

SUNGAI WAY-SUBANG METHODIST CHURCH

Being with Jesus

VOL 4, OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2023

NAME:

Love God Love People

Mark 12:29-31

Make Disciples

Matthew 28:19-20

READING SCHEDULE, OCT - DEC 2023

BEING WITH *Jesus* 2023

	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
WED		1 2 Peter 1:5-9	
THU		2 2 Peter 1:10-11	
FRI		3 2 Peter 1:12-15	1 Hebrews 2:14-18
SAT		4 2 Peter 1:16-18	2 Hebrews 3:1-6
SUN	1	5	3
MON	2 1 Peter 1:1-2	6 2 Peter 1:19-21	4 Hebrews 3:7-11
TUE	3 1 Peter 1:3-5	7 2 Peter 2:1-3	5 Hebrews 3:12-19
WED	4 1 Peter 1:6-9	8 2 Peter 2:4-9	6 Hebrews 4:1-11
THU	5 1 Peter 1:10-12	9 2 Peter 2:10-16	7 Hebrews 4:12-13
FRI	6 1 Peter 1:13-16	10 2 Peter 2:17-22	8 Hebrews 4:14-16
SAT	7 1 Peter 1:17-21	11 2 Peter 3:1-2	9 Hebrews 5:1-10
SUN	8	12	10
MON	9 1 Peter 1:22-25	13 2 Peter 3:3-7	11 Hebrews 5:11-14
TUE	10 1 Peter 2:1-3	14 2 Peter 3:8-10	12 Hebrews 6:1-3
WED	11 1 Peter 2:4-8	15 2 Peter 3:11-14	13 Hebrews 6:4-8
THU	12 1 Peter 2:9-10	16 2 Peter 3:15-18	14 Hebrews 6:9-12
FRI	13 1 Peter 2:11-12	17 Jude 1-2	15 Hebrews 6:13-20
SAT	14 1 Peter 2:13-17	18 Jude 3-4	16 Hebrews 7:1-3
SUN	15	19	17
MON	16 1 Peter 2:18-20	20 Jude 5-7	18 Hebrews 7:4-10
TUE	17 1 Peter 2:21-25	21 Jude 8-10	19 Hebrews 7:11-14
WED	18 1 Peter 3:1-7	22 Jude 11-16	20 Hebrews 7:15-22
THU	19 1 Peter 3:8-12	23 Jude 17-23	21 Hebrews 7:23-25
FRI	20 1 Peter 3:13-17	24 Jude 24-25	22 Hebrews 7:26-28
SAT	21 1 Peter 3:18-22	25 Hebrews 1:1-3	23 Hebrews 8:1-7
SUN	22	26 Baptism & Membership Service	24 Christmas Service
MON	23 1 Peter 4:1-6	27 Hebrews 1:4-14	25 Hebrews 8:8-13
TUE	24 1 Peter 4:7-11	28 Hebrews 2:1-4	26 Hebrews 9:1-5
WED	25 1 Peter 4:12-19	30 Hebrews 2:5-9	27 Hebrews 9:6-10
THU	26 1 Peter 5:1-4	30 Hebrews 2:10-13	28 Hebrews 9:11-14
FRI	27 1 Peter 5:5-7		29 Hebrews 9:15-22
SAT	28 1 Peter 5:8-14		30 Hebrews 9:23-28
SUN	29		31 Watchnight Service
MON	30 2 Peter 1:1-2		
TUE	31 2 Peter 1:3-4		

PASTORAL MESSAGE

Dear SSMCians,

Well done everyone for following the BWJ faithfully! To those who are not yet onboard, we encourage you to begin this journey with us. In retracing our 2023 reading thus far, we did Joshua and Judges in Q1, the Pauline letters Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, Philemon in Q2 and the pre-exilic Minor Prophets Hosea, Joel, Zephaniah, Amos, Jonah, Micah, Nahum and 1-3 John in Q3. For October - December, we will read and reflect on the non-Pauline letters of 1-2 Peter, Jude and Hebrews. The Sunday sermons will follow our BWJ reading. We seek to encourage everyone to systematically read the Bible from cover to cover in due time.

Saint Augustine famously said, “The new is in the old concealed; the old is in the new revealed.” The Old Testament and the New Testament are interlinked. They converge on the person of Jesus Christ. The writings in the Law and Prophets is a foreshadow, fulfilled in Jesus’ life, death and resurrection, redemption, renewal and eternal reign as Lord of all and in all, now and forever. As we read the Bible, the written Word of God, may we encounter the eternal Word, the Logos. Through Jesus, we have access to Father God by the Spirit.

Before we proceed with this Q4 BWJ, take time to reflect on whether you have grown in your relationship with Him. Jesus’ invitation and call to us is “Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.” Matthew 4:19 (ESV). The questions we frequently need to ask as we read the Bible :

1. How am I following Jesus? What does it look like?
2. How is Jesus transforming my life?
3. How am I engaged in the mission of Jesus?

The Bible is INFORMATIVE and TRANSFORMATIVE, impacting the HEAD-HEART-HAND nexus when we read and obey it.

On behalf of the church, we appreciate and thank the committed team for putting together the BWJ.

Love God, Love People, Make Disciples.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Robin Liew and the Leadership Team

INTRODUCTION TO THE READINGS

The New Testament letters which we will be reading through to end 2023 repeatedly address the topic of false teachers and false teachings. This topic is an important one even 2000 years later, so let us as a church fully apply our minds to the study of God's Word, that we may know the truth of this gospel and not be easily misled. As we read these passages, let us also have Christ-centered humility and avoid pridefully assuming that our own beliefs and practices are perfect in all ways. Let us focus on the core protections the Spirit provides us with on these matters - minds which search scripture as well as hearts that remain in communion with our Lord and hands that are not idle in doing what He has called us to do. And let us also remember to focus on Christ, rather than mere theological correctness, as well as on love rather than just being right.

The provided questions for each day's readings are intended to encourage us to chew on God's Word, not just with our minds, but with our heart and soul. The pronouns "I", "me", and "my" are used to indicate the personal nature of the proposed reflections. Let us remember too that our faith is walked together in communities, and that "we" and "our" pronouns are often also appropriate. As with any other Christian writings, none of the provided questions rise to the level of Scripture, and all are encouraged to rely on Scripture alone.

