



ON THIS ROCK

FAITH • FAMILY • FUTURE



21 DAYS OF PRAYER

WITH STORIES OF TRANSFORMED LIVES

VOLUME 1



REACHING PEOPLE.
CHANGING LIVES.
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CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

2023-2026

MONTCLAIR TABERNACLE:

LET'S PRAY AND AGREE TOGETHER FOR GREAT THINGS FROM GOD.

Are you ready for an adventure? Over the next 21 days we will join together to experience first hand the power of what God can do in the lives of those we worship with each week.

As you read remember two things, one is that we are all a work in progress and second, remember that the Kingdom of God is made up of individuals that each have a distinct story of the Lord's faithfulness and grace. Some of their paths are simple and some more complex, however God works through it all. As you read these stories and experience the Scriptures and devotionals that accompany them, think about your own life and how God has strategically placed you in this place at this time.

Pray about how your life, time, and resources can help someone else experience the kind of life change that is represented by these stories.

As you embark on this prayer journey, I am asking you to seek the heart of God. Don't just pray lifeless prayers to check a box but instead:

1. Pray fervently for direction for you and your family concerning your service to the Kingdom and this campaign.
2. Pray for our church, that we would continue to be led by His Spirit in all that we do.
3. Pray for Erica and I and our entire leadership team, that we would be focused on hearing and responding to the voice of God. That every decision would be bathed in prayer and be the right one for the sake of the church and for the building of God's Kingdom.

Our goal of building a new building was birthed in prayer and has matured through our Spirit-led actions. We need to pray to stay in step with what God is doing in us and through us. That is why I am asking you to join us in prayer. Our goal isn't just to build a new building, it is to establish a hub for reaching more people and changing more lives like the ones you will read about in this booklet. Let the adventure begin.

Let's Do This Together !



Pastor Brad and Erica Lewis



Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:6-7

DAY 1

HE WILL DIRECT YOUR PATH

I was blessed to be born into a Christ centered home. At the age of 4 while sitting in Sunday school listening to my favorite teacher, I realized my need to ask Jesus to come into my heart. I didn't do it that moment but as soon as we got home from church that day, I went into my room and knelt by my bed, hands clasped together and asked Jesus to come into my heart and forgive me of all my sins. I am turning 55 in a few days and the Lord has never let me forget that day because it was the most important decision that I have or ever will make.

My parents were pastors with the Assemblies of God while I was growing up. I loved growing up in the ministry, despite the many challenges that life can bring for the pastors and their families. Our family was married to the church and we all served happily together. I was very attached to our church family as well as my own family so when my husband was offered a job opportunity in Northern Virginia, I was excited but very sad to leave our church. We moved from New Mexico across the country to Virginia to start our new journey and I was concerned we might not find a church that we would love as much as our former church. After trying several churches, praying and trying a few more, I was driving down route 234 one day and this church sitting off the road caught my attention.

The sign said Montclair Tabernacle, Church of God. I did not know what Church of God denomination was about so I called my dad and he encouraged us to visit. My husband was tired of playing musical churches, and told me to just find one and let him know when I had! I nervously stepped through the door on a Wednesday night with my two children (at the time) and was immediately greeted with such kindness. I felt love and peace almost immediately, as if the Lord was saying "you're home". We visited again the following Sunday, this time with my husband in tow and it was him that said to me after the service was over, "this is it, this is our new church". Not only did we feel the presence of the Lord in church that day, but we were welcomed with love and open arms by the church family.

We have been blessed and enriched under the ministries of Pastors Gary and Brenda Caruthers and Pastors Brad and Erica Lewis. Our three children grew up in Montclair Tabernacle and were taught and mentored from the time they were very young by many wonderful teachers working in various children's and youth ministries along the way. These people poured into our children's lives, prayed for them and loved on them all the way through and still do to this very day! Montclair tabernacle has been a source of love, support, and growth for our family. We are family!

My spiritual journey has taken me to the top of the mountains, and I have been in the lowest of valleys, but Jesus has remained the consistent in my life. I can't do anything to make him love me any less. In my life, I have experienced his love, peace, forgiveness, mercy, grace, healing, and provisions (to name a few!) and because of all of this, I am compelled to keep pressing on in the faith! If you haven't accepted Jesus as your personal savior, I encourage you to do so, you will not regret it! If you are looking for a new church home, you've come to the right place. Welcome home!

Rhonda Pettera

READ:

2 Corinthians 1:3-11

REFLECT:

What "plans" in your life has God asked you to let Him control? As you read the passage, how does God comfort you through the changes in your life?

Who are two people you can come alongside and comfort with your story today?

PRAY!

God, I surrender my plans to You. I give up control. I trust You to be at work in my life and unfold your greater plan. Amen.

PRAYER FOCUS:

Pray for an overwhelming abundance of life change through all the ministries of Montclair Tab. Pray that God would continue to send people searching for a place to call home and that He would allow you to be an agent of change as you witness.

DAY 2

LIGHT SHINES THROUGH BROKENNESS

When I walked into Montclair Tabernacle, I was alone, hurt, sad, full of guilt and regret. I was just so tired of life.

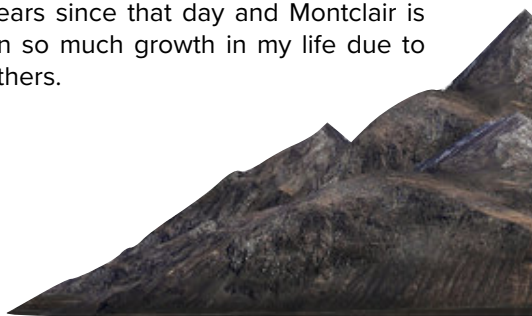
I was raised and churched in the Pentecostal faith. I was saved at church camp and all through college was very active with my church. But, after I got married, life just took over. A demanding career, moving from place to place, having a baby, joining the army, Christ was no longer a priority in my life. We tried to find a church to attend, but used the excuse "Not the right fit for us".

Relationships became broken, a divorce, and my son and I barely communicated. My son got in some serious trouble and had to face some pretty tough consequences.

FINALLY, God had gotten my attention and I felt Him say, "Beth, what are you doing?! I am right here!! Come back!!" So, one Sunday morning I got in my car and drove up and down RT 234, twice. I did not see MTCOG's sign the first time, but as I was driving to go back home, it was right there. I passed it, turned around again, and turned in to the lot. I slid in and took a seat near the back. All I could do was cry. God just poured His grace out on me and it felt like a cork on a bottle popped off. Folks around me put their hands on me and prayed silent prayers with me. I did not know them, yet I felt they were really concerned and cared. I then began a long journey of healing.

After that service I was greeted by so many folks noting I had not been there before. I was made so welcomed. Like so many others say when they first came to Montclair, I knew I had a church home after that day. I was only a visitor once!

It has now been over 15 years since that day and Montclair is my second family. There has been so much growth in my life due to what has been poured into me by others.



It is now such a pleasure to be involved with MTCOG's serve and ministry teams: Woman's Ministry, Prayer team, Discipleship Ministry and Choir. Through my pain, I have been able to recycle it and become a part of other's lives to help them heal and find their path past their pain.

I was reminded recently that the peace of our souls does not have to rise and fall with unpredictable people and circumstances. The peace of our soul is tethered to WHO GOD IS.

Hebrews 13:5-6 (5) Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said "I will never leave you nor forsake you". (6) So, we may boldly say "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear. What can Man do to me?"

Bethany Alexander

READ:

Romans 8:28-39

REFLECT:

What evidence can I see that God has taken my mourning and pain and given me peace and healing?

What conscious effort can I make to tell others about the way You have healed me?

PRAY!

Father, thank you for your work in my life, for the healing I have experienced and for the peace and trust that you have placed in my heart. May I be an instrument of your power and peace in the lives of others. Amen.

PRAYER FOCUS:

Take time to pray for the Women's ministries of Montclair Tabernacle. Pray that those women who come to our church with emotional wounds can find healing in Jesus name.



DAY 3

LOVE MAKES A DIFFERENCE

How did this church make a difference in my life? Wow! Where should I start and what shall I say.... Should I begin with when they reached out to my family through a Tuesday night feeding program that forever changed our lives, maybe it should be about the time I went to the altar and wept before God in despair without a word flowing from my lips, but by the time I left church God had laid it on the hearts of His people to be a blessing. That was the same year that my children woke up to Christmas blessings under the tree that people within the church had provided. Or perhaps I could share about the time God used some special ladies to encourage a then pregnant high school dropout to get her GED. Then kept offering encouragement until 30 years later I would finally get my college degree. I graduated college in 2020 as my youngest graduated high school. It was a tremendous moment!

