



## Greystanes Grapevine

The weekly newsletter of Greystanes Uniting Church



**18 AUGUST 2024**

### Welcome

Welcome to church this morning, we hope you enjoy being with us.

### Lectionary readings

#### This week 18 August, 2024

1 Kings 2:10-12, 3:3-14  
Psalm 111  
Ephesians 5:15-20  
John 6:51-58

#### Next Sunday 25 August, 2024

1 Kings 8:(1,6,10-11), 22-30,41-43  
Psalm 84  
Ephesians 6:10-20  
John 6:56-69

### Ladies Bible Study

Ladies Bible Study will meet on Tuesday afternoon at 3pm in the chapel, they are looking at Study 4: Into the Swirl Proverbs 10:1-32.

### Fathers' Day Breakfast

Our Child Care Centre is hosting a Fathers' Day Breakfast on Thursday 29 August from 7.30am. This is a great opportunity to interact with the families of our Child Care Centre and we would encourage anyone who is available to come along and enjoy some breakfast and meet the families of our centre.

### Soul Care Conference 2024

You're invited to 'Rediscover and Reimagine' pastoral care at this year's Soul Care Conference at Wesley Conference Centre in Sydney. It's a time that promises to be rich in insights, shared understanding, practical take aways and wonderful fellowship with like-minded people. Great speakers like Kate Thornley and Dale Yardy are already lined up. You can find out more about the event and register at <https://www.nswact.uca.org.au/calendar/soulcare-2024-12-13-september/>

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Essential: WWCC, Authority to teach SRE, approval from your church minister and experience in teaching SRE.  
The position is fully funded by the HCMF SRE Board and paid via your local church.  
Contact us to find out more.



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## **So you believe in Jesus! Now what?**

Over the past few Sundays the Revised Common Lectionary has included readings from the Letter to the Ephesians. This letter would have been read out aloud to the early believers as they gathered to worship Christ. It would have also been distributed to many other young, fledging churches and when I say young, it has been estimated that this letter would have been written some twenty years post the Resurrection in 50 AD. Imagine being the church back then without the two thousand years of Christian tradition we take for granted today.

In this letter the author describes Christ as the head of the church and outlines some of the ways in which the church should operate. Rules for the running of households and advice on how to conduct family life and relationships are also detailed. There is advice for spouses, parents and children, and slaves and masters. This letter is a “how to letter”, a “how to live a new life in Christ” guide and although it was written centuries ago still speaks to our age in which so many things have changed, yet stayed the same.

Before offering the ‘how to guide’, the author writes about the wonders and mysteries of God’s plan to gather all things up in Christ in the fullness of time. We are reminded that we are spiritually blessed, redeemed, adopted by God, empowered, freely gifted grace, and brought peacefully together in one body the church with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. Only once the reader has been reminded of the blessings of coming to Christ in faith, do we get to the nitty gritty of the letter, for example, the ‘do’s and do not’s’ of slave ownership.

Imagine being a slave owner in Ephesus and then converting to Christianity, now what? Like everyone else in town you treated your slave like property. Even if you were a kind hearted master it would have been of no consequence to speak to your slave harshly and use them as a whipping boy, or worse. Now you follow Christ, and you are to live a new life, showing the same love, grace and mercy you have received from God to all people, including your slave.

We no longer keep slaves, and although our context has changed, we are still swayed and coerced by the culture we live in just like those early believers. What advice would you give to someone coming to faith in this city in 2024? We do not like telling people what they can and cannot do, that makes us sound moralistic, judgemental, prudish and bossy, so I think, like the author of Ephesians our best advice would be to first explain, illustrate and emulate the love of God found in Jesus Christ.

Like the author of Ephesians, consider the riches of knowing God in Christ and if you have a moment make a list of all the things that you consider a blessing because you are a Christian. You never know, one day you may need to use that list as wise advice for someone seeking God.—Rev Gail