May God bless the reading of His Word. May you and your loved ones who partake with you in communal reading grow in wisdom and understanding, grow in love and obedience, and grow in the demonstrated fruit of the Spirit's leading. May we continue learning to be more and more like our Master who shed His blood for us.

Yours truly,
Ng Oon-Ee (Christian Education)

This edition of Being With Jesus has seen significant contributions from various disciples in the body. Special thanks to Kwee Heong for editing, as well as the other Christian Education team members who spent time and effort in preparing this material. Much thanks as well to Rosalind for her editorial work on the final copy and Sarah for the cover design.



OCT 1, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

OCT 2, MONDAY

1 Peter 1:1-2

We Are Exiles

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) In this letter, Peter specifically addresses 'exiles'. Who are these exiles, and why are they scattered throughout many provinces (see also Acts 8:1b and Acts 11:19-20)? 2) Peter refers to these exiles as "God's elect." How are these "elect" described in 1 Peter 1:2? 3) Who am I before God the Father, Christ the Son, and the in-dwelling Holy Spirit? How can I constantly remind myself of my identity?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

OCT 3, TUESDAY

1 Peter 1:3–5

The Coming Inheritance

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Jesus had told Nicodemus (John 3:7) that he must be born again. In today's reading Peter excitedly praises God for our new birth. What have we been born into? 2) Is the inheritance that Peter writes of something that has already been given, or something that will be given? How does this affect my understanding of the gift of salvation? 3) How can today's passage comfort me (or any of my brethren) when we grow discouraged and disillusioned in our faith walk?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

OCT 4, WEDNESDAY

1 Peter 1:6-9

For A Little While

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Recall the situation of the readers of this letter (see meditation on 1 Peter 1:1-2) - what sort of trials is Peter referring to in 1 Peter 1:6? What trials am I currently facing for a little while? 2) What purpose does Peter give for trials and grief in today's passage? Is this purpose immediate or eternal? 3) Does Peter instructing readers to rejoice, or is he describing a natural reaction? How can I greatly rejoice in the midst of grief and trials?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

OCT 5, THURSDAY

1 Peter 1:10-12

The Grace That Was To Come

Context

Questions
to ponder

- 1) What is it that the prophets and the angels were eagerly trying to see according to today's passage?
- 2) In the last quarter (BWJ 2023 Q3) we have read through various minor prophets. What grace did they speak of while warning God's people?
- 3) How does Christ's sufferings and glory provide an example or inspiration to us?

Head

What can I understand?

Heart

How do I respond?

Hands

What must I do?

OCT 6, FRIDAY

1 Peter 1:13–16

Grace Evidenced in Our Head, Heart, and Hands

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What does Peter say about the state of my mind as I set my hope on Christ's grace? 2) What direction am I to orientate my heart towards (and away from) in light of Christ's grace? 3) What should my hands do in light of Christ's grace?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

OCT 7, SATURDAY

1 Peter 1:17-21

Knowing My Lineage

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Why does Peter refer to the readers as 'foreigners'? In light of today's reading as well as the beginning of 1 Peter 1 - whose am I? 2) 1 Peter 1:18-19 summarizes the amazing account through which we have come to call on our heavenly Father. Remember what Peter personally experienced (Luke 22:54-62, Luke 24:12, John 21:15-19). Has my experience of Jesus led me to a similar place of awe and thankfulness?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) How am I to live out my time 'here' in this present world as a foreigner?
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

OCT 8, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

OCT 9, MONDAY

1 Peter 1:22-25

The Word of Love

John 13:34-35

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Just as Jesus exhorted for love to prevail in John 13:34-35, so does Peter. What is the pre-requisite for this sincere love, according to today's reading? 2) 1 Peter 1:23 tells of the distinctive change which marks all of us as disciples. Yet this change is most visible in our love for one another. Does my faith community reflect this well? 3) Each and every disciple is no longer like grass or flowers, the perishable have been reborn as imperishable. How do I demonstrate that I deeply love other members of my faith community?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

OCT 10, TUESDAY

1 Peter 2:1-3

Grow Up!

Context

Questions
to ponder

- 1) When did I first taste that the Lord is good?
- 2) What is it that enables me to grow up in my salvation, according to today's readings? (See also 1 Peter 1:23-25)
- 3) 1 Peter 2:1 instructs us to rid ourselves of various harmful traits. What commonality do I see between these traits, and how can I rid myself of them?

Head

What can I understand?

Heart

How do I respond?

Hands

What must I do?

OCT 11, WEDNESDAY

1 Peter 2:4-8

The Living Stone

Context

Questions
to ponder

- 1) "To you who believe, this stone is precious". Why is the living stone precious to us?
- 2) Why is this same living stone the a "stumbling block" (Isaiah 8:14) for those who do not believe?
- 3) In today's reading, Peter does not only speak of one living stone (see 1 Peter 2:5). How am I and my faith community being built by the Spirit into a new Jerusalem?

Head

What can I understand?

Heart

How do I respond?

Hands

What must I do?

OCT 12, THURSDAY

1 Peter 2:9–10

This is Who We Are

Context

Questions
to ponder

- 1) What are the four descriptions of believers in today's passage?
- 2) What is the response that these truths should bring out in us?
- 3) Each of these descriptions involve a special-ness of one form or another. Which of these truths have I failed to recognise in myself?

Head

What can I understand?

Heart

How do I respond?

Hands

What must I do?

OCT 13, FRIDAY

1 Peter 2:11-12

Lived Testimony

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What is the context of the readers of this letter in terms of social influence? Were they influential and well-regarded? 2) What is Peter's advice to those who are foreigners and exiles in a land not their own? Does this apply to me? 3) What are the reasons Peter gives to live good lives? What reputation does he prioritize?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

OCT 14, SATURDAY

1 Peter 2:13–17

Submission to Government

Context

Questions
to ponder

- 1) Why does Peter advocate submission (1 Peter 2:15)?
- 2) 1 Peter 2:15 talks of a freedom or "non-submission" that we should avoid. Why?
- 3) 1 Peter 2:17 ascribes love to the family of believers, fear to God, and honour to the emperor (those in political power). How can I obey the instructions in today's reading while avoiding the trap of elevating those in power to the position only God should hold?

Head

What can I understand?

Heart

How do I respond?

Hands

What must I do?