There is truly not enough paper to write about how grateful I am for my church family at Montclair. They have shown us so much love and grace from day one. It has never changed but over the years it has grown. The love of God is pouring out of the walls at Montclair into the hearts of His people and it is undeniable. Love is what they know and love is what they give.

When I think about that love, it brings me back to how those ladies at church took time from their families to feed my family and other families. This is something that will forever be embedded in my heart.

They were not just filling my stomach, they were actually nurturing my withering empty soul. It was at that time when God began to quench my thirsty weary soul with His living water. I made the decision to go visit the church on a Sunday after being invited by those hospitable ladies and I've never looked back. It's been almost thirty-years since I first stepped into Montclair Tabernacle and they still love my family with the love of God. Thank you God for such a loving church.

Rhonda Carter

READ:

Jonah 1-4 (The story of Jonah and God's Mercy for Nineveh and Jonah); Hebrews 11:31 (Rahab's faith).

REFLECT:

Martin Luther is credited with the suggestion that God uses "crooked sticks to draw straight lines." Throughout Scripture, we see example after example of human beings, flawed and selfish and sinful, whom God chooses to do his will. Through these "crooked sticks" cities were spared, people were healed, Israel, was delivered from Pharaoh, Jericho was defeated, and giants were killed. Before we think we are unsalvageable, unworthy, or unloveable, we need to recall that the same God who saved and used Jonah, Moses, the prophets, Rahab, and Jesus's own twelve disciples, waits for us to run to him. He will save, heal, protect, and prepare us for his purposes and for his glory.

PRAY!

Lord God, Maker of Heaven and Earth. Place a burden in my heart for the lost. Show me how I can better reach out to others and not be ashamed to tell your story. Give me eyes to see people as you do.

PRAYER FOCUS:

Pray for our outreach programs at Montclair Tabernacle. Pray that many would come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ because they see Jesus in the things that we do to meet the needs of our community.

Homeless Ministry
Food Distribution
God Squad 2.0
Back Pack Bash
Giving Tree
Transportation Ministry
The Death Trail
Prison Outreach
Special Needs Care
And more.



DAY 4

FINDING A FAMILY

Montclair Tabernacle is the only church I've ever called home. I grew up here, I started coming to MTCOG when I was only 3 years old. I came up through the youth group with Pastor Brad as my youth pastor. I met my wife in youth group. The youth ministry of our church laid the foundation for the man that I am today. The leadership of pastor Gary caused me to fully seek a relationship with God and come to know Jesus Christ on a personal level.

Our church has always been a family to me, I saw through the leadership that church wasn't just a building, it didn't just happen on Sunday's and Wednesday nights. Church happened in hospitals, at funeral parlors, at graduation ceremonies and weddings. People who I had no other connection to other than going to the same church as me became family.

My best man in my wedding, the God mother of my first born, both came out of relationships that were formed inside of MTCOG. When I was young and struggling with my faith my church family spoke words of understanding into me. When I made mistakes they corrected me in love. When my wife Heather and I struggled for years to get pregnant our church family spoke words of encouragement into us, believing along side us for the miracles we would undoubtedly receive.

During my struggles and triumphs, through laughs and tears MTCOG has been more than just a building, more than just a church, It's an extension of my family. It's home.

Nick Stanko



READ:

Ephesians 1:5, Ephesians 2:19,
Romans 9:8, Romans 8:16

REFLECT:

The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ and the Father are One (John 1:1-4), and that He is also the only begotten Son of God (Hebrews 1:1-4). This familial term indicates God regards Jesus as a family member. Born-again believers are told that we, too, are members of this family (Romans 9:8; 1 John 3:1-2). How do we become a part of this family of God? When we hear the gospel, confess our sins, and place our faith and trust in Jesus Christ, we are at that moment born into God’s kingdom as His children and become heirs with Him for eternity. Being a part of the family of God is the greatest blessing bestowed upon believers and one that should drive us to our knees in humble adoration. We can never do anything to deserve it for it is His gift of love, mercy, and grace to us, yet, we are called to become sons and daughters of the Living God (Romans 9:25-26). May we all respond in faith to His invitation!

PRAY!

Father, thank you for making me a part of your family. You are a good father that delights in me as your child. Thank you for loving me and giving me courage and strength to carry out your mission in the earth.

PRAYER FOCUS:

Pray for families with our church. Pray that they would be strengthened with faith and perseverance. That all members would be unified in purpose.

Write down the members of your family and make it a point to pray over each of them.

DAY 5

I AM YOUR FIRST LOVE

I grew up in a Christian home, went to church every Sunday, and accepted Christ at a young age, but beyond that, I would say I didn't have much of a relationship with God. I went to a Christian high school, and every year they had a two-day retreat. My freshman year, a group of us got in trouble; I don't remember what we did that got us into trouble, but we were told during chapel time if we walked up to the alter to be saved, they wouldn't tell our parents, and we wouldn't get in trouble. We all said yes.....but I was the only one who walked up. Little did I know God would use that moment to change my life. I returned from the trip, and that Wednesday night at youth, one of the youth leaders said, "God showed me a picture of a small stream, and now the stream is starting to turn into a huge rush of water. That stream is God in you." It was then that I decided to really pursue a relationship with God. I was a "leader" in youth group and became a youth leader when I graduated. In my early 20s, I met my ex-husband; he wasn't a Christian. I knew better than to date him, let alone marry him but at the ripe old age of 23; I thought I knew what was best and how could anyone else be right.

Long story short, I didn't walk away from God, but I put our relationship on the back burner. We were a military family, I would take my kids to church, but we were never in one place long enough to make meaningful connections.

When we moved to Virginia, I couldn't find a church I liked. So I put God back on the back burner. I'd watch sermons online and still pray, but my relationship with God was one of acquaintances. When my husband left me to be with another woman, my mom recommended I see a family friend who did inner healing ministry. It was a three-day trip, we talked a lot, and I dealt with a lot, which started my journey to rebuild my relationship with God. I still didn't have a church I liked, but I pushed forward, God and me doing our own thing. At the end of 2020, I was diagnosed with aggressive breast cancer. I have spent the last two years with my head down, focusing on getting well and diving deeper into my relationship with God.

God gave so many promises and affirmations during that time, but at the time, I couldn't see how any of it was ever going to happen. I had been praying that God would put Christian friends in my life. Even though my relationship with God was good, I missed the company of other Christians. On one of my trips back from chemo, we were driving by MT, and I heard God say, "you're going to go there when you're better." In May of 2022, My mom and I walked into Montclair Tabernacle for the first time.

That day Eva introduced herself and was so welcoming, but what really stuck with me was that she remembered our names the next Sunday. Being at MCT has been a feeling of coming home. Having other Christians to pray with me, encourage me, and pour into my life has filled my heart. There is nothing like being in God's presence and seeing him move during service. It's like watching a flower garden bloom, and because of MT's faithfulness and obedience to God, I am one of those blooming flowers.

Michelle Galvin

READ:

Malachi 3:6-7, Ephesians 3:18-19,
Rev. 2:1-7

REFLECT:

First love for Jesus begins when the God-given tasting of His beauty and worth awakens a holy desire in us that refuses to be comforted except with God Himself. New, holy longings born of the Spirit of God lay hold of us, and we begin to groan and ache for more of Him until our aching is met with His fullness. These yearnings are not neutral. They alter the course of our lives and change our trajectories because they get to the bottom of our affections.

When Jesus calls us, as He did the church in Ephesus, to return to our first love for Him, He is calling us to return to our first longing and desire for Him—to induce that thirst again. Through this He can bring healing to every area of our lives.

PRAY!

Dear Jesus, teach us to love. May we reject anything that comes between us and you. Forgive us and take us back when we stray.

PRAYER FOCUS:

Pray for our Hospitality ministry, that others would encounter the acceptance and welcome that Michelle received when she needed it the most.

DAY 6

PRAYER WORKS WONDERS

In 1988, about 20 years into my faith journey, one of my uncles passed away. Shortly after that event, I was driving to work one morning listening to a Christian radio broadcast. The speaker mentioned prayer as a part of the devotional life. I recall getting a strong urging from the Lord which basically told me, "Jeff, you need to start praying for your family (as in, my parents, dad's uncles and aunts and cousins)." So I began to pray. This was at least every week, but sometimes more than once a week. In the next few years, I saw the answers to prayer begin to come in.

