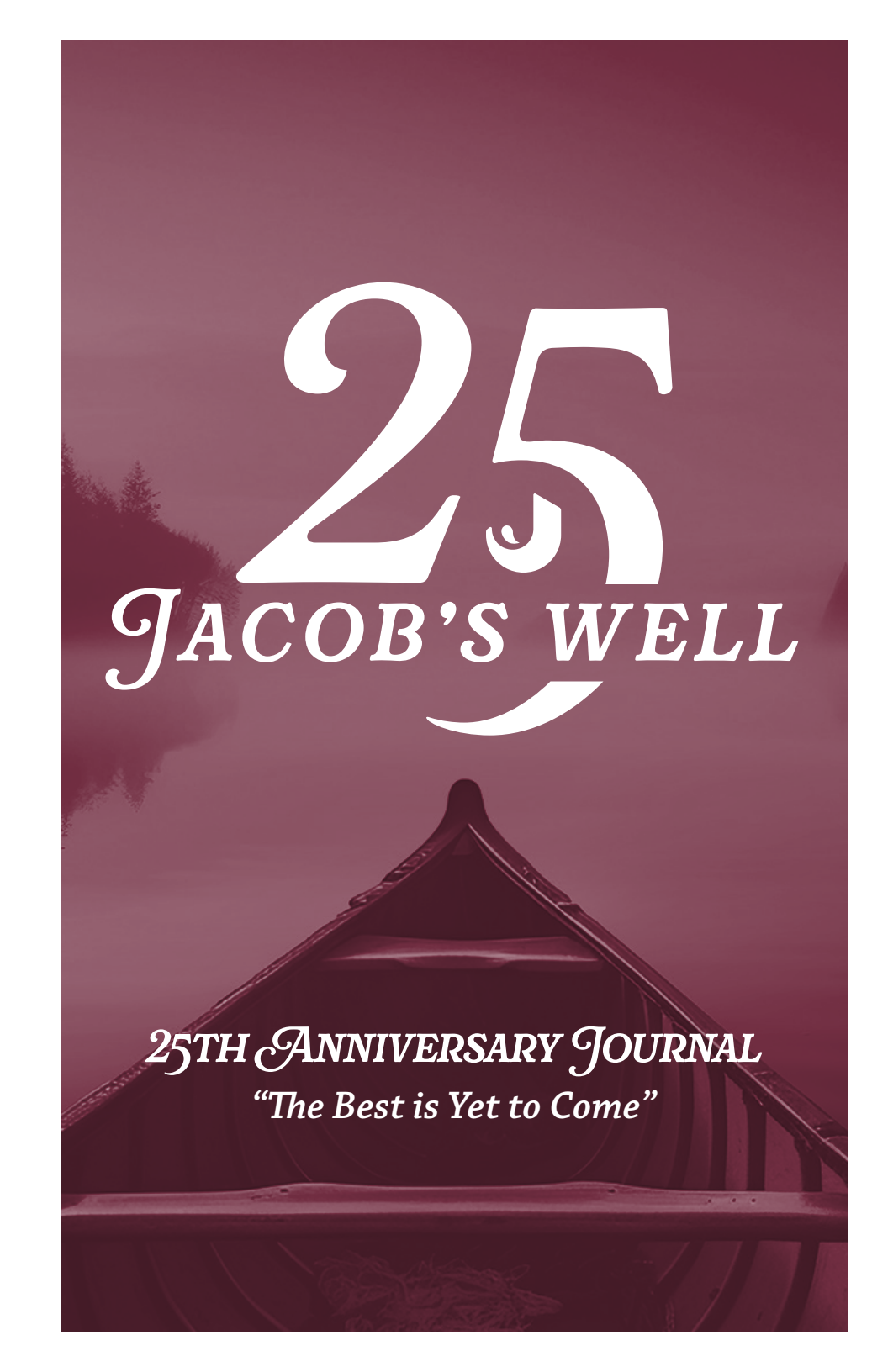




25

JACOB'S WELL

25TH ANNIVERSARY JOURNAL

"The Best is Yet to Come"