OCT 15, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

OCT 16, MONDAY

1 Peter 2:18–20

Submission to Masters

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Unlike yesterday's reading, Peter does not give a purpose or reason for submission in today's reading. Why? 2) Instead of providing a purpose, Peter's emphasis is on God's approval of their submission. Some Christians, now and in the past, believe that the practice of slavery is God-ordained, or not forbidden. What is the whole counsel of Scripture on this matter?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) Today's reading speaks directly to slaves who are being unjustly treated. We can draw comparisons with unjust treatment in modern workplaces, and how foreign or low-skilled workers are treated. How can I reconcile this with Jesus' words in Luke 4:18?
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

OCT 17, TUESDAY

1 Peter 2:21-25

Christ's Example of Submission

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Submission is hard, especially in unjust situations. Yet the believer is called to endure by the example of our Lord. How can I demonstrate submission as per Christ's example? 2) Believers at various points in history have walked in Christ's footsteps in suffering, yet the emulation is not identical. 1 Peter 2:24 describes the part of Christ's suffering that we are not called to emulate. Have I ever placed on myself too great a burden - one that God never requires of me?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) Christ bore our sins "that we might die to sins and live for righteousness". What is the righteousness that believers who are spared from injustice and oppression should demonstrate when encountering those who are suffering?
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

OCT 18, WEDNESDAY

1 Peter 3:1-7

In The Same Way

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What is the purpose of believing wives submitting to their husbands according to today's reading? Is the believing husband called to compel submission from his wife? 2) What is the purpose of believing husbands honouring their wives and co-heirs? What is the guideline in 1 Peter 3:6b? 3) 1 Peter 3:1 and 3:7 both start with "in the same way...". How should Christ's example from yesterday's reading inform the conduct of believing wives and husbands? How can my faith community promote Godly marriages and guard against abuse and unrighteousness?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

OCT 19, THURSDAY

1 Peter 3:8-12

Finally, All of You

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The last four readings have addressed submission for 3 categories of believers - the governed, the slaves, and the married. Who does today's passage address? 2) How does the instruction of today's reading compare with God's law in the Old Testament or the laws of the nations we inhabit today? Are these instructions positive or prohibitive? 3) What is the over-arching attitude the believer is to hold?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

OCT 20, FRIDAY

1 Peter 3:13-17

Suffering Should Be For What Is Right

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) How would I answer the rhetorical question given in 1 Peter 3:13? 2) Does today's passage tell us that suffering for what is right is an inevitable part of the believer's life? How can we guard against having a "persecution complex" when faced with minor or trivial challenges? 3) Persecution was and remains a reality for at least some parts of Christ's body. In light of yesterday's reading, what is Peter primarily concerned with when instructing believers on how to prepare for persecution?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

OCT 21, SATURDAY

1 Peter 3:18-22

Christ's Example of Suffering

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Suffering is hard, even when we suffer for what is right. Just as he did at the end of chapter 2, Peter again points the believer to our Lord. What hope can I take from Christ's example in suffering? 2) The account of Noah here can be hard to interpret, but some general truths are evident due to the obvious context that Peter is writing to persecuted believers. What does God's proclamation of victory to disobedient spirits mean to the readers of this letter (see also Ephesians 6:12)?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) The parallel between those who were 'saved through water' and the persecuted believers is drawn via the symbolic sacrament of baptism. How does this symbol encourage me when I face persecution, perhaps even to death?
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

OCT 22, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

OCT 23, MONDAY

1 Peter 4:1-6

The Rest Of My Earthly Life

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) While suffering is not to be pursued for its own sake, it can have an intense purifying effect. How can bodily suffering result in believers putting away their sinful habits? 2) 1 Peter 4:6 refers to those believers who had received the gospel but had by now perished. What is their standing before God, and how can this encourage us who for a little while yet, remain as exiles in this world? 3) The life of sin that we leave behind is not exhaustively described in today's reading, lest any of us claim innate self-righteousness. What evil human desires still remain in my life to which I should say "enough!" and surrender in favour of the will of God?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

OCT 24, TUESDAY

1 Peter 4:7-11

Love Each Other Deeply

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Today's reading begins with a reminder of urgency which remains true even after two millennia. Am I living an alert and prayerful life, expecting the return of my Lord and Saviour? 2) According to Peter, in what practical ways can believers love one another deeply? Which of these areas am I called to? 3) Our faith community is not perfect, and neither are its members, regardless of their seniority or spirituality. How can I allow love to cover over a multitude of sins while not allowing sin to take root in me and my faith community? Find a brother or sister today to pray together about this.
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

OCT 25, WEDNESDAY

1 Peter 4:12-19

Do Not Be Surprised By Persecution

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) In today's passage, persecution is not something strange or unexpected. How are Christ's disciples to respond when persecuted? 2) Peter once again, when dealing with the topic of suffering and persecution, takes pains to differentiate the situation described in 1 Peter 4:14 and 4:16 with that of 1 Peter 4:15. Have I known believers who experience consequences for their own sinful behaviour but treated it as persecution? How can my faith community guard against this?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) Peter has repeatedly reminded persecuted believers that they are blessed and filled with God's Spirit and presence. Who can I reassure of this truth today?
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

OCT 26, THURSDAY

1 Peter 5:1-4

Elders, Be Willing Shepherds

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What is the distinctive experience of an elder (besides their greater age) according to today's passage? 2) Elders are instructed to be shepherds of God's flock, yet there are two things they are to avoid according to 1 Peter 5:2. What are these two things, and why does Peter specifically warn against them? 3) 1 Peter 5:3-4 contains instruction on how shepherds are to lead, in contrast to the practice of leadership the world promotes, both in Roman times and today. How does this look like in our faith community?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

OCT 27, FRIDAY

1 Peter 5:5-7

Humility and Submission to Elders

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) If elders according to yesterday's passage are marked by a distinctive experience, what then can we conclude about today's passage addressing "you who are younger"? 2) How are submission and humility related? How can Godly humility help all of us, especially those who are younger and more head-strong, to submit to our elders? 3) Humility and submission includes vulnerability and risk. What is Peter's reassurance to believers on this matter? How can our faith community faithfully administer God's "lifting up" of the humble?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

