



New Believers Devotional

28 DAY JOURNEY

EMANUEL CHURCH

YOUR NEXT STEP | 28 DAY DEVOTIONAL

DAY 1 — SALVATION

NEW LIFE

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NLT)

This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!

Ephesians 2:10 (NLT)

For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.

Welcome to your new life! The Bible tells us that God gives each of us new life the moment we receive the gift of salvation that He offers through His Son, Jesus. Receiving salvation means believing that Jesus is the Son of God who came to the earth to die for our sins so that we could be forgiven and restored to our relationship with God.

Deciding to follow Jesus is the best and most life-changing decision you will ever make. You might even feel overwhelmed as you step into life with God and learn what it means to follow



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Him. Be assured—you are not alone. We all learn and grow one step at a time as we walk with God day by day.

God is now at work in you, changing you from the inside out. Change can feel intimidating, but God promises that He only changes us for the better.



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DAY 2 — SALVATION

NEW IDENTITY

1 John 3:1 (TPT)

Look with wonder at the depth of the Father's marvelous love that He has lavished on us! He has called us and made us His very own beloved children.

Romans 8:15–16 (NLT)

So you have not received a spirit that makes you fearful slaves. Instead, you received God's Spirit when He adopted you as His own children. Now we call Him, "Abba, Father."

In our new life, God also gives us a new identity. We are now defined by what God says about us—not by what we've done or what others have said about us. God replaces old labels with a new truth: we are His beloved sons and daughters.

Learning to live from this new identity is a process. As we spend time with God and His Word, our minds are renewed. When we believe what God says about us, our thoughts and actions begin to change.



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DAY 3 — SALVATION

WHY WE NEED SALVATION

1 Peter 3:18 (NLT)

Christ suffered for our sins once for all time. He never sinned, but He died for sinners to bring you safely home to God.

Romans 3:23–25 (NLT)

For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard. Yet God, in His grace, freely makes us right in His sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when He freed us from the penalty for our sins.

God sent Jesus as our Savior because the world has a problem called sin. Sin is defined as “missing the mark.” All of us have missed the mark and fallen short of God’s perfect standards.

God is so good and so holy that He cannot be in relationship with anything corrupted by sin. Sin must be paid for in order to be erased, and according to the Bible, the payment for sin is sacrifice.



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Before Jesus came, people offered animal sacrifices to temporarily cover their sins. But Jesus came to offer a sacrifice that would pay for all sin, for all time. Jesus lived a life that was completely perfect, untouched by sin.

Because He was perfect, He became the perfect sacrifice—accounting for the sins of the whole world. Jesus' sacrifice made a way for us to receive the gift of salvation by grace through faith.



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DAY 4 — SALVATION

WE CAN'T EARN IT

Ephesians 2:8 (TPT)

For it was only through this wonderful grace that we believed in Him. Nothing we did could ever earn this salvation, for it was the gracious gift from God that brought us to Christ!

Romans 3:22–24 (NIV)

There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

One of the most unique aspects of Christianity is the grace we receive through Jesus. Religion tells people they must earn right standing with God—based on behavior and performance.

Jesus came to flip religion upside down. He did the work of making us right with God. Our part is simply to believe that His work was and is enough.

God's love is completely unconditional. He doesn't love us more when we do the right thing or love us less when we mess up. He loves us fully, all the time.



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You can be confident that regardless of your past sins and mistakes, God's grace now covers you completely.



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DAY 5 — SALVATION

WHO IS GOD?

1 John 4:8 (NLT)

God is love.

Psalms 103:8 (NLT)

The Lord is compassionate and merciful, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love.

Isaiah 40:28 (NLT)

The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of all the earth. He never grows weak or weary.

As you begin your journey with God, it is important to understand who He truly is. Many people carry distorted views of God based on past experiences or religious environments.

God reveals His true nature through the Bible and through the work of the Holy Spirit in us. Scripture tells us that He is loving, compassionate, faithful, just, merciful, holy, patient, and good.