First - my dad was lost and for 20 years had been resistant to the gospel. Syble and I had attended a summer seminar where we heard a pastor speak whose church was near my dad's home. Months later in a visit to my dad, I invited him to attend church where this pastor served. Thankfully, he agreed to go. The pastor had retired, but again by God's grace my dad liked this new pastor. He continued to attend the church. About 9 months later, I got a call from my dad. He had understood the gospel, got some important questions resolved, and prayed to receive Jesus as his Savior. Praise God ! **Second** - During those months while my dad was attending the church, we learned that my mother had cancer. Dad tried to explain his new faith to her, but to no avail. In July of 1992 (8 months after my dad's decision), the church visited my mom in their home. She trusted Jesus as her Savior. She was baptized in October that year, and passed away in December 1992. But she showed good signs of genuine conversion before going home to the Lord. **Third** - I continued to pray for the family. In 1993, one of my cousins in north Florida was doing Bible study with another cousin, all unknown to me. I got a call that the younger cousin had an accident at work, and died. Quickly I inquired about the circumstances and learned the following. The cousin who died had professed his faith in Jesus on a Sunday, then baptized the following Sunday, and then the accident occurred 4 days later. **Fourth** - at the funeral service (which I attended) the church was packed. This deceased cousin was the president of an old car club that year, and many of the members were present. Also present was another cousin from Sarasota FL. This cousin, along with 4 other men, raised their hands to profess Jesus as a result of the service and the pastor's clear gospel presentation.

Fifth - several years passed. My dad's brother Giles, from north FL, professed faith in Jesus and attended church for a few years before his passing in 2000. **Sixth** - My dad's sister professed faith in Jesus in around 2003 a few years before her passing in 2005. **Seventh** - My dad's youngest sister professed faith in Jesus around 2006. Before her conversion, she was following new age teachings. She lives near my dad's youngest brother in south central FL. **Eighth** - Sheri, daughter of my dad's youngest brother, had been somewhat of a prodigal for years, having several broken relationships, and children by several men. She professed faith in Jesus around 2010.

Ninth - Jamie, a cousin living near my brother in Norfolk had a believing wife. He professed faith in Jesus around 2011, and served faithfully in a church in Nags Head, NC until his passing in December of 2022. **Tenth** - my brother, who was away from church after his profession of faith as a teenager, returned to the church, was re-baptized in 2006, and continues to serve as a leader (trustee, maintenance manager, and bookkeeper) in a church in Norfolk VA.

I continue to pray. God has worked slowly, but faithfully over the years in response to many prayers. One positive sidebar to note. The first of my dad's siblings to profess faith in Jesus found the Lord as a sailor in the US Navy in the early 1960's. I am sure he and his wife have prayed often for our family over the years. During my years in the Navy, in 1977, I got to meet the man who led my uncle to faith. One of those curious meetings that only God could have arranged.

Jeff Killen

READ:

Numbers 6:24-26

REFLECT:

Who in your family still needs what you have? Do you have a desire to see them saved? If so, are you praying accordingly?

PRAY!

Lord, I know there are members of my family that need you. Give me a passion to see them won to you and even become a part of our church.

PRAYER FOCUS:

Take time to pray for lost family members of those within our church.

DAY 7

GOD HAS BEEN GOOD

I came to know Christ at an early age. I really don't remember anything else. My parents became Christians and started going to church when I was about 2 years of age.

I'm sure the trajectory of my life changed drastically at that point, since I heard many stories of how my parents lived before finding Christ. I had a wonderful childhood and attended the same church until I left home to attend Lee College in Cleveland, Tennessee. At college, I met and married Gary Caruthers in 1971. We did Evangelistic work and traveled throughout the state of Florida for 3 1/2 years, preaching at different churches almost weekly.

In 1974, we moved to Covington, Virginia, and started a church and pastored there for 2 1/2 years. Our daughter, Erica was born there. We spent 6 months in Richmond, Virginia, as a Youth Pastor, 4 1/2 years in Winchester, Virginia as the Lead Pastor and the remaining 38+ years of our ministry at Montclair Tabernacle. Our son Jeremy was born at Montclair and came along 11 1/2 years after his sister.

I came to Montclair Tabernacle because I followed the call of God on my husband's life. My life has been a wonderful journey with Montclair Tabernacle being some of the happiest memories of my life. I love music, people, teaching God's word and I'm still involved in those areas in the church.

Our son-in-law and daughter, Brad and Erica Lewis are now the pastor and pastor's wife of the church and they are doing a great job. I believe the best days for our church are not behind us but ahead of us!

Brenda Caruthers

I was raised in church from my earliest childhood. I was a faithful attendee but not a born again Christian. God began to deal with me about a calling on my life when I was 18 years old but I did not obey Him. I ran from God for a while and living in rebellion. I finally surrendered at the age of 21 and dedicated my life to Jesus Christ. I met my wife Brenda at Lee College. We got married and traveled in Florida for 3 1/2 years evangelizing. In 1974 we moved to Virginia to start a church. We eventually became the pastors at Montclair Tabernacle for over 38 years until January of 2020. God has been good and faithful.

Gary Caruthers

READ:

Psalms 5:12, Matthew 6:23

REFLECT:

In order to live in the Favor of The Lord we must position ourselves in right relationship with Him in several areas of our lives. The Lord wants to favor those who diligently and fervently seek Him. Some of these important areas are: First-Living in the Favor of the Lord through Prayer. A major key in maintaining a right relationship with God and to live in the Favor of the Lord is through prayer.

In Matthew 6:33 the Word speaks of the importance of prayer- But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. (James 5:15-18 NIV) And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven. {16} Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. {17} Elijah was a man just like us. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years. {18} Again he prayed, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its crops.

Second-Living in the Favor of the Lord through Faith. God's Favor always follows Faith. Nay-saying and perpetual doubting are a choice to die in the wilderness. Jesus said in Matthew 9:29- Then he touched their eyes and said, "According to your faith will it be done to you". In the midst of these trying days Faith is required to receive everything we need. (Heb 11:6 NIV) And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

PRAY!

Father, you are good. You uphold me and sustain me. Help me to always walk humbly before you and be grateful for the favor you have given me. Amen

PRAYER FOCUS:

Pray for the favor of God over our church. Ask that God would allow us to see supernatural resources flow from many places.



DAY 8

HIS WAYS ARE HIGHER

Even in my mother's womb, I believe that God's protection and provision was over me (Psalms 71:6). My mother was very sick during her pregnancy and my parents decided to get an abortion. It wasn't until she was actually on the operating table of the clinic that she decided to not go through with the procedure. Born in Korea in 1975, we immigrated to the United States in 1980 in search of a better life and education for my siblings and I. Throughout all of the cultural and language struggles, God continued to show His faithfulness and favor to my family, and He always provided enough for us even in our very humble beginnings in this country (1 Corinthians 15:10). In the summer of 1990, I was led to give my life to Christ because I realized how much He loved me and that He gave everything for me through Jesus' death and resurrection (John 3:16). In college, I struggled physically with chronic back issues and my academics suffered as well. After months of unbearable pain and earning a less than 2.0 grade point average, I finally broke down and found myself praying to God asking for forgiveness for not fully being focused on Him. At the moment I began to pray and answered His call on my life (Isaiah 6:8), I felt the presence of God softening my heart and healing my body. After that prayer, my back began to get better and God allowed me to stay in school where I received my undergraduate degree and also obtained my Masters of Business Administration.

After I had prayed that same prayer in Isaiah, I could feel the power of the Holy Spirit healing my body but also empowering me to go and make disciples (Matthew 28:19). I began helping with a local Korean church in Blacksburg, VA leading children's Sunday school worship in 1995. I then served as president of Korean Campus Crusade for Christ at Virginia Tech in 1997 leading such activities as large groups and discipleship training. After graduating my Master's program in 2004, I married my wife, Helenann. We began to serve in youth ministry at a Korean church in Woodbridge, VA as we were living in Virginia Beach. Through prayer and the leading of the Holy Spirit, we moved to the northern Virginia area to more effectively minister to the youth. The Holy Spirit daily empowered us to lead youth activities such as missions' trips, weekly Friday night gatherings, Sunday school worship and classes.

After over 5 years of serving the youth, the Holy Spirit led us to begin attending Montclair Tabernacle. It was there that God revealed His plan for my wife and I to lead young adults at Montclair Tabernacle. Since 2015, we have been serving young adults and encouraging them to make deliberate life-changing decisions for Christ and to go make disciples at places such as colleges, universities, and places of work.