OCT 28, SATURDAY

1 Peter 5:8-14

Be Alert And Of Sober Mind

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Peter repeatedly stresses that the reader should "be alert and of sober mind". How can this help me resist the enemy? 2) Implied in today's passage and other letters in the New Testament is that our enemy is constrained. The book of Job illustrates this well. What reassurance can I take away from this knowledge with regards to standing firm in my faith? 3) 1 Peter 5:10 is especially powerful when read in the context of a church undergoing active persecution. What encouragement can I bring to a brother or sister in Christ today regarding God's grace, eternal glory, and plan to restore and strengthen His disciples?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

OCT 29, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

OCT 30, MONDAY

2 Peter 1:1-2

Faith and Knowledge

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) In Peter's second letter, he introduces himself differently (compare 1 Peter 1:1) as a "doulos" and apostle of Jesus Christ. A "doulos" is someone who is owned for a lifetime, alternatively translated slave or bondservant. What does the use of this term tell me about Peter's self-perception? 2) Peter is writing to those who have "received a faith as precious as ours". Am I included among those who received this faith? Is my faith as precious as that of the apostles?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) Peter's "shalom" greeting uniquely includes mention of "the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord". This is a key theme of this letter. Why is this knowledge important in my Christian walk?
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

OCT 31, TUESDAY

2 Peter 1:3-4

What God Has Given

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Today's passage recalls what God has given us. 2 Peter 1:3 speaks of "everything we need for a godly life". How does this truth influence my confidence in living as a disciple? 2) "Everything we need" is given through our knowledge of Christ. Is this knowledge a one-time gift, or one that continues to grow? How can I increase in this knowledge? 3) 2 Peter 1:4 speaks of God's "very great and precious promises". What are the purposes of God's promises according to today's passage?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

NOV 1, WEDNESDAY

2 Peter 1:5-9

Qualities for Clear Sight

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Are the qualities listed in 2 Peter 1:5-7 a natural product of our Christ-centered faith, or are they skills and attributes that we intentionally cultivate and grow through obedience? 2) What is the benefit of these qualities, and which of them should I be actively cultivating today? 3) What does Peter say about those who do not possess these qualities which reflect a godly life (2 Peter 1:3)? How does the lack of these qualities produce nearsightedness, blindness, and forgetfulness?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

NOV 2, THURSDAY

2 Peter 1:10-11

Confirmed Calling and Election

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) 2 Peter 1:10 encourages us to "make every effort". Is our calling into Christ's eternal kingdom a decision and obedience that we render unto God? 2) 2 Peter 1:10 also uses the word "election". Is our calling into Christ's eternal kingdom the result of God's sovereign choice? 3) The "therefore" in today's passage indicates an intrinsic connection to the readings of the last few days. Let us remember that God has given us everything we need to live godly lives, and that we are to strive to grow and build our faith. Today, how can I reassure a brother or sister regarding his/her election and the need perseverance in the faith?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

NOV 3, FRIDAY

2 Peter 1:12–15

Always Remember

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Peter's readers know and are firmly established in the truth of "these things". What are these things, as stated in the beginning of chapter 1? 2) What is Peter preparing for, according to 2 Peter 1:14? And how does he make preparation for that? 3) What practical steps can my faith community and I take to remember God's truth today, tomorrow, and till Christ returns?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

NOV 4, SATURDAY

2 Peter 1:16-18

Not Fake News

Context

Questions
to ponder

- 1) What is the historical event that Peter is referring to here? Look up Matthew 17:1-11; Mark 9:2-12; Luke 9:28-36.
- 2) Why does Peter emphasize what he had seen and heard, and that these are not "cleverly devised stories"? How much does our faith practice today rest on cleverly devised stories?
- 3) The Transfiguration was not merely a change in Jesus' appearance, but most of all a revelation of His true nature. One day He will return and we will see him face to face. What does this mean for me?

Head

What can I understand?

Heart

How do I respond?

Hands

What must I do?

NOV 5, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

NOV 6, MONDAY

2 Peter 1:19–21

Prophecy is God's Speech

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What sort of prophecy does Peter refer to in today's passage? Do these words apply to modern day prophets as well? 2) In the context of what we have read so far, what is the prophetic message that Peter is referring to (see also John 5:39)? How is this message a "light shining in a dark place"? 3) The prophetic message is completely reliable, and in paying attention to it, the morning star has risen in our hearts. How am I studying and applying Scripture in my life?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

NOV 7, TUESDAY

2 Peter 2:1-3

False Prophets and False Teachers

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Is it possible for prophecies to be wrong or not from God? How can I exercise discernment and wisdom in these matters without falling into the trap of cynicism and disbelief? 2) What are the distinguishing marks of false prophets and false teachers according to today's passage? What is their impact on our faith community? 3) Peter speaks of the motivation of false teachers, but he also speaks about their ultimate destiny. How can the knowledge of both of these encourage me as I strive to faithfully obey my Lord and Saviour?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

NOV 8, WEDNESDAY

2 Peter 2:4-9

The Lord Knows How

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What are the three acts of God that Peter refers to in today's passage? How is he connecting these acts to the current situation of the readers of this letter? 2) Peter uses examples of judgement ("did not spare" and "condemned") that God has already carried out. What does this imply for the false prophets and teachers of yesterday's passage? 3) The specific references to Noah and Lot are meant to illuminate an important truth in these accounts of judgement - God knows how to rescue the godly! Who can I share this truth with today?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

NOV 9, THURSDAY

2 Peter 2:10–16

Recognising False Teachers By Their Fruit

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Peter does not mince his words in today's passage. What can we learn about identifying false teachers in our own time and faith community? 2) Today's passage describes false teachers as unreasoning animals, and focuses on the area of sinful desires. Is this still a characteristic displayed by the false teachers of today? 3) Besides sinful desires, false teachers are also described here as being greedy and loving the wages of wickedness. Do I struggle with greed and the love of money, and does this make me more of a target for false teachers?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

NOV 10, FRIDAY

2 Peter 2:17-22

Empty Promises

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Today's passage provides insight into the attractiveness of false teachers (likened to springs) as well as the folly of following after them. What happens to believers who follow after false teachers? 2) Peter begins this letter by describing himself as a "doulos", and in 2 Peter 2:19 he says that these false teachers are also doulos/ slaves to depravity. How can I apply 2 Peter 2:19 to my life and decision making? 3) Who in my faith community is vulnerable to false teaching? Is it those who are young or new to the faith? Or perhaps those who are disillusioned after many years of service? How can we support one another and watch out for one another in this matter?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

NOV 11, SATURDAY

2 Peter 3:1-2

Stimulating Wholesome Thinking

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Having started his letter by referring to the knowledge of God, what is Peter's overall purpose in writing this second letter? 2) What do I understand by the words "wholesome thinking"? Other translations say "pure mind" or "honest/sincere mind". Is it something more than factual knowledge or intellectual understanding? 3) 2 Peter 3:2 refers to words and commands which we receive through the Holy Scriptures. How do I engage with God's Word? Am I in haste, or irregular, or distracted? Do I seek to apply His Word daily?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

NOV 12, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

NOV 13, MONDAY

2 Peter 3:3-7

Did Christ Really Promise To Return?

