

WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

Sunday	10.30am	Morning Worship
Tuesday	10.00am	Little Treasures (pre-school)
Wednesday	9:00am - 12.00pm	Friendly Bean Community Café
Thursday	9:00am - 12.00pm	Friendly Bean Community Café
Friday	7.30pm-9.30pm	PowerHouse (yrs 7-11) – 1st & 3rd Fridays in the month

Threlfall-Holmes's book is short and accessible. Some of her chapters are only six pages long but, in those pages, she presents a thorough guide to a single approach to reading the Bible, using language anyone could understand. Despite this, she is unafraid of the difficult bits of the Bible that can be stumbling block and invites the reader to face them head-on using the methods she describes.

The appendix contains instructions for reading the book as a group, and even if you read How to Eat Bread alone it would be worth taking time to chew over each chapter as you read it. Each section provides suggested scriptural texts to practice applying its method, so that the proof of the pudding can indeed be in the eating.

Some chapters may feel frustratingly simple to experienced Christians, but I nevertheless believe the book is worth reading. It invites the reader to reflect on those familiar methods, to ask whether they are still the best way to read the Bible, and to experiment with something new. I began the chapter on ecological reading feeling sceptical but was thoroughly persuaded by Threlfall-Holmes' artful exegesis of the familiar parable of the sower: she challenges our focus on the human sower, so that by asking new questions about the birds, the seed, and the soil of the land, we can appreciate new answers.

The message of How to Eat Bread is not to find a "right way" to read the Bible, but to learn how to experiment, how to question our assumptions, and how to experience the Bible as so much more than a book.

Reviewed by Amanda Higgin, a ministerial student at Regent's Park college, reading for a Masters' degree in New Testament theology.

Borstal Baptist Church

To know Christ and to make Him known



JANUARY 2022

Welcome to our church. We pray that you will meet with God here. There is a loop system in use, just turn your hearing aid to the 'T' position. Children are welcome and you are warmly invited to stay for coffee or tea after the morning service. If we can help you in any way, please don't hesitate to ask. Do please sign the visitors' book before you leave.

CONTACT US!

Minister:	John Western ☎ 07969 391393
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Deacons:	Karen Barnes Lynda Gilbert Fay Graham Jan Rogers

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From the Manse:

The last couple of years have been tough for everyone. Our stories are unique. The difficulties and anxieties I have faced are different from those you have experienced. The truth is that no-one has had it easy. As we move into 2022, I want to wish you, not just a Happy New Year, but a Hope-filled New Year. I'm sure we all want to see improvements of different kinds – whether the ability to make plans with some degree of certainty, or the freedom to visit vulnerable relatives at any time and to give them a hug, without hesitating and thinking “is this wise?”

We need more than wishful thinking. As we enter this New Year, we need solid, tangible, reliable hope.

Many years ago, at the age of 15, Ruele Howe, had a traumatic experience. He grew up with his parents in a very remote location. The harrowing incident was the family home catching fire. They all escaped with their lives, but with nothing else, except the clothes on their backs. Since there were no neighbours, Ruele and his father walked to the nearest village to get supplies. As they returned they saw something that stayed with Ruele for the rest of his life. Beside the charred remains of what had been their house, his mother had laid out lunch on a log. She had placed a tin can filled with wildflowers on the log. It was a symbol of hope in the midst of tragedy.

Ruele's mother hadn't tried to cover up the disaster with flowers. The charred timbers remained starkly visible. Yet, in the midst of that gloomy scene she had placed a symbol of hope - something bright and cheerful. More than that, something that grows. The most beautiful of flowers begins as nothing more than a seed, an insignificant speck.

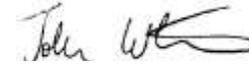
Faith in Christ doesn't make hardship or tragedy disappear. It doesn't pretend that all is well in the world, or in our lives, but it does bring something revolutionary to the heart of the situation – indeed to our hearts. Christ not only points to a brighter, more cheerful future, He is the One who will bring it about.

As we celebrated Christmas once again, we were reminded of a sign of hope in a dark and gloomy world – the infant Christ, born in very humble surroundings. He alone has the power to bring change – to transform this broken and hurting world into his kingdom of wholeness, of justice and of peace. He alone has the power to transform the most stubborn of human hearts.

The Son of God came down and dwelt among us – a foretaste of how things will be in the future. When the Apostle, John, was given a glimpse of that future, he declared: ‘Look! God’s dwelling-place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. “He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death” or mourning or crying or pain” (Revelation 21:3,4)

That is the sure and certain hope we have in Christ. I can't express my prayer for you at the beginning of this New Year any better than by using the words of another Apostle – Paul: “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.” (Romans 15:13)

Every Blessing



HOW TO EAT BREAD by MIRANDA THRELFALL-HOLMES

A short, accessible yet thorough guide to 21 diverse and meaningful methods of reading the Bible.

How do I read the Bible? It seems like a simple enough question but, as most of us will have discovered at one time or other, “pick it up and start reading” isn't a good enough answer. This 2000-year-old library of texts is so important to our faith, yet so often creates a stumbling block for Christians whether young or old, new or experienced. In *How to Eat Bread*, Miranda Threlfall-Holmes will not tell you how to read the Bible but offers 21 diverse and meaningful methods by which it can enrich our faith.

Some readers may be sceptical about the book's premise. After all, isn't the best way to read the Bible simply to read it? If that's you, the first chapter of *How to Eat Bread* should be encouraging: a selection of ways to read the Bible drawn from the Bible itself. In this chapter, 'From the Larder', Threlfall-Holmes draws insights from the way characters in the Bible tell stories and how the New Testament cites the Old.

In her second chapter, 'Grandma's Recipe Book', she draws on Christian tradition to explain ways of reading like *lectio divina*, allegory, and Augustine's rule of love. Finally, she describes the fresh insights of modern theological studies in 'Molecular Gastronomy', offering tools not only to access academic commentaries but also to experiment in the ways we read the Bible together.