



July 23, 2025

Sarah of the Bible: When God Makes You Laugh

Rick Hamlin

Remember Sarah's reaction when the three men—God's messengers—appeared at Abraham's tent and said that he and Sarah would have a child within a year? She laughed. How was it possible? She was way too old. "Me, give birth? At my age?"

Then she was afraid for having laughed. Even pretended she hadn't laughed. Lied about it, tried to squirrel out of it. *What, me laugh?*

What I love about Sarah and so many of the characters of the Bible is she is so real. So, like us. God gives us a promise that seems impossible. Wouldn't the first reaction be to laugh? And then to be afraid.

I think Sarah is an example of what happens when God enters our lives, and we're open to it. Things are never the same.

First of all, she had to change her name, a sign of her changed identity. She was Sarai. Her husband had been Abram. They become Sarah and Abraham. We are all called something. Then we hear God's call and our whole identity changes.

We know a bit about her sense of shame. Remember what happened to her earlier. She faced the humiliation, especially humiliating in those times, of not being able to have a child. She offered up her servant Hagar to sleep with her husband and Hagar became pregnant.

That made Sarai—as she was then called—feel even worse. So, she banished Hagar into the wilderness. Hagar only returns when God's messenger intervenes and tells her that she's just going to have to put up with Sarai for a while. He has His promise for her, too. She'll bear a son named Ishmael, a name that means "God hears."

God hears us all.

We know the end of the story. The aged Sarah becomes miraculously pregnant. God's promise is fulfilled. She and Abraham have a son. The child's name is Isaac.

Remember what *that* name means—sometimes this gets a little lost in translation. Isaac in Hebrew means “He laughs” or just “laughter.” This is my favorite part of Sarah’s story. Answered prayers can bring endless delight and laughter. Fulfilled promises are a source of joy.

Even after a journey of shame, humiliation, fear and disbelief. Sarah found that out. By God’s grace, laughter—and Laughter—was born.

Sarah laughs to herself when she overhears the Lord telling Abraham that she will have a son. She doubts it will happen due to her age. God confronts her about her laughter, and she denies it out of fear.

Genesis 18:12-15:



Worship Calendar

July 27
Aug. 3
Aug. 10

Jesus Teaches Us to Pray
TBA
TBA

Luke 11:1-13

Rev. Eric Lee
Rev. Jan Hieminga
Rev. Jan Hieminga



NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Our New Instagram Account

We’re pleased to share that Graceview now has an official Instagram account! It will be maintained by **Rachael Chen** and will focus especially on updates and outreach related to our new Young Adults Group. We invite you all to follow our IG account.

Here is the link:

<https://www.instagram.com/graceview.presbyterian?igsh=MnlpeXE5YTYyN2ly>

Egg Cartons Wanted

St. James Food Basket is once again in need of egg cartons, at least for the summer months. Please leave them in the cloakroom at Graceview and they will be taken to St. James. Thank you for your help.

SodaStream

Free to a good home two pink canisters for SodaStream. Contact Maureen at 416-433-8148 or maureenscreen@gmail.com.

A Summer Devotional Update (Updated June 17, 2025):

A **new** edition of **These Days** (July/August/September), as well as a **new** edition of **Our Daily Bread** (June/July/August) are available on the table in the church vestibule and in the devotional box on the church porch.

Lemonade



Lemonade will now be served (self-served that is) after worship during June, July and August. Please join us in the Adamson Lounge for a refreshing glass of lemonade and some cookies.

Music Announcement



Glen would like to start a New Bell Ringers Choir. Anyone can join between the ages of 10 and 110 years. No music knowledge or experience is needed. Rehearsals will be once a month, every third Sunday for 20 minutes after church. The first performance will be Thanksgiving Sunday. The next rehearsal of the Graceview Bell Ringers will be on August 17.



PRAYER REQUESTS AND PASTORAL CARE

* Pray for the people of war-torn countries who are living in fear and uncertainty. Pray for those close to home who need your special love and guidance during trying times.

* Please keep in your prayers the following:

Norma Hendershot, the family of Margaret MacLauchlan, Chris Parr, Jean Fox, Eftekhar (grandmother of Ali), **Earl** Nixon, Lynne Bishop, Joan Pateman, Debbie Homebrooke and family, Margaret Munene's brother Simon, Lenore Carty, Shelia Thomas' grandson, Carter, the Jarvis family, Olive S., Roman P., Ed. L., and Jean Fox's nephew, Ryan.

