

A man in a dark hoodie and pants stands in a field of tall grass, looking up at a dramatic sunset sky with orange and red clouds. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright lens flare. The word "VISION" is overlaid in large white letters.

VISION

Harvest Devotional

A new year brings calendar pages and fresh goals. But for us as a church, 2026 is more than a new year. It is a harvest year.

On the first Sunday we opened Scripture to see the heart of Jesus in Matthew 9:35-38 and the call of Hebrews 12:1-2. We saw a Savior who walks through real towns, sees real people, feels deep compassion, and says the harvest is plentiful. We heard the invitation to throw off what hinders, run our race, and fix our eyes on Jesus.

This devotional flows out of that message.

These five devotions expand the core ideas from Vision Sunday and connect them to other passages in Scripture. You will read, reflect, and apply God's truth in simple, practical ways.

Our desire as a church is clear.

We want to see the harvest the way Jesus does.

We want to feel about people what Jesus feels.

We want to pray the way Jesus told us to pray.

We want to run our race with our eyes locked on Jesus.

When a church steps into a harvest year with that mindset, stories change, and communities feel the difference.

As you move through this week, slow down. Read the passages in full. Reflect honestly.

Pray with expectation. Let God speak about your part in this story.

My prayer is that by Friday you will have a name on your heart, a 9:38 prayer rhythm in your day, and a fresh sense of what it means to run your race in 2026. At the end you will also find a section for gathering with others to open the Word and grow together.

This is your first step into a harvest year. Let's go!

"The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

Jesus

9:38 Prayer Challenge

Big Idea:

When prayer moves from idea to practice, a harvest year shifts from theory to real life.

Step one: Write the name

Take a card, a note in your phone, or a piece of paper and write the first name of the person you sense God highlighting. Place it somewhere you will see often this week.

Step two: Set the alarm

Set an alarm on your phone for 9:38. Morning, evening, or both. Label it Lord of the harvest so you remember why it is there.

Step three: Pray the prayer

Every time the alarm goes off, pray a short prayer like this.

Jesus, please send workers into the harvest, and begin with me. Please open my eyes, heart and give me the courage to love and lead (My One _____) to you. Amen.

Let it be simple. Let it be honest. Trust that God hears.

Prayer Challenge Notes

Monday: The Harvest Has A Face

Today's Big Idea

The harvest is not a crowd. The harvest is people with names and stories that Jesus already sees.

Today's Reading

Matthew 9:35-38

Luke 15:1-7

Scripture Focus

In Matthew 9:35-38 Jesus walks through towns and villages, teaches, proclaims good news, and heals. When he sees the crowds, he has compassion because they are harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he tells his disciples that the harvest is plentiful and calls them to pray. In Luke 15:1-7 Jesus tells a story about a shepherd who leaves ninety-nine sheep to go after one that is lost. Together these passages remind us that the harvest is huge, but it is always made up of individuals that matter deeply to God.

Reflection

The harvest is personal before it is statistical.

Jesus does not see a blur of faces. He sees people who are tired, anxious, ashamed, and searching. When you think of harvest, God wants you to picture people, not numbers.

The harvest is full right now.

Jesus does not say the harvest will be plentiful someday. He says it is plentiful now. There are people in your life who are more open to hope than you can see on the surface.

Compassion is the starting line.

Jesus does not roll his eyes at the crowds. He feels compassion. If our hearts are cold, we will never step into the harvest. Ask God to let you feel a fraction of what he feels.

There is always a one in the crowd.

The story of the one sheep shows us that God notices the individual inside the mass. There is one person in your circle that God is especially putting on your heart this year.

God's heart for the harvest includes you.

You are not outside this picture. Jesus sees you in the crowd too. His compassion is for your fear, your questions, and your story as well.

Questions for your day

1. When you hear the word harvest what or who comes to mind first?
2. Who in your life feels most like that one sheep in Luke 15 right now?
3. What would look different today if you saw your coworkers and neighbors the way Jesus sees the crowds?

