

**T****A****B****L****E**  
**G****r****o****u****p****s**

***INFORMATION***

***&***

***JOURNAL***

***2015***

# INTRODUCING TABLE SUNDAYS & TABLE GROUPS

Developing personal, community and spiritual habits is one helpful way to grow and mature as Christians. Over the past few years we have developed the habit of having “Breaking Bread Sundays” once a month; a time when we come together to celebrate Jesus’ life, death and resurrection around the Lord’s Supper and then enjoy fellowship after each service. In 2015 we will continue to do this with the addition of some more habits that will help us be One in Christ at MacChap.

## TABLE Sundays

During 2015 we will continue to gather around the communion table on the 1st Sunday of each month. Since the early church this has been an significant and symbolic occasion to remember the Gospel message and recommit ourselves, personally and corporately Jesus. Every second month we will gather together after the services

in a large morning tea, lunch or dinner.

On alternate months in 2015 we will be meeting together in smaller groups called TABLE groups. We hope that everyone at MacChap will be part of a TABLE group.

## TABLE Groups

TABLE groups may be integrated within existing social networks/groups in the congregation or be formed just for the year - it is up to you!

We will start building/organising groups in Feb 2015, with the first TABLE group Sunday happening in March 2015. These groups will provide a social connection throughout the year AND also be a place where you will encourage each other to develop habits that will help us meet the year’s vision and also our broader MacChap Vision. Developing specific behaviours will help us as a church to live out our mission: to be a biblical and spirit-filled, proactive and prayerful, expanding and personal, loving and prophetic, contemporary and historical, Australian and global, all ages, local Christian church.

As we seek to be ONE in CHRIST in 2015, TABLE groups will help us worship learn, connect, care and reach out to others. Group members will commit to meet together for a meal every second month and also commit to practicing a set of habits (as outlined in the following pages)...

# WHY TABLE HABITS:

As followers of Jesus we are asked to dive into a life of adventure; where we (individually and corporately as the church) journey inward and upward into a deeper relationship with God AND where we are sent into this world to proclaim the good news of God's truth and grace. As followers of Jesus we need to become people whose lives are different because we have encountered and continue to seek true life in Christ, true community, true freedom, true welcome, true joy. Sometimes it can be difficult to know how to show this in our everyday, normal lives - sometimes it takes developing some intentional habits to encourage grow, joy, connection, worship and godliness. It is our hope that TABLE habits will do exactly that for you and for MacChap in 2015.

## DISCOVER NEW WAYS OF WORSHIP AND DEEPENING OUR WORSHIP

ROMANS 12:1-2 paints a broad picture of worship;

*Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.*

*Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.*

Developing TABLE habits and meeting together with your TABLE group will help encourage you to embody your faith - to use your mind, body and soul to respond to God. Practising these habits will take discipline and may involve you having to go out of your comfort zone. As you do so we hope that your life will be enriched and that as we individually and collectively re-orientate our lives towards God we will be transformed by Him.

## LEARN MORE ABOUT GOD, MORE ABOUT OURSELVES AND MORE ABOUT OTHERS

Proverbs 1:5 encourages us;

*- let the wise listen and add to their learning, and let the discerning get guidance -*

Making TABLE habits a regular aspect of your life, and sharing your experiences and insights with each other will enrich our understanding of God, ourselves and each other. The habits of Attuning to God and Learning Christ are deliberately designed to help you learn more about God and be immersed in the story of Jesus. As we do these, as well as the other habits we will learn about ourselves and about each other. TABLE habits are designed to be individual and relational.

# **FIND NEW WAYS TO CONNECT AND CARE FOR EACH OTHER**

I Thessalonians 5:11 reminds us to;

*- encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.-*

TABLE habits will hopefully give you new ideas and new ways to encourage and build each other up. This encouragement may be spiritual, relational or practical - whatever form it takes we hope that as we practice TABLE habits we will get to know people better and be committed to sharing life with others.

## **HELP US REACH OTHERS AND BE SENT INTO THE WORLD**

John 20:21 says;

*Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you."*

Practising these TABLE habits will give us new ways to talk about what it means to be a follower of Christ. While these habits will unite us together as a group of believers, they will also help us look for opportunities to share with others and show God's love to others. As we listen and learn more about God we will be encouraged and challenged to see ourselves as sent people into this world.

If we **TALK** to people every month, we are going to show greater interest in relationships and the lives of a wider group of people of different backgrounds, ages, and life experiences.