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) From the earliest days of creation, the father of lies has sought to cast doubt on God's sure and certain promise. What specific promise is Peter dealing with in today's passage? 2) The scoffers saw an unchanging world, while science today recognises that the world has always been changing. Yet within both worldviews there are those who continue to scoff and say that Christ will not return. What firm foundation do I have for believing in Christ's return?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) When was the last time I considered the second coming of Christ? Am I prepared to say, as in the book of Revelations - "Come, Lord Jesus!"
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

NOV 14, TUESDAY

2 Peter 3:8-10

How Long, O Lord?

Context

Questions
to ponder

- 1) Peter wrote this letter almost 2000 years ago, yet we still await what has been promised. What does Peter remind believers of concerning God's timing?
- 2) What reason does Peter give for God's "slowness" in keeping His promise? Who is this "slowness" for?
- 3) Peter reiterates in 2 Peter 3:10 that God's promise will be kept. Jesus Christ will come again. What do I need to do/accomplish before that glorious day?

Head

What can I understand?

Heart

How do I respond?

Hands

What must I do?

NOV 15, WEDNESDAY

2 Peter 3:11-14

Looking Forward

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) "What kind of people ought you to be?" repeats what Peter has already addressed at the start of this letter. Why are holy and godly lives so important when considering the new heaven and new earth to come? 2) 2 Peter 3:12 speaks of us "speeding" the coming of the day of the Lord. This seems ridiculous, for how can we exercise such authority since even the Son does not know the day or the hour? Perhaps 2 Peter 3:9 can shed some light on this.
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) The new heaven and the new earth that God has promised will not be fully known till that day, though Scripture does give some glimpses into it. How am I preparing myself for this new reality?
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

NOV 16, THURSDAY

2 Peter 3:15-18

Be On Your Guard, Grow in Grace and Knowledge

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What is the root cause of some people distorting Scripture? 2) 2 Peter 3:17 summarises this letter's warnings about false teachers. What practical steps can I take to increase my faith community's immunity to "the error of the lawless"? 3) The last verse in today's passage is a positive note, that we are to grow in grace and knowledge, to the glory of Christ. Who in my life has demonstrated such growth recently, and how can I encourage them further?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	



NOV 17, FRIDAY

Jude 1-2

Spiritual Identity

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Jude, like Peter in his second letter, introduces himself as a "doulos" of Jesus Christ. There is a more prestigious title he could claim (see the name Judas in Mark 6:3). Why does Jude choose to introduce himself in this way? 2) Jude is more concerned with the identity of the recipients of this letter. Unlike other NT authors, Jude addresses his readers solely by their identity in God's Kingdom (rather than by their geographical location). Do I also hold this same identity?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) Jude's greetings focus on God's relationship and actions towards us as disciples. Who can I encourage today to center their identity on the solid rock of Christ?
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

NOV 18, SATURDAY

Jude 3-4

An Urgent Message

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What was Jude initially intending to write about in this letter? What does this tell me about the focus of everyday Christian living? 2) Instead, what urgent matter does Jude deal with in this letter? Why is this topic more urgent? Is our shared salvation a less important matter? 3) In the coming days we will read more about the false teachers Jude is warning against. What is the destiny of these individuals as emphasised by Jude in these opening verses?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

NOV 19, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

NOV 20, MONDAY

Jude 5-7

Accounts of God's Judgement

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Jude cites three accounts of God's judgement. What is the reason for each of these judgements? Note: the account of the angels is extra-biblical, taken from 1 Enoch, and perhaps refers to the "sons of God" in Genesis 6:1-4. 2) Does God's nature and holiness change over time between the Old Testament and the New Testament? How can a God of love mete out physical death, binding in darkness, and eternal fire?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) What can I learn from these accounts? See also 1 Cor 10:1-6.
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

NOV 21, TUESDAY

Jude 8–10

Sins of False Teachers

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Today's passage echoes the readings of Nov 9 (2 Peter 2:10-16). One of the sins of these false teachers is the rejection of authority. Whose authority is being rejected? 2) Similar to Peter, Jude also compares these false teachers with irrational animals. What is the end result of instinctual response untempered by godly restraint? 3) The boldness and presumptuousness of these false teachers originate in part on the "strength of their dreams" (Jude 8). What insight does this give me into the nature of false teaching? Are there parallels to be observed in today's church?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

NOV 22, WEDNESDAY

Jude 11–16

Influence of False Teachers

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) In today's passage, Jude gives another three examples, this time in the form of significant persons and leaders from Israel's history. Balaam and Korah directly instigated others' sin, and Cain in Jewish tradition is the archetypal sinner and instructor of others in sin. What does this tell me about false teachers? 2) Part of the harm of false teachers is the influence they wield either within or outside the church. "Shepherds who feed only themselves" are already in leadership or positions of influence. How can a faith community excise such "ungodly people"?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) When Jude (or Peter) denounces false teachers and false teaching, it is often easy to see how their descriptions fit someone else within the Body. Am I also one of these ungodly people in my lifestyle, motivations, speech, and influence? Do I need to repent to avoid the multitude of judgements Jude writes about?
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

NOV 23, THURSDAY

Jude 17–23

Remain in His Love

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Should false teachers (and scoffers) come as a surprise to Christ's disciples? Is their existence and presence inevitable until the day Christ returns? 2) One additional harm Jude ascribes to false teachers is that of dividing Christ's body, breaking the unity of the Spirit. What antidote does he prescribe in today's passage? 3) Towards the end of a letter filled with judgement and harsh words, Jude speaks of mercy and of mercy mixed with fear. How can I hold in tension Christ's tender mercy towards each of His children and His holy hatred for sin and corruption?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

NOV 24, FRIDAY

Jude 24–25

He is Able to Keep

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Jude began his letter by speaking to those who are "kept for Jesus Christ". What else does Jude 24 say? 2) What does today's passage emphasize to me about the struggle against false teaching in Christ's church? Who is it who ultimately will triumph? 3) Jude bids us to look forward to the day where we will all be presented "without fault" and "with great joy". Am I looking forward to that day?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	



NOV 25, SATURDAY

Hebrews 1:1-3

Christ Is All

Context

Questions
to ponder

- 1) Hebrews begins by extolling Jesus (the Son) as the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of His being. What does this say about Christ's divinity?
- 2) Israel's leaders were prophets, priests, and kings. Christ spoke, provided purification, and is enthroned in heaven. What does this tell us about Christ in relation to the prophets, priests, and kings sent before Him?
- 3) Today's passage teaches us essential truths about Jesus. Who can I share these truths with today?