Prayer

Jesus thank you for seeing people, not just crowds. Open my eyes to see the people around me the way you do. Bring one face to mind today that you want me to pray for and love well. Let your compassion shape the way I think, speak, and act. Help me remember that I am seen by you too. Amen.

Tuesday: The Gospel Is In A Hurry, Not In A Rush

Today's Big Idea

God feels the urgency of eternity, but he is never frantic. He calls us to pray deeply before we move quickly.

Today's Reading

Matthew 9:37-38, 2 Peter 3:8-9, 1 Timothy 2:1-4

Scripture Focus

In Matthew 9:37-38 Jesus says the harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few, and he tells his disciples to ask the Lord of the harvest to send out workers.

2 Peter 3:8-9 reminds us that the Lord is patient, not wanting anyone to perish but everyone to come to repentance.

1 Timothy 2:1-4 calls believers to pray for all people because God wants all people to be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth.

These passages show a God who cares deeply and urgently about people yet chooses the path of prayer and patient pursuit instead of panic.

Reflection

God is ready right now.

The harvest is plentiful. God is not stuck. He is not waiting for a better year or easier moment. His Spirit is already at work.

God is patient on purpose.

Peter tells us that God's sense of time is different from ours. His patience is not indifference. It is mercy toward people who still need to turn to him.

Prayer is the first move.

Jesus does not say the harvest is plentiful so get out there as fast as you can. He says the harvest is plentiful so ask. Prayer aligns our hearts before our feet move.

Rushing can get in the way.

When we rush ahead without praying, we often talk more than we listen, push more than we love, and treat people like projects instead of people to love.

Urgency and unhurried trust belong together.

You can feel the weight of eternity and still move at the pace of the Spirit.

Questions for your day

1. Where do you feel the most urgency for someone to meet Jesus right now?
2. How do you usually respond when you feel that urgency rush ahead or shut down?
3. What would it look like to bring that person to God in prayer before you try to fix anything?

Prayer:

Lord of the harvest thank you for caring about people far more than I do. Forgive me for the times I have rushed ahead without praying or given up when I did not see quick change. Teach me to live in the tension of urgency and trust. Show me one person to lift before you today and give me peace as I wait for you to move. Amen.

Wednesday: Surrounded and Sent

Today's Big Idea

You are not the first runner in this race, and you are not running alone. The faith of others is meant to push you forward, not make you feel small.

Today's Reading

Hebrews 11, Hebrews 12:1-2

Scripture Focus

Hebrews 11 walks through story after story of people who trusted God in real life. Noah builds an ark before seeing rain. Abraham leaves home without a map. Moses chooses the path of faith instead of comfort and power. Ordinary men and women face lions, armies, fires, and injustice believing God is better than what this world offers.

Hebrews 12:1-2 then says that since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, we are to throw off what hinders, run with perseverance the race marked out for us, and fix our eyes on Jesus.

Reflection

Faith has a history.

You are part of a long story. Generations before you trusted God in their own storms and decisions. Their stories remind you that God can be trusted again.

You are surrounded by witnesses not critics.

The cloud of witnesses is not a crowd shaking their heads at you. It is more like stands full of people cheering you on to keep going and keep trusting.

You have a race that is marked out.

You are not called to run Noah's race or Moses race. You have your own lane in this harvest year with specific people and places God has in mind.

Throwing off what hinders is part of the race.

The command to throw off everything that hinders and the sin that entangles is not just about sin management. It is about getting free to run the race you were made for.

Your focus is a person, not a plan.

We fix our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. Plans matter, but a harvest year begins with a Person at the center.

Questions for your day

1. When you think about the cloud of witnesses who comes to mind first?
2. What habit or weight feels like it is wrapped around your ankles in this season?
3. How would your day look different if you consciously pictured Jesus at the finish line cheering you on?

Prayer

Jesus thank you for the men and women who trusted you before me. Thank you that I am surrounded by their stories and by people in my own life who cheer me on. Show me what is hindering me from running freely. Give me courage to throw it off and help me fix my eyes on you as I step into the race you have marked out for me this year. Amen.

