

Odyssey

— inspire disciples. empower evangelists. —



Forward
Movement

— SPRING 2020 —



Table of Contents - Spring 2020

3	Letter from the editor
4	Letter from Executive Director Scott Gunn
5	Through the Years: The <i>Forward Day by Day</i> Story
8	Meditations from <i>Forward Through the Years</i>
11	Letters and Love Notes: The Ministry of <i>Forward Day by Day</i>
17	<i>Forward Day by Day</i> Online Community
19	Staff Stories about <i>Forward Day by Day</i>
21	<i>Forward Day by Day</i> Podcast
22	<i>Forward Day by Day</i> for Discipleship and Evangelism
16	Prayer for Forward Movement
21	Forward Movement's Board of Directors

Stay Connected



Letter from the editor

Dear friends of Forward Movement,

When I started working at Forward Movement almost ten years ago, the first issues I saw in production had covers by Kathrin Burleson. You might remember those covers - we received so much positive feedback that led to her working with us on several other projects. I remember being awed by her painting see on the cover. I'll never forget that feeling - it was a welcome that I'd never felt before when I read *Forward Day by Day*.

I pray that this issue of *Odyssey* shows you the breadth and depth of God's work through our authors' thoughts and understandings of holy scripture and how that Word affects our daily lives. I pray that the contents of this *Day by Day* focused issue are a blessing to you, and a reminder of all that we have in common as children of God and followers of Jesus.

Please share your good news about *Forward Day by Day* with me at mmckenney@forwardmovement.org, or leave a note on our *Forward Day by Day* Facebook page. I also love mail, so drop me a line! Most importantly, please pray for our ministry. God bless you and thank you for your unwavering support.

Peace,

Miriam McKenney



Dear Friends in Christ,

Matthew 24:44. *Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.*

We are meant to be warned, to act as if we might greet Christ's second coming any moment. Of course, we have also made a baptismal promise to "seek and serve Christ in all persons," so it is not just in the second coming that we meet our Lord.

One day in the parish, I was busy in the sacristy, probably getting ready for a service. One of our parishioners came in and started making small talk. I kept working, hardly looking up, going on about my work. After a few minutes, I paid attention.

The person had a grave problem and had been making chitchat to warm up. If I had kept working, she would never have shared her burden. I almost missed serving Christ in this person. I wasn't ready for Christ in this unexpected hour.

Thanks be to God, she was persistent. I wonder how often we miss meeting Christ because we are not ready. I hope I will be ready the next time Christ is coming.



Scott Gunn, Executive Director
Forward Day by Day
December 17, 2013

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Through the Years: The *Forward Day by Day* Story

Richelle Thompson and Rachel Jones

Mark 16:15. *Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation.*

When Forward Movement began in 1935, it was not a publishing house but a renewal movement in the Episcopal Church, established by General Convention to counter the spiritual malaise of the Depression. Volunteers went from diocese to diocese, calling on people to commit themselves afresh to the basic principles of discipleship. They organized conferences and workshops on mission, on Bible study, and on the leadership of prayer groups. It was a great success. Enthusiasm developed rapidly, and the morale of the church was much improved. The publishing program grew from this, as a means to provide resources for evangelism, education, and spiritual growth.

When the disciples first preached the Gospel, it, too, was a movement of the spirit, depending on the testimony of eyewitnesses and people's memory of what Jesus taught,

passed on by word of mouth. Mark was one of the first to see the need for writing things down in a permanent and organized form, so people everywhere might know the basic facts about Jesus and what he said and did. His brief account is still the best starting point for new Christians. Give thanks for Mark and Paul, the first Christian authors.