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God is your loving Father. He is always with you. He is powerful. And He desires a relationship with you.



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DAY 6 — SALVATION

WHO IS GOD — THE TRINITY

John 1:14 (NLT)

So the Word became human and made His home among us.

John 14:26 (NIV)

But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things.

God is a Triune God—three persons, perfectly united as one:

God the Father

God the Son (Jesus)

God the Holy Spirit

God the Father is our Creator and loving Father. Jesus is the Son of God who came to save us and restore our relationship with God. The Holy Spirit lives within us today—guiding, strengthening, and transforming us in everyday life.



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DAY 7 — SALVATION

WATER BAPTISM

Matthew 28:19 (ESV)

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

1 Peter 3:21 (NLT)

And that water is a picture of baptism... It is effective because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Water baptism is the next step after salvation. Jesus calls every believer to be baptized as a public declaration of their faith.

Being lowered into the water represents Jesus' death and the old life being buried. Being raised out of the water represents Jesus' resurrection and the new life we now have in Him.

Through baptism, we publicly declare that we are followers of Jesus and choose to walk in obedience to Him.



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At Emanuel Church, we regularly celebrate water baptism and would love to help you take this next step. You can register for baptism at emanuelchurchbaytown.org/bapstims



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DAY 8 — THE BIBLE & PRAYER

WHAT IS THE BIBLE? (PART 1)

2 Timothy 3:16 (NLT) *All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right.*

The Bible is one of the greatest gifts that God has given us. It is a source of wisdom and direction for us as we walk out our journey with Him. The Bible tells us about God's faithfulness throughout history, His promises for our lives, and His plan for the future.

From cover to cover, the Bible is God's Word recorded by various people whom He chose at various times. Written across a span of 1,500 years, the Bible contains 66 books written by about 40 different authors. Only God could put together a book with a perfectly cohesive message using 40 different people, across more than a millennium.

The Bible is not just a valuable resource of instruction, but it is the foundation of our lives. Through Scripture, we learn how to handle day-to-day situations such as how to manage our finances, how to treat our family and friends, and how to work well on our jobs. Even more



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important though, the Bible tells us how to build our relationship with God and grow closer with Him.



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DAY 9 — THE BIBLE & PRAYER

WHAT IS THE BIBLE? (PART 2)

Romans 15:4 (TPT) *Whatever was written beforehand is meant to instruct us in how to live. The Scriptures impart to us encouragement and inspiration so that we can live in hope and endure all things.*

If you have ever opened the Bible, you might know that it is divided into two sections—the Old Testament and the New Testament. Everything that happened in the Old Testament set the stage for Jesus to come. The New Testament tells us what happened when He did. The Old Testament gives us the account of how God created the world, and how sin came into the earth and corrupted creation.

It tells us about the people God chose to bring His plans to pass and prophecies (supernatural insights) about the Savior that God promised to send the world. The New Testament can be summed up in one Name—Jesus. The first four books of the New Testament, called the Gospels, tell us about who Jesus was, how He lived, and why He came.

The books following the Gospels are written by His followers who were living in response to everything Jesus accomplished when He was with them. The New Testament books tell us



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about God's plan for His church and how to live out Christianity in day-to-day life, in relationship with God and each other.

We recommend starting to read the Gospel of John in the New Testament if you are new to the Bible. It tells all about the Good News of Jesus and how that changes our lives.



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DAY 10 — THE BIBLE & PRAYER

PSALMS & PROVERBS

Two of the most unique books in the Bible are Psalms and Proverbs. Psalms is a collection of prayers and songs written to God; Proverbs is a book of wisdom and instruction. Many of the Psalms were written by a man named David who was the King of Israel.