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letter from Paul.....	3
Theme Verse - Isaiah 43:19	6
Week 1: Journey So Far	11
Reflection: Remebering as Worship.....	12
Journaling	12
Gratitude Inventory	16
Blessing	18
Week 2: Challenges Ahead	21
Reflection: Challenges Ahead.....	22
Journaling	22
Breath Prayer – Psalm 23.....	26
Prayer	27
Week 3: The Church: A Gift to the Valley	31
Reflection: Light That Gives, Not Performs.....	32
Journaling	32
Acts of Light.....	36
Prayer	38
Week 4: For Generations Not Yet Born	41
Reflection: Faithfulness That Outlives Us.....	42
Journaling	42
Letter to the Next Generation.....	46
Blessing	50

25
JACOB'S WELL

Letter from Paul
THE BEST IS YET TO COME

Jacobs Well family,

Twenty-five years is a gift. It's long enough to see God's faithfulness clearly, and short enough to remember that everything we have has come by grace. As we pause to mark this moment, my heart is full of gratitude—not just for what God has done, but for what God is still doing among us.

This anniversary is not about rehearsing a highlight reel or preserving a memory. It's about recognizing that the same God who has carried us this far is still leading us forward. God has been faithful behind us, and God's invitation is still unfolding ahead of us.

At the heart of that invitation is the vision that has shaped us from the beginning and continues to guide us today: *Wherever we are on our journey, we will take steps together to know and become like Jesus.*

When I think about Jacobs Well, I think about people. I think about stories—some joyful, some hard, many unfinished. I think about prayers prayed in faith, tears shed in hope, and quiet moments where God met someone right where they were. These moments matter. They shape us. And they remind us that following Jesus has always been a shared journey, taken one faithful step at a time.

At the same time, we are not called to live looking over our shoulder. Scripture invites us to remember, but remembering is meant to strengthen our trust, not anchor us in the past. We remember so that we can keep moving forward—together—toward Jesus.

Letter Continued Next Page...▶

I am deeply aware that Jacobs Well is made up of people in many different places. Some of you have been here from the early days. Some of you arrived recently. Some of you are returning after time away. Wherever you find yourself, know this: you belong here.

This next chapter is not reserved for a few; it is written by all of us together. God is shaping a community that reflects His love, brings living water to a thirsty valley, and creates a well-worn path toward hope for generations yet to come.

As you move through this journal, my prayer is that you would notice God's faithfulness more clearly, trust God's presence more deeply, and sense God's invitation more personally. May you be encouraged by the journey so far—and courageous as you take your next steps into what lies ahead.

We don't gather to preserve what was, but to follow where God is leading. The best is not behind us. The best is yet to come.

With gratitude and hope,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Paul H. Benth". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Pastor Paul



WHEREVER WE ARE

**ON OUR
JOURNEY**

WE WILL TAKE STEPS

TOGETHER

TO KNOW AND

BECOME LIKE

JESUS

THEME VERSE: ISAIAH 43:19

On the next page, you'll find the full verse of **Isaiah 43:19**. We encourage you to tear it out and place it somewhere you will see it often—on a mirror, the fridge, or take a picture and make it the background on your phone. Take time to read it, memorize it, and reflect on the meaning of each word. We invite you to revisit it throughout the week and let it remind you of what God is doing.

SEE, I AM DOING
A NEW THING!

NOW IT SPRINGS UP;
DO YOU NOT PERCEIVE IT?

I AM MAKING A WAY

IN THE WILDERNESS
AND STREAMS
IN THE WASTELAND.

ISAIAH 43:19



***“COMMUNITY
is what has
kept me here.”***

– Carli C.



***“The people are
kind and welcom-
ing who never
seem to judge and
accept everyone
regardless of
where we are in
our walk with
God or in our
lives.”***

– Lisa J.



***“Jacob’s Well has
been an invaluable
tool of great
healing in my life.”***

– Courtenay J.



"25 years ago we were home from the Cities and my in-laws were trying a new church that was meeting in South Middle School's auditorium. This young pastor was vibrant and I connected in a way that church seemed "user" friendly to a newer Christian. We never left...even after they moved to almost every middle school in Eau Claire!"

- Ken W.



"I pray that the church will continue growing deeply in the Lord, serve our community, and that many people will come to the Lord through the ministry of Jacob's Well."

