



Celebrating God's Faithfulness

Week 1	5 October – Cultivating a life of gratitude.
WEEK 2	12 OCTOBER – REMEMBER, REJOICE, REDEDICATE.
Week 3	19 October – Recognizing grace through the years.
Week 4	26 October - Removing barriers and building bridges for the renewal



Psalm 100:4-5, “Enter His gates with praise...His goodness endures forever, and His faithfulness to all generations”.

Thessalonians 5:16-18, Always rejoice.... give thanks to God for all things”

Matthew 13:1-13, vv. “A farmer went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured them. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and immediately they sprang up, since they had no depth of soil. Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop...”

We begin this month of October in a celebration mood as we commemorate the 69th birthday of Bryanston Methodist Church. Generally, church birthdays hold a special place in the life of a congregation. They are opportunities to reflect on the faithfulness of God, celebrate milestones, and envision the future. With every passing year, we have a chance to share our stories of how God has worked in our lives.

Our church's birthday is a reminder of God's perfect guidance that leads us through the uncertain terrains of life. It points us to the power of God's Word, which illuminates our path, providing the direction and strength we need to continue our pilgrimage. We have seen God's faithfulness in our lives and in the life of the church. Our theme, therefore, for this month of October is: **“Celebrating God's faithfulness”**.

This theme honours our church's rich history, bringing to the fore the blessings and grace God has showered upon our community over the years. Over this month of October, we will be affirming the Lord's guidance over our church. He has led us through the pastures and along the waters, offering rest amidst turbulence and hope during the droughts. This month as a community we reflect on the works of God, reaffirming our commitment to faith and to the values that unite us as the church. This birthday is a celebration of God's enduring faithfulness and the loving community called BMC He has built. Life is a celebration. This birthdate is a reminder to celebrate the life as well as to update the life. Celebration is an active state, an act of expressing reverence or appreciation.

A church anniversary is much more than a celebration, it is a profound occasion to honour spiritual heritage, celebrate the unity of the present, and look with hope to the future. We celebrate BMC's witness, and recounting God's work. We celebrate BMC's missional calling through outward-focused worship that leads to action.

It is a privilege for the church to still be here after so many years. It is refreshing and speaks to the church's hospitality. BMC has weathered the seasons because its foundation is solid rock. On this anniversary, we stand on the foundation of God-self. We 've built our church upon Him in the past and we will continue to build upon Him in the future. We can know that He will sustain us and continue to build us. And so, whatsoever you do, don't do it as a duty, do it from your love, don't do it as a burden, do it as a celebration. Come let us celebrate together our victorious journey in Christ Jesus so far. Let us rejoice in the never-ending blessings He has poured out upon us. Let us make this anniversary a moment of spiritual reflection for our community.

An anniversary is vital signpost in the life of the church. Just as the Israelites would celebrate God's great faithfulness and deliverance, so should we commemorate and give thanks for the ways God has led us and blessed us. May this be a month filled with joy and celebration. May we be filled with gratitude and praise for all that God has done for us. May we rejoice in the faithfulness of God, knowing that He will continue to be faithful to us for many years to come. Be good; Be well, and my wish for you is joy! Rev Zamani.

Home Groups and classes guide:

1. Open in Worship and Prayer: this is to invite God into the meeting. For example, you can light a candle, sing together, or use a YouTube Hymn or song.
2. Open your Bibles and read the Bible verses for this week (take turns?) see below.
3. Reflect on the Bible verses and the reflection written by a Minister or Lay Preacher.
4. Connect with each other and take the reflection deeper by answering the Questions.
5. Works out: What have we learned that we can apply in our lives in this session? Keep each other accountable for promises made or important steps taken. Pray for and over each other (after taking prayer requests).



Week 2: 12 October – Remember, Rejoice, Rededicate.

"Life is lived forwards, but it must be understood backwards", (Soren Kierkegaard, Journalen, 1843)

A church anniversary is an occasion to honour the past and give thanks for the blessings received and look with hope to the future. We commemorate faithful individuals, and reflect on the community's journey, historical narratives, and liturgical practices. We recall and honour the legacy of past witnesses and connect the present church to the enduring legacy of faithful believers who have gone before. We celebrate the spiritual heritage passed down from generation to generation, keeping alive the community's connection to God's promises.