King David was a man after God's heart, according to Scripture, but the Psalms that he wrote tell us that he still faced trials. In the midst of the obstacles David faced, he was honest with God about his hardships. In the book of Psalms, we find encouragement and hope for our everyday lives, as we learn what it means to walk with God through pain and joy, loss and victory. Written by the wisest man in the Bible, King Solomon, the book of Proverbs gives us practical principles for everyday life.

From instructing us about relationships to handling our finances, there is counsel in Proverbs applicable to every circumstance. As you begin reading the Bible, reading one Psalm and Proverb daily can be a great source of hope and wisdom for you.



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DAY 11 — THE BIBLE & PRAYER

PRAYER

1 John 5:14 (KJV) *And this is the confidence that we have toward God, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us.*

One of the greatest gifts that we have received as believers is the ability to talk to God through prayer. Often, prayer is seen as a religious duty or obligation, but prayer is a privilege! We have complete access to talk to God and be confident that He hears us. We don't have to pray eloquent prayers – you don't need a thesaurus to pray.

We can simply talk to God like we talk to a friend. The Bible says that God is looking for people who will be truthful before Him, not people who are putting on a religious show. In the same way we spend time getting to know our friends through conversation, we get to know God through our daily communication with Him.



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DAY 12 — THE BIBLE & PRAYER

THE POWER OF AGREEMENT

Matthew 18:20 (NRSVUE) *For where two or three are gathered together in my name, I (Jesus) am there among them.*

Prayer not only helps us get to know God, but the Bible tells us that through prayer, God begins to change situations in our lives and in the lives of those around us. God could work independently if He wanted to, but God wants us to participate with Him as He works—one way we do this is through prayer.

Prayer is the act of extending our faith toward God. Jesus said that faith even the size of a mustard seed is enough for God to work with. If you are reading this, and wanting to know more about prayer, it is more than likely that you have more faith than the size of a mustard seed! Know that simple prayers offered in faith to God are powerful (Matthew 17:20).

The Bible tells us that God is near in a unique way when we pray with other believers. Prayer is powerful when we pray alone, but when we are unified with others, the Bible says that God's presence is there.



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DAY 13 — THE BIBLE & PRAYER

WHERE TO START — THE FIRST FIFTEEN

Psalm 119:15-17 (TPT) *I will meditate on your precepts and consider your ways. I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your word.*

Be good to your servant while I live, that I may obey your word. The daily habit of spending time with God is an important part of growing with God. This is not a religious ritual that we participate in, but it's an intentional investment into our relationship with God. Just as we set time aside to spend with our friends and family to strengthen our relationships with them, as we spend time with God through reading His Word and prayer, our relationship is strengthened.

A simple way to put this into practice is by implementing something we call the First Fifteen. Set aside the first fifteen minutes of your day to read the Bible and spend time with Jesus through prayer.

Practically, this looks like finding a place without distractions like a specific room in your house, a coffee shop, or even somewhere outside, where you can be with God. Begin to talk to Him like you would a friend. After you talk, wait to see if He would impress anything on your heart—this



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is a two-way conversation! Grab your Bible and read a chapter or two of Scripture, paying attention to anything that jumps out at you.

During this time, keep a journal of what you are praying for and what you feel God is speaking to you. It is amazing to reflect back and see what God has done in your life.



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DAY 14 — THE BIBLE & PRAYER

THE POWER OF DECLARATIONS

Proverbs 18:21 (AMP) *Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruits...*

Did you know that the words you speak have power? The Bible even says that words have the power of life and death! Because words are so powerful, we should begin to change how we talk about ourselves and our circumstances. When we align our words with the truth of what God says, His life and peace will begin to transform our lives.

Here are a few powerful declarations to begin saying over yourself:

- I am not a victim of my past, but an overcomer through Jesus. (1 Corinthians 15:57)
- I am a new creation in Christ. (2 Corinthians 5:17)
- I have been strategically designed and equipped for my unique purpose. (Psalm 139:14)



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- I am free from all strongholds, addictions, and bad habits that have held me back. (2 Corinthians 3:17)

- I am completely loved and accepted by God. (Romans 8:38-39)

We encourage you to take hold of these promises and begin declaring them over yourself in faith.

