

Evergreen Heights Summer Spiritual Formation Challenge

Most of us spend more time outside in the summer months, appreciating the warmth and the beauty of nature. As you're outside this summer we'd like to encourage you to be amazed by creation and incorporate some reflection and spiritual practice into your time. Each week we'll have a different way to engage with God and nature. Try to do these ideas each day if you're able. These practices can be done on your own or together with your family. Consider incorporating both the morning and evening practices into each day this month.

If you aren't able to join in these particular practices, try observing out your windows – what do you see, hear, feel, smell about nature and creation? Thank God for the beauty around you.

Week 5 (August 1-7)

Read: Psalm 143:8 & Lamentations 3:21-26

Practice: Take your morning tea or coffee outside. Be still. Notice what you might not have noticed before. What do you see, hear, smell and feel? Thank God for the day and all the opportunities it will bring.

Week 6 (August 8-14)

Read: Matthew 6:25-34

Practice: As you walk around your property or through your neighbourhood, notice the flowers, trees, and birds you see. Reflect on the many types – colour, size, shape – of each. Keeping in mind the passage from Matthew, pray about what you're worrying about and ask God to help you let go of those worries.

Week 7 (August 15-21)

Read: Psalm 23

Practice: Take a drive to your favourite spot by the lake, or another body of water you enjoy. Spend some time enjoying the water and its ability to sooth, calm and make us feel rested. Reflect on what you're preoccupied with and striving for that may be making it difficult to rest in the abundance and wholeness God has for us. Ask God to shift your focus to him and the gifts He is pouring into your life.

Week 8 (August 22-28)

Read: Psalm 121

Practice: Head outside in the evening and spend some time in stillness before God. Thank God for the day. Review your day and the events that occurred – where were you aware of God's presence? Was there a time you focused on yourself and missed an opportunity to be used by God? Where were you at your best and worst? Name the feelings that come up as you review your day. Chose a couple of those feelings to pray about, taking time to listen to God. Look ahead to tomorrow – what did God reveal to you that you want to bring into tomorrow?