If we **ATTUNE** to God we will become more aware of the work of the Holy Spirit in our life, our church and the world.

If we **BLESS** others every month, we are going to find new ways to be generous and welcoming, and show God's love to others.

If we **LEARN** about Christ every month we will be encouraged and challenged to follow Him and become more of the people God wants us to be in this world.

If we **EAT** together every month we will become more hospitable people and grow in our celebration of Christian community.

# **STARTING A NEW TABLE GROUP**

If you would like, we can coordinate a TABLE group for you or you might like to form one yourself. Joining a TABLE group means that you are committing to meeting with the same people at least once a month for the whole year. A TABLE group can be as big as you want it but small enough so that having a meal together is practical!

TABLE groups can be any size (although Groups over 10 people would benefit from dividing into smaller groups when sharing together so that all people can contribute).

# **INCORPORATING TABLE GROUPS INTO A SMALL GROUP OR OTHER EXISTING GROUP**

TABLE groups can be easily incorporated into an existing group such as a Small Group. You might want to spend some nights sharing together about the TABLE habits or even split into smaller groups to hold each other accountable. When your Small Group is in between Major Series you might decide to practice the ATTUNE TO GOD habit together by attending the Prayer Meeting or spending time in prayer or devotional reading of the Bible.

# **TABLE GROUPS AND FAMILIES**

You could choose to invite another family (or 2) to form a TABLE group with your family. Each habit is child-friendly and can be incorporated into family devotions or time together. Each habit can be adapted for children of any age (ok - maybe babies aren't up for deep conversation but they can get there eventually!).

# **HOW TO GET INVOLVED**

Complete this sign-up sheet and put in the offering, Perspex Connect Box at the back of the church or to a member of Staff. We will contact you if you have asked to join a group.



# HABIT 1: TALK TO OTHERS

Commit to having 3 deeper conversations a month, conversations that go beyond the usual and hopefully include something about your faith – with at least one conversation being with someone outside of the MacChap community.

## WHY?

If we TALK to people every month, we are going to show greater interest in relationships and the lives of a wider group of people of different backgrounds, ages, and life experiences.

## HOW?

At the start of each month:

1. write down the name (or description if you don't know their name) of one person within MacChap that you plan to have a deeper conversation with during the month
2. write down the name (or description if you don't know their name) of one person outside the MacChap community that you plan to have a deeper conversation with during the month. (this could be a work-mate, someone you see regularly at other times or even someone that you wouldn't normally talk to)
3. ask God to give you another opportunity to have a good conversation with one other person.

## HOW TO HAVE DEEPER CONVERSATIONS?

It can sometimes be difficult to move beyond the superficial. You will need to be intentional, interested and invested in listening to others and willing to give the time needed to let a conversation develop. See the TABLE page on the MacChap website for ideas and look out for training opportunities.

## WHAT TO JOURNAL?

In your journal write down one or two things you learned in your conversations, either about the person you were talking to or even more importantly about yourself.

## WHAT TO SHARE WITH YOUR TABLE GROUP?

When you meet together with your TABLE group you might share what it was like to have these conversations, what lessons you have learned about yourself or share a prayer point relating to your conversations (be aware not to break confidences).



## HABIT 2: ATTUNE TO GOD

Set aside at least 4 times in the month (maybe once a week) to pray, listen and respond to God. This will hopefully include participating in a few of the regular Prayer Meetings at MacChap.

### WHY?

If we ATTUNE to God we will become more aware of the work of the Holy Spirit in our life, our church and the world.

### HOW?

At the start of each month:

1. write down 4 ways that you plan to attune to God (look at the TABLE page on the MacChap website for ideas)
2. If one or more of these is to attend a prayer meeting indicating when you will do this and put it in your diary.

### HOW TO ATTUNE TO GOD?

Attuning to God will take time and discipline. Not many of us are in the habit of quieting ourselves to listen to God and respond to Him. Using new ways to pray, read the Bible or engage with God's creation can help us see and experience God in new ways.

### WHAT TO JOURNAL?

In your journal write down one or two ways you became aware of God as you listened to him. This could be specific passages of the Bible that you resonated with you, experiences of God's presence during prayer or other times, or new insights you have about God, His character or purposes. You might also journal about the process of attuning to God - what do you find easy? difficult?

### WHAT TO SHARE WITH YOUR TABLE GROUP?

When you meet together with your TABLE group you might share what it was like to pray and listen to God. You might like to share one or two insights you have gained throughout the month.