Write a few of these declarations on sticky notes and put them in your house, your car, and your workspace. As we constantly keep what God says about us in focus, our thoughts begin to align with the truth of God's Word.



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DAY 15 — RELATIONSHIPS

TAKING INVENTORY

1 Thessalonians 5:11 (NLT) *So encourage each other and build each other up, just as you are already doing.*

As Jesus was carrying out His work on the earth, He didn't do it alone. In fact, He chose a core team of 12 people, all with varying personalities and strengths, to be with Him as He ministered. If Jesus placed a high value on relationships, how much more should we!

Taking inventory of your current relationships is a great way to determine what type of relationships you need to focus on developing and which ones you might need to separate yourself from.

Here are a few helpful questions to ask yourself while evaluating your relationships:

- Do I feel encouraged or inspired to know God more after spending time with this person?



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- Do I feel weighed down with negativity or uplifted with encouragement after being with this person?
- Is this a person I can trust with the things that are important to me?

After answering these questions, you probably have an idea if the relationship is worth investing your time and energy into. If it's not, then you might need to step away from the relationship for a season. You do not need to completely cut off friends or family, but you sometimes need to place a higher priority on different relationships in order to grow in your faith.

One of the ways you can find encouraging relationships at Emanuel is by joining an E-Group. Go to emanuelchurchbaytown/groups to find a group.



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DAY 16 — RELATIONSHIPS

RELATIONSHIPS WORTH THE INVESTMENT

Proverbs 27:17 (NIV) *As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.*

Romans 12:5 (NLT) *So in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.*

God created us with a need for connection through meaningful relationships. In Genesis 2:18 God gave Adam, the first man, a partner because it was not good for him to be alone. God provided for Adam's need for connection, and He does the same for us today through the community of our local church.

As you walk out life with God, one of your greatest sources of growth and encouragement will come from the people that you surround yourself with. Healthy relationships are the context in which our God-given needs for love, comfort, support, understanding, and accountability are met.



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In the places where you have closed off people and isolated yourself, we encourage you to begin to embrace the relationships in your life, especially those that you find at your local church. We need each other!



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DAY 17 — RELATIONSHIPS

RELATIONSHIP CIRCLES

1 Corinthians 12:18-19 (TPT) *But God has carefully designed each member and placed it in the body to function as He desires. A diversity is required, for if the body consisted of one single part, there wouldn't be a body at all!*

During Jesus' time of ministry, He chose a core team of twelve people, all with varying personalities and strengths to travel with Him. Just as Jesus placed value on relationships, so should we!

There are three types of relationship circles that are important for all of us to have—mentor relationships, peer relationships, and relationships with people who you can invest into.

Mentors are people who can speak wisdom and encouragement into your life because they are further along in their journey than you are. Peers are those who are in the same stage of life as you. You are able to relate with your peers and offer mutual support. People who you can invest into are those who you can share wisdom and encouragement with. You get to cheer them on as they navigate seasons of life that you have already walked through.



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See if you can identify these three types of relationships in your life. If you notice that you are lacking in one or more of these relationships, begin looking for people who you can develop these relationships with. As we both receive and give in relationships, we experience fulfillment, encouragement, and growth!



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DAY 18 — RELATIONSHIPS

STEPPING INTO FORGIVENESS

Ephesians 4:32 (CSB) *Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.*

One of the greatest challenges we face in relationships is holding onto unforgiveness towards others. Maybe you have been hurt by a parent, friend, or spouse, and you feel like the hurt is too deep to forgive. Although the wounds caused by others' actions and words are very real, God is more than able to heal our hearts and bind up our places of brokenness if we are willing to release the hurt to Him.

By holding onto anger and unforgiveness, it might seem that we are being justified, but the truth is that we are only hurting ourselves. As we allow unforgiveness and bitterness to take place in our hearts, what was an initial wound turns into a chronic issue that continually affects our lives.

