

“A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood” starring Tom Hanks, Matthew Rhys, Susan Kelechi Watson, 2019, PG, 109 minutes

Major themes:

- Mister Rogers
- Friendship
- Forgiveness
- Reconciliation
- Listening
- Feelings
- Family
- Anger
- Gratitude
- Prayer
- Intentionality
- Wonder

Major characters:

- Fred & Joanne Rogers
- Lloyd & Andrea Vogel
- Jerry & Dorothy Vogel
- Lorraine Vogel & Todd
- Bill Isler

Background info:

- Mister Rogers' Neighborhood (sometimes shortened to Mister Rogers) is an American half-hour educational children's television series that was created and hosted by Fred Rogers. There are many characters on the show, including Mr. & Mrs. McFeely, Officer Clemmons, Bob Dog, Handyman Negri, Keith the Handyman, Prince Tuesday, Mayor Maggie, Chef Brockett, Neighbor Aber, Ana Platypus, and many more.
- Fred Rogers and Mister Rogers' Neighborhood (1968-2001) won 4 Emmy Awards – Outstanding Individual Achievement in Children's Programming (1980), Outstanding Writing in a Children's Series (1985), and Outstanding Performer in a Children's Series (1997, 1999).
- In an interview on CBS This Morning (1992), Tom Hanks described playing Fred Rogers as "terrifying" due to Rogers' immense cultural and social influence. He credited Joanne Rogers, who served as a consultant on the film, with helping him to craft an honest and believable representation of her late husband. Joanne also gave Hanks several of Fred's neckties which Hanks wore in the film.
- Joanne Rogers (Fred Rogers' widow), David Newell (Mr. McFeely actor), Margaret Whitmer (*Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* producer), and Bill Isler (The Fred Rogers Company CEO) all appear in the scene in the Chinese restaurant in honor of Fred Rogers.
- Fred Rogers was known to be extremely difficult to interview because he cared more about the person interviewing him than he did about being interviewed and would often use the time to befriend the person interviewing him.

Movie Nights for Thinkers and Seekers

Scriptures:

Matthew 6:7-15 (NLT) – *“When you pray, don’t babble on and on as the Gentiles do. They think their prayers are answered merely by repeating their words again and again. Don’t be like them, for your Father knows exactly what you need even before you ask him! Pray like this: Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy. May your Kingdom come soon. May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us today the food we need, and forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us. And don’t let us yield to temptation, but rescue us from the evil one. If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins.”*

Proverbs 17:9 (The Message) – *“Overlook an offense and bond a friendship; fasten on to a slight and—good-bye, friend!”*

2 Corinthians 5:16-21 (The Message) – *“We look inside, and what we see is that anyone united with the Messiah gets a fresh start, is created new. The old life is gone; a new life emerges! Look at it! All this comes from the God who settled the relationship between us and him, and then called us to settle our relationships with each other. God put the world square with himself through the Messiah, giving the world a fresh start by offering forgiveness of sins. God has given us the task of telling everyone what he is doing. We’re Christ’s representatives. God uses us to persuade men and women to drop their differences and enter into God’s work of making things right between them. We’re speaking for Christ himself now: Become friends with God; he’s already a friend with you. How? you ask. In Christ. God put the wrong on him who never did anything wrong, so we could be put right with God.”*

Proverbs 18:15 (The Message) – *“Wise men and women are always learning, always listening for fresh insights.”*

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Discussion points:

1. What do you think most helped Lloyd to overcome his skepticism and cynicism?
2. What advice did you learn from Mr. Rogers that you could offer to someone who is struggling to forgive somebody that has hurt them?
3. Fred, when asked about fame, says, *"Fame is a four-letter word. What matters is what we do with it."* What have you learned from what he did with his fame?
4. When at the restaurant, Fred asks Lloyd to be silent for 60 seconds and think of the loved ones and those that shaped him in his life. How did you respond to this invitation?
5. What does this film teach us about the importance of childhood and the lessons we learn in that season of our lives?
6. If you could change one thing in your community, what would it be (and why)?
7. What helped Fred to be a good listener? What happened as a result of his being a good listener?