

Anatomically incorrect heart-shaped décor, shades of red and pink, more X's and O's than a tic-tac-toe board, and sales on flowers and chocolates fill the Walmart displays. Reminders from teachers about class parties—and which types of valentines can and cannot be shared—are coming home in my sons' backpacks. It's February, y'all! Regardless of whether you brave the crowds to get a special reservation at a restaurant with a significant other or not on the 14th, this shortest calendar month will assuredly fly by. But our care and attention to the state of our hearts is something that is always worth our time.

In the Hebrew language that the oldest parts of the Bible were originally written in, the heart was thought to be the “control center” of the human person, so to speak. The heart was not only associated with emotions and feelings, but also with thoughts and decision-making (things we today associate more with our brains). So God's Word spoke a lot about hearts.

One author in the Bible, Jeremiah—who has been nicknamed “the weeping prophet” (how's that for a Valentine's month inspiration?)—was given some particularly insightful words from God about God's own heart for His people and their hearts. After chapters of bad news about judgment to come (hence the weeping bit), Jeremiah is given this banger of a word from God:

I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me forever, for their own good and the good of their children after them. I will make with them an everlasting covenant, that I will not turn away from doing good to them. And I will put the fear of me in their hearts, that they may not turn from me. I will rejoice in doing them good, and I will plant them in this land in faithfulness, with all my heart and all my soul. - Jeremiah 32:36-42

Here are three bankable, trustworthy observations you can recall when you see a <3 this month:

(1) **God's whole heart is for us and for our good.** Not only our own good, but (what is far more important and valuable to me as a parent) for the good of our children. God derives joy in the good He does and commits to not turning away from us. There is no one reading the back side of this calendar who is outside of the heart of God, or for whom God does not desire good.

(2) **God purposes and promises to give us one heart as His people.** Sisters and brothers, there is so much that gets in the way of us taking this word to heart. We live distracted and divided lives. We regularly place our own preferences, politics, prejudices, and priorities ahead of God's way. Our words and actions often reveal our mixed motives. But God desires that we share His heart—to love God and our neighbor wholeheartedly, even as He first loved us. Jesus' life, teachings, and work reveal clearly what God's heart is, as Jesus came not only to show us God's way but also told His followers, “I AM the way...” We need to pursue the heart of Christ together.

(3) **A healthy respect—literally, the “fear of God”—must be in our hearts if we are to stay on-track.** There are so many things that we fear today: recession, illness, divorce, failure, eviction, rejection, violence—you could add your own candidate to this list of worthwhile terrors. It's easy to let waves of anxiety and clamoring stressors drown out and crowd out room in our hearts for reverence. What Jeremiah invites us to is a rootedness in the reality, perspective, and eternal considerations of God our Maker.

So this month, may you know God's heart for you and for your good, and may a reverence for Him give us one heart as we seek to bring Him joy in seeking the good of one another and the next generations.

<3 Pastor Brad

February 2026

New Life Community

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| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|--|---|--|--|---|--|---|
| 1 8:30 AM Growth Class 10 AM Worship Service & Communion Women's Soup Fundraiser 5 PM Youth Group | 2 | 3 6 AM Men's Bible Study 2:35 Good News Club at Jefferson 6:30 PM Healing Room Prayer | 4 11am-1pm Palm Church Lunch for Open Gate 2 PM O.G. Food Distr. 5 PM Worship Team 6:30 PM Prayer Group | 5 6:00 PM Celebrate Recovery | 6 | 7 11am-2pm Foundations in Finance Workshop <i>Special offering tomorrow for Open Gate!</i> |
| 8 8:30 AM Growth Class 10 AM Worship Service "Souperbowl" offering 5 PM Youth Group | 9 | 10 6 AM Men's Bible Study 9 AM LIFT Women's Bible Study 2:35 GNC 6:30 PM Healing Room | 11 2 PM Open Gate Food Distribution 5 PM Worship Team 6:30 PM Prayer Group | 12 6:00 PM Celebrate Recovery | 13 | 14  |
| 15 8:30 AM Growth Class 10 AM Worship Service (guest Tim Geddert) 5 PM Youth Group 6:30 PM GriefShare | 16 Presidents' Day (office closed)  | 17 6 AM Men's Bible Study 2:35 Good News Club at Jefferson 6:30 PM Healing Room Prayer | 18 2 PM Open Gate Food Distribution 5 PM Worship Team 6:30 PM Prayer Group | 19 6:00 PM Celebrate Recovery | 20 6:00 PM Youth For Christ Report Banquet (here) | 21 |
| 22 8:30 AM Growth Class 10 AM Worship Service 11:15 Family Meal 5 PM Youth Group 6:30 PM GriefShare | 23 | 24 6 AM Men's Study 9 AM LIFT Women's Bible Study 2:35 Good News Club at Jefferson | 25 2 PM Open Gate Food Distribution 5 PM Worship Team 6:30 PM Prayer Group | 26 6:00 PM Celebrate Recovery | 27 | 28 |
| 1 8:30 AM Growth Class 10 AM Worship Service 11:30 Deacons' Mtg. 5 PM Youth Group 6:30 PM GriefShare | 2 | 3 6 AM Men's Bible Study 2:35 Good News Club at Jefferson 6:30 PM Healing Room Prayer | 4 2 PM Open Gate Food Distribution 5 PM Worship Team 6:30 PM Prayer Group | Memory Verse for this month: <i>Ephesians 5:2</i> | "And walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us ..." | ...as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God." |
| NLC Kids "Winter Jam" Themes in February: 1--Bible Buddy Adoption 8--Super Ice Cream Bowl | "Winter Jam," continued: 15--Winter Wonderland 22--Polar Express Youth (AM&PM) will have their own themes! | NOTES MARCH PREVIEW: 1--Communion Sunday; 7--Change clocks ahead tonight for Daylight Savings Time; 14--YFC Youth Worship Night at NLC; 29--Family Meal (Easter Sunday is April 5) Calendar accurate as of 1/23/26 - most events also on website calendar at www.newlifedinuba.org | | | | |