As we begin to walk in forgiveness, we find freedom and joy in our relationships that we didn't know were missing. Embracing forgiveness is not for the benefit of the person who caused pain, it is for the person who experienced pain.



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It is a process, often requiring us to daily choose to forgive, but God is faithful to heal us and bring justice as we trust Him. When it feels like you cannot find the strength to forgive, be encouraged that God is with you strengthening and empowering you!

A prayer to release forgiveness: *"Lord, I release _____ for _____. I need your strength to walk in forgiveness, and I ask that You would heal the heartache and pain I have experienced. I trust You to be my Defender. In Jesus' Name, Amen."*



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DAY 19 — RELATIONSHIPS

OVERLOOKING OFFENSES

Proverbs 19:11 (NLT) *Sensible people control their temper; they earn respect by overlooking wrongs.*

Hebrews 12:15 (TPT) *And make sure no one lives with a root of bitterness sprouting within them which will only cause trouble and poison the hearts of many.*

No one is perfect—we have all realized this by now! We make mistakes, say things without thinking, and take thoughtless action at times. Although we are often quick to overlook our own mistakes, overlooking others' mistakes can be one of the most challenging parts of our relationships. If we can learn to continually trust God, releasing our offences to Him, our relationships will grow stronger, deeper, and richer.

Holding onto offence allows bitterness to take root in our hearts. The Bible says that if we hold onto bitterness, it begins to poison our lives. Bitterness will taint our perspective of life, convincing us that everyone is against us. It will steal our joy, peace, and relationships if we continue to dwell on the wrongs that others have done towards us.



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Don't allow one event to continue to affect your life—practice releasing offense and bitterness as soon as you recognize it in your life. As you do this, you will walk in a greater sense of peace and joy.

A prayer to let go of bitterness: *"Father, I release the bitterness I have been holding onto. I welcome You into the places of pain I have experienced and ask You to heal me in the way that only you can. In Jesus' Name, Amen."*



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DAY 20 — RELATIONSHIPS

A HEART OF HONOR

Romans 12:10 (ESV) *Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor.*

Honor is one of the most important keys to having healthy relationships. When we begin to be intentional about honoring the people around us, we will see relationships rise to new levels.

What does honoring others look like practically?

Speaking words of life and encouragement over people is one of the most powerful ways that you can show honor. You might be waiting to honor someone until they honor you, but you can be the one to change the relationship. People will rise to the level of encouragement we give them. Look for the gifts and talents in your family, your friends, and your co-workers, and call them out. Pull out the potential in the people around you.

We also show honor to those around us by covering them. The Bible says that love covers others. We cover others by not talking about their faults or exposing their mistakes to other



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people. When you face challenges in your relationships, choose not to allow conflict to create strife and division in your world, but choose to cover others with love as you work through whatever you may be facing.

Being a person who honors and covers others is a daily choice, but if you begin to develop these characteristics in your life, your relationships will reach new levels.

Think about your relationships and choose someone you can be intentional about honoring. Ask God to show you how you can best honor them.



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DAY 21 — RELATIONSHIPS

THE PROMISE OF BEING PLANTED

Psalm 92:13 (NKJV) *Those who are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God.*

The principle of being planted—of being invested in your local church—is one of the most powerful principles in the Bible. Scripture says that when we are planted, we will flourish. Through involvement in the community of our local church, we grow spiritually and find fulfillment.

Being planted is not just about going to church, it is about building relationships with other believers. Through relationships with people on the same God-journey, we get to do life with those around us. We become family with them as we both give and receive support.

Psalms 92:13 paints a picture of someone being planted or rooted when they invest themselves into the house of God, the local church. If you have ever seen a tree trying to withstand the forces of a hurricane, you know how important it is for the tree to have a strong root system. The tree might shake, it might bend, but because it has a strong support system it does not fall. This



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same principle applies to us as believers—if we want to live lives of strength and victory, even in times of adversity, we must cultivate faith-based, supportive relationships around us.