# HABIT 3: BLESS OTHERS



Bless 3 people each month through affirmation, acts of kindness or small gift - with one blessing being given to someone outside of the MacChap community.

## WHY?

If we BLESS others every month, we are going to find new ways to be generous and welcoming, and show God's love to others.

## HOW?

At the start of each month:

1. write down the name (or description if you don't know their name) of one person within MacChap that you plan to bless during the month and how you plan to do it.
2. write down the name (or description if you don't know their name) of one person outside the MacChap community that you plan to bless during the month. (this could be a work-mate, someone you see regularly at other times or even someone that you wouldn't normally talk to) and how you plan to do it.
3. ask God to give you another opportunity to bless one other person.

## HOW TO BLESS OTHERS?

Blessing others will help us strengthen others and enrich their lives. Blessing others doesn't have to be extravagant and can be done through words of affirmations, acts of kindness or gifts - whatever suits you and the person you are hoping to bless. See the TABLE page on the MacChap website for ideas.

## WHAT TO JOURNAL?

In your journal write down one or two things you learned by blessing others. In what way did it help you to understand the way God has blessed you? In what ways did it remind you of the blessing of God's provision, love and grace?

You might also journal about the process of attuning to God - what do you find easy? difficult?

## WHAT TO SHARE WITH YOUR TABLE GROUP?

When you meet together with your TABLE group you might share what it was like to bless others and what you did (share your ideas!). If you were blessed then you could share what this was like as well.





## HABIT 4: LEARN CHRIST

Learn about Jesus each month through reading a gospel or reading/ viewing something about Jesus.

### WHY?

If we LEARN about Christ every month we will be encouraged and challenged to follow Him and become more of the people God wants us to be in this world.

### HOW?

At the start of each month:

1. Look at what the reading/viewing challenge is for the month and plan how you will you fulfil it.

**March:** Read Matthew

**April:** Mark and compare the Easter narratives

**May:** Luke

**June:** John

**July:** Read a book about Jesus' life (see website for suggestions)

**August:** Matthew again

**Sept:** Mark again

**Oct:** Luke again

**Nov:** John again

**Dec:** Watch a movie or look at art about Jesus (see website for suggestions) and read the Christmas narratives.

### HOW TO LEARN CHRIST?

This habit aims to saturate you in the story of Jesus and become familiar with all aspects of his story - beyond Christmas, Easter and a few miracles! Reading a gospel a month or reading/viewing other sources will keep you focused on Jesus' life. You might plan to read each gospel a few times in one sitting (Mark will take about 90 minutes, John about two hours, and you can get through Matthew and Luke in around two-and-a-half hours each) or reading them in a more devotional way each day.

### WHAT TO JOURNAL?

In your journal you might write down new insights, aspects of Jesus' life that make you feel uncomfortable, events that remind you of his relationship with you, or things you have never noticed before.

### WHAT TO SHARE WITH YOUR TABLE GROUP?

When you meet together with your TABLE group you might spend time reading parts of the gospel, watching a movie about Jesus, or sharing passages/events that made an impression on you throughout the month.



## HABIT 5: EAT TOGETHER

Eat together with other people at least once a month, either at Table Sundays or Table Group Sundays. At least once in the year invite someone else to join you.

### WHY?

If we EAT together every month we will become more hospitable people and grow in our celebration of Christian community. As we have done in the past, MacChap will celebrate the Lord's Supper on the first Sunday of each month.

### HOW?

At the start of each month:

1. coordinate with your TABLE Group if you will meet for a meal this month and where and when you will meet - and then enjoy time together!
2. if it is a TABLE Sunday month then commit to being at church, consider the beauty and blessing of coming together around the Lord's Supper and stay for the morning tea/lunch or dinner.

**March:** TABLE GROUPS

**July:** TABLE GROUPS

**Nov:** TABLE GROUPS

**April:** TABLE SUNDAY

**August:** TABLE SUNDAY

**Dec:** TABLE SUNDAY

**May:** TABLE GROUPS

**Sept:** TABLE GROUPS

**June:** TABLE SUNDAY

**Oct:** TABLE SUNDAY

3. you might choose to plan another meal with other people, maybe joining with another TABLE group or people completely unrelated!
4. consider inviting someone who is not a follower of Christ to join you for a meal.