—*Forward Day by Day* meditation from 1991

Forward Day by Day has encouraged, challenged, inspired, prodded, and empowered millions of people around the world since its conception in 1935. Born in a time when the United States and The Episcopal Church were facing deep divisions and pressing challenges, *Forward Day by Day* immediately became a place where people sought daily connection with scripture and with God. More than eighty years later, *Forward Day by Day*, a cornerstone of the ministry of Forward Movement, continues with the same conviction that regular, consistent prayer is fundamental for disciples who seek healthy spiritual lives.

Guided by this central tenet, *Forward Day by Day* has also changed. What began as a six-times-a-year print devotional is today published quarterly—in large and regular print, as an app and a podcast, on social media, and in English, Spanish, and Braille. We added author names and biographies, and in 2017 added *Moving Forward* to give you concrete ways to amplify your *Forward Day by Day* experience. Through the years, the ethnicity and gender of writers have grown more diverse. From a cadre of white, mostly older clergymen, our roster of authors has come to reflect the whole church: lay and ordained; women and men; young and old. Our writers are black and white, Latino, Asian, and Native American. They are straight, gay, married, single, widowed. Not every reader loves every writer, but every writer has something of value for every reader.

The community of *Forward Day by Day* has changed over the years as well. No longer is the conversation maintained solely at

the kitchen table or in-person prayer groups. Today, *Forward Day by Day* has a half-million readers and listeners in more than fifty countries.

What hasn't changed about *Forward Day by Day* is the timeless wisdom offered in the meditations. As we compiled *Forward Through the Years*, a collection of the best of *Forward Day by Day*, we appreciated the continuing relevance of entries. God's words—and deep reflection upon them—are timeless.

Because we believe so strongly in the mission of *Forward Day by Day*, we have made it a vital part of our ministry at Forward Movement. Our staff gathers every weekday morning to read the daily devotion and then pray together. Also, we actively seek donor support to continue our ministry of giving nearly 30,000 copies of *Forward Day by Day* each quarter to members of the military, people in hospitals and nursing homes, and incarcerated people. One of our most beloved writers was a convicted murderer who, while incarcerated, found a constant companion in *Forward Day by Day*—and ultimately forgiveness and redemption through the ever-abiding, amazing grace of God. May it be so for all of us.



Richelle Thompson serves as Deputy Director and Managing Editor at Forward Movement.



Rachel Jones serves as Associate Editor at Forward Movement and is the primary editor of Forward Day by Day.



Like Forward Day by Day on Facebook

Meditations from *Forward Through the Years*

Editor's note: Whenever I get an annual devotional, I read a few entries in my birth month to get a preview of the book. Here are my favorite meditations from March from Forward Through the Years. I'd love to share a copy with you, so send requests for a complimentary copy to Miriam McKenney, Forward Movement, 412 Sycamore St. Cincinnati, OH 45202, or mmckenney@forwardmovement.org. Your donation sends a book to someone incarcerated who needs it and cannot afford it. Thank you!

MARCH 6

Mark 5:2. And when he had stepped out of the boat, immediately a man out of the tombs with an unclean spirit met him.

As Jesus steps out of the boat, a crazy man rushes toward him, jumping, shrieking, waving his arms. To the disciples, he is a loathsome menace to be over-powered or fled from. But Jesus sees past the filth and ravings. He sees a suffering child of God. His whole being goes forth in a mighty wave of pity, trying to penetrate the frightful exterior. His only thought is to help. That is love in action; Christ coming to the outcast.

You may have some repulsive disease; you may be disgusted at your sin; others may have imprisoned you as a threat to their safety; because of your color, they may treat you as only partly human; you may live in poverty or squalor; your mind may be unsteady. But Christ sees in you one who can become a strong, useful child of God. He offers you his friendship, his power, his love, a share in his work. Will you accept it? Will you believe in yourself as Christ does and let his companionship make you what you might be? —1936

MARCH 11

Mark 6:46. *After saying farewell to them, he went up on the mountain to pray.*

In this chapter of Mark, Jesus learns about John the Baptist's terrible murder, finds a lonely place apart to collect himself, and then tackles the teaching and feeding of five thousand persons. Mark depicts an active, can-do Jesus, but we also see one who prays every chance he gets.