At Emanuel, we engage in community through our E-Groups and through our volunteer team, The Best Team. Go to www.emanuelchurchbaytown.com/groups for more information about our E-Groups and www.emanuelchurchbaytown.com/serve for information about The Best Team.



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DAY 22 — THE BEST IS YET TO COME

EMANUEL HISTORY

Emanuel Church has a legacy worth honoring.

This house began over 30 years ago, with a small group of people meeting in a mission-style setting, hungry to worship God and reach Baytown with the gospel.

That small gathering grew into a church in the 1980s, meeting in a small building on Pruitt Street in historic Baytown. Families were raised there. People were saved, healed, and disciplined there. That building represented faith, sacrifice, and obedience.

In the 2000s, the church moved into the building we call home today — carrying the same heart, but expanding the vision for a new generation.

And in 2020, during one of the most challenging moments in our world, Pastor Edna and I stepped into the role of Lead Pastors.

Since then, we've been honored to shepherd, lead, and continue building on the foundation that generations before us faithfully laid. We're here today because of decades



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of prayer, generosity, commitment, and faithfulness from people who believed in this house long before many of us arrived.

We believe the best is yet to come for Emanuel Church, and we believe the best is yet to come for you! You've begun a journey with Jesus, and we're grateful you've chosen to walk out this journey at Emanuel. This week you will have an opportunity to learn how you can influence the Gospel working in your life.



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DAY 23 — THE BEST IS YET TO COME

LIVING WITH PURPOSE

Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV) *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 a future and a hope.*

By now, you may be familiar with Emanuel Church’s mission statement: Emanuel Church exists to help people encounter Jesus, grow in their faith, engage in meaningful community, and live out their God-given purpose by making a difference in the world.

The Bible says that we use faith to see the things we hope to become our reality, hoping for things we cannot yet see. We have placed our faith in Jesus, and now we are hoping for life eternal with Him. You have faith in the chair you’re sitting in, and you hope to not fall to the ground.

What would a life filled with the hope of Jesus look like? Blessed, worry-free, secure... Jesus’ hope isn’t this effervescent, whimsical cloud painted in shades of cotton candy, that if we try hard enough, we can grasp some of the sweet, blue and pink airy hope. That is not it at all! Jesus has a plan, a whole active plan, just for you! This plan is fully loaded with hope for your



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life. You've accepted Him as your Lord and Savior, and you now have access to Him and that active hope in your life.

Now that you're here, your life can be the biggest beacon of hope for those you encounter throughout your life. How you live, how you speak, how you treat people –all of these things and more are ways you can show that you have accessed the hope of Jesus and that it is available to others.

Just like the church's vision statement, you can spread the hope of Jesus by making a difference in the world.



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DAY 24 — THE BEST IS YET TO COME

GENEROSITY

Proverbs 11:25 (NLT) *The generous will prosper; those who refresh others will themselves be refreshed.*

Generosity is one of the cornerstones of Emanuel Church. As a church, we make it a priority to be generous with our time, talents, and treasure.

You can be generous with time through relationships with your family and friends – take time to listen to a friend going through a hard time, have an afternoon in the park with your kids, set aside time proposed to share with your spouse. With your talents, you have the opportunity to serve in different areas at Emanuel on The Best Team. Being generous with treasure most often is represented through paying your tithe and giving your offering. Tithe is the first 10% of your income given back to God. Our pastors have often said that living off of my blessed 90% is better than having 100% of my income without God – My 90 and God's 10 is better than my 100.



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Generosity is a way of life at Emanuel. You can be a part of this way of life by joining The Legacy Builders Team or going on a mission trip and giving to those we're connected with throughout the world. Living a generous life is possible for you and your family.



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DAY 25 — THE BEST IS YET TO COME

GENERATIONS

Psalms 145:4 (NIV) One generation commends your works to another; they tell of your mighty acts.

