the most disorienting realities of the summertime was the dramatic fall-off in social and relational connection. Despite what students often thought, being in their lives was an incredible blessing to me, not just to them. Hearing about challenges small and large, being in Scripture together, talking about theological doubts, laughing about how far they had come—all the makings of friendship wrapped up in a mentoring relationship. What I realized over summer was how much I preached the gospel and the Word of God to myself simply by reminding others of who Jesus was. Encouraging them encouraged me. I got to live in the story of the Bible day in and day out. I might be feeling discouraged in my own faith, but I found that caring for others, being interested in their lives, and pointing them to God inevitably deepened my own faith.

I have heard the phrase “out of sight, out of mind” when it comes to friendship. But when you enter a few months of being away from your primary community, that is a time to be intentional, tell them you want to know them

*Continued on next page*

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over the summer, hear how they are doing and deepen your spiritual friendship even in a season of being apart. Talk to a friend, ask them to pray, ask how they are growing in their faith, ask how they are struggling. Let the word of Christ dwell in your friendships richly.

### **Remember who you are and hold fast**

Author Paul Tripp coined the phrase “functional atheist” to describe Christians who find themselves living as if God doesn’t exist when something trivial happens. Especially when I am moving quickly and my schedule is full, minor frustrations can turn into day-ruiners. But why? When I am living a “my kingdom come, and my will be done” lifestyle, my identity is primarily defined by either what I do or how I feel, and not by who God says I am. This is dangerous turf. When the busyness stops, I feel down and unproductive. Suddenly, I am wondering if God even loves me. If He did, why would He let me feel this way? Another dangerous step. When my identity is driven by my performance and emotions, I naturally start to relate to God based on how I feel or perform.

I need to remember who I am and hold fast to the truth. I love the refrain in Hebrews—“let us hold fast to the profession of our faith, for he who promised is faithful” (10:23). If you are a Christian, your identity is in Christ. You are who He says you are. You are a chosen person, a saint, forgiven, loved, made holy. I once heard a sermon on just the word “benediction.” It means “a good word.” God speaks a good word over you. But, as I heard almost weekly in college ministry, I don’t feel it. I don’t feel like I am loved or forgiven. What then? We need to actively choose to live in the story of the gospel rather than one that is about me. We might know God loves us, but we need to whisper it to our hearts; we need to massage the love of Christ into our uncertain chests. We need to decenter the story off of us, recenter it on Christ, and choose to agree with what our God says about us.



**Anne Kerhoulas** is a writer for Christian Union. Anne and her husband, Andrew, have twin daughters and live in Hendersonville, North Carolina, where Andrew is a pastor at Grace Mills River. Read more of Anne’s writing at Daily Discipleship.



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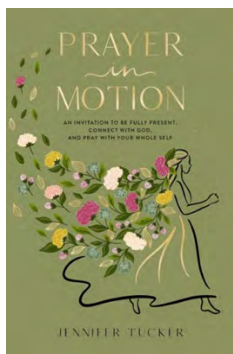
# FROM THE DESK OF DENISE RAMSAY

## GOD WALK

By Mark Buchanan

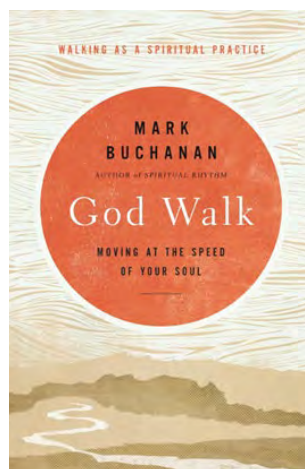
As I write this, I've just returned home from Alberta and some time with extended family. While gone, I did a lot of thinking about daily rhythms.

Before leaving, I was reading *Prayer in Motion* by Jennifer Tucker. In it, she asks us to consider some of our own daily rhythms. She writes, "Our rhythms tend to reveal what really matters to us. If someone looked at your daily rhythms (not the one you wish you had but the actual rhythms of your actual life), what would they say is most important to you?" I have to admit that line stopped me in my tracks.



Lately, I've been feeling tired and apprehensive about some upcoming events, and admit my daily routine suffered under the weight of it all. But as I thought about my rhythms, I felt convicted that some of them needed improvement, and set out to make some changes in my daily practices. Of course, I looked at a few books to help with this and stumbled across an old copy of *God Walk* by Mark Buchanan.