### HOW TO EAT WITH OTHERS?

Eating together doesn't have to be a formal occasion, simply gather together over some food (whether you have made it, it is takeaway, or at a restaurant - doesn't matter!) As you eat together, share stories, hopes, fears, laugh together and even share your faith in Jesus.

### WHAT TO JOURNAL?

In your journal write down when and where you plan to eat with others. Record how the time together blessed you or connected you with others. If it is a TABLE Sunday month then reflect on what Christ's life, death and resurrection mean to you.

### WHAT TO SHARE WITH YOUR TABLE GROUP?

As you gather to eat together share about the other 4 habits, and anything else!

# **TABLE HABITS JOURNAL**

# MARCH

## HABIT 1: TALK TO OTHERS



People I talked with:

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Insights:



## HABIT 2: ATTUNE TO GOD

Ways I attuned to God this month:

Insights:



## HABIT 5: EAT TOGETHER

Plans:



## HABIT 3: BLESS OTHERS

People I blessed:

_____	<input type="checkbox"/> affirmation	<input type="checkbox"/> service	<input type="checkbox"/> gift
_____	<input type="checkbox"/> affirmation	<input type="checkbox"/> service	<input type="checkbox"/> gift
_____	<input type="checkbox"/> affirmation	<input type="checkbox"/> service	<input type="checkbox"/> gift

Insights:

## HABIT 4: LEARN CHRIST

TASK THIS MONTH: Read Matthew

How I accomplished this:



Insights:

# APRIL

## HABIT 1: TALK TO OTHERS



People I talked with:

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Insights:



## HABIT 2: ATTUNE TO GOD

Ways I attuned to God this month:

Insights:



## HABIT 5: EAT TOGETHER

Plans:



## HABIT 3: BLESS OTHERS

People I blessed:

_____	<input type="checkbox"/> affirmation	<input type="checkbox"/> service	<input type="checkbox"/> gift
_____	<input type="checkbox"/> affirmation	<input type="checkbox"/> service	<input type="checkbox"/> gift
_____	<input type="checkbox"/> affirmation	<input type="checkbox"/> service	<input type="checkbox"/> gift

Insights:

## HABIT 4: LEARN CHRIST

**TASK THIS MONTH:** Read Mark and compare the Easter narratives

How I accomplished this:



Insights:

# MAY

## HABIT 1: TALK TO OTHERS



People I talked with:

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Insights:



## HABIT 2: ATTUNE TO GOD

Ways I attuned to God this month:

Insights:



## HABIT 5: EAT TOGETHER

Plans:





# HABIT 3: BLESS OTHERS

People I blessed:

_____	<input type="checkbox"/> affirmation	<input type="checkbox"/> service	<input type="checkbox"/> gift
_____	<input type="checkbox"/> affirmation	<input type="checkbox"/> service	<input type="checkbox"/> gift
_____	<input type="checkbox"/> affirmation	<input type="checkbox"/> service	<input type="checkbox"/> gift

Insights:

# HABIT 4: LEARN CHRIST

TASK THIS MONTH: Read Luke

How I accomplished this:



Insights:

# JUNE

## HABIT 1: TALK TO OTHERS



People I talked with:

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Insights:



## HABIT 2: ATTUNE TO GOD

Ways I attuned to God this month:

Insights:



## HABIT 5: EAT TOGETHER

Plans:



## HABIT 3: BLESS OTHERS

People I blessed:

_____	<input type="checkbox"/> affirmation	<input type="checkbox"/> service	<input type="checkbox"/> gift
_____	<input type="checkbox"/> affirmation	<input type="checkbox"/> service	<input type="checkbox"/> gift
_____	<input type="checkbox"/> affirmation	<input type="checkbox"/> service	<input type="checkbox"/> gift

Insights:

## HABIT 4: LEARN CHRIST

TASK THIS MONTH: Read John

How I accomplished this:



Insights:

# JULY

## HABIT 1: TALK TO OTHERS



People I talked with:

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Insights:



## HABIT 2: ATTUNE TO GOD

Ways I attuned to God this month:

Insights:



## HABIT 5: EAT TOGETHER

Plans:



## HABIT 3: BLESS OTHERS

People I blessed:

_____	<input type="checkbox"/> affirmation	<input type="checkbox"/> service	<input type="checkbox"/> gift
_____	<input type="checkbox"/> affirmation	<input type="checkbox"/> service	<input type="checkbox"/> gift
_____	<input type="checkbox"/> affirmation	<input type="checkbox"/> service	<input type="checkbox"/> gift

