

I'll admit that I was a bit disappointed to discover, upon unboxing them, that despite their solid 4.6-star rating on Amazon, the compasses I'd ordered as an object lesson for our series on the biblical theme of Exile didn't quite all point in the same direction. Even with my notorious challenges with directions, I could tell by a process of elimination that at least some of them must not be pointing North as intended.

Perhaps some bumps along their transportation route had jostled them out of alignment. Whatever the case, these little compasses are helping me to appreciate the sense of direction that Daniel maintained through his 900-mile exile from home.

In fact, a small detail in Daniel 6:10 shows that even as Daniel aged and the imperial regimes he was employed by changed around him, he never forgot where he came from and where his truest home was. He had adopted a habit of praying three times a day in the direction of his homeland. This rhythm reveals the anchor to his identity that Daniel maintained despite all the surrounding pressures of his time. Remembering where he came from and whose he was—as a child and servant of the living God—gave him wisdom and vision to navigate an array of challenges.

In a similar way, we today need a strong sense of God's guiding presence in our lives to continue pressing on towards His will while navigating the many tensions we are presented with. How do we balance or live with the natural tensions that exist between independence and community, saving and enjoyment, living in the present and planning for the future, maintaining boundaries and being available, transparency and confidentiality?

As G.K. Chesterton memorably put it: *"We are all walking on a tightrope over an abyss, and it is surprisingly easy to lean too far in one direction or the other."*

Thank God that we have Jesus as the pioneer and perfecter of our faith (Hebrews 12:2). Impressive as Daniel and his friends' example is, in Christ Jesus we have our ultimate model – our 'true North' as it were.

This is evident in how Paul writes to an early Christian community with this timeless advice: *"Therefore, be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved us and gave Himself up for us."* (Ephesians 5:1-2)

So whether, like Captain Jack Sparrow, you have been gifted a compass that doesn't point North, I pray that you'd be reminded of what you truly desire. Whenever I see one of these little compasses hanging from my son's backpack, see the one on my bedside table, or hand another one out this month, my prayer is that we will remember and seek to follow Christ's faithful leading through the push and pull of all life's distractions and temptations.

May all we exiles, in all life's pressures, navigate by Christ our true North, the magnetism of His mercy, and the gravity of His grace.

-Pastor Brad Isaak

# September 2026

New Life Community

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| SUNDAY                                                                                                                            | MONDAY                                                                                                                                     | TUESDAY                                                                                        | WEDNESDAY                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | THURSDAY                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | FRIDAY                                                                                           | SATURDAY                                                                                    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>30</b><br>10 AM Worship Service<br>11:15 AM Family Meal<br><br>5 PM Youth Group                                                | <b>31</b>                                                                                                                                  | <b>1</b>                                                                                       | <b>2</b><br><i>Open Gate Food Distribution</i><br><br>6:30 PM Prayer                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <b>3</b><br><br>6 PM Celebrate Recovery                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <b>4</b>                                                                                         | <b>5</b><br><br><i>Women's Retreat final payments &amp; survey answers due by tomorrow!</i> |
| <b>6</b><br>8:30 AM Growth Class<br>10 AM Worship Service & Communion<br>11:30 Deacon Meeting<br>5 PM Youth Group                 | <b>7</b><br><br>Office closed                             | <b>8</b><br>6 AM Men's Bible Study<br>9 AM LIFT Women's Bible Study<br>6:30 PM Properties Mtg. | <b>9</b><br>7:30 AM <i>DUSD Meetings</i><br><i>Open Gate Food Distr.</i><br><br>6:30 PM Prayer                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <b>10</b><br><br>6 PM Celebrate Recovery                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <b>11</b><br> |                                                                                             |
| <b>13</b><br>8:30 AM Growth Class<br>10 AM Worship Service<br><br>5 PM Youth Group                                                | <b>14</b><br><br>6:30 PM GriefShare                                                                                                        | <b>15</b><br>6 AM Men's Bible Study                                                            | <b>16</b><br><i>Open Gate Food Distribution</i><br><br>(No Prayer Group)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>17</b><br><br>6 PM Celebrate Recovery                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <b>18</b><br><i>7 AM DUSD Meetings</i>                                                           | <b>19</b>                                                                                   |
| <b>20</b><br>8:30 AM Growth Class<br>10 AM Worship Service<br>11:30 AM MBF Workshop<br>11:30 AM Healing Room<br>5 PM Youth Group  | <b>21</b><br><br>6:30 PM GriefShare                                                                                                        | <b>22</b><br>6 AM Men's Bible Study<br>9 AM LIFT Bible Study<br>6:30 PM Youth Worship Night    | <b>23</b><br><i>"See You at the Pole"</i><br><i>prayer at local schools</i><br><i>Open Gate Food Distr.</i><br>6:30 PM Prayer                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <b>24</b><br><br>6 PM Celebrate Recovery                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <b>25</b>                                                                                        | <b>26</b><br><i>Dinuba Raisin Day Parade</i>                                                |
| <b>27</b><br>8:30 AM Growth Class<br>10 AM Worship Service<br>11:15 AM Family Meal<br>11:15 AM Fingerprinting<br>5 PM Youth Group | <b>28</b><br><br>6:30 PM GriefShare                                                                                                        | <b>29</b><br>6 AM Men's Bible Study                                                            | <b>30</b><br><i>Open Gate Food Distribution</i><br><br>6:30 PM Prayer                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <b>MEMORY VERSE for this month:</b><br><b>1 Corinthians 1:28-29</b><br><br><i>"God chose things despised by the world, things counted as nothing at all, and use them to bring to nothing ...</i><br><br><i>"...what the world considers important. As a result, no one can ever boast in the presence of God."</i> |                                                                                                  |                                                                                             |
| <b>SERMON SERIES:</b><br><br><b>Exile--Faithfulness Under Pressure</b>                                                            | <br><small>Sermon Series: August-September 2026</small> |                                                                                                | <b>NOTES</b><br><i>OCTOBER PREVIEW: 4--Communion Sunday; 4--Semi-Annual Member Meeting; 10--Celebrate Recovery's Sausage Making Day (volunteers welcome); 10--Immanuel Schools' 18th Annual Auction; 16-17--"Men of Iron" Men's Conference in Dinuba; 25--AM: Missionary guest speakers, PM: Family Fun Night</i><br><br><i>Calendar accurate as of 8/26/26 -- most events also on website calendar at <a href="http://www.newlifedinuba.org">www.newlifedinuba.org</a></i> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                  |                                                                                             |