Thursday: Healthy For The Harvest

Today's Big Idea

If Jesus is inviting you into the field, he also cares about the condition of your heart, your mind, and your body. Health is not vanity. Health is readiness.

Today's Reading:

Hebrews 12:1, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, Mark 6:30-32

Scripture Focus

Hebrews 12:1 calls us to throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles and to run with perseverance. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 reminds us that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit and that we are to honor God with our bodies. In Mark 6:30-32 Jesus invites his tired disciples to come with him to a quiet place and get some rest. Together these passages show that God cares about every part of who you are as you step into the harvest.

Reflection

Weights are not only spiritual.

Some hindrances are obvious sin. Others are patterns of exhaustion, neglect, or unprocessed pain that quietly drain strength and joy.

Your body and soul are connected.

Scripture never splits spiritual life from physical life. How you eat, rest, move, and think impacts how available you are for the people God is calling you to love.

Rest is obedience, not laziness.

Jesus tells his disciples to come away and rest.

Saying yes to healthy rhythms is part of saying yes to Jesus.

Health is about availability, not appearance.

Healthy for the harvest is not a fitness slogan. It is about being able to climb the stairs, sit with someone, serve, and stay present without constantly running on empty.

Small changes can be Holy.

Choosing better food, going to bed earlier, taking a walk, meeting with a counselor, or creating a quiet space with God are all ways of throwing off what hinders.

Today is not about fixing everything in one week. It is about letting Jesus show you one area where getting healthier will help you be more present in the harvest.

Questions for your day

1. Which area feels least healthy right now spiritual, emotional, mental, or physical?
2. How might that area be hindering your ability to love and serve the people around you?
3. What is one specific change you can make this week as an act of obedience, not guilt?

Prayer

Holy Spirit thank you for living in me. Show me where I am carrying extra weight in my soul, my mind, or my body. Help me see health the way you see it not as perfection, but as readiness to love and serve. Give me wisdom to take one concrete step toward being healthy for the harvest and the courage to follow through. Amen.

Friday: One Name And One Rhythm

Today's Big Idea

A harvest year becomes real when you carry one name on your heart and build one simple habit of prayer into your day.

Today's Reading

Matthew 9:38

Colossians 4:2-6

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Scripture Focus

In Matthew 9:38 Jesus says Ask the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest field. Colossians 4:2-6 calls believers to devote themselves to prayer, to be watchful and thankful, and to be wise toward outsiders. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 urges us to rejoice always, pray continually, and give thanks in every situation. These passages invite us into a life shaped by ongoing, focused prayer that touches real people.

Reflection

Focus starts with one name.

You cannot carry every need in the county, but you can carry one person intentionally. One name makes the harvest personal and practical.

Prayer shapes how you see that person.

When you bring someone to God regularly, you start to see them through his eyes, not just through past experiences or frustrations.

Rhythms help your heart remember.

A 9:38 alarm is not magic. It is a simple tool to help you remember the command Jesus gave us to ask the Lord of the harvest to send workers into the harvest field.

God often answers by moving you.

When you pray Send workers into your harvest field God may nudge you to listen, encourage, serve, or invite that person in a specific way.

Small prayers add up.

Over time, simple daily prayers create a trail of God moments, conversations, and opportunities that you would have missed if you were not asking.

Today is not about becoming a prayer expert. It is about choosing a name and a rhythm that keep your heart connected to the harvest all year.

Questions for your day

1. Who is the one person God is putting at the center of your prayers in this season?
2. When during your day could a 9:38 style reminder fit naturally?
3. How would your faith change if you prayed daily for that person all year long?

Prayer

Lord of the harvest I choose one name today. You know their story. You see their heart. I ask you to move in their life. Draw them to Jesus. Send workers into your harvest field and if you want to start with me give me courage and opportunities to love them well. Help me build a simple rhythm of prayer that I carry through this year. Amen.