- Cheryl M.





SCRIPTURES

¹¹ *I will remember the deeds of the Lord;
yes, I will remember your miracles of long ago.*

¹² *I will consider all your works
and meditate on all your mighty deeds.*

¹³ *Your ways, God, are holy.
What god is as great as our God?*

¹⁴ *You are the God who performs miracles;
you display your power among the peoples.*

¹⁵ *With your mighty arm you redeemed your people,
the descendants of Jacob and Joseph.*

— **Psalm 77:11–15**

⁵ *Come and see what God has done, his awesome deeds for mankind!*

⁶ *He turned the sea into dry land, they passed through the waters on foot—
come, let us rejoice in him.*

⁷ *He rules forever by his power, his eyes watch the nations—
let not the rebellious rise up against him.*

— **Psalm 66:5–7**

REFLECTION: REMEMBERING AS WORSHIP

Remembering is more than reflection it is an act of worship. Throughout Scripture, God's people are repeatedly invited to remember, not so they can live in the past, but so they can anchor their faith in God's faithfulness. When we remember what God has done, we rehearse truth to our own hearts.

The story of Jacobs Well is not a single story it is a tapestry of stories. Stories of healing, of doubt, of return, of first prayers and answered prayers. When we tell these stories to one another, we remind ourselves that God has been present all along, often in ways we didn't recognize at the time.

As we look ahead to what God may do next, we begin by honoring what God has already done. Gratitude becomes the soil where hope grows. Before we ask, "*Where are we going?*" we pause to say, "*Thank you.*"

JOURNALING

- When did you first walk through the doors of Jacobs Well?
What was happening in your life at that time?
- Where are you now? What growth, healing, or change has taken place since then?
- Write about 2–3 specific moments where you clearly saw God at work.
- Who is one person you could share one of these stories with this week?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

[illegible]

GRATITUDE INVENTORY

Set a timer for 5–10 minutes. Write without editing. List everything you can think of that you are grateful for—big or small.

Prompt Starters:

- People
- Moments
- Strength given
- Places
- Prayers answered
- Grace received

[illegible]

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

BLESSING

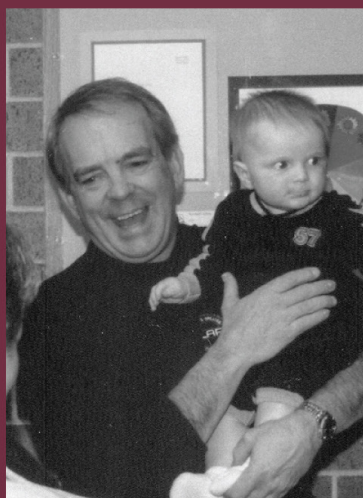
Pray this blessing over yourself and our whole church this week.

*May the God who has been faithful
be faithful still.*

*May memory strengthen your hope,
and gratitude deepen your trust.*

*May you walk forward carrying grace,
not clinging to what was,
and may thanksgiving light the road ahead.*

Amen.



*"The church wants people
and families to grow."*

– Josh T.

*"We were welcomed
by so many people
on day one."*

– Ed I.





"What has rooted us here has been the dedication to preach and teach the truth of God. His word is never circumvented, but instead it is taught."

– Laurie E.

"I feel Jesus' presence every time I walk through the doors. I am growing deeper in my faith. The messages are relevant to everyday life, and I have found community with the people."

– Deb H.





WEEK 2

CHALLENGES AHEAD

SCRIPTURES

² When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze.

— Isaiah 43:2

³¹ What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³² He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? ³³ Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies.

³⁴ Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. ³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?

³⁶ As it is written: “For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.”

³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, ³⁹ neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

— Romans 8:31–39

REFLECTION: CHALLENGES AHEAD

Scripture never promises a challenge-free future. It repeatedly promises the presence of God. The assurance we are given is not escape, but companionship. As Isaiah reminds us: *“When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze”*

(Isaiah 43:2). God’s promise is not absence from difficulty, but His steadfast presence within it.

