



# Growing through times of change

## Week 7 Reflection



St Paul's  
LUTHERAN CHURCH BOX HILL

### *Psalm 86:12*

I give thanks to you, O Lord my God, with my whole heart, and I will glorify your name forever.

### *Psalm 9:1-2*

I will give thanks to you, Lord, with all my heart; I will tell of all your wonderful deeds.

I will be glad and rejoice in you; I will sing the praises of your name, O Most High.

### *Colossians 3:15-16*

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.

*Loving God,*

*We have so much to be grateful for. Thank you for all that you provide us with and for the love that you lavish upon us. When we feel anxious or down, help us to refocus on those things that bring us life and to be thankful for them. Amen.*

*Gratitude is an emotion. We are meant to feel it, not just think it.*

The emotional experience of gratitude is more than a thought or memory. It involves an all-of-brain experience. *We receive messages from our thoughts, emotions and body when we experience true gratitude.*

*Research on the heart has discovered that it has its own version of a brain, and that there is constant and complex dialogue between the brain in our head and the brain in our heart. The nature of this relationship is reflected in our Heart-Rhythms. A regular heart-rhythm is an indicator of a healthy heart.*

***Gratitude has been found to be one of the key emotions to regulate and maintain harmonious heart-rhythms.***

*The feeling of genuine appreciation is one of the most tangible and accessible positive emotions for us to self-generate and sustain. This is more difficult when we are under stress, depressed or anxious. At these times we need to override the practiced messages that we are receiving and choose to focus on gratitude.*

*As we practise the skill of gratitude, we start to develop a 'gratitude' outlook where we not only apply it to ourselves, but we also generate a 'gratitude' mindset within our relationships and circumstances. Gratitude becomes contagious.*

*It is a skill worth practising.*

Dietrich Bonhoeffer reflected that *"In ordinary life, we hardly realize that we receive a great deal more than we give, and that it is only with gratitude that life becomes rich."*