At Emanuel,, we know that every season of life holds great significance. There is a need for people across generations, backgrounds, and cultures to participate in the church body.

We are passionate about intentionally bridging any gaps that might exist between generations. Primarily, we do this through our serving opportunities. On any Sunday, you will see volunteers ranging from elementary school age up to seniors (65+) serving alongside each other. We believe that every season holds great significance, and we want each person to embrace that significance at whatever age and whatever stage of life they find themselves in.

Just as the Bible talks about, it is so important that we be the example of what it looks like to walk faithfully with the Lord, such as we have in the lives of those who are seasoned in the faith. We also need the passion and energy of those who are young, both in age and in faith, to bring



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a sense of vitality to our local body of believers. The kingdom of God is strictly inclusive, welcoming all generations to play a part — we want to reflect this here at Emanuel.



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DAY 26 — THE BEST IS YET TO COME

EXCELLENCE

Daniel 6:3 (ESV) *Then this Daniel became distinguished above all the other high officials and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him. And the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom.*

At Emanuel, one of the key values that has shaped our culture is excellence. As believers, we believe that we are called to live, work, and create with a higher standard. In the Bible, we read that Daniel, a man who worked for a king, had a spirit of excellence, which propelled him to greater status and promotion. He was distinguished because of his character.

One of the main aspects of excellence is integrity. Simply, this is us living with authenticity and honesty in every area of our lives. Does this mean that we must be perfect? Not at all! It means that we give our best in every area, and when we do mess up, we don't try to hide it or sweep our mistakes under the rug. We fully embrace God's grace and strength as we move forward, learning and growing.



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As we begin to grasp the grace and love that God has shown us, we can't help but respond with a thankful heart—wanting to passionately give back to Him the best of ourselves we have to offer. Practically, this looks like not cutting corners on your job, but doing your best even if it goes unnoticed. It looks like not gossiping about your friends behind their back even though they might never know. It looks like going the extra mile, being attentive to details, and finishing a task fully.

Through these simple acts, we bring honor to God and set ourselves apart as people who are unwilling to compromise regardless of the culture around us.



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DAY 27 — THE BEST IS YET TO COME

DISCOVER YOUR STRENGTH

Romans 12:6-8 (NLT) *In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you. If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well. If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly.*

God created us each with a special purpose in mind. We all have a set of gifts and talents that are unique to us! The Bible says that we have these abilities so that we can walk in the purpose God prepared for us before we were even born. Not only were we created for a special purpose, but God equipped us with everything we need to fulfill that purpose.

In Belong Membership Class, you'll be hearing about different teams that will highlight some of the strengths you possess. Within these strengths, you'll begin to see yourself in new ways and understand where your purpose can be carried out in your life, in your family, and in your church.



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As we learn our strengths – our gifts and the things we are good at – we can learn to develop them as we work to fulfill the special things God has called us to do.

Take our Belong Membership Class during the last Sunday of the month. For more information visit emanuelchurchbaytown.org/yournextstep.



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DAY 28 — THE BEST IS YET TO COME

THE BEST IS YET TO COME

Ephesians 3:20 (TPT) *Never doubt God's mighty power to work in you and accomplish all this. He will achieve infinitely more than your greatest request, your most unbelievable dream, and exceed your wildest imagination! He will outdo them all, for his miraculous power constantly energizes you.*

Today, we simply want to tell you how proud we are of your decision to step into a relationship with Jesus. It is one decision that we can promise you will never regret. Let Him be the foundation on which you build your life. You will discover purpose, peace, and freedom that surpasses everything you've known yet.

Attend Emanuel Church faithfully for one year and your life will never be the same because of what God is going to do in your heart and mind. Consistency is key, come as often as you can. Plant yourself in the house. We are here for you every step of the way!

We are so excited to see all that God is already doing and all that He will do in your life as you follow Him. Welcome to the Emanuel Family, the best is yet to come!