Insights:

## HABIT 4: LEARN CHRIST

**TASK THIS MONTH:** Read a book about Jesus' life  
(see website for suggestions)

How I accomplished this:



Insights:

# AUGUST

## HABIT 1: TALK TO OTHERS



People I talked with:

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Insights:



## HABIT 2: ATTUNE TO GOD

Ways I attuned to God this month:

Insights:



## HABIT 5: EAT TOGETHER

Plans:



## HABIT 3: BLESS OTHERS

People I blessed:

_____	<input type="checkbox"/> affirmation	<input type="checkbox"/> service	<input type="checkbox"/> gift
_____	<input type="checkbox"/> affirmation	<input type="checkbox"/> service	<input type="checkbox"/> gift
_____	<input type="checkbox"/> affirmation	<input type="checkbox"/> service	<input type="checkbox"/> gift

Insights:

## HABIT 4: LEARN CHRIST

**TASK THIS MONTH:** Read Matthew again

**How I accomplished this:**



Insights:

# SEPTEMBER

## HABIT 1: TALK TO OTHERS



People I talked with:

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Insights:



## HABIT 2: ATTUNE TO GOD

Ways I attuned to God this month:

Insights:



## HABIT 5: EAT TOGETHER

Plans:





## HABIT 3: BLESS OTHERS

People I blessed:

_____	<input type="checkbox"/> affirmation	<input type="checkbox"/> service	<input type="checkbox"/> gift
_____	<input type="checkbox"/> affirmation	<input type="checkbox"/> service	<input type="checkbox"/> gift
_____	<input type="checkbox"/> affirmation	<input type="checkbox"/> service	<input type="checkbox"/> gift

Insights:

## HABIT 4: LEARN CHRIST

TASK THIS MONTH: Read Mark again

How I accomplished this:



Insights:

# OCTOBER

## HABIT 1: TALK TO OTHERS



People I talked with:

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Insights:



## HABIT 2: ATTUNE TO GOD

Ways I attuned to God this month:

Insights:



## HABIT 5: EAT TOGETHER

Plans:



## HABIT 3: BLESS OTHERS

People I blessed:

_____	<input type="checkbox"/> affirmation	<input type="checkbox"/> service	<input type="checkbox"/> gift
_____	<input type="checkbox"/> affirmation	<input type="checkbox"/> service	<input type="checkbox"/> gift
_____	<input type="checkbox"/> affirmation	<input type="checkbox"/> service	<input type="checkbox"/> gift

Insights:

## HABIT 4: LEARN CHRIST

TASK THIS MONTH: Read Luke again

How I accomplished this:



Insights:

# NOVEMBER

## HABIT 1: TALK TO OTHERS



People I talked with:

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Insights:



## HABIT 2: ATTUNE TO GOD

Ways I attuned to God this month:

Insights:



## HABIT 5: EAT TOGETHER

Plans:



## HABIT 3: BLESS OTHERS

People I blessed:

_____	<input type="checkbox"/> affirmation	<input type="checkbox"/> service	<input type="checkbox"/> gift
_____	<input type="checkbox"/> affirmation	<input type="checkbox"/> service	<input type="checkbox"/> gift
_____	<input type="checkbox"/> affirmation	<input type="checkbox"/> service	<input type="checkbox"/> gift

Insights:

## HABIT 4: LEARN CHRIST

**TASK THIS MONTH:** Read John again

**How I accomplished this:**



Insights:

# DECEMBER

## HABIT 1: TALK TO OTHERS



People I talked with:

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Insights:



## HABIT 2: ATTUNE TO GOD

Ways I attuned to God this month:

Insights:



## HABIT 5: EAT TOGETHER

Plans:



## HABIT 3: BLESS OTHERS

People I blessed:

_____	<input type="checkbox"/> affirmation	<input type="checkbox"/> service	<input type="checkbox"/> gift
_____	<input type="checkbox"/> affirmation	<input type="checkbox"/> service	<input type="checkbox"/> gift
_____	<input type="checkbox"/> affirmation	<input type="checkbox"/> service	<input type="checkbox"/> gift

Insights:

## HABIT 4: LEARN CHRIST

**TASK THIS MONTH:** Watch a movie or look at art about Jesus (see website for suggestions) and read the Christmas narratives.



How I accomplished this:

Insights:

# **OTHER INSIGHTS**



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