Prayer is unlike vitamins or exercise—it is impossible to overdose! Brother Lawrence, a 17th century monk, prayed joyfully as he washed dishes. A rancher friend of mine prays as he spends hours alone in the saddle. Richard Foster, the Quaker writer and teacher, has joined a covenant of friends who take five minutes at noon to stop every other activity, assess how their morning has gone, and ask God's continual guidance.

Perhaps you can experiment with some new ways of praying. You might try a short prayer of thanksgiving for every person with whom you speak in a given day. Or you might offer a stoplight prayer: "You are patience and joy, O God. Help me be more like you."

Saint Teresa of Avila said: "There is but one road that reaches God, and that is prayer. If anyone shows you another, you are being deceived."—1992

MARCH 18

1 Corinthians 12:12. *For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.*

Watching an orchestra, I noticed three things. First, the unchangeable oboe sounded the pitch and all the other players tuned to it. Second, the musicians each concentrated on their own instrument. Third, they watched the written score before them but played according to the interpretation of the conductor. What a fine parable for the church!

Composers writing for an orchestra don't want a hundred clarinets. They call for families of varying voices, in groups both large and small—all playing in harmony. In the church it doesn't matter whether all think alike, but that we love one another, find our own faults rather than our neighbor's, be in tune with the congregation, and follow the score as directed by our conductor. We must practice alone, but in a concert only one score can be played at a time. Someone must arrange the program if the church is to produce harmony and not discord. Let us keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, rather than the uniformity of our opinions in the bond of prejudice.—1937

MARCH 22

Exodus 4:12. *Now go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you are to speak.*

This chapter in Exodus gives us the four voices in which Moses could speak to Israel and to Pharaoh, the same voices we have been using ever since. The first is symbolized by the rod become snake. This is the way of force and fear. People can be frightened into obedience by the show of power.

The second voice is that of mystery and magic. Moses, in making his hand leprous at will, appealed to magic. This is the promise of a panacea to cure all ills. We look for it in technology and politics; wonder drugs are not confined to medicine.

The third voice is that of authority, illustrated by Aaron the priest. The appeal here is to tradition. At best it is second-hand and derived. For all its impressive rite and ceremony, the power sometimes goes out of it.

The only satisfactory appeal is through our own personal experience and witness. Like Moses, we may seem to be slow of speech, but we cannot foist our task off on any Aaron. We dare not say, "Send some other person." Not by the voice of force, magic, or authority, but only in the voice of personal concern and commitment will the message be heard.—1971

Letters and Love Notes:

The Ministry of Forward Day by Day



Pictured are a few of the many letters we receive asking for prayers and for spiritual resources such as *Forward Day by Day*. Most of the people who write to us are incarcerated. Your support of our ministry allows us to say yes to every person who seeks to know God, no matter where they are in their life's journey.

Thank you to all of you who support us and those whom we serve with your prayers and gifts!

Please notify _____
Address I read Forward every time I visit & Henry while
he was in a Memory Care facility -
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Stay Connected



HERMANOS DE Adelante Día a Día -
nte Todo les deseo mucha Salud
deseo cosas buenas PARA Todos.
Les escribí hace poco o meno
unos meses, donde les decía
e yo recibí los libritos de D
Día, pero estoy muy triste
és en Casa todos no leemo.
ya para Noviembre no lo
tenemos, en nuestra parro-
la St. Trinidad, Episcopal
es gusta que se lo lleve

Dear brothers and sisters of Adelante Día a Día,

I want to begin by wishing you good health and good things.

A couple of months ago, I sent you a letter communicating that we have received our copies of *Día a Día*. I feel sad – at home, we all read the books, and unfortunately, we don't have the next issues of November. Our parish St. Trinidad likes for me to share *Día a Día*, but unfortunately, sometimes we don't get them back, and it makes us upset. Can it be possible for you to send me more free issues? I know it is a bit early, but I would like to wish you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. That with baby Jesu's birth, you receive good things and good health.