Small Group Guide

Harvest 2026

Matthew 9 and Hebrews 12

Relational warm up

Choose a question to walk the group through.

1. What was one highlight from your first week of the new year?
2. When you hear the word harvest what image or memory comes to mind?

Let everyone share briefly.

Scripture Reading

Read together: Matthew 9:35-38, Hebrews 12:1-2

Ask

What word or phrase stood out to you most and why?
(Spend some time discussing this, don't rush past it.)

Three core truths to discuss

1. Jesus sees and feels before he speaks.

He walks through real places, sees crowds who are harassed and helpless, and feels compassion. Our vision for 2026 starts with his heart, not our plans.

2. The harvest is plentiful and personal.

Jesus says the harvest is plentiful, not scarce. Yet the harvest is also made up of individual people who need someone to see and carry them.

3. We are surrounded and sent.

Hebrews 12 reminds us that we are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses and called to run our race, to throw off what hinders, and to fix our eyes on Jesus.

Conversations that matters

Open heart questions

1. Where in these passages did you feel the strongest personal tug from God?
2. Do you tend to see people around you more as a crowd or as individuals with stories?

Open Bible questions

1. In Matthew 9 what do you notice about the order of Jesus actions seeing, feeling, speaking, and commanding?
2. In Hebrews 12 what do you think it means practically to throw off everything that hinders?

Open life questions

1. What is one weight or distraction that might be slowing you down in this season?
2. Who might be your one in this harvest year and what is one small step you can take toward them?

Prayer as a shared practice

Invite everyone to sit quietly for one minute and ask the Spirit

“Jesus, who is the one person you want me to carry in prayer this year?”

After the silence, invite anyone who is comfortable to share just a name or a short phrase. Then pray briefly for each person and each name mentioned. Close with a simple group prayer asking God to make your group a people who pray first, throw off what hinders, and run your race with your eyes fixed on Jesus in 2026.

JANUARY 4
5:30 - 7:30 PM

Come and watch
Ice Age with us!

We will have
popcorn & water.

FAMILY
MOVIE
NIGHT

PLEASE LET US KNOW YOU ARE
COMING BY SIGNING UP ON THE
CHURCH CENTER APP, OR AT
MARLBOROCHRISTIAN.COM/EVENTS





Women's Ministry Soup Potluck

January 10
2026
6 - 8 pm

Bring a
crockpot
of soup to
share!

Guest Speakers
Ethan & Ashleigh Hughes

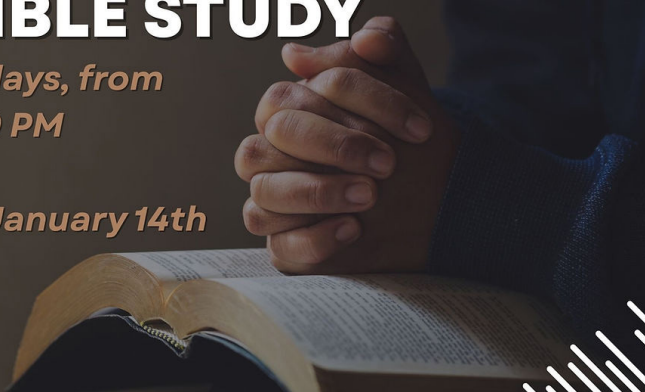


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Church Center App, or
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HIGH SCHOOL
BIBLE STUDY

Wednesdays, from
6:00-7:00 PM

Starting January 14th



JANUARY 18
6-10PM
\$5 PER PERSON
LAKE HIGH SCHOOL/YMCA



2026
CATALYST
REVERSE THE FLOW

MEN'S MINISTRY
BREAKFAST
SATURDAY, JANUARY 17TH
AT 8:00AM

SIGN UP ON THE CHURCH CENTER APP OR
AT MARLBOROCRISTIAN.COM/EVENTS

FAMILY
Game
Night

Bring your
favorite game
to share!
Popcorn will be available.

JANUARY 31
5:30 - 7:30

Sign up at marlborochristian.com/events



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