Since answering God’s call in my dorm room in 1995, God has taken me to new heights in my walk with Him. I’ve experienced things that only God can do and I believe this is the next step in continuing to seek after Him. Most recently, in August 2021, I believed that God was calling my family to move from Virginia to Georgia. This was difficult because we were comfortable in Virginia and there was a lot of uncertainty with the move. In Georgia, I was hospitalized with COVID induced pneumonia and was there for three weeks. During my stay, God spoke to me about Ezekiel 37. In serving the Lord, there were parts of me that needed to be reawakened and reenergized. The Lord spoke to my wife and I to return to Virginia to serve Him at Montclair Tabernacle. As a result, we moved back to Virginia as our home never sold! We were also able to have our deposit on our new home in Georgia returned to us! On top of that, my wife was able to return to her previous job as a school counselor as no one filled that position! In summary, I am grateful for all of God’s blessings and am excited to see what He has planned for my family. Currently, my favorite verse is Philippians 4:13. I truly believe that I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength! Amen!

Yong Song

READ:

Proverbs 3:5-6, Psalms 37:23-24

REFLECT:

I love the promise of God directing our path in this proverb. It is such a clear statement and promise. It leaves no other options on the table. If we do our part, He does His. When we fully trust God and look to God for His direction, He is there to give it.

PRAY!

Lord, you are the author of my life. As I submit my life to you, lead me in your perfect will.

PRAYER FOCUS:

Take time to pray for clear direction. Ask God to give you discernment and the ability to hear His voice.

DAY 9

FAITHFUL IN EVERY SEASON

I came to Montclair Tabernacle when I was just 4 years old. Of course at that age it wasn't my decision to be there, but looking back now I know that the Lord's hand was upon my parents' decision and was leading us into His calling.

As I grew and become an awkward teenager I was highly involved in the youth group with Pastor Brad and Mrs. Erica. Through the struggles of school, finding who I was, and discovering who Christ was, I had the constant support of my Montclair family. Pastor Brad and Mrs. Erica were always so encouraging and helped me to know who Christ was/is and come to the decision of giving Him my life.

As I continued to grow into a young adult I fell into the world and struggled with seasons of being a pew warming, lukewarm Christian. I knew who He was, but didn't have an authentic relationship with Him. I struggled with just playing the part and would just come to church because it was the thing to do and was "expected of me." Through these seasons my leaders and my Montclair family never gave up on me. They prayed for me, showed me nothing but love, and always pointed me to His truth.

The constant prayers and support of my church family and my parents did not return void. I'm so glad today that I said yes to a real relationship with Jesus! He is SO good, and His goodness was always running after me, even in my wayward seasons. I now have the greatest honor to assist my husband Dillon in leading our youth and lead God's people in worship each week. We do it all for the Glory of His Kingdom. We are so incredibly blessed to be a part of the family at Montclair Tabernacle. God is up to something BIG!

Danielle H. Lewis



READ:

Genesis 8:20-22, Deuteronomy 32:4, Psalm 36:5, Hebrews 13:8

REFLECT:

Life is made up of different seasons that help us learn and grow into the person God has made us to be. And not just the typical seasons you think of like autumn, winter, spring, and summer. But if you have been to places where each season is unique and beautiful, you will understand the goodness of God's creation that transforms before your eyes. We don't like change but nothing is static in life for long. We would rather stay on the positive side of things (laughing, loving, having peace, etc.). But as long as we live in a world of conflict, we must accept the fact that we cannot live with unchanging circumstances. However, these seasons of change should bring us hope because we know that God is in control and everything is designed to be good in its season. Our God created these different seasons so we would learn to rely on Him. God is faithful, and in these seasons, He is molding us into who we are meant to be. He is the Creator of all things good. He allows everything to work together to achieve His master plan.

PRAY!

Lord, only true constant in life is You. You have beautifully orchestrated every part of our lives down to the minute. While we may never understand why you would allow things to happen as they do, You knows what you are doing. You are in control and have set a time for everything in accordance with your purpose for our lives. It is all according to your divine plan. Everything You does is for our good and your glory. During seasons of change, i want to listen to You and trust your timing. It is my call to remain faithful even when I want to give up. Amen

PRAYER FOCUS:

Take time to pray for the many in our church that are going through seasons of transition in their own life. Pray that God would use all things for our good and His glory!



DAY 10

HE'S STILL WORKING ON ME

I grew up in the church with my father being a pastor and church planter as well as being in the military and my mother being an evangelist. I was the definition of the bad pastors kid continuously doing dumb things - doing drugs getting into a lot of trouble and really not truly caring about church or God in general. When I turned 18 I joined the Army as a way to get out of the house and serve my country. During that time I still went to church but I had one foot in the world and one in the church. I got out the Army in July 2015 and immediately moved to Nashville TN to continue my career in IT and pursue music.

During the short time I would experience a downward spiral. I got really badly addicted to cocaine and alcohol to the point I couldn't function without being drunk or high. During this time I was also dealing with an abusive marriage and the alcohol and cocaine was my escape to feel nothing. I got to a point where I would black out and wake up the next morning wondering how I got home. I tried to escape and made a decision that would make things a little harder and filed for divorce to get away from the abuse, but I still stayed in Nashville even though I had lost my job due to my addiction. I still continued to pursue music. I started to realize that things were continuing to go down hill when I would try to play music or write and I couldn't unless I was high or drunk. At that point I had moved out of my home to get out of the abuse but didn't have anywhere to go to so I lived out of my car until I could find enough money to stay in a hotel. At this point it was Oct 2015.

I remember sitting in my room opening the Bible and reading John 3:16-17 and looking up asking God if he really hasn't come to condemn me to save me from all this hurt pain and addiction. Oct 24th 2015 I sat in that hotel room and tried to commit suicide and was unsuccessful. That day I called my mom and dad and told them I have reached absolute rock bottom and have nowhere else to go. They told me to come home and I tried to leave that day but got into a really bad accident that made my car almost undrivable however I still left going 55 miles an hour all the way from Nashville to Fort Belvoir, VA where my dad was stationed at the time. I drove all the way there while doing cocaine and drinking. I remember getting to my parents and not a single word was said - we just hugged and my dad said "God has the rest". I locked myself away for months until Feb 2016 to detox and try to pick up the pieces, all while asking God why I had to go thru this. I met my wife Angie in March of 2016 and I was still struggling with alcoholism and drug use but also serving in another church helping in the music and youth departments. I was not living right, but God was working on me.

Later that year Angie had told me she was pregnant with our oldest son. This was very hard as we were not married and having a kid, we were told by the church that we no longer welcome at there due to this. At this point I fell even harder to alcoholism. On top of that all the divorce proceedings had begun but I could not find my ex wife as she had ran away and took my daughter. Wow, could it get any worse. But again, God was working.

In Feb 2017 we started to go to Montclair Tabernacle. We immediately felt welcomed and Angie and I knew immediately that this was the place we could call home. In March 2017 my divorce was finalized but I was only able to see my daughter 1 weekend a month. I fell into depression again, but God was still working.

Angie and I got married on July 29 2017 but I was still working thru alcohol addiction, but I knew God brought her into my life for a reason. We had moved into a small town house in North Stafford together. Eli was born shortly after in November 2018. We continued to live life and I found out that my ex-wife was putting Nova in dangerous situations and we immediately filed for emergency custody and won in November 2019 and have had Nova full time since.

God blessed us with our last child Jonah in Sept 2021, from the moment he was born he has had a struggle where we were continually going to the doctor. He was unable to breath due to his lungs being severely congested. Through it all we have continued to stay focused on God and there is no looking back. I have to be honest and say that I m still struggle at times with temptation but I know GOD HAS MY BACK and He is still workin on me to make me what I ought to be!

Josh Alejandro

READ:

1 Corinthians 10:13, Philippians 2:13

REFLECT:

Do you feel as though you are too far gone? Does your past haunt you and keep you from total surrender. Remember, you are a work in progress. He knows the struggle. He sees your heart and he desires to deliver you once and for all. Don't give up on him, because he will never give up on you.

PRAY!

Father, thank you for being my deliverer. You know the innermost parts of my life and yet you still love me. Help me to live me life in a way that pleases you. I can overcome, because you are still working on me.

PRAYER FOCUS:

Pray for new ministries to be birthed at MT that will focus on Drug and Alcohol addiction.

DAY 11

HE HEARS MY CRY

I really don't know where to begin my testimony, so I'll just do the best that I can to highlight my story. Looking for love in all the wrong places, led me to setting my feet on a dark and lonely road. From my innocence being taken and seeking numbness from the hurt of the world. I realize now that not knowing my true value led me to toxic relationships.

