**Series OVERVIEW**

“turn-the-page”

1. *(verb)* To proceed to the next page in a book.
2. *(idiom)* To move on to new activities or involvements; to make a fresh start.

In this series we’ll challenge people to move forward in their spiritual journey by challenging them to:­

1. Engage with Scripture - We know that regularly reflecting on Scripture is the most catalytic practice for spiritual growth no matter where a person is in their spiritual journey. During this series, we’ll start at the beginning of the Bible and encourage everyone to “turn the page” with us as we move through a big picture view of the story of the Bible. Each week through a creative element, we’ll provide an overview of a particular section of the Bible. We’ll also provide an expanded “Turn the Page” Bible Reading Resource (including extra material and reflection questions that lead people through the story of the Bible). The goal is to help people gain clarity and confidence in their understanding of the Biblical narrative so they feel greater confidence engaging Scripture on their own.
2. Make a Fresh Start - Each week we’ll focus on a particular Biblical character that is representative of the section of Biblical history he or she represents. We’ll learn something about what that person experienced in an area of their spiritual journey and challenge one another to “turn the page” in that area of our lives, allowing God to give us a fresh start.

**WEEK 5  | NOVEMBER 18 | FROM AVOIDED TO ANOINTED**

**Scripture: 1 Samuel 13:13-14, 1 Samuel 16:1-13**

**MESSAGE BIG IDEA**

Turn the Page” by seeing people the way God sees people.

**Bible Overview**

The Kingdoms (1 Samuel - 2 Chronicles, Psalms - Song of Songs) Samuel, Saul, David, Solomon, The Temple

**Key Story**

Samuel Anoints David

*13 “You have done a foolish thing,” Samuel said. “You have not kept the command the Lord your God gave you; if you had, he would have established your kingdom over Israel for all time. 14 But now your kingdom will not endure; the Lord has sought out a man after his own heart and appointed him ruler of his people, because you have not kept the Lord’s command.” -1 Samuel 13:13-14*

*The Lord said to Samuel, “How long will you mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him as king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and be on your way; I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem. I have chosen one of his sons to be king.”* *2 But Samuel said, “How can I go? If Saul hears about it, he will kill me.”* *The Lord said, “Take a heifer with you and say, ‘I have come to sacrifice to the Lord.’ 3 Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what to do. You are to anoint for me the one I indicate.”* *4 Samuel did what the Lord said. When he arrived at Bethlehem, the elders of the town trembled when they met him. They asked, “Do you come in peace?”* *5 Samuel replied, “Yes, in peace; I have come to sacrifice to the Lord. Consecrate yourselves and come to the sacrifice with me.” Then he consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.* *6 When they arrived, Samuel saw Eliab and thought, “Surely the Lord’s anointed stands here before the Lord.”*

*7 But the Lord said to Samuel, “Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”*

*8 Then Jesse called Abinadab and had him pass in front of Samuel. But Samuel said, “The Lord has not chosen this one either.” 9 Jesse then had Shammah pass by, but Samuel said, “Nor has the Lord chosen this one.” 10 Jesse had seven of his sons pass before Samuel, but Samuel said to him, “The Lord has not chosen these.” 11 So he asked Jesse, “Are these all the sons you have?”* *“There is still the youngest,” Jesse answered. “He is tending the sheep.”* *Samuel said, “Send for him; we will not sit down until he arrives.”* *12 So he sent for him and had him brought in. He was glowing with health and had a fine appearance and handsome features.* *Then the Lord said, “Rise and anoint him; this is the one.”* *13 So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the Lord came powerfully upon David. Samuel then went to Ramah. -1 Samuel 16:1-13*

**Message Description**

Saul was the first Israelite king, but he disobeyed God so God directs Samuel to anoint a new king. He sends Samuel to Jesse in Bethlehem telling him that the next king is one of Jesse’s sons. When Samuel arrives, he sees Eliab, the oldest, and based on his strong appearance, assumes this must be the king. But God says to Samuel, *“Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”*

It turns out God’s anointed was the youngest son, David, a mere shepherd boy. God saw what others couldn’t see...a man after his own heart...and God uses David to do carry his story forward. Look what God did with someone who no one else was giving a second thought!

