

## 134. NAMING THE DUCKLINGS - THURSDAY - MAY 28, 2026

Good morning, Grace Harbor – it's Dan. Happy Thursday!

Well, since school got out so early yesterday, my daughter and I decided to head downtown to get a sweet treat at Auden and Brookies Ice Cream & Cookies. I had my favorite, the chocolate chip cookie milkshake. And she was in luck, as they had one yellow marshmallow duck left, so she got the very last birthday milkshake that debuted the day the 8 Quackerson ducklings were born.

While we were enjoying them, I pulled up the list of duckling names you all sent in and read some of them to her. I got about 3 names in when she shouted, "Wait! No! Let's save them."

I asked her what we were saving them for, and she said, "When we're done, we should go to the pond and read the list. And if any of them look like those names, we can give it to them!"

I knew what she meant. When her mom and I adopted our cat, her name was "Boo Boo," and we were like, "She does *\*not\** look like a Boo Boo." So, we changed her name to Sophie, and I don't know how to describe it, but that's the perfect name for her. The opposite happened when we adopted our golden retriever Luke. The moment we met him, we said, "He is absolutely a Luke!"

So, after finishing our milkshakes, we headed over to the pond, and it just so happened that we ran into Brie. She

was sitting on the bench near the nest, taking a break after the lunch rush had ended at her bakery. When we told her what we were planning to do, she got really excited.

You see, her Fruit of the Earth Bakery is not far from the pond, so she's come by almost daily during breaks and after they close to check on the Quackersons. She said, "You know, it's really peaceful to just sit here for a bit and watch them. It's a nice way to turn off my work brain and just be me again. I'm so tired after work, but by the time I leave here, I'm usually feeling much better."

I told her that it was perfect, then, that we ran into her because she probably knows the personalities of the ducklings better than anyone else in town. She can help us be sure they get the right names.

So, without any further ado, the names of the 8 ducklings are: Joey, Bob, Abby, Sophie, Elliot, Leona, Mack, and Quack.

Yep, we named one after our cat, and the one that cracks me up the most is Quack.

Quack Quackerson! It sounds like a ducky newscaster, doesn't it? Brie said that was perfect because little Quack always seems to venture off a bit further than the rest and then comes back jabbering away, like he's reporting on what all he saw.

Her guess is that he's trying to be like his dad, Mr. Quackerson. She said whenever you see just Mrs.

Quackerson with the ducklings, it usually means he's off either getting food for the family or scouting out some new adventure.

Little by little, they've been heading out farther into the pond, to some new corner of the Village Green, or they explore a new side street during their stroll down Main Street. And each time, Mr. Quackerson walks or swims the route first before bringing his family along so he knows what to expect and what to look out for.

Mr. Quackerson is doing something we've been learning to practice too: setting intentions. He's thinking ahead about what they're going to do and how they're going to do it.

Now, he can't anticipate everything. Things change. There might be more or less traffic, or the weather might be different. Or there might be a certain local podcast host walking his golden retriever who wants nothing more in the world than to meet the ducklings. But thinking ahead, especially about things they should do and things they should avoid, is really helpful.

We can do the same when it comes to our days, our weeks, and even whole seasons—like summer! You probably have some things on your calendar – maybe summer camp or a nice vacation – but you can't know what everyday will be like.

However you *can* say, "This summer, I want to learn how to whistle." Or, "I want to go swimming at least once a week." Or, "I don't want to watch more than 1 hour of TV

each day, unless I'm watching a movie with family or friends."

Why don't you all take a few moments together and talk about what you want summer to be like this year. What's something you want to do more of, or do differently, or maybe try for the first time? Share your ideas now, and if you need more time, feel free to pause the podcast. I'll be right here when you get back.

[PAUSE]

You know, we've also talked about how setting intentions includes thinking about *\*how\** we want to do things. So, for example, I'd like to be more go-with-the-flow. I normally like to plan things out and know what we're doing most days, but sometimes the best part of the summer is the spontaneous things that come up along the way.

As the school year ends and the summer begins, I encourage you to think about what you want this summer to be like and how you might help make it a great summer for the people in your life too.

Ok, let's close in prayer. If you want to, you can close your eyes and fold your hands.

Dear God, we thank you for the opportunities we have each day to be the people you've made us to be and enjoy this incredible world. Sometimes they're things we plan ahead of time, and sometimes they're surprises you place on our path. Help us keep our eyes open this summer for ways to

both have a good time ourselves and make it a summer to remember for the people we love, too. Amen.

Ok, Grace Harbor! This is it! We've got one more day together before our summer break, so I'm really looking forward to being with you tomorrow.

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