Paul echoes this same truth in Romans 8, reminding us that no matter what comes against us—trouble, hardship, persecution, or even the threat of death—we are never alone. *“If God is for us, who can be against us?”*

(Romans 8:31). Through Christ’s love, we are more than conquerors **(v. 37)**. Nothing in all creation, neither present nor future, life nor death, angels nor demons, can separate us from God’s love **(vv. 38–39)**.

Challenges are not signs of failure. They are the crucible in which God refines our faith. He uses difficulty to strengthen us, shape us, and form us into people who reflect His love more clearly. We are not sent ahead alone. God goes with us, and He places us within a community to walk together, carrying one another.

Looking forward honestly means acknowledging the hard things without surrendering hope. The same God who has been faithful in the past will be faithful in the present and the future. Whatever waters, rivers, or fires you face, God is with you, and His love guarantees that you will emerge victorious, not by your own strength, but through Him who loves you endlessly.

JOURNALING

- Write about a past challenge you faced where God showed up.
- Who helped walk with you during that season?
- What challenges are you currently facing?
- What challenges might lie ahead—for you personally or for our church?
- How does remembering God’s past faithfulness shape your confidence today?

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

BREATH PRAYER - PSALM 23

Breath prayers are a simple way to slow down, focus your mind, and connect your body and spirit with God's presence. By linking your breath with a short prayer, you allow God's truth to sink deeply into your heart. This practice is especially helpful when facing stress, fear, or uncertainty.

Instructions

1. Find Your Space

Sit comfortably in a chair or on the floor. Place your feet flat on the ground and rest your hands gently on your lap. Close your eyes if it helps you focus.

2. Settle Your Body and Mind

Take a few slow, deep breaths, inhaling for four to six seconds and exhaling for eight. As you breathe out, notice any tension in your shoulders, jaw, or chest, and let it release. Give yourself permission to settle in and arrive fully in this moment.

3. Begin the Prayer

- Inhale slowly and pray silently:
*"Even though I walk through
the darkest valley..."*
- Exhale slowly and pray: "...
You are with me."

4. Repeat the Cycle

Continue this pattern for 3–5 minutes. Focus on your breath and the words. If your mind wanders, gently bring your attention back to the prayer.

5. Reflect and Close

When you feel ready, take a final deep breath, pause, and silently thank God for His presence. Slowly open your eyes and carry the presence of God with you.

Tips for Deeper Engagement

- **Visualize the Words:** On the inhale, imagine walking through a shadowed valley; on the exhale, picture God's presence surrounding you like light or warmth.
- **Use Throughout the Week:** Return to this prayer whenever you feel anxious, fearful, or overwhelmed. It's a portable way to center your mind and reconnect with God's presence.

PRAYER

Pray **Psalms 23.**

¹ *The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing.*

² *He makes me lie down in green pastures,
he leads me beside quiet waters,*

³ *He refreshes my soul.
He guides me along the right paths
for his name's sake.*

⁴ *Even though I walk
through the darkest valley,
I will fear no evil,
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff,
they comfort me.*

⁵ *You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies.
You anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.*

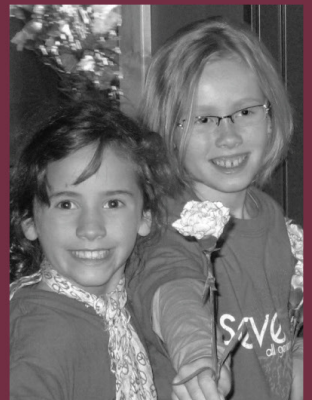
⁶ *Surely your goodness and love will follow me
all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord
forever.*

25
JACOB'S WELL



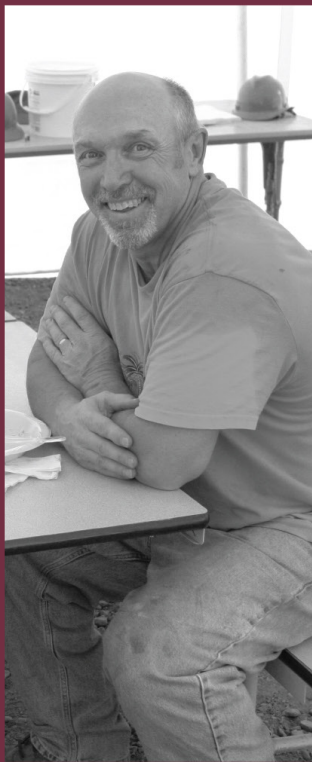
"I finally fit into a church. I didn't need to be married or have kids to be a valued member of a group."