Head

What can I understand?

Heart

How do I respond?

Hands

What must I do?

NOV 26, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

NOV 27, MONDAY

Hebrews 1:4-14

Jesus Superior to Angels

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What does today's passage say about the origin, nature, and purpose of angels? 2) The author of Hebrews cites heavily from Jewish scripture and applies them to the person of Christ. How is Christ's origin, nature, and purpose vastly superior to that of the angels? 3) Some Jews at the time of the New Testament were unhealthily obsessed with angels (see Colossians 2:18), and then as now others simply dismiss the existence or importance of angels. Are these attitudes helpful to my walk of faith?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

NOV 28, TUESDAY

Hebrews 2:1-4

Pay Attention!

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Jews believed that the law of Moses was brought by angels (see also Acts 7:38). How does this help me to understand Hebrews 2:2? 2) In yesterday's passage, Christ is established as specifically superior to the angels. What does this mean for His message (Hebrews 2:3)? 3) We, the readers of Hebrews, are exhorted to "pay the most careful attention" so that we do not drift away. How can I and my faith community focus our attention on the person and message of Christ?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

NOV 29, WEDNESDAY

Hebrews 2:5-9

Jesus Became Man - To Die

Context

Questions
to ponder

- 1) What does today's passage say about the origin, nature, and purpose of man? Is this purpose fulfilled?
- 2) Jesus (greater than the angels) was made lower than the angels (as a man) for a little while. For whom did He give up His life?
- 3) What would it mean if Christ had not become a man and tasted death for me (see also Ephesians 2:12)? Let us reflect on what this means, in praise and worship.

Head

What can I understand?

Heart

How do I respond?

Hands

What must I do?

NOV 30, THURSDAY

Hebrews 2:10–13

Jesus Pioneered Our Salvation

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Jesus is the pioneer (other translations use "author" or "founder") of our salvation. Why is he able to do this (based on yesterday's passage)? 2) What is the fundamental difference in nature between God (Hebrews 2:10) and man? How does Hebrews 2:11 make this difference clear while also resolving it? 3) What does it mean to me that Jesus calls me brother or sister? Is there a brother or sister who needs this reminder today?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

DEC 1, FRIDAY

Hebrews 2:14-18

Jesus Helps Us (Who Are Tempted)

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Christ's kinship with us is expounded on in today's passage. What is the power (or trap) over us that Christ breaks? 2) Today's passage emphasizes the benefits of Christ becoming "fully human in every way" as He is able to atone for our sins and help us in our temptation. How does this encourage me? 3) What does "in every way" really mean? What aspects of earthly life did Jesus endure (Matthew 26:40, John 4:6, Matthew 17:17, Matthew 21:18, John 11:35, Matthew 26:60-61, Luke 23:32-37 and more)? Is He able to understand my sufferings and temptations?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

DEC 2, SATURDAY

Hebrews 3:1–6

Jesus Greater Than Moses

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Moses the law-bringer was highly revered by the Jews, yet as today's passage shows, his role, appointed by God and recognised by himself, was that of a faithful servant. What did Moses have to say about Jesus (Deuteronomy 18:15)? 2) What justification does the author of Hebrews give for claiming that Jesus is greater than Moses? How should this impact my own attitude and respect towards leaders and institutions of faith?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) How can I fix my thoughts on Jesus (Hebrews 3:1) and hold firmly to my confidence and the hope of glory?
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

DEC 3, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

Do Not Harden Your Hearts

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Today's passage quotes Psalms 95:7-11, echoing the warnings issued to the ancient Israelites in the desert. What occurred at Massah and Meribah (Exodus 17:1-7)? 2) These verses refer to the "times of testing" in the wilderness. Who was doing the testing, and who was being tested? Were the Israelites testing God despite the wonders they had seen? Was God testing the Israelites' faith and belief? 3) The conclusion of today's passage is a stark warning to us. What "rest" was denied to the Israelites? What "rest" is it that could be closed off to us if we harden our hearts today? Do I have a heart of stone or a heart of flesh (Ezekiel 36:26)?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

DEC 5, TUESDAY

Hebrews 3:12-19

As Long As It Is Called "Today"

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The author of Hebrews re-emphasizes Hebrews 3:8 in Hebrews 3:15. Who is the "you" who is referred to here? Am I included? 2) Today's passage starts and ends with the word "unbelief". How is unbelief related to disobedience (Hebrews 3:18-19)? What does this mean for me and my conduct today? 3) This passage is not merely a warning, as it also contains an timeless and forever relevant instruction in Hebrews 3:13. How can my faith community build a habit of regularly encouraging one another so as not to be hardened by sin's deceitfulness?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

Enter His Rest

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The Israelites in their disobedience and unbelief did not enter into the Promised Land, though they heard God's message. What did they lack? 2) First century Jews in Israel believed they had already entered into God's rest since the time of Joshua, and again during the return from exile, but the author of Hebrews proclaims that this rest as spoken of through David was not yet fulfilled. What is the rest that Christ offers?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) How can we respond in faith demonstrated by obedience to God's Word and thus find our Sabbath-rest?
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

DEC 7, THURSDAY

Hebrews 4:12-13

The Living Word

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) When reading works of literature, the reader interacts with words penned by an author, often long dead and interprets them accordingly. How is Scripture different from other works of literature according to today's passage?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2) The phrase "laid bare" comes from tetrachelismenos, where a victorious gladiator would expose his defeated opponent's throat, prepared to sever it. How does the utter vulnerability of this word describe my (and our) condition before God?
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) What are the thoughts and attitudes of my heart today. Shall I harden my heart to conceal them, or shall I throw them before my Lord in surrender?
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