What might it mean to see people as “anointed?” I means we choose to…

* See the image of God in them.
* Believe the best about their heart.
* Recognize their life has a purpose.

**Turn the Page**

Ask yourself: How have I been judging people by their outward appearance? Who have I dismissed? Turn the Page” by seeing people the way God sees people.

**Docent Requests**

* Commentary on the 1 Samuel passages.
* What does it mean that David is called “a man after God’s own heart”?
* What are other example throughout the Bible of overlooked things?
* How do we understand (and possibly demystify) the idea of anointing?

**Week 6  | November 25 | From Captive to Courageous**

**Scripture: Daniel 6**

**Message Big Idea**

“Turn the Page” by courageously living out my convictions.

**Bible Overview**

The Exile (United Kingdom, Divided Kingdom, The Exile, The Return)

**Key Story**

Daniel in the Den of Lions

*It pleased Darius to appoint 120 satraps to rule throughout the kingdom, 2 with three administrators over them, one of whom was Daniel. The satraps were made accountable to them so that the king might not suffer loss. 3 Now Daniel so distinguished himself among the administrators and the satraps by his exceptional qualities that the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom. 4 At this, the administrators and the satraps tried to find grounds for charges against Daniel in his conduct of government affairs, but they were unable to do so. They could find no corruption in him, because he was trustworthy and neither corrupt nor negligent. 5 Finally these men said, “We will never find any basis for charges against this man Daniel unless it has something to do with the law of his God.”6 So these administrators and satraps went as a group to the king and said: “May King Darius live forever! 7 The royal administrators, prefects, satraps, advisers and governors have all agreed that the king should issue an edict and enforce the decree that anyone who prays to any god or human being during the next thirty days, except to you, Your Majesty, shall be thrown into the lions’ den. 8 Now, Your Majesty, issue the decree and put it in writing so that it cannot be altered—in accordance with the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed.”9 So King Darius put the decree in writing.* *10 Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before. 11 Then these men went as a group and found Daniel praying and asking God for help. 12 So they went to the king and spoke to him about his royal decree: “Did you not publish a decree that during the next thirty days anyone who prays to any god or human being except to you, Your Majesty, would be thrown into the lions’ den?”* *The king answered, “The decree stands—in accordance with the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed.”* *13 Then they said to the king, “Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, Your Majesty, or to the decree you put in writing. He still prays three times a day.” 14 When the king heard this, he was greatly distressed; he was determined to rescue Daniel and made every effort until sundown to save him.* *15 Then the men went as a group to King Darius and said to him, “Remember, Your Majesty, that according to the law of the Medes and Persians no decree or edict that the king issues can be changed.”* *16 So the king gave the order, and they brought Daniel and threw him into the lions’ den. The king said to Daniel, “May your God, whom you serve continually, rescue you!”* *17 A stone was brought and placed over the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the rings of his nobles, so that Daniel’s situation might not be changed. 18 Then the king returned to his palace and spent the night without eating and without any entertainment being brought to him. And he could not sleep.* *19 At the first light of dawn, the king got up and hurried to the lions’ den. 20 When he came near the den, he called to Daniel in an anguished voice, “Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to rescue you from the lions?”* *21 Daniel answered, “May the king live forever! 22 My God sent his angel, and he shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in his sight. Nor have I ever done any wrong before you, Your Majesty.”* *23 The king was overjoyed and gave orders to lift Daniel out of the den. And when Daniel was lifted from the den, no wound was found on him, because he had trusted in his God.* *24 At the king’s command, the men who had falsely accused Daniel were brought in and thrown into the lions’ den, along with their wives and children. And before they reached the floor of the den, the lions overpowered them and crushed all their bones.* *25 Then King Darius wrote to all the nations and peoples of every language in all the earth:* *“May you prosper greatly!* *26 “I issue a decree that in every part of my kingdom people must fear and reverence the God of Daniel.* *“For he is the living God* *and he endures forever;* *his kingdom will not be destroyed his dominion will never end.* *27 He rescues and he saves;* *he performs signs and wonders* *in the heavens and on the earth.* *He has rescued Daniel* *from the power of the lions.”* *28 So Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus the Persian. -Daniel 6:1-28*

**Message Description**

Daniel lived in a culture that was constantly trying to shape him according to its values. The pressure to conform was intense.