- Mary S.



"The way Pastor Paul delivers his messages is so well done! Direct and loving with a sprinkle of humor."

– Becca M.



"I have been inspired in more ways than I ever thought possible! I have taken many of the classes offered which are amazing! I serve on the funeral committee which is an honor. We serve with communion... But the biggest thing is the people! You are truly met where you are in your journey."

– Vicky S.





WEEK 3

THE CHURCH - A GIFT TO THE VALLEY

SCRIPTURES

¹⁴ *You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden.*

¹⁵ *Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.* ¹⁶ *In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.*

— **Matthew 5:14–16**

¹⁵ *So that you may become blameless and pure, “children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation.” Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky* ¹⁶ *as you hold firmly to the word of life. And then I will be able to boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor in vain.*

— **Philippians 2:15–16**

³⁸ *Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.*

— **John 7:38**

REFLECTION: LIFE THAT GIVES, NOT PERFORMS

Jesus calls His people light not for attention, but to be attractive and give direction. How we live should be attractive in the way we love one another. Light exists so others can see, find their way, and move toward hope. Our lives are meant to shine in contrast to the world, drawing others toward hope through the beauty of faithfulness and grace. The church shines best not when it is elevated above the world, but when it is faithfully present within it.

Scripture describes God's people as light in a crooked generation and as a river of living water flowing outward. The church is not meant to store up life—it is meant to pour it out. We exist for the good of others, for the healing of neighborhoods, and for the flourishing of the valley we are planted in.

Jacobs Well is not a destination; it is a source. A place where people drink deeply—and then carry living water into their homes, workplaces, and streets.

JOURNALING

- Where do you see darkness, weariness, or need in your everyday life?
- How has this church been a gift to you?
- In what ways might God be inviting you to be a gift to others?
- What would it look like for Jacobs Well to shine more brightly—not louder, but deeper?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

[illegible]

[illegible]

ACTS OF LIGHT

Practice shining God's love into the world through simple, intentional actions.

Instructions:

1. Take a moment to reflect on your week and the people or places where light is needed.
2. Write down five ideas for "acts of light" you can do this week. These are small, tangible ways to bring encouragement, kindness, or hope to others.

Examples of Acts of Light

Youth

- Say a kind word to a classmate, teacher, or friend.
- Help set the table or do a small chore at home without being asked.
- Give someone a hug or high-five to cheer them up.
- Text or message a friend to encourage them during a challenging week.
- Help a younger sibling or neighbor with homework or a task.
- Invite someone new to hang out or join a group activity at school or church.

Adults

- Write a note of encouragement for a friend, coworker, or neighbor.
- Pray intentionally for someone you know or for someone in need.
- Share a meal, snack, or small gift with someone.
- Make a phone call or send a message to check in with someone.
- Compliment or affirm someone's effort, work, parenting, or character.

- Hold a door open, smile, or practice other simple acts of hospitality.
- Cook or deliver a meal to someone in need.
- Offer to babysit or help a friend or neighbor with errands.
- Share a story, memory, or wisdom with a younger family member or neighbor.
- Write letters to friends, neighbors, or others in your community.
- Volunteer at a church, school, or community organization.
- Pick up litter or perform a small act of care in a public space.
- Give financially to someone who needs it
- Pay for someone behind you in the drive thru
- Share Scripture, an encouraging quote, or a thoughtful word with someone who needs it.
- Visit someone at their house to encourage or bless them.

My “Acts of Light”

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

PRAYER

Pray you would be an instrument of peace to those around you.

Peace Prayer – St. Francis of Assisi

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let me sow love;

where there is injury, pardon;

where there is doubt, faith;

where there is despair, hope;

where there is darkness, light;

and where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek

to be consoled as to console,

to be understood as to understand,

to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive,

it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,

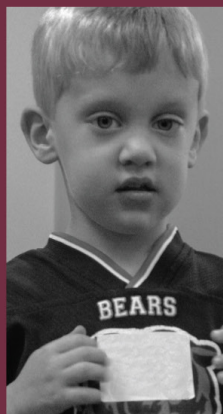
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Amen.



