

In this season of graduations, promotions, and all that comes along with them – the photoshoots, parties, formal wear, gift cards and big questions about “what’s next,” I’m reminded of my senior year. Let’s just say, it didn’t go as I’d hoped. In fact, it was a disaster. As a graduate of the class of 2008, which was not exactly the most prosperous or hopeful period of time to be entering the job market, I started college terrified that my senior year failures and frustrations would follow me into the college experience. I spent the summer of 2008 haunted by and stuck in the past.

Meanwhile, another incoming college freshman student showed up very differently. He showed up to our college campus wearing his high school letterman jacket. As a star athlete from a small town, he had *all* the patches – sports, grades, music. To this day, I’ve never seen such a decorated jacket. Yet, the upperclassmen quickly let him know, there, on our new college campus, he looked ridiculous. None of them cared about what the mascot was at his old high school. His teammates weren’t impressed by his prior accomplishments. They wanted to know that he was 100% present and committed to his new team and school right there and then.

See, we both showed up stuck in the past. Me, in my failure; him, in his glory. Turns out, as we became friends, we both had to figure out what we’d do with the new phase of life right in front of us.

We all face this kind of challenge throughout life’s many transitions whether through a stage in life like becoming a parent, or getting married, or getting let go or promoted at work, moving to a new city.

In the 29th chapter of Jeremiah’s prophecies, this messenger of God is addressing God’s people as they struggle to come to terms with life under a radically disrupted set of circumstances. The people have been forcibly taken by their enemies away from their homeland, across many borders, to a place they do not know. This experience of “exile” is a tragedy that deeply disorients the entire nation for generations. Many of them are understandably longing for a return to their homes and holding out for a return to the normalcy of their old way of life. They are stuck in the past when Jeremiah writes them with some peculiar advice.

Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper.” — Jeremiah 29:7

Catch that? God’s Word to these people is to seek the peace and prosperity of the place in which they find themselves (however disappointed they might be to be there)! Their own peace and prosperity are bound up in that of their neighbors. This principle holds true and provides us with clarity in navigating changes and embracing God’s present work in whatever place, circumstance, and company we find ourselves today. We do not live in constant fear of our past failures or attempt to live in the rearview mirror of our best, healthiest, and idealized past eras. Rather, we faithfully pray and work for peace in the present place where God, in His providence, has placed us.


May you encounter God’s loving presence with you today. And may you find encouragement in the place you are. Peace! — Pastor Brad

June 2026

New Life Community

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SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
31 8:30 Growth Class 10 AM Worship, guest speaker & Graduate Recognition 11:15 Family Meal (No PM Youth Group)	1	2 6 AM Men's Bible Study Church Camp Out begins (through June 6) (No Healing Room this month)	3 8 AM DUSD Mtg. <i>Open Gate Food Distribution</i> 6:30 PM Prayer	4 6 PM Celebrate Recovery	5	6 <i>Church Camp Out in Sequoia National Forest ends today</i>
7 10 AM Worship Service & Communion (No Youth Group)	8 <i>SOAR in Bakersfield (through June 13)</i>	9	10 <i>Open Gate Food Distribution</i> 6:30 PM Prayer	11 6 PM Celebrate Recovery	12	13 <i>SOAR participants return!</i>
14 10 AM Worship Service 11:30 AM Members' Meeting 5 PM Youth Group	15	16 10 AM Summer LIFT Women's Bible Study	17 <i>Open Gate Food Distribution</i> (No Prayer Group this week)	18 6 PM Celebrate Recovery	19	20 <i>"Change for Life" Dawnings' fund-raiser ends 21st!</i>
21 Father's Day 10 AM Worship Service 5 PM Youth Group	22 6:30 PM Pre-Budget Planning Q&A Session	23	24 <i>Open Gate Food Distribution</i> 6:30 PM Prayer	25 6 PM Celebrate Recovery	26	27
28 10 AM Worship Service (meal will be held on July 5) 5-7 PM "Sun-A-Palooza" VBS begins (through July 2)	29 5-7 PM VBS	30 5-7 PM VBS	1 <i>Open Gate Food Distribution</i> 5-7 PM VBS	2 5-7 PM VBS (final night) (No Celebrate Recovery)	3	
Memory Verse: Philippians 1:6 "And I am certain that God, who began..."	...the good work in you, will continue His work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns."	NOTES JULY PREVIEW: 2--Last night of VBS; 3--Independence Day Holiday observed; 5--Family Meal & VBS Wrap-Up; 14--Summer LIFT Women's Bible Study; 23-25--USMB National Conference; 26--Family Meal; 31--Parenting Network Resource Fair Calendar accurate as of 5/27/26 -- most events also on website calendar at www.newlifedinuba.org				