Playing with fire I eventually got pregnant. I wanted to try to turn it around get married to the father but he didn't want to. Thank God for that but hardheaded me got pregnant again. So now I had two kids by the same man who abused me physically, mentally, and emotionally and I was still trying to find love through it. Things got as bad that I literally fell on my knees and asked God to get me out and that if he did, I would never go back to that. Within a few months, God had open doors for me to move to Virginia.

My family has always gone to Montclair Tabernacle as far as I can remember so it wasn't hard to find a church. I was trying to get back my peace and happiness. Things started to look up for me and my children. But the enemy never sleeps. I have so much inner healing to still receive.

So often I've found myself at square one again listening to the whispers of the enemy. Crying out to God. Then the Holy Spirit led me to reading the Bible from the beginning, and it wasn't until that moment that I truly met God. Realizing how much he loves me and how much he has been there throughout my life still brings tears to my eyes.

I pray that I never become ungrateful for what he's done for me, and what he has brought me out of. My testimony still goes on and his love overcomes.

Cathleen Contee

READ:

Matthew 11:28, Psalm 38:17-18
Romans 5:10

REFLECT:

Though choices to do things outside of Gods will is the cause of our great burden, thankfully it does not have the final word. For the faithful Christian, we must live with a mindfulness of our sin and shame, yet an even greater awareness of the mercy and compassion of God. In fact, at our best, awareness of our sickness drives us to seek out a true and lasting cure. This has always been the pattern, as our reading faithfully reminds us today. God is in the business of restoring and healing even the most hurtful of pains. His ear inclines to those that are calling out to him for deliverance. He knows your story and he hears your cry.



PRAY!

Father, great as the storms of this world may be, there is no greater chaos than that which lives within the human heart. Help us to see our shortcomings for what they are, yet trust afresh in your great love and healing touch, resting in the promise that you love us and will never forsake us. Amen.

PRAYER FOCUS:

Pray for those that have encountered abuse and pain in their lives that are within our church. Pray that the healing touch of God would be felt in a way that will cleanse every ounce of guilt and shame.

I was saved at the age of 19. I was brought up in a loving catholic family where religion was a part of life for us. My parents encountered many years of illnesses which caused us to hunger for more of God. A dear family friend witnessed to my mom and sister, and I overheard their conversation and accepted the Lord into my heart.

We started attending a small Church of God, and we all fell in love with the Lord Jesus. Every time the doors were open, we were there. At the age of 21, I met a man in the church that loved the Lord and was called into ministry. We were married 3 years later and started our family shortly after. We had two kids and desired to move to Virginia. The Lord worked it out and we moved not far from Woodbridge. We attended a church but never felt connected.

We were then directed to Montclair Tabernacle and at the first encounter, we knew we were home! I met so many wonderful people in the church. The pastors, Pastor Gary, sister Brenda, Pastor Brad and Erica became family. Life was good in our new state, and we stayed connected to ministry and church life.

Then in October 2010, my life came to a screeching halt when my husband turned from God and left me. I went into a deep depression and didn't want to go on. Church folks would check on me and help in anyway possible but wanted to run away because of so many memories, but I couldn't leave the comfort of the loving nest I found at this church. It truly wasn't an option.

God has been with me every step of the way and slowly is rebuilding my life. I lost it all, but God has a great plan. I continue to stay faithful to my church and the wonderful people that would do anything to help the lost and devastated. I know God is using my story and has changed me drastically through my ashes. I have such a deeper love for people and devoted to prayer and worship.

So, if anyone is wondering if God works all things for good, I'm here to say yes and amen. I hope many would consider finding the love I have found in this church and leadership. God is doing a great work and will use this body of believers for a lost, hurting, and dying world.

I'm so excited to see what God has next for this church and all who attend and call it home. I want to be a part of it, because it will be amazing. Use me Lord Jesus, to God be the glory!

Camille Howard

READ:

Isaiah 61:3

REFLECT:

Does God make beauty out of ashes?

He sure does, but when you are sitting in a pile of ashes, it takes great faith to dare to believe this promise. Take that step of faith! God promises to walk with you through all that you are going through. He made that possible by sending Jesus to the cross. Jesus walked on earth and experienced life. He knows how we feel. We have been given such grace to cope with all of the trials and tribulations that come in our life. When Jesus rose from the grave, we were left with the Holy Spirit to dwell in us if we invite Him to take up residence in our hearts. He will fill us with such peace even in the midst of crisis.

God wants to take your mourning and replace it with the oil of gladness, He wants to take your spirit of despair and turn it into a garment of praise. You get to give Him all your heartache and in return, He blesses you His joy!

PRAY!

Thank you Father for Your promise to give beauty for ashes. Help me to surrender my life to you, to give you my despair and pain, to give you my ashes. Fill me with such expectancy of You redeeming my situation. Give me a renewed passion to study Your word and to trust that You are working in all my life situations and that You will cause good to come out of my trials. I want to display Your glory! Amen.

PRAYER FOCUS:

Pray for men and women that have experienced the pain of divorce and separation. Pray that God will carry them into another chapter of his amazing purposes for their life.

DAY 13

WINDOWS OF HEAVEN

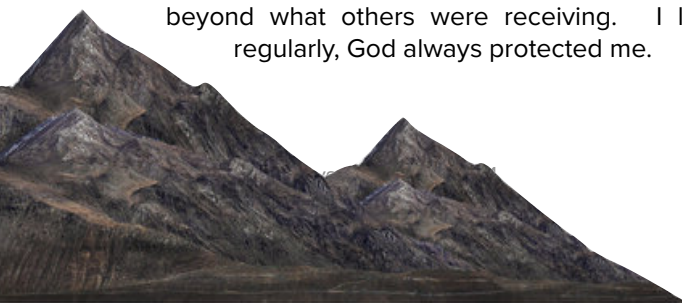
- I became a believer in 1968 and had strong roots in a baptist church where giving and tithing were taught and practiced.

For about 20 years, I practiced tithing and was able to even go beyond the tithe in my early years when I had only myself to support. I learned that God honors and notices every obedience we practice. For me, in those early years of my journey, His blessing came largely in the areas of growth in my faith, training I needed from others, but not any noticeable monetary blessing. I always had enough, but never any huge amounts of money.

In 1988, I got myself stretched a bit thin financially. I was in a new home paying on a large mortgage for the pay I had, paying for Christian school for our son, all on one income. Due to the financial pressure, I decided to reduce my giving to a tithe on my net pay, instead of tithing on my gross pay.

Maybe this sounds like a small reduction. But I immediately began to have stress hit me financially. A car blew a head gasket. I had a vehicle to sell, but nobody was buying. Then I had to repair it before I could sell it. After 3 weeks of this, I was sensing trouble, but I didn't know what to do. Then I headed to church. The sermon that day was on Malachi 3. I heard verses 9-10 explained, like I had heard before.

Then the pastor explained Malachi 3:11. Simply stated, this verse describes God's disciplinary action to those who refuse to give a tithe out of their income to the Lord. I left that day, knowing I had to change, and thankfully I did, as I returned to tithing based on my gross pay. In the years that followed, I continued to tithe. I saw my job threatened with layoffs several times, but it never happened. I saw a colleague laid off, and they gave me his job. I saw God bless my savings and investments beyond what others were receiving. I learned that if I gave regularly, God always protected me.



I met many people in financial stress who had incomes like mine, but they did not attend church. I concluded that they did not follow the Bible and that a failure to give from their income led to the trouble. So if you are not tithing now, I hope you will begin soon ! Start with 5%, but quickly increase it toward 10% as you see the Lord blessing, because he will.

Jeff Killen

READ:

Malachi 3:11

REFLECT:

God challenges us to prove that He means what He says. He is waiting to do business with us, whenever we're ready. He promises to open the windows of heaven and pour out blessing until we can't contain it all. The only delay is on our part. As soon as we trust Him by taking the jump, He will show us that there are many more trees to enjoy than we had ever imagined. God says, "I dare you to obey Me by giving properly." The question is, are you willing to take God up on His dare? Normally, God does not invite His people to test Him. But here, God throws down the challenge. He dares us to test Him to see whether or not His promise is true. When God dares us to test Him, we would be sinning to refuse. Of course, when God tells you to do something, it is not risky in the ultimate sense, because you know that He will sustain you. But from our perspective, it still seems risky at first. God is saying, "You begin to give to Me first, and I'll pour out the blessings in response!

PRAY:

Thank you Lord for your promises. Every promise in your Word is true. Why should I senates one from the other. If you are declaring that I will be blesses through my giving then I should follow you. Help me to be faithful and cheerful in my giving knowing that when I do your promises will sustain me and push back against the negative around me. Amen

PRAYER FOCUS:

Are you trusting God in the area of your finances? Consider today giving what He deserves and put him to the test. Pray for guidance on what you can do to bless the Kingdom of God through this local church.