This month we honour our church's rich history, bringing to the fore the blessings and grace God showered upon the community over the years. We celebrate the faith that has sustained members from the beginning to the present. We reflect on the atmosphere of gratitude and worship. So, the 69th birthday – devoted equally to remembering, rejoicing, and rededicating – begins with a chance to assess the past. Our history includes good things; there's also some pain and need for repentance. We need to confess our conflicts as we rededicate ourselves afresh to God.



WORSHIP SONG: Give Thanks - Janella Salvador (Lyrics)

<https://youtu.be/PYRgB26rPIs?si=XH-DIoxDMBuQTvsU>

READINGS: Joshua 24: 1- 18; Psalm 1; Galatians 3: 1-14 & John 16:17-22

REFLECTION WRITTEN BY: REV HILTON VOLKWYN

And so, the theme this week is: REMEMBER REJOICE AND REDEDICATE.

This theme calls us to next steps. And so, in the sense of being Christ-followers we should be asking ourselves: What are the next steps I should be taking on my spiritual journey?

I thought that sub dividing the theme would and can be the easiest way for us to broach the subject.

REMEMBER - I am almost sure that as a Christ follower it is an easy task to REMEMBER the goodness of God in your life. The act of remembrance is the foundation of the spiritual cycle. As human beings, we are prone to forgetting. The "spiritual amnesia" of which the Bible so often warns can lead to disillusionment and a feeling that one has been abandoned by God. To counteract this, REMEMBERING involves intentionally recalling God's working in the past in our lives. Looking at Scripture alone, there is so much to see what it is that God has done. But on a personal level there are many a time we would have to say that surely if it were not for God, your life would have been very different if not in jeopardy....

Just briefly..... a look at Scripture suggests many a time that the Chosen people of God needed to remember their deliverance from their slave masters in Egypt. Added to that, was that they needed to remember that God had covenanted with them to be their God.

Jesus you will recall also at the last supper with His disciples called them to share the meal in order to remember him..... *"And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me.'"* (Lk. 22:19). By looking back on God's past faithfulness, believers gain hope and confidence that He will continue to be faithful in the future.

Lest we forget, let us REMEMBER the blessings upon blessings that we have received. Recalling specific acts of grace cultivates a heart of gratitude and prevents a spirit of entitlement.

REJOICE - Our REJOICING should be evident in the way we live. As remembrance fills the heart with gratitude, rejoicing becomes the natural and joyful response. Rejoicing is more than a fleeting emotion of happiness; it is a spiritual discipline, a conscious choice to be glad in the Lord regardless of one's circumstances.

The apostle Paul, who wrote from a prison cell, exhorted believers to *" Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!"* (Phil. 4:4). His situation alone demonstrated that this joy is not based on temporary feelings but on an unwavering faith in God's sovereignty and goodness. Choosing to be joyful lifts one's spirit and it also provides the resilience needed to face ongoing challenges.

REDEDICATE - After remembering and rejoicing, the circle can only be completed when one REDEDICATES one's life to God again.

Rededication is a commitment to live in renewed faithfulness considering what has been remembered and celebrated. REDEDICATION is the practical application of the spiritual journey, transforming reflection and celebration into intentional action. It is an act of surrendering one's life anew to God's purpose and will, much like the prodigal son's return home to his father.

To conclude this reflection let us remember that the journey from remembrance to rededication is a vital rhythm for a life of faith. It honours the past, enriches the present, and purposefully prepares one for the future.

In a sense, I am suggesting that by consistently engaging in this cycle, as Christ followers, we can move beyond periods of spiritual dryness and live a life marked by hope, joy, and committed action.

GROUP/CLASS QUESTIONS:

1. Recall a time in your life when you were at your lowest in your faith and spiritual journey.
2. At present what are the things that you remember of God's goodness and faithfulness in your life.
3. What are the ways you can express your Joy in the Lord?
4. What are meaningful ways that you can rededicate or recommit your life to God?