I enjoy Buchanan's writing and had not looked at this book for a few years, so I picked it up and started reading. God says, "I will walk among you and be your God, and you will be my people," reminding us of His desire to have a close, personal relationship with His people, walking alongside them in every aspect of life.



Get the book!



Buchanan shows us that the simple rhythm of walking can help us on our journey to wholeness and joy with God, to change our thinking one step at a time. When Jesus taught, He often did so while walking. It was then that He trained, tested, empowered, and released His disciples. He has also invited us to walk with Him in every way.

As I read, I explored how the rhythm of walking would promote healing, prayer, and spiritual growth. With practical insight and biblical reflections, Buchanan gives us the tools and encouragement to implement the practice of living at God's speed—to breathe and move with prayer and intention. It reminded me to slow down, spend more time in prayer, and rethink my rhythms.

This is a thoughtful and compelling book that made me think deeply about my walk with God. Its honesty and practical insights made it hard to put down.

I'll be mulling over these words for a long time, and probably while walking.



Review by **Denise Ramsay.**

Denise is an avid reader with a busy family life. She serves on our MLC Women's Leadership Team and works as Book Manager at House of James.

2026



**BIBLE READING PLAN**

Here's your opportunity to read through the Bible in 2026. This M'Cheyne Bible Reading Plan will enable you to read through the OT once and NT twice in the year.

(JULY)

## MONTH SEVEN

1. ☐ Jos 3; Ps 126–128; Is 63; Mt 11
2. ☐ Jos 4; Ps 129–131; Is 64; Mt 12
3. ☐ Jos 5:1–6:5; Ps 132–134; Is 65; Mt 13
4. ☐ Jos 6:6–27; Ps 135–136; Is 66; Mt 14
5. ☐ Jos 7; Ps 137–138; Jer 1; Mt 15
6. ☐ Jos 8; Ps 139; Jer 2; Mt 16
7. ☐ Jos 9; Ps 140–141; Jer 3; Mt 17
8. ☐ Jos 10; Ps 142–143; Jer 4; Mt 18
9. ☐ Jos 11; Ps 144; Jer 5; Mt 19
10. ☐ Jos 12–13; Ps 145; Jer 6; Mt 20
11. ☐ Jos 14–15; Ps 146–147; Jer 7; Mt 21
12. ☐ Jos 16–17; Ps 148; Jer 8; Mt 22
13. ☐ Jos 18–19; Ps 149–150; Jer 9; Mt 23
14. ☐ Jos 20–21; Acts 1; Jer 10; Mt 24
15. ☐ Jos 22; Acts 2; Jer 11; Mt 25
16. ☐ Jos 23; Acts 3; Jer 12; Mt 26
17. ☐ Jos 24; Acts 4; Jer 13; Mt 27
18. ☐ Jgs 1; Acts 5; Jer 14; Mt 28
19. ☐ Jgs 2; Acts 6; Jer 15; Mk 1
20. ☐ Jgs 3; Acts 7; Jer 16; Mk 2
21. ☐ Jgs 4; Acts 8; Jer 17; Mk 3
22. ☐ Jgs 5; Acts 9; Jer 18; Mk 4
23. ☐ Jgs 6; Acts 10; Jer 19; Mk 5
24. ☐ Jgs 7; Acts 11; Jer 20; Mk 6
25. ☐ Jgs 8; Acts 12; Jer 21; Mk 7
26. ☐ Jgs 9; Acts 13; Jer 22; Mk 8
27. ☐ Jgs 10:1–11; Acts 14; Jer 23; Mk 9
28. ☐ Jgs 11:12–40; Acts 15; Jer 24; 3 Mk 10
29. ☐ Jgs 12; Acts 16; Jer 25; Mk 11
30. ☐ Jgs 13; Acts 17; Jer 26; Mk 12
31. ☐ Jgs 14; Acts 18; Jer 27; Mk 13

(AUGUST)

