



Growing through times of change

Week 9 Reflection



St Paul's
LUTHERAN CHURCH BOX HILL

Romans 5:1-5

Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us. (NRSV)

- How have you experienced the journey through suffering, endurance and character to hope?
- Where do you see hope in your everyday life?
- How will you take up the invitation to patiently pursue and nurture hope?

God of life, you invite us to trust in you, for you are the hope that does not disappoint us. Give us courage, patience and imagination so that we can look forward with hope to what the future may bring.

Amen.

Imagine life without hope. Notice the difference between being hopeful and hopeless.

Hope causes us to look forward – not with worry and anxiety but with anticipation and positivity.

What enables us to nurture hope?

- *Hope requires our imagination.* Hope is fed when our imagination of what might be aligns with our positive emotions.
- *Hope requires patience.* It involves uncertainty, and a determination to pursue a sense of trust and belief for as long as necessary.
- *Hope requires courage.* It invites us to be willing to step beyond the confines and familiarity of what is, into the strangeness and unknown of what lies ahead.
- *Hope requires practice.* We must practice the skill of hope until it comes to us as a valid option at every choice point.
- *Hope requires intention.* We have to want to hope. We have to want our lives to be framed by the belief that there is meaning and purpose in every aspect of our experience.
- *Hope requires vigilance.* Hope asks us to be alert and watchful for opportunities to find the light in the shadow and bring that light into the world.
- *Hope requires faith.* Faith enables us to set our hope on something that is beyond ourselves and gives meaning and perspective outside of our own experience.

We all know hope. If we allow ourselves to notice it, attune to it, and have the courage to follow its lead, hope can lead the way through the changes and challenges of life. It gives us a promise of a future - and a place for each of us to dwell within that promise.