Yet, Daniel was grounded in his identity in God. He knew who he was (or rather “whose” he was) and how he was called to live. He didn’t flaunt it, but he certainly didn’t hide his convictions. He did not waver in his steadfast devotion to God and his Word.

While the threat of execution doesn’t linger over our heads, our culture is trying to shape us according to its values. It can be easy to conform, whether intentionally or unconsciously, and end up “going with the flow” of society.

But a Christ-follower doesn’t belong to this world; we belong to God. Our identity as his people shapes how we are to live.

This message will be a challenge to personal integrity - to live a life worthy of the “calling we have received” (Ephesians 4:1).

Are we willing to choose what is right even when it will cost us?

**Turn the Page**

Who or what are you letting define you? “Turn the Page” by not letting yourself be held captive by the world, but instead let your identity in Christ help you live courageously. To live courageously means standing up for what you know is right. This could be a word you need to speak, an action you need to take, a stand you need to make.

**Docent Requests**:

* Commentary on Daniel 6.
* What are some modern examples of barriers to courage?
* Why is conforming to the culture we’re in so tempting?
* Modern stories of standing up to systems/powers.

**Week 7 | December 2 | From Ruined to Restored**

**Scripture: Isaiah 61, Luke 4:16-21**

**NOTE: Christmas “look” for the series starts here.**

**GIFTMART TOY COLLECTION WEEKEND AT MOST LOCATIONS BEGINS**

**Message Big Idea**

“Turn the Page” by helping to restore God’s dream for the world.

**Bible Overview**

The Prophets (Major, Minor, The End of the Old Testament)

**Key Story**

Isaiah Prophesies about Jesus

*The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me,* *because the Lord has anointed me* *to proclaim good news to the poor.* *He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,* *to proclaim freedom for the captives* *and release from darkness for the prisoners,* *2 to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor* *and the day of vengeance of our God,*

*to comfort all who mourn,* *3 and provide for those who grieve in Zion—to bestow on them a crown of beauty* *instead of ashes,* *the oil of joy* *instead of mourning,* *and a garment of praise* *instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness,* *a planting of the Lord* *for the display of his splendor.* *4 They will rebuild the ancient ruins* *and restore the places long devastated;* *they will renew the ruined cities* *that have been devastated for generations.* *5 Strangers will shepherd your flocks;* *foreigners will work your fields and vineyards.* *6 And you will be called priests of the Lord,* *you will be named ministers of our God.* *You will feed on the wealth of nations,* *and in their riches you will boast.* *7 Instead of your shame* *you will receive a double portion,* *and instead of disgrace* *you will rejoice in your inheritance.* *And so you will inherit a double portion in your land,* *and everlasting joy will be yours.* *8 “For I, the Lord, love justice;* *I hate robbery and wrongdoing.* *In my faithfulness I will reward my people* *and make an everlasting covenant with them.* *9 Their descendants will be known among the nations and their offspring among the peoples.* *All who see them will acknowledge* *that they are a people the Lord has blessed.”* *10 I delight greatly in the Lord;* *my soul rejoices in my God.* *For he has clothed me with garments of salvation* *and arrayed me in a robe of his righteousness,* *as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest,* *and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.* *11 For as the soil makes the sprout come up* *and a garden causes seeds to grow,* *so the Sovereign Lord will make righteousness* *and praise spring up before all nations. -Isaiah 61*

*16 He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read, 17 and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:*

*18 “The Spirit of the Lord is on me,* *because he has anointed me* *to proclaim good news to the poor.* *He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind,* *to set the oppressed free 19  to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”*

*20 Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. 21 He began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.” -Luke 4:16-21*

**Message Description**

The prophetic books in the Bible are often the ones we’re the least familiar with. In this message, we’ll describe the role of the prophet and how to approach this prophetic literature.

The books of the prophets in the Old Testament contain many foreshadowing references to the coming Messiah. We might want to include a quick list of OT prophecies Jesus fulfilled.

Isaiah, who lived hundreds of years before Jesus would come, was telling people that a Savior would redeem them. Isaiah lived in Judah before and during its destruction. Despite how dire everything looked, he prophesied of a time of restoration when prisoners would be set free, the blind would see, and the oppressed would be set free.