## MONTH EIGHT

1. ☐ Jgs 15; Acts 19; Jer 28; Mk 14
2. ☐ Jgs 16; Acts 20; Jer 29; Mk 15
3. ☐ Jgs 17; Acts 21; Jer 30–31; Mk 16
4. ☐ Jgs 18; Acts 22; Jer 32; Ps 1–2
5. ☐ Jgs 19; Acts 23; Jer 33; Ps 3–4
6. ☐ Jgs 20; Acts 24; Jer 34; Ps 5–6
7. ☐ Jgs 21; Acts 25; Jer 35; Ps 7–8
8. ☐ Ruth 1; Acts 26; Jer 36; Ps 9
9. ☐ Ruth 2; Acts 27; Jer 37; Ps 10
10. ☐ Ruth 3–4; Acts 28; Jer 38; Ps 11–12
11. ☐ 1 Sam 1; Rom 1; Jer 39; Ps 13–14
12. ☐ 1 Sam 2; Rom 2; Jer 40; Ps 15–16
13. ☐ 1 Sam 3; Rom 3; Jer 41; Ps 17
14. ☐ 1 Sam 4; Rom 4; Jer 42; Ps 18
15. ☐ 1 Sam 5–6; Rom 5; Jer 43; Ps 19
16. ☐ 1 Sam 7–8; Rom 6; Jer 44–45; Ps 20–21
17. ☐ 1 Sam 9; Rom 7; Jer 46; Ps 22
18. ☐ 1 Sam 10; Rom 8; Jer 47; Ps 23–24
19. ☐ 1 Sam 11; Rom 9; Jer 48; Ps 25
20. ☐ 1 Sam 12; Rom 10; Jer 49; Ps 26–27
21. ☐ 1 Sam 13; Rom 11; Jer 50; Ps 28–29
22. ☐ 1 Sam 14; Rom 12; Jer 51; Ps 30
23. ☐ 1 Sam 15; Rom 13; Jer 52; Ps 31
24. ☐ 1 Sam 16; Rom 14; Lam 1; Ps 32
25. ☐ 1 Sam 17; Rom 15; Lam 2; Ps 33
26. ☐ 1 Sam 18; Rom 16; Lam 3; Ps 34
27. ☐ 1 Sam 19; 1 Cor 1; Lam 4; Ps 35
28. ☐ 1 Sam 20; 1 Cor 2; Lam 5; Ps 36
29. ☐ 1 Sam 21–22; 1 Cor 3; Ezk 1; Ps 37
30. ☐ 1 Sam 23; 1 Cor 4; Ezk 2; Ps 38
31. ☐ 1 Sam 24; 1 Cor 5; Ezk 3; Ps 39

# MLC CELEBRATIONS

## JULY ANNIVERSARIES

Elaine & Richard Sarrazin—July 9, 2005  
Adele & Wade Hammond—July 17  
Leah & Matt Cobb—July 22, 2012

## JULY BIRTHDAYS

Dianne Neufeld—July 2  
Sarah Patton—July 3  
Allana Lemke—July 9  
Emile Mutware—July 11  
Cindy Sather—July 16  
Reid Blaschek—July 21  
Mary Dyck—July 22  
Ashley Hiebert—July 23  
Walter Cranston—July 23  
Carol Fischer—July 27  
Chris Mbonimpa—July 27  
Liza Funk—July 31

## AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

Megan De Beer—August 2  
James Clarke—August 3  
Shannon Cranston—August 7  
Claudette Levert—August 9  
Rebekah Neufeld—August 20  
Jeff Rusu—August 21  
Jane Dyck—August 24

## AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES

Carol & Kurt Fischer—August 2, 1986  
Allana & Randy Lemke—August 7, 1993  
Carolyn & Don Murdoch—August 19, 1961  
Joyce & Hank Regehr—August 22  
Darcy & Phil Vike—August 23, 1975  
Yula & Bob St-Cyr—August 28, 2015  
Ruth & Arvid Olson—August 29, 1959  
Liza & Zach Funk—August 30, 2014  
Jacquie & Richard Blaschek—August 31, 2011

## WEDDINGS

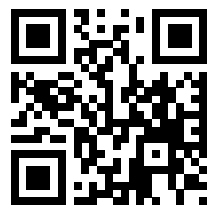
Congratulations to Jarrod & Katherine Hong (Charlton) on their wedding in South Korea, May 23. May God bless you in your life together.



## Put On Your Armour

"For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised. From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come."

**2 Corinthians 5:14-17**



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