DAY 14

GOD WILL BE MY SOURCE

I grew up in the Sierra Nevada Mountains in California. I became a Christian at the age of 12. As a young child I began dreaming about God and Jesus. I knew that He was very real. As a teenager close to graduating high school I went to youth camp where my camp counselor taught on FAITH. Those faith lessons were going to be put to the test as I put my hand in God's hand at that camp to let my dad know that I had made a decision that he was not going to be happy about or agree with. I really felt like God was telling me to go to Bible College. My dad was not a Christian and yes he wanted me to go college. As I held on to God's hand and gave my dad the news that I wanted to go to Bible College he was not supportive and said "if I went he would not support me financially." I went in faith and God met my needs because my heart knew that is where he wanted me. That foundation of faith teaching was going to be needed again later in life.

I married my husband in 1977 and we moved every 12 to 18 months for his profession as a welder. I have three grown girls and five grandchildren. As the girls grew we decided to settle down in California. I worked at a Christian television station and then moved on to work at the church we attended. I was the church secretary for 20 years for two different Pastors. I was in children's ministry, an Inner Healing ministry, and wherever I was needed.

In 2008 I once again had to return to the foundation of faith that I had learned so many years ago. Empty nest had happened. Our girls were making a life of their own. One day the enemy of our soul struck again. God exposed the inappropriate behavior my husband had shrouded himself in at various times in our marriage. God had enough and He told me that I was to leave and not take anything but my clothes. It took 30 days for my faith muscles to have the strength and obedience to walk on with God when I could not see, feel or understand the nothingness that stared back at me as I looked out in the future. But once again my faithful obedience was rewarded with His words.

I heard... “God has a plan, had made the reservations, and that He would be my benefactor.” That stepping out in faith that began is what I call my spiritual adventure of a lifetime. My faith muscles were once again to be exercised in 2018.

God told me to retire and that He wanted me to minister, not from the pulpit but to those in need. The dictionary meaning of ministry is “to take care of, serve, look after, nurse. Since I have retired, I have been living out of a suitcase ready to go when someone calls for help. I have not had a home church since 2008. Yes I have attended churches in the areas I have been sent to but could never really got involved. My daughter Michelle who I now live with and I started attending Montclair Tabernacle a year ago. Being here feels like home.

The love we receive each week warms our hearts. The diversity of all your faces is a loving peacefulness against the hate and discord that surrounds us all. The ministry outreaches to meet the needs of all those in our community and around the world matches my hearts calling. I am delighted and proud to call Montclair Tabernacle my home church.

Kathy Winters

READ:

Psam 23, Philippians 4:19,
Romans 8:28

REFLECT:

Have you ever wanted something so bad, you dreamt about it at night? Did you get what you wanted? Sometimes we need things we don’t want and we want things we don’t need. God is aware of all our needs and wants; he promises to provide. When we seek to follow God’s will, he will guide us. God will provide wherever he guides. The moment we lean upon our own plans is when we say, “It’s ok God, you don’t have to do anything, I got this.”

The Bible says in Luke 12:31 “But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you”. God always takes care of his people. When we are seeking to serve God and when tough times come upon us, we can claim God’s promise that he will provide and we can trust in his word.

PRAY:

Father, I am so glad hat I can trust you with my life. It may not always work out like I planned but as I walk in obedience to you, you order my steps. Amen

DAY 15

GATEWAY TO GREATER THINGS

After I left Pastoring my Church in Aug. 1998 I continued to seek the Lord for future direction and service. We visited several Churches and attended one for about a year but it was not the right fit. Of course then we came to our “felt like Home Church” and the rest was history. During this time in a devotion God gave me a vision.

Acts 19:10 caught my heart speaking about the regional spread of the Gospel in Ephesus, and God showed me a place, a building. It was evident in my vision that crowds of people were traveling by car, van, bike and so on to get there. You could see sadness and hurt in many of the faces, they were bound and needing help. Then from the building were those leaving who’s countenance was totally different. They were joyful, happy, and rejoicing as they exited.

God impressed me that this place was a “gateway”. People would enter in and not leave the same as when they arrived.

A few weeks ago during my devotion God brought this vision to my remembrance. God brought back that place to my mind. This place was a “gateway” chosen by God to reach the World. God impressed on me a number of things he was doing in this “gateway”:

TO THIS PLACE

- I will bring the lost
- I will bring the hurting
- I will bring the bound
- I will bring the broken
- I will be bring the discouraged
- I will bring the willing
- I will bring workers

FROM THIS PLACE

- I will send those Healed
- I will send those Restored
- I will send those Set Free
- I will send those Encouraged
- I will send those Called to Ministry
- I will send those Called to Missions
- I will send those Called to Teach
- I will send those Equipped as Warriors to Win a Lost World
- From this place my Anointing, Power, Love and Peace will flow.

God said to me, Robert you have been and are part of this place. It is Montclair Tabernacle Church! I am at work now. Join me!

So the “gateway vision” from 1998 was for 25 years later as he was showing me our Church! Our Lord is moving with His anointing all over this place week after week. Because of the faithfulness of leadership through the years and the efforts of many who call this place home and love our church, God will fulfill what he promised and I can’t wait to see what’s next.

Robert Welborne

READ:

Acts 19:10, John 14:15-20

REFLECT:

What in the world is Jesus talking about? How could we possibly do greater things than Jesus? He has raised a dead guy named Lazarus, healed a blind man, and is on the brink of atoning for the sin of the world on the cross and defeating death through His resurrection. How could any Christian possibly do greater things than Christ? The reference to “greater” does not, and obviously cannot, refer to greater in magnitude. Instead, it means greater in number. While on the earth, Jesus accepted the temporary limitations that came with a human body. Jesus was limited to being in one place at a time and ministering in one place at a time. After His death, burial, and resurrection the Spirit was sent to empower Christians to continue the ministry of Christ in greater numbers.

Today, Christianity continues to grow as believers in greater and greater numbers testify to the greater works of Jesus Christ. When Jesus spoke of these “greater works”, He had not yet died on the cross or risen from death and returned to heaven. Having completed His greater works, Jesus has now sent Christians filled with the Spirit to testify to what He has accomplished.

PRAY:

Lord, allow me to be a part of what you are doing. May I wake every day eager to carry out ‘Greater Things’ through my witness and testimony of you. May our church see greater things by each member serving others and recognizing ourselves as ambassadors for Christ.

PRAYER FOCUS:

Pray for laborers in the harvest. Pray that more and more people would choose to get out of the stands and onto the field. May we be faithful so we will be ready when he sends the lost.

DAY 16

DIVINE U-TURNS

I was raised in Church and saved at a young age. At the age of 15 at church camp I was called to do children's ministry. At 21 my husband and I got married and actively started serving in children's ministry and other areas. This continued after moving to San Antonio.

Fast forward to Covid 2020 which took a toll on our family. After several trials like layoffs, job changes and quarantine; we stopped actively serving at our church in San Antonio. We prayed together that God would lead us to a place where we could continue our calling and serve the body of Christ. We prayed and God opened a door to Virginia. Having never been to Virginia, I started to really pray and claim Romans 8:28 "We may face uncertainty, failure, fear, and suffering as we try to fulfill God's plans for our lives. But God is with us every step of the way. He is working all things for the good of those who love Him"

Our first Sunday in Virginia while still in a hotel we visited MTCOG. God moved and at the altar I fell to my knees grieved for the time I lost with Jesus. I repented for letting fear of the unknown and trials keep me from a relationship with Christ and the body. We got in the car and my children said Mommy I really felt Jesus at that church. My husband and I both agreed this is where God had lead us.

Nine months later we left Virginia and the church God had called us too. It felt like we were leaving our family. We moved to Oklahoma, and God however kept speaking into our lives. I had to stand on Deuteronomy 31:8 says the Lord goes before you, He will be with you. He will never leave you or forsake you. By March of 2022 my husband and I both after praying said we are suppose to be back in Virginia at Montclair Tabernacle. Again, God opened doors and by June 2022 we were back.

Montclair Tabernacle has given us the ability to serve in so many different areas of ministry. Our family has been strengthened but most importantly our relationships with Christ has been strengthened. Our girls are learning to love Christ and building faith on the word of God.

They are understanding and listening to the Holy Spirit and letting him lead. That his plan is much so greater than the one we can ever hope. MTCOG has become our family. We are blessed that God has lead us to be a part of a church that loves people and most importantly loves Christ!