If we fast-forward to the New Testament, at the beginning of Jesus’ ministry he reads from Isaiah 61 and declares, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”

Jesus came to restore God’s dream for the world, and he invites us to share in that by partnering with him to restore God’s dream.

There are many ways to partner with God in restoring his dream, but this morning we’ll focus on Community 4:12’s Giftmarts. We’ll want to share the vision behind the giftmarts and challenge people to specific action. (Idea: Possibly have people take immediate action that day by leaving service to buy a toy and bring it back or creating an Amazon wishlist so they could buy a toy in the moment).

**Turn the Page**

Turn the Page” by looking beyond the “ruins” in our world to see the promise of restoration God provides in Jesus. Partner with God in helping to restore his dream for this world.

**Docent Requests**

* Commentary on Isaiah 61 and Luke 4:16-21.
* 10-12 examples of how Jesus fulfilled OT prophecy (make sure to include “Christmas” ones).
* Summary of the context in which Isaiah is writing.
* Summary that explains the role of the prophet (ancient/modern) and how to approach prophetic literature.
* Any specific Christmas-related challenges, responses, or applications.

**Week 8  | December 9 | From Waiting to Wonder**

**Scripture: Luke 2:1-20, Matthew 15:29-31**

**Kids on Stage – Week 1**

**Message Big Idea**

“Turn the Page” by recognizing the everyday wonders of Jesus in our world.

**Bible Overview**

The Gospels

**Key Story**

The Birth of Jesus

*In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. 2 (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) 3 And everyone went to their own town to register.* *4 So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. 5 He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. 6 While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, 7 and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.* *8 And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. 9 An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 10 But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.11 Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. 12 This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”* *13 Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,* *14 “Glory to God in the highest heaven,* *and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”* *15 When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”* *16 So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. 17 When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, 18 and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. 19 But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. 20 The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told. -Luke 2:1-20*

*“Jesus left there and went along the Sea of Galilee. Then he went up on a mountainside and sat down. Great crowds came to him, bringing the lame, the blind, the crippled, the mute and many others, and laid them at his feet; and he healed them. The people were amazed when they saw the mute speaking, the crippled made well, the lame walking and the blind seeing. And they praised the God of Israel.” -Matthew 15:29-31*

**Message Description**

For some background, let's reach back in history to about four centuries before the birth of Christ. The Old Testament ends with this mysterious phrase in Malachi 4:5-6: "See, I will send you the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes. He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers; or else I will come and strike the land with a curse." Just like that, the Old Testament comes to a close. It's confusing, cryptic, disturbing. It's not really the way you want to end a book—unless you're planning to write a sequel.

After the close of the OT, it seems as if God goes dark for a really long time. When we turn the page from Malachi to Matthew, 400 years have gone by. If you thought we have to wait a long time in between Star Wars movies, the wait from the OT to the NT was 400 years!

But after all that waiting...a wonder unlike any the world had ever known...Jesus is born!

And the miracle of his birth was just the beginning. The truth is that everything about Jesus led people to wonder. Everything about him was unique and different. One of the things that drew people to Jesus were the wonders he performed...the miracles that broke into the darkness bringing healing, wholeness, hope (Matthew 15:29-31).

Some of us know what it is like to be in the “waiting.” Maybe it hasn’t been 400 years, but it feels like 400 years.

But here’s the truth: Even in our darkest times, Jesus still breaks into the world with wonder.

This would be a good message to have a video story...how Jesus is breaking into the life of someone who is in a dark time.

On the night he was born, some recognized the wonder of Jesus, but many missed it. Let’s not be people who miss the miracles he is working every day in our midst!

Let’s ask him to break into our world with wonders and miracles! Yet even in the wait, let’s actively look for him. Let’s recognize how he is at work. Jesus is still breaking into our world with wonder.

**Turn the Page**

“Turn the Page” by recognizing the everyday wonders of Jesus in our world.

**Resource**

See previous COMMUNITY message [“Wonderful Counselor”](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1fKGQclJPaaIi8XzKnoYrts6x75b4GlA3)

**Docent Request**

* Quotes on the “wonder” of Jesus’ birth.
* Commentary on key scriptures.
* Humorous examples of things we’re bad at waiting for.
* Why are we inclined to miss wonder?
  + This could include statistics about busyness, entertainment statistics, etc.