

Vision Sunday September 2026

Following the vision weekend last April, we are simply revisiting the vision, pausing, gathering and checking where we are at, ready to move forward in this next academic year. If you have not heard the sermon, we encourage you to listen to it via Youtube or on Spotify.

Read Nehemiah 4:6-18

V18 gives a picture of the spiritual battle (sword) and the work of ministry (tools)
What does this look like for you at this present time?

Read 2 Corinthians 4:1-18

Here we see the **twofold battle** of spiritual darkness and suffering and weakness.

Linking with the previous reading in Nehemiah, the 'sword' against the darkness is prayer and scripture. We are specifically called to prayer at this time. How might you engage in this call?

Re read v7-12.

Take time to share in confidence an area of life where you are hard-pressed on every side, perplexed, persecuted or struck down. Then as a group read Isaiah 43:1-2 as a prayer of declaration over yourselves and the wider HTL family.

Re read v13-14

These verses speak to **the work** of the gospel. Paul stresses the need to **speak out** the gospel, not just demonstrate it in our lifestyle and deeds. What is your challenge in this? What do you need to equip you? How can you encourage each other?

Vision 2 September 2026 Giving to God: Mark 12:41-44

Read Mark 12:41-44

The woman gave "out of her poverty" meaning she didn't give from her excess; she gave from what she needed. It also demonstrates her trust in God, her wholehearted devotion in worship and personal sacrifice. Jesus doesn't measure generosity by the size of the gift; but what the gift costs the giver.

With this in mind, reflect on your approach to giving in light of Bishop Matt Porter's short book, *The Art of Giving* (Authentic), which explores this important aspect of discipleship. We recommend it for further reading.

His premise is that generosity is a spiritual discipline that speaks to and is practiced through financial giving. In his book he talks through five ways we should give:

- 1) **Cheerfully** - The spirit with which we give matters to God

Read 2 Corinthians 9:6–7 and Proverbs 22:9. What emotions do you associate with giving? What makes giving feel joyful and difficult for you?

2) **Regularly** – Generosity grows through consistency

Read 1 Corinthians 16:2 and Malachi 3:10. How can you build a rhythm of generosity; are there things you need to address to do this?

3) **Occasionally** – not all giving is planned it is spontaneous too, these moments require spiritual sensitivity.

Read Romans 12:13. Am I open to spontaneous opportunities to give?

4) **Collectively** – The early church modelled shared generosity meeting needs together

Read Acts 2:44–45 and 2 Corinthians 8:13–14 How does shared giving build unity?

5) **Expectantly** - Giving with faith and trusting God for the Impact

Read Luke 6:38 and Galatians 6:9 What does it mean to give expectantly without being transactional? How can faith shape your giving?

Which of the five areas above challenged you most? What is one long-term change you will commit to?