Baylee Marsh

READ:

Isaiah 58:11, Psalm 143:10

REFLECT:

We live in a world where U-Turns are difficult at the times we need them the most, reserving them only for unusual circumstances (for safety reasons, of course). But living our spiritual lives before God is different. Living authentically with God, and for God, in this world requires innumerable U-Turns.

The good news of the Bible is that we can take U-Turns. In fact, God loves them. In God's world, U-turns are not only allowed—they are required, encouraged, commanded, and welcomed by the Creator who became our gracious Redeemer. And this offer of redemption is openly made to men and women, boys and girls—all people of all ages, all colors, and all nationalities.

Is your life driving away from total dedication to God? What sinful ways or unhealthy habits do you need to turn away from in order to follow God with all your heart? Remember this: In God's world, there are no signs saying, "No U-Turns Allowed." Instead it is the very opposite. God says, "Turn around anytime. Come back to me. Leave behind your burdens. Give them to me. I will carry them for you."

PRAY:

Lord, thank you for allowing me to make u-turns in my life. Sometimes I stray and sometimes I lose my way. But you are always faithful to receive me back and call me your own. I love the way you gently guide and show me the depths of my soul. Amen

PRAYER FOCUS:

Pray for our church to become a U-turn station. That many would find themselves at the altar remembering God and coming back to him.



DAY 17

HOPE AND A FUTURE

My testimony is simple and quick but its about finding the truth. I grew up always thinking there was a God but I struggled with the concept that if God is God and if He is good - why did he allow my life and many others lives turn out so bad. I didn't her the best of beginnings. There were some serious struggles. One day through some rough times I came up with an ultimatum to see if God was real and if my life was worth living for Him. I had a Bible and I started to read the Bible on my own to know the truth. When I started reading day after day God began to reveal himself to me. I saw things in His Word that I could personally apply to my struggles and to my life. He began to give me a purpose for living and my life began to change.

Soon after that experience I started coming to Montclair Tabernacle. I immediately felt the presence of God upon entering and I have never left. I know His plans for me are summed up in Jeremiah 29:11 - *"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.*

God is so good and everyday I am forever grateful for what Jesus did on the cross for me. I am also grateful for all those that speak into my life and believe in me. Glory to God.

Nuri Conway

I came to Christ at a young age. I grew up attending Sunday school, and for as long as I can remember, have always known Jesus as my Savior. That said, I haven't always lived for Christ.

2020 was the darkest year of my life. I wasn't attending church, and hadn't been for years. I was living in the world, and reaping the consequences. I faced physical and mental health problems as a direct result. I was even arrested at one point. All in all, my life was on a downward spiral.

In November of 2021, I fully submitted myself to the Lord Jesus Christ. I asked Him to come into my life and change things about me that I'd struggled for years to change. And He did just that. Shortly after, I began attending Montclair Tabernacle, and have met numerous people who have helped support my walk with Christ. There was no judgment, only a group of people who welcomed me as one of their own from the start.

Jake Talcott

READ:

Jeremiah 29:11-13

REFLECT:

This is a promise of restoration for the people of Israel in exile after the completion of the time allotted for their discipline. God had plans for their good and not their harm. He had plans to prosper them and to give them a future and hope. God gave them this wonderful promise that if they seek Him with their whole heart, they will find Him. They would be exiled for 70 years, and some of the Israelites would die during this time of exile. They would not all get back to Israel but God keeps His promises. Israel was restored and the people of Israel were blessed during their time of captivity.

Jeremiah 29:11-13 was written specifically for the people of Israel that were in exile but the promises God made to them are also made to us. God longs for us to seek Him with all of our hearts and to diligently seek His presence. It is in that secret place with God that we too will find Him. And it is in that secret place that God's plans can unfold in our lives.

God has a plan for you!
Are you in a difficult situation?

You can take comfort from Jeremiah 29:11 knowing God is with you in the middle of your difficulty. You are not promised immediate change of your situation but you can know God's peace in it as you trust Him to work in it.

God can restore all that was lost to you. I am amazed at the changes that God has brought about in my life. Some of the things that I prayed for, waited for, and hoped for a change in, have not always happened as I expected them to. But hindsight is a great thing and I am so blessed that God did not answer my prayers in the way I thought He should! Nuri and Jake discovered God through His Word and you can as well. Read, meditate, seek Him and He has promised that when you seek Him You will find Him when you search with all your heart.

PRAY:

Thank You Father for Your plans for my life. Thank you that You are with me in all my situations. Forgive me for when I don't trust You to work in my life. Help me to hear Your voice directing me and help me to choose Your plan and path for my life. Fill me with a passion to seek You diligently and to have excitement as I read Your word and apply it to my life. Amen.

PRAYER FOCUS:

Ask God to give you a hunger for His Word. Start reading more than just enough to say you read your Bible . Begin studying it as if it is your road map to life. When you do He will will show up.



I have been at Montclair Tabernacle for 24 years, I am glad that I my family found somewhere that could help guide and support me throughout the years of my life. I was saved when I was young and chose to follow God. I don't know of a time without Him. My relationship with God always was there when I needed someone to talk to or simply in silence. I am grateful for my church for always praying for me, encouraging me, and encouraging me into my purpose even before I even see it.

My faith has also grown even more by becoming a mother. It has shown me my capability to do things that I never thought I could. It has built a confidence in me that I could not see in myself before. It means a lot to me when people say how I have grown to be a great mother and I am doing great job.

The small ways we encourage people around us with the things we say has more power than we think. The power of life and death is in the tongue... our words are powerful. The encouragement that people have spoken over me has been so valuable. Especially in challenging times.

In Peter 1:7 "These trials will show that your faith is genuine. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold—though your faith is far more precious than mere gold. So when your faith remains strong through many trials, it will bring you much praise and glory and honor on the day when Jesus Christ is revealed to the whole world."

In our journey we don't always understand the reason certain things happen, but at through it and at the end of our trial we should always give thanks even when we can not see the whole picture. God has a plan for everyone and each of our stories and testimonies have impact on others. My prayer is that my life will be a witness to How God has blessed me and that He is glorified in me.

Veronica Wagoner

READ:

Proverbs 18:21, Ephesians 4:29

REFLECT:

“Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit” - Proverbs 18:21. We’ve all heard the phrase “Sticks and stones can break my bones, but words can never hurt me.” In my mind, that statement couldn’t be further from the truth. Words are powerful. We’ve all, no doubt, been wounded at some point by careless, unkind or mean statements. Their effect on our lives, even years later, is undeniable. No matter how much we deny it, it still makes us cringe to remember the taunts of the second-grade bully on the playground and makes us want to crawl under a rock to think of that rumor spreading through the high school hallways. “Death and life are in the power of the tongue,” Proverbs 18:21 says. The impact our words have on others cannot be overstated. One small comment or remark can make the difference between building a relationship up or tearing it down. We have the power to either encourage or destroy others with our speech. The Bible speaks extensively about the power of words – especially positive ones – and warns about the dangers of careless ones.

“A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger,” says Proverbs 15:1. “Pleasant words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the bones,” Proverbs 16:24 adds. Ephesians 4:29 says, “Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.” And Matthew 12:36-37 says: “But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.” A kind, positive or encouraging word at the right time can truly be life-changing. Your words hold the power to breathe an attitude of death or life into others – which will you choose? Let us strive to remember the power of our words and their impact on those who hear them. Think twice before making a negative statement, and instead find a way to pass along an encouraging word today.

PRAY:

Lord, I know my tongue often gets ahead of my mind and heart. I am quick to speak and I repent of the many thoughtless things I have spoken. I am sorry for words I have spoken in anger or in gossip. Please help me to see when I am about to speak without thinking and to check my heart. And help me to speak life into others. Amen

PRAYER FOCUS:

Pray that every one who comes to church recognizes the need to speak with love and grace.



My story began as a child brought up in church as long as I can remember. My parents were pastors and most of their ministry was at Montclair Tabernacle in Dumfries, Virginia. They pastored here for almost 40 years. I spent most of my life at the same church and didn't know anything else. It was a blessing not moving around like a the typical pastor family did. Over the years growing up my home was a secure environment. My parents had a positive outlook on ministry and faithfulness in their walk with God. Even with the ups and downs that can come with ministry. As a child and young adult I understood the challenges and victories that came with being in ministry.

Growing up a lot of things that other people were allowed to do was not allowed in our home. At times it was difficult for a young person to understand why those things were not allowed, however, I'm sure that protection kept me from a lot of heartache.

Growing up I did make choices outside of the boundaries that my parents tried to provide and that the church encouraged . Some of the choices caused learning experiences that I wish I could have avoided. But looking back and moving forward have made me who I am today. We all have to find our own way and discover our relationship with Christ.