God is Love: I am a lay minister from the Episcopal Church of St. Trinidad in Bermejo, Cuba, from years ago.

To Whom It May Concern:

March 27, 2019

Greetings!

I write this letter with the hopes and prayer that you can assist me.

I recently obtained your address with the information that your ministry provides a Devotional entitled, "FORWARD DAY BY DAY."

I have found that the use of a Devotional during my quiet time helps me as I read and study the Word of God as each reading has a message for me.

However, the information did not indicate that or if a subscription was required. I hope this is not an issue because please understand that I am one of the many unfortunate inmates that is indigent and is unable to pay.

But please find it in your heart to add my name and address to your mailing list so I can receive each issue of "FORWARD DAY BY DAY" to use as I study God's Word.

Please respond with any assistance you can do.

I thank you in advance.

May God bless you and your ministry.

January 26, 2020

Dear Reverend Scott Gunn,

My name is George [redacted] and I am a 100% military service connected disabled veteran. As I approach the end of my time here on Earth, I get the wonderment of reviewing my life and all that has occurred.

As I was going through one of the many boxes of memories, I came upon the enclosed "Forward-day by day-" booklet from 1953. I looked up the Forward Movement information and found that you are the Executive Director of the organization now.

I hope you will re-read this little booklet and may the Holy Spirit fill you!

Thank you for your service to the Lord! No higher calling is known.

I would appreciate it if you would take a moment and raise up George & Melinda [redacted] and our family in prayer. Thank-you.

May God bless you and keep you, may He shine His face upon you and give you peace.

Sincerely,



George [redacted]



Dear Sirs & Madams

Thank you so much for my indigent/incarcerated subscription. It means so much to stay connected to my Anglican roots even through my trying circumstance. I find strength through our beautiful Saviour Jesus Christ. Day by Day helps me focus my daily study. Thank you all again and may God bless you and keep you always.

Forward Day by Day

.....*Sincerely and in Christ*

Joel

11-20-19



Dear Forward movement.

Thank you so much, for all of your help, inspiration, guidance, and motivation. I am currently in recovery. I am a client at the Harmony House in New Bedford MA.

I've been reading the daily reflections every day and it helps my stay spiritually grounded and our touch with the word of God. I've been reading from, Jail, to C.S.S., to T.S.S., to here at the halfway house, and I feel like it's helped me so much.

So I'm writing to say thank you, I love you guys, and also if it is at all possible, could you please send a couple of copies here to the Harmony House, so I can share them with some of the other guys, here please.

Thank you so much,
God Bless

Forward Movement,

Aug 3, 2019

Blessings and prayers to all!
God is good!

My name is Tabatha Black. I am a prisoner at FCI Aliceville. I am writing to request that my Forward Day by Day be renewed. It brings me such joy and hope.

Here at FCI Aliceville prisoners are allowed to practice yoga. Yoga is a wonderful way to pray and reflect on Gods love. If possible could I please receive a copy of Faith With A Twist?

Thank you beyond all possible words.

A Prayer for Forward Movement

○ God, we ask your guidance and blessing for the Forward Movement of your church. Use it, we pray, to open our eyes to your glory and to the opportunities that lie before the church to reach people everywhere with the good news of Christ. Grant that the leaders of Forward Movement may be both wise and daring disciples, and stir up in us the will to share joyfully in this work with our prayers and gifts. Let not our purpose grow slack, that the nations of this world may become one holy people under the kingship of our Lord Jesus Christ. This we ask in his name. Amen.

The *Forward Day by Day* Online Community



It is incredible and moving to witness the interactions of our online *Forward Day by Day* community. Each day, members of this vibrant and active community come together to reflect on the day's meditation and pray for each other. And although most have never met in real life, they know each other by name and pray, grieve, and celebrate together. Join the conversation at prayer.forwardmovement.org and facebook.com/forwarddaybyday.