Please keep these folks, and indeed, everyone in our church family and people around the world, in your prayers.

Note from your editor...could you please advise me from time to time on the status of your loved ones so that updates can be recorded and shared to prove that the power of prayer does work miracles.



**Better one handful with tranquility than two handfuls with toil and chasing after the wind.
Ecclesiastes 4:6**

The saying goes that bigger is better but there's a sacred simplicity in having less. It's not about the quantity of what you hold, but the quality of life you lead. Embrace the peace that comes with contentment, recognizing the value of a tranquil heart over an exhaustive pursuit of the next best thing.

Heavenly Father, grant me the wisdom to seek peace and satisfaction in the present moment.



UPCOMING EVENTS

- * Tuesdays @ 11:00 AM – Walking Group – All are welcome
- * Thursdays @ 2:00 PM – Worship service at Centennial Park Place
- * Tuesday, Aug. 26 @1:30 PM – Music & Worship Team meeting
- * Tuesday, Sept. 9 @ 6:30 PM – Presbytery of West Toronto meets at Graceview
- * Tuesday, Sept. 23 @ 6:30 PM – Session
- * Sunday, Nov. 2 @ 10:30 AM – Remembering Tree Sunday

	<u>Prayer Roster</u>	<u>Lay Readers</u>	<u>Welcome and Announcements</u>
July 27	Eric Lee	Georgena Engineer	Kathy Twynam
Aug. 3	Chris Parr	Errol Baldeo	Nancy McPherson
Aug. 10	Margaret Munene	Kathy Twynam	Susan Chopp
Aug. 17	Bob Twynam	Nancy McPherson	Iris Lee
Aug. 24	Eric Lee	Al Bishop	Bob Twynam
Aug. 31	Rachael Chen	Bob Twynam	Kathy Twynam

Sept. 7	Nancy Green	Anna Cherniak	Nancy McPherson
Sept. 14	Eric Lee	Nancy Green	Susan Chopp
Sept. 21	Ethel Waite	Harry Learoyd	Iris Lee
Sept. 28	Maureen Screen	Chris Parr	Bob Twynam



WEEKLY GIGGLE

A climber fell off a cliff, and as he tumbled down, he caught hold of a small branch wedged in the rock.

"HELP! IS THERE ANYBODY UP THERE?" he shouted.

A majestic voice boomed through the gorge:

"I will help you, my son, but first you must have faith in me."

"Yes, yes, I trust you!" cried the man.

"Let go of the branch," boomed the voice.

There was a long pause, and the man shouted up again, "IS THERE ANYONE ELSE UP THERE I COULD TALK TO?"



Where to Find Us

Do you have any news or prayer requests that you would like to share? Drop me a line and I will be happy to include it in the Weekly Email. Have a blessed week, everyone.

Susan choppertini@hotmail.com

* Message from **Pastor Eric**: "FYI the Graceview website page has been revamped, so as to keep people updated of our activities and events. Visit us and enjoy all that is good about Graceview".

<https://graceview.ca/calendar-events>

* We also have our own Facebook page. (Graceview Presbyterian Church). This site shows the world all that we are and what we have to offer as a church. Check it out and be sure to "follow."

Please note the following email addresses for all church-related communication:

Pastor Eric: pastor@graceview.ca (416-621-0888) and press #1 for Pastor Eric.

Church Office: office@graceview.ca (unchanged and managed by our Secretary, Halyna)



July

2025



SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

		1 	2	3 Service @ CPP 2:00 PM	4	5
6 Sent Rev. Eric Lee	7	8 Walking Group 11:00	9	10 Service @ CPP 2:00 PM	11	12
13 The Good Samaritan: Rev. Eric Lee	14	15 Walking Group 11:00	16	17 Service @ CPP 2:00 PM	18	19 Young Adults Fellowship 7:30 PM
20 *In a World of Distraction Rev. Lee *Bell Ringers	21	22 Walking Group 11:00	23	24 Service @ CPP 2:00 PM	25	26
27 Jesus Teaches Us to Pray Rev. Eric Lee	28	29 Walking Group 11:00	30	31 Service @ CPP 2:00 PM		