DEC 8, FRIDAY

Hebrews 4:14–16

The Empathetic Great High Priest

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What is the role of the high priest (Exodus 30:10), and how has Jesus fulfilled that role according to Hebrews 4:14? 2) Just as the author had previously mentioned in Hebrews 2:17-18, Hebrews 4:15 again proclaims Jesus' ability to empathize with us in experience. Yet in this matter Christ differs from us in one very important way, "yet He did not sin". What does this combination of empathy and righteousness mean to me?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) What sort of confidence do we have in approaching God's throne? Are there other forms of confidence that we need to lay down in order to approach as in Hebrews 4:16?
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

DEC 9, SATURDAY

Hebrews 5:1-10

Jesus Greater Than Aaron

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Today's passage lists down the characteristics of a high priest (Hebrews 5:1-4). Which of these characteristics are divine or out-of-reach for man? 2) Hebrews 5:3 identifies the limitation of the office of high priest, from the time of Aaron onwards. This is why the high priest only entered the Holy of Holies once a year. How is Jesus greater than Aaron and the rest of the high priests? 3) Hebrews 5:7 probably refers to the garden of Gethsemane (Luke 22:44), and today's passage as a whole emphasizes that Jesus is now our high priest and source of eternal salvation, no annual renewals required. To whom is this salvation available (Hebrews 5:9)?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

DEC 10, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

DEC 11, MONDAY

Hebrews 5:11-14

Immaturity By Choice

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The expression at the end of Hebrews 5:11 is often translated "dull of hearing" in more traditional translations (the NIV uses "no longer try to understand"). The author is addressing an intentional laziness rather than an innate inability to understand. What could cause believers to become like this? 2) What does it say about a person if, though grown, they subsist only on milk rather than solid food? What does it say about my faith community if some continue to rely on spiritual milk for years and years?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) Today's passage can and has been used to propagate an elitist approach to theology and faith, centered around what exactly is solid spiritual food. But the author of Hebrews is quite specific that he is referring to teaching about righteousness which allows distinguishing good and evil. How do I currently feed myself solid spiritual food?
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

DEC 12, TUESDAY

Hebrews 6:1-3

Elementary Teachings About Christ

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The author is entreating the readers to move beyond the elementary teachings about Christ. He then proceeds to list out six such foundational teachings. Why does he do so? 2) The first two elementary teachings (Hebrews 6:1) are truths about our salvation and how we receive the gospel. What is my understanding of these two teachings? 3) The last four elementary teachings (Hebrews 6:2) have to do with the beginning and end of our believing life on earth, from baptism (both water and Spirit) to the completion of our race. Are these elementary teachings to be discarded by the mature in the same way many of us have discarded elementary school math?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

DEC 13, WEDNESDAY

Hebrews 6:4–8

Impossible!

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Today's passage speaks of believers who have fallen away. Does the author refer to those who were never "truly" saved to begin with, or to those with genuine faith who have lost that faith or disposed of it? 2) Is there no hope for those of our faith community who have turned away from the living God and "crucified the Son of God all over again"? 3) What does it mean to be like a land that "drinks in the rain often falling on it" (Hebrews 6:7)? How has God watered my heart, and what sort of fruit is it producing?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

DEC 14, THURSDAY

Hebrews 6:9–12

God Is Not Unjust

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The author of Hebrews closes this section on a positive note. Without negating his previous warnings, he assures his readers that God will not forget their work and love (Hebrews 6:10). What can I learn here about the relationship between what is in my head and heart with what my hands find to do for Christ? 2) The author's motivation here is that we, the readers, continue to be diligent and avoid laziness, so that our hope will be fully realized. What is the hope that I have in Christ?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) How can I encourage and deeply love a brother or sister even while I warn them about destructive behaviours and habits?
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

DEC 15, FRIDAY

Hebrews 6:13–20

Our Sure Hope

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) In reassuring his readers, the author of Hebrews refers to the faith and patience of Abraham. How long did Abraham wait for the fulfilment of God's promise to even begin with the birth of Isaac (see Genesis 12:4 and Genesis 21:5)? 2) What is the basis of God's oath according to today's passage? How does this basis greatly encourage me? 3) Hebrews 6:19 focuses the account on "we" who have this hope. The greek work for anchor (anchura) sound like "in Christ" (en kurio), and early Christians would have recognised that God's promise to Abraham is fulfilled in Christ, the high priest through whom Abraham's offspring would be counted. What does this hope mean to me?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

DEC 16, SATURDAY

Hebrews 7:1-3

Melchizedek

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Melchizedek is mentioned in Genesis 14:18-20 as being both the king of Salem (later Jerusalem) and a priest of God Most High. What did he do for Abraham? 2) The author of Hebrews uses Melchizedek as an example to help us understand Christ as both priest and king, of both righteousness and peace. Why does the author specifically mention the lack of genealogy for Melchizedek? 3) Hebrews 7:3 states also that Melchizedek is "resembling the Son of God". How did he resemble the Son of God, based just on the few verses of Scripture that describe him?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

DEC 17, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

DEC 18, MONDAY

Hebrews 7:4–10

Melchizedek Greater Than Abraham (And Levi)

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Today's passage emphasizes how great Melchizedek was, based on Abrahams' interactions with him. What are the two interactions which indicate the greatness of Melchizedek compared to Abraham? 2) Abraham pays a tithe to Melchizedek even though the God's instructions on the tithe were not yet instituted, since Moses the law-giver had not yet been born. Why is Levi mentioned here, and what does this mean regarding the relative stature of Melchizedek and Levi?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) The book of Hebrews was written for Jewish readers. How would Jewish readers have reacted to today's passage comparing a little-mentioned historical figure to their patriach and the ancestor of their priests and Levites? How should this inform my reading of this passage of Scripture?
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