MEMORY VERSES FOR THE WEEK:

- Monday:** *"He protected us on our entire journey and among all the nations through which we travelled." (Jos. 24:17b)*
- Tuesday:** *"That person is like a tree planted by streams of water which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither whatever they do prospers." (Ps. 1:3)*
- Wednesday:** *"Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!" (Phil. 4:4)*
- Thursday:** *"For the LORD watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked leads to destruction." (Ps. 1:6)*
- Friday:** *"He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit." (Gal. 3:14)*
- Saturday:** *"Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy." (Jn. 16:22)*

FAMILY TIME: WRITTEN BY JENNY BLAKE (CHILDREN'S PASTOR)

Week 2 Theme: Remember, Rejoice, Rededicate

Scripture Readings:

- Joshua 24:1–18
- Psalm 1
- Galatians 3:1–14
- John 16:17–22

Opening Prayer

Lord, thank You for guiding us through the years. Help us to remember Your faithfulness, rejoice in Your goodness, and rededicate our hearts and lives to You. May our family and church always reflect Your love and promises. Amen.

Short Summary of the Readings

- **Joshua 24:1–18:** Joshua calls the Israelites to remember all that God has done for them and challenges them to choose whom they will serve. They recall God's faithfulness and renew their commitment to Him.
- **Psalm 1:** This psalm describes the blessings of those who delight in God's law, meditate on His Word, and live according to His guidance, contrasting them with the way of the wicked.
- **Galatians 3:1–14:** Paul reminds the believers that faith, not works, is the source of salvation. God's promises are fulfilled through faith in Jesus Christ, who redeems us from the curse of the law.
- **John 16:17–22:** Jesus tells His disciples that although they will face sorrow, their grief will turn to joy. God's plan brings hope and eternal joy beyond temporary hardships.

Reflection

Søren Kierkegaard once wrote, *“Life is lived forwards, but it must be understood backwards.”* Our church anniversary is a special time to reflect on this truth. It is a moment to honour the past, give thanks for God’s blessings, and look with hope toward the future.

Through this celebration, we:

- **Remember** the faithful individuals who built the church, those who prayed, served, and laid the foundation for our spiritual community.
- **Rejoice** in God’s blessings — the faith, friendships, guidance, and grace that have sustained the church and its members over the years.
- **Rededicate** ourselves, acknowledging areas that need repentance, asking God to strengthen us, and committing anew to His service.

Honouring the past connects us to God’s promises. Celebrating our spiritual heritage keeps alive the legacy of faith, reminding us that we stand on the shoulders of those who trusted God before us. Church anniversaries are opportunities not only for reflection but also for renewed worship, gratitude, and commitment.

As our church celebrates its 69th birthday, we can take time as a family to reflect on our own spiritual journey — remembering God’s work in our lives, rejoicing in His faithfulness, and rededicating ourselves to living faithfully today.

Discussion Questions

For Teenagers:

1. Why is it important to remember the past, both the good and the hard times?
2. How does understanding the history of our church help you appreciate your faith today?
3. What does it mean to “rededicate” yourself to God? Can you think of areas in your life where you need to do this?
4. How can rejoicing and gratitude change the way you face challenges or setbacks?

For Younger Children:

1. Can you tell about a time God helped you or your family?
2. What is something about our church that makes you happy or thankful?
3. How can we show God that we want to follow Him every day?
4. What are some ways we can celebrate God’s goodness this week?

Family Activity Ideas

1. **Family Memory Tree** – Draw a tree and write or draw ways God has been faithful in your family’s life. Add leaves for each blessing.
2. **Thanksgiving Circle** – Share one memory of God’s goodness in your life or the church’s history. Take turns expressing gratitude.
3. **Rededication Promise** – Have each family member write one thing they want to rededicate to God (obedience, prayer, kindness, sharing). Pray together over these commitments.
4. **Timeline Collage** – Create a timeline showing important moments in your church or family’s spiritual journey.

Memory Verse

“You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light.” — 1 Peter 2:9

Closing Prayer

Thank You, God, for guiding our church and our family through the years. We remember Your faithfulness, rejoice in Your goodness, and ask for Your help to rededicate our hearts to You. May we live lives that honour You and shine Your light to others. Amen.

GRATITUDE & REDEDICATION PRAYER POEM FOR CHILDREN

Dear God, we thank You for the past,
For blessings, friends, and love that lasts.
We remember all You've done,
The battles won and races run.
We rejoice for joys we see today,
For every hug, for every play.
And now, dear Lord, we give our hearts,
To follow You in all our parts.
Help us live with love and care,
And share Your goodness everywhere.
We rededicate our lives to You,
In all we say, in all we do.
Amen.