Along the journey from childhood to where I am today I have discovered the goodness of God. I have tasted and seen his goodness. It hasn't come without struggles and lessons along the way. God called me into ministry when I married my husband Brad. We met at Lee University in 1995 and married in less than a year. I didn't always except or even appreciate the call on my life. Early on It came with resistance and self reliance.. I overcame fear and insecurities that wanted to constantly rule my mind and then my actions.

The battle in my mind at times almost won. BUT GOD and the community of believers that surrounded me pulled me though and picked me up over the years.

Let me tell you that the call on your life doesn't come without struggles and tribulation. Even Christ said you would face spiritual warfare and trouble. But we are victorious and made to be over-comers through Christ. Christ came to redeem and restore all of us. I have learned we are already fighting from victory and our hope is in Him.

My confidence came in knowing the word of God and using it against the enemy. The thief comes to steal, kill, and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. We are victorious!!!!

First Lady - Erica Lewis

READ:

Romans 8:37, John 16:33,
1 John 5:4-5

REFLECT:

In the seasons and years we feel weary, unseen and tired, it's important to not rename ourselves in the middle of a storm. We're meant to be more than conquerors, and "Overcomers" will be a part of our new name — if we don't give up. Being more than a conqueror means whatever the enemy intended to use to take you out — whatever was meant to destroy you — did not in fact destroy you, and it's now being used for God's glory. It means we don't rename ourselves in the seasons we feel forgotten and forsaken. It means we persevere to the other side of the trial and wait, expectantly, for our new name. Our stories are important. They're part of our testimony about what God has done for us.

But there's a second part to our stories. How are we overcoming? How are we being made new? What's God doing inside of us, not just yesterday or last week or 10 years ago, but today? Do our stories show God's ongoing faithfulness?

PRAY:

Heavenly Father, thank You for being an overcoming God! I know I can take heart because You have overcome the world. Empower me to rise above my circumstances. Help me cast my anxiety on You because You care for me. Give me Your power to overcome. Thank You for giving me the victory! In Jesus' Name, Amen.

PRAYER FOCUS:

Pray that many in our church will take their rightful place as an overcomer. That each person would see themselves from a position of victory and not defeat. In Jesus name!

DAY 20

AS FOR ME AND MY HOUSE

I was born at 12:01 on an early Sunday morning many years ago. My parents took me to church the next Sunday and every Sunday, Wednesday, revival, and prayer meeting after that. Or at least it seems that way. I was raised in Montclair Tabernacle Church of God. I have a few memories of our church before, but most are from 16120 Dumfries Road. Montclair Tabernacle has been my home away from home. My grandparents, parents, sibling, and various “aunts and uncles” attended Montclair. My family is engrained in the fabric of our church.

We did not have a lot of biological family in the area anymore, but I do remember my parents always telling people, “Our church family is our family.” Over the years, that sentiment still rings true. The stability of knowing that our church family was there for us, at times, was what brought me through terrible life events. Whether it’s deaths, births, marriages, or that in between time of waiting, our church has been there to stand in the gap for me and my family. They loved me when it hurt too much to love. They believed in me when my confidence was gone. They supported me when I didn’t think I could stand another moment. Why? You may ask. Our church is a place full of the love of God in its most natural form.

As a people, we are not perfect. We have flaws; but we are constantly striving to be better than before. Christ showed us what perfect love is. We are constantly looking for ways to show the world around us what we know. That Jesus loved us so much that He paid all our sin debts and that we can live a life of abundant joy in Him. The people at Montclair Tabernacle are so overcome with joy and gratitude for what God has done for us, that we must share that same joy and love to those around us.

God has been so good to me and my family. He has given us a way back to Him, through Jesus Christ. He has given me a rich Christian heritage of faith that I can cherish. He has given me purpose and passion for His kingdom. He has given me a home church that truly loves like Jesus “with skin on.”

Even though my parents passed away years ago, I clearly remember one time asking my daddy if we were going to church one Sunday morning. My dad said, “Baby, it’s not a question of if we go to church but when we get to go to church. ‘As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.’(Joshua 24:15)” I have never forgotten that. When I moved into my own apartment in college, my mom brought a plaque with this scripture on it. So, I would not forget. That same scripture hangs in my home today. There is no greater honor than to love and serve the Lord and His people. It is my privilege to serve and be a part of the Montclair Tabernacle family.

Elise Simpson

READ:

Joshua 24:14-15

REFLECT:

Within this verse, Joshua is making a declaration about what matters most to him and his household. He is stating clearly and without any doubt who he will serve. It didn’t matter to him what any other Israelite and their families decided to do he was establishing what was right for his house. In this chapter, Joshua begins by summoning the people of Israel together. During this time, he takes them on a verbal history journey. Starting from the time when their ancestors did not know God to Abraham. He then systematically takes them through a history of God’s faithfulness and delivery of the people of Israel.

He reminds them of everything God has done which has gotten them to this point and this leads to him asking them for a commitment. He literally asks them to choose and what will you do. They were still being blessed as a nation, as a whole, but there were individuals who were harboring foreign gods. If this situation continued their blessing would eventually stop. Joshua knew that to continue in God’s blessing it would require obedience. Knowing this I am convinced this is part of what Joshua meant when he said as for me and my house we will serve the Lord.

PRAY:

I ask you to send forth your Spirit to raise up prayer and intercession for me and my household. I now call forth the kingdom of God throughout my home, my family, my household, my kingdom, and domain in the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving all glory and honor and thanks to him. In Jesus’ name, amen.

My husband and I were in dire need of a home church. We were halfway through the pandemic and severe restrictions made gathering with other believers almost impossible. A year of online church just wasn't cutting it. Even though infection rates were down and vaccinations were up, most churches still weren't willing to ease up on their restrictions. My home church at the time being one of them. I was angry, hurt, discouraged, and felt completely abandoned.

Hebrews 10:24-25 says *"And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near."*

Clinging to this verse, I told myself there just had to be a church in Northern Virginia that wasn't neglecting to meet together! Spoiler alert! There was. It was 10 minutes down the road, off 234, a place I would pass every week without so much as a second thought. Montclair Tabernacle.

It was Easter weekend. My husband and I agreed we would find an Easter service to attend IN PERSON. My husband picked Montclair Tabernacle. I however was adamant that we were supposed to show up at a much larger church further away but we were running late. Looking back I can see the Lord's hand over the situation although at the time I could only focus on how angry I was. Angry that we were running late and angry that it wasn't the church I picked. I convinced myself it would be a huge waste of time and we would be back to the drawing board. In fact I was so angry I almost didn't get in the car...

I couldn't tell you about the message or what was said that day. All I know is that when I walked I was so overcome by the presence of God I couldn't stop crying. The last time I felt His presence in such a way was the night I cried out to Him to be saved some 13 years earlier. I watched in complete awe as people one by one dropped to their knees at the altar. Not in some fake, attention seeking, disruptive charismatic type of way - just real individuals humbling themselves before the Lord and crying out. IT WAS MOVING! I knew in that moment we were where God wanted us to be.

That was two years ago. Because of Montclair Tabernacle's dedication to train up and equip the body of believers - It has been an INCREDIBLE two years of growth for me and my family.

Matthew 28:19-20: "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

At Montclair Tabernacle there is a huge emphasis on being obeyers and doers of the Word. I watched my husband step into his role as the spiritual leader within our home which in turn has helped lead our oldest daughter to salvation! I would like to think I have become a better mother in the sense that I am so painfully aware of how much I need Jesus. Now there isn't a day that goes by where I don't humble myself before Him and ask Him to guide me.

God has given us a wonderful home church. We have also met so many wonderful people who encourage us and LOVE us. I can't tell you the amount of times someone has come up to me and asked to pray for me or my children. Through it he has blessed us, stretched us, and strengthened us. Shaping us into the family He has called us to be. We are truly grateful for Montclair Tabernacle and excited to see how God continues to use His church, THIS church to bless others. All the praise and glory to God.

Danielle Suszczynski

READ:

Matthew 28:19-20,
Hebrews 10:24-25

REFLECT:

Paul says it in the verse... "much more so as you see the Day approaching." The "Day" is the day of Jesus' return. We are to apply this verse even more so as His return draws near. Assembling happens not only in churches but also in church houses, small group settings, and gatherings with other believers.

There is wisdom and a warning in God's Word to gather "more so as you see the Day approaching." It is critical we do not forsake assembling together as we move further into the last days so we are strengthened and protected. There will be spiritual forces that resist the saints assembling but we will not waiver..

PRAY:

That many that left church during COVID that have not returned will get back to God's House.





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