“A good way to start my day. Oftentimes there’s something very relevant to my circumstances; sometimes it’s an epiphany of scripture and many times comforting conversation from the Disqus forum. Try it out!”

“Best wakeup call every day.”

“Love your publication has been a constant daily reading in my home for years. You were asking about anchors in our lives other than Jesus. I lost my anchor, my best friend of 55 years ago to cancer and my

favorite brother-in-law within a week to cancer. Your *Forward Day by Day* publications was a blessing. Thank you so much, and God bless all of you there.”

“I get up early to make sure I read this before I leave the house.”

“The reflections are right on target for what we face in today’s world. Rooted in Scripture for the ages, but I see the lessons throughout the day in the living world.”

“I follow *Forward Day by Day* online, along with a wonderful group of people. We love the inspirational posts and how writers try to be inclusive in outreach, inspirational, and empathetic, and also both timely and timeless. The posts are well designed to speak to us in the here and now but also to show how the word of Christ has remain essentially unchanged across the ages.”

“I am posting this in honor of Marshall Williams, a true FDBD saint who was referred to as the “Moses” of the online FDBD community. It’s very fitting that Marshall was able to soldier on in his fight against cancer to make it to one more Veteran’s Day. Marshall’s Dad was one of the “Greatest Generation,” men and women who sacrificed much for a noble cause. Marshall himself lived every day of his life dedicated to others. He is an inspiration to us all. We need more leaders like Marshall: leaders who listen, empathize, encourage, uplift. Peace be with you, Marshall.”



Alyssa Finke is the Marketing Coordinator at Forward Movement. She manages social media and associated Forward Movement websites.

Visit [ForwardMovement.org](https://www.ForwardMovement.org) to donate



Staff Stories about *Forward Day by Day*

At Forward Movement, there's one product we all touch in some way, and that's *Forward Day by Day*. Each of us as a part to play in the creation, production, and distribution of our beloved devotional. Here, staff from the business office share a few recent stories of their interactions with *Forward Day by Day* customers.

We had a lady call to place a standing order of twelve copies of *Forward Day by Day* for a small group she's leading. She rush-ordered extra February issues because she's going to give them as Valentine gifts instead of flowers! - Barb

This man called because he hadn't received his issue of *Forward Day by Day* in the mail and needed another one sent. He talked about how he needs it every day. Lots of people say that but coming from him, it felt more real. He said, "Every day, I eat breakfast alone, but I'm really eating breakfast with it." He didn't elaborate on "it," but it was a very humanizing way of referring to *Forward Day by Day* as a companion. -Nia

Just received a donation "in memory of" St. Martin-in-the-Fields, Toronto, where the donor picked up her first *Forward* in 1951. The church is still there, but she has moved. - Peggy

I received this letter in Spanish that said when they don't get their

copies of *Adelante Día a Día*, it makes them upset. They need more copies! -Tania

Just had a caller who is a longtime reader of *Forward Day by Day*, and when placing his order for the Lenten book, he made a point to say how much *Forward Day by Day* has meant to him over the years. Specifically, he said during those dark times when he could not pray, he could always turn to *Forward Day by Day* and read, gathering spiritual strength and a much-needed connection with God. It has been a blessing to him again and again. -Amy

Your Monthly Gift Makes a Difference

Your monthly gift sustains us year-round and helps us send *Forward Day by Day* to all who want and need it. Visit www.ForwardMovement.org to donate, or mail your gift to Forward Movement, 412 Sycamore Street, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202.

All gifts are tax-deductible.

\$25

\$50

\$100

Other

\$ 10.00

Choose a Frequency

One Time

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Forward
Movement

Forward Day by Day Podcast



Engage your heart and your ears by downloading a daily podcast of *Forward Day by Day*, available on all streaming platforms, including Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Stitcher, and anywhere else you listen to podcasts.