DEC 19, TUESDAY

Hebrews 7:11–14

Changing Priesthood

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Today's passage hits the heart of the matter, that the Levitical priesthood is insufficient and is to be replaced (Hebrews 7:12). What meaning would this have carried to the Jewish readers of Hebrews? 2) Hebrews 7:14 reminds readers that Jesus was of the tribe of Judah, of David's line. However, the line of Aaron was the line dedicated to the priesthood. How do these two come together in today's passage (see also the reading of December 16th from Hebrews 7:13)?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) The law and priesthood given by Moses was not wrong or misguided, but Christ brought about their fulfilment by a priesthood older than that. What does this teach me about the importance or place of significant traditions and practices in my faith community?
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

DEC 20, WEDNESDAY

Hebrews 7:15–22

A Different Basis For Priesthood

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Levitical priests were selected by ancestry, as instructed in the Law (Hebrews 7:16). What is the basis of Jesus' priesthood? 2) Was the man Melchizedek immortal or "without beginning of days or end of life" (Hebrews 7:3)? Who is it who actually is all these things? More crucially, who is it who has planned all these things from the beginning of time (see the quote from Psalm 110:4 in Hebrews 7:17 and 7:20)?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) What is the uselessness of the former regulation, and how does Christ introduce a better hope for me and all of us?
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

DEC 21, THURSDAY

Hebrews 7:23–25

A Permanent Priesthood

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The reason priests were selected by ancestry was simple, replacements would always be required. What does this tell readers about the limitations of the Levitical priesthood and the Law of Moses? 2) If the role of the high priest is to intercede before God for me, what is the effect of the high priest's death? How much difference does the great high priest who lives forever make to this? 3) What is Christ interceding on my behalf? What does He say to the Father? How am I to respond to His complete and permanent priesthood?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

DEC 22, FRIDAY

Hebrews 7:26–28

Sacrifice Once For All

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) We have read much about replacing the Levitical priesthood based on ancestry, but today's passage discusses another pillar of the Law of Moses, the regular sacrifice. What is the purpose of these sacrifices? 2) Who is it who instituted these sacrifices? What does He have to say about the practice of priestly sacrifice (Isaiah 1:11, 1 Samuel 15:22)? What does this tell me about the practice itself? 3) Jesus' sacrifice is once for all and perfect forever. How does this sacrifice "truly meet our need" (Hebrews 7:26)?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

DEC 23, SATURDAY

Hebrews 8:1-7

Jesus' Ministry Is Superior

Context	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The earthly tabernacle was made on God's instruction by Spirit-filled men. What can we say about the true heavenly tabernacle of which it is a copy and shadow? 2) Who is it who set up the heavenly tabernacle? And who is it who ministers there as high priest? 3) The superiority of Jesus' ministry is reflected in the superiority of the new covenant (see the Christmas reading of Hebrews 8:8-13). Who is He ministering to?
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

DEC 24, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

DEC 25, MONDAY

Hebrews 8:8-13

The New Covenant

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The author of Hebrews speaks of the new covenant which replaced the covenant Jews held on to, but quotes prophecy from Scripture in Jeremiah 31:31-34. The word used for "new" is "kainos", which does not only refer to the passage of time, but also to a greater quality. How is this word suitable for this new covenant?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2) What is it which caused the old covenant to produce disappointing results? What is different about this new covenant which God is declaring in today's passage?
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) The new covenant makes it possible for the Word, which became flesh, to dwell within us, that God's laws be on our minds and written in our hearts. How have I experienced this?
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

DEC 26, TUESDAY

Hebrews 9:1-5

The Earthly Tabernacle

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Jewish readers would have been familiar with these details from the book of Exodus, but the author of Hebrews specifically points out some characteristics of the earthly tabernacle. Which part of the tabernacle is his main focus? 2) Every part of the tabernacle mentioned in today's passage is specifically connected to the practice of Levitical priesthood or the promises of God. For example, Aaron's staff that budded reinforced God's appointment of him as the divinely ordained high priest (Numbers 17:8-10). What is the importance of symbols and relics to our appreciation of God's continuing work?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) What is God's promise regarding the tabernacle (Exodus 25:22)? How has He fulfilled this promise in a new way?
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

DEC 27, WEDNESDAY

Hebrews 9:6–10

The Levitical Ministry

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The practices of worship at the tabernacle, and later the temple, involved restrictions of access. Why was access restricted to certain people and only at certain times and only with blood? 2) The author of Hebrews explains that these practices were only "illustrations" (Hebrews 9:9). What symbolic occurrence had already occurred that proved to the early Christians that these practices had now come to fruition (Matthew 27:51)?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) What was the lack in the Levitical ministry before Christ according to today's passage? What is the lack in our faith practices and activities today?
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

DEC 28, THURSDAY

Hebrews 9:11-14

The Blood of Christ

Context

Questions
to ponder

- 1) What did the shedding of blood of animals represent?
- 2) The high priest was not able to enter the Most Holy Place without the shedding of blood. What enabled Jesus to enter the Most Holy Place in the heavenly tabernacle?
- 3) What is the effect of Christ's blood on my conscience?

Head

What can I understand?

Heart

How do I respond?

Hands

What must I do?

DEC 29, FRIDAY

Hebrews 9:15–22

Covenant of Blood

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The word translated "will" in today's passage is "diatheke", which is the exact same word as that used for "covenant" in Hebrews 9:15 and prior to that. However there are obvious differences in the described covenants. How many parties make an agreement in a covenant, and how many parties make an agreement in a will?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2) The author of Hebrews describes the new covenant as taking force due to Christ's blood, as the old covenant had taken force through the blood of animals. What is the benefit that we receive from this shedding of blood?
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) Unlike an earthly will which requires a guarantor and executor who out-lives the one who makes the will, Christ's new covenant is executed by Himself, the Risen One. What is the inheritance that our Lord promises to us?
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

DEC 30, SATURDAY

Hebrews 9:23-28

The Heavenly Sacrifice Is Greater

Context	
<i>Questions</i> to ponder	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The blood of animals purified the earthly tabernacle. What was the effect of Christ's blood on the heavenly tabernacle? 2) Why does today's passage emphasize the singular and one-time nature of Christ's sacrifice? Have I fully accepted Christ's blood shed for the forgiveness of my sin? 3) Hebrews 9:28 promises that "he will appear a second time", this time for a different purpose. How am I waiting for this salvation? Who am I waiting with?
<i>Head</i> What can I understand?	
<i>Heart</i> How do I respond?	
<i>Hands</i> What must I do?	

DEC 31, SUNDAY

Sunday Worship Celebration

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE

PREACHER

Notes



Notes



Notes



Notes



Notes





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