*"A place where
all are welcome,
a place where
the searching
can end; we can
plant roots,
and grow and
flourish. This is
a most precious
gift."*

– Suman B.





"Our prayer for Jacobs Well is that the leaders would always seek and follow the Lord for direction. That the congregation would continue to pray for wisdom and discernment for our pastors and staff. May the Lord would grant Jacobs Well another 25 years and more of ministry to a hurting world."

– Timm and Rose H.





WEEK 4

FOR GENERATIONS NOT YET BORN

SCRIPTURES

⁶These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. ⁷Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.

— **Deuteronomy 6:6-7**

⁹Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

— **Galatians 6:9**

⁸Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

— **Hebrews 13:8**

Week 4 Continued Next Page...▶

REFLECTION: FAITHFULNESS THAT OUTLIVES US

The future is shaped by faithfulness in ordinary, everyday moments. Scripture reminds us that some seeds we plant will be harvested by others (**Galatians 6:9**). This is not loss—it is legacy. We walk paths made by those who came before us, and we lay down paths for those yet to come. Our lives, our choices, our small acts of love and obedience ripple outward in ways we may never fully see.

Deuteronomy 6:6–7 calls us to keep God’s commandments on our hearts and impress them upon our children—to speak of them in daily life, in the rhythm of ordinary days. Faithfulness is woven into routines, conversations, and the patterns of living. These are the unseen threads that strengthen the fabric of the generations to come.

Our calling is not to control outcomes, but to live faithfully today. To teach, to love, to serve, and to persevere in ways that create a well-worn road toward God. Even when the harvest seems distant or invisible, we trust that God, who is the same yesterday, today, and forever (**Hebrews 13:8**), is at work through our faithfulness.

Jacobs Well exists not only for us, but for the generations to come. Every act of love, teaching, encouragement, and service contributes to a legacy of faith. By living faithfully now, we participate in the unfolding story of God’s kingdom, creating a well-worn road toward God for future generations.

JOURNALING

- If you could dream without limits, what would you hope for the next 25 years of Jacobs Well?
- What do you hope future generations experience through this church?
- Where do you sense God inviting you to invest—time, prayer, presence?
- What kind of legacy do you want to be part of leaving behind and how can your everyday choices contribute to that story?

[illegible]

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

[illegible]

LETTER TO THE NEXT GENERATION

This activity invites you to leave a written blessing, encouragement, or hope for those who will follow in your footsteps—children, future leaders, or simply anyone who will continue the journey at Jacobs Well. Your words are a tangible way to contribute to a legacy of faithfulness.

Instructions

1. Choose Your Recipient

Decide who your letter is for. It could be:

- A future child or grandchild
- A person you may never meet who will call Jacobs Well home
- A future church leader or volunteer
- Or simply: “To those who come after us...”

2. Begin Your Letter

Start with “Dear [Name or Title]” to give your letter a personal touch.

3. Include Words of Hope, Encouragement, and Blessing

Consider sharing:

- What you hope they experience in their faith journey
- How you pray God would guide, protect, and sustain them
- What you have learned about God’s faithfulness that you want them to remember
- Specific encouragement about living faithfully, loving others, or walking with God

4. Be Honest and Authentic

Don’t worry about perfection. Speak from your heart—your hopes, your prayers, and even your struggles are part of the gift you leave behind.

5. Close with a Blessing

You might end your letter with a prayer, a scriptural encouragement, or a heartfelt hope. Examples:

- “May you know God’s love and faithfulness every day.”
- “May your life be filled with courage, joy, and peace as you follow Him.”
- “With hope and love, [Your Name]”

6. Reflect

After writing, take a moment to reflect:

- What did this activity reveal about the legacy you want to leave?
- How might your daily actions now shape the story you are beginning for others?

LETTER

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

[illegible]

BLESSING

Pray this classic Celtic prayer over yourself, those you love,
and the next generation.

May the road rise to meet you.

May the wind be always at your back.

May the sun shine warm upon your face,

The rains fall soft upon your fields,

And until we meet again,

May God hold you in the palm of His hand.

25
JACOB'S WELL