We also offer other podcasts to center you in prayer. *A Morning at the Office* includes all three readings as well as bonus prayers. *Daily Prayer* includes two readings and follows the same text as our app and website. In our *ChurchNext* podcast, Chris Yaw discusses a variety of topics in the Episcopal and Christian scope.

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Using *Forward Day by Day* for Discipleship & Evangelism

The Way of Love calls us to use several spiritual practices as we follow Jesus' teachings and work toward being members of the community God dreamed for us in this life. *Forward Day by Day* inspires people who want to be more like Jesus and encourages them to spread his love in the world.

With a half-million readers worldwide, the daily devotions continue as a contemporary and relevant resource that nourishes the spiritual lives of people today. Regular, consistent prayer is foundational for modern disciples who seek active spiritual lives, and *Forward Day by Day* is a tool for your spiritual practice toolkit.

Forward Movement's mission is to inspire disciples and empower evangelists. Here are some ways you can use *Forward Day by Day* to be both.

For Personal Devotions

- Set aside a regular time and space to read *Forward Day by Day* daily.
- Read all of the scripture appointed for the day. Then read the meditation and spend some time in prayer. If you have time, read and pray the Daily Office or Daily Devotions for Individuals and Families, all found in The Book of Common Prayer.
- Write a meditation on the day's scripture, perhaps using a different scripture. Compare it to the one in *Forward Day by Day*. Listen to what the Spirit says to you through both.
- Do the Moving Forward for the day. Did it change you or your day? How? You can share on social media by using #ForwardDayByDay.
- If a reflection is particularly meaningful to you, share it with friends on Facebook or Twitter.

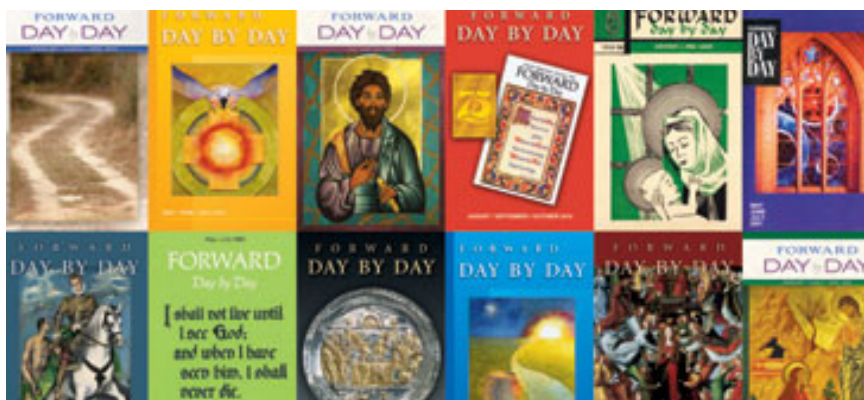
-
- Visit and like the *Forward Day by Day* Facebook page. Here you can read the day's meditation, comment, and share with friends and other readers.

For Group Study

- Use *Forward Day by Day* in a Bible study or prayer group.
- Form a Facebook group to discuss *Forward Day by Day* regularly.

For Outreach and Evangelism

- Give *Forward Day by Day* to church visitors.
- Send gift subscriptions for *Forward Day by Day* to family and friends.
- Like *Forward Day by Day* on Facebook. Share particularly meaningful readings.
- Post *Forward Day by Day* as a link on your congregation's website and Facebook page.
- Carry an extra print copy to give away. Distribute copies when you visit a hospital or nursing home. Offer them to a local prison chaplain. Many individuals and congregations buy a standing order of ten or more copies for this purpose.
- Have copies available at your workplace. We know of copies placed on coffee shop tables, with the magazines in a doctor's office, in a literature rack in a hotel, and on the counter of a machine shop.





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