

The Prodigal Son



Father's
Day

**TODAY'S
9:45AM
SERVICE:**

- Welcome
- Songs
- Spotlight
- Bible Reading:
[Luke 15:11-32](#)
(Bible p.1048)
- Sermon
- Song
- Prayer
- Holy Communion
- Conclusion

If you are a visitor to our service please don't feel obliged to contribute financially.

Most St Stephen's collection is received electronically.
BSB: 062 272
Account Number:
00490436

Sunday 4 September 2022

Our 9:45am service is live streamed to our YouTube and Facebook Channels. Please occupy the pews towards the back if you don't wish to feature on our stream.

Welcome to St Stephen's! It is great to have you with us. If you are new or visiting, we are glad to welcome you here. Please take a moment to say hi to one of our staff or welcomers. We would love to spend more time getting to know you. You can also give us feedback about our service using the Connect Card (an electronic version is available via the QR Code).



Today we pause to give thanks for the fathers in our lives. As always the story is mixed. Some of us have great memories of our fathers. For others, our memories are either negative or tinged with sadness because he is no longer here. It's the story of life – whenever we celebrate something, there is often another who is mourning. We long for a time when we might simply rejoice, when tears are wiped away, when streets are filled with laughter and memories only make us smile. Such a time is coming. Our heavenly Father has set a time when he will bring this about. We are all given an invitation in his Son – the Lord Jesus – will we accept it?



St Stephen's
WILLOUGHBY

Prayers for those not sharing in Lord's Supper

Participation in the Lord's Supper is for those who have professed faith in Jesus - it's a powerful and important symbol of the Christian message. As such we want to encourage those who are still exploring the Christian faith to feel free to remain in their seats when others move to the front to receive the Lord's Supper. During that time you may want to reflect on the sermon or Bible reading. You may also want to pray one of these prayers below.

Prayer for those searching for truth

Lord Jesus, you claim to be the way, the truth, and the life. Grant that I might be undaunted by the cost of following you as I consider the reasons for doing so. If what you claim is true, please guide me, teach me, and open to me who you are. Give me an understanding of you that leads to the life that you promise. Amen.

Prayer of belief

Lord Jesus, I admit that I am weaker and more sinful than I ever before believed, but through you I am more loved and accepted than I ever dared hope. I thank you for paying my debt, bearing my punishment on the cross, and offering forgiveness and new life. Knowing that you have been raised from the dead, I turn from my sins and receive you as Saviour and Lord. Amen.

Prayer for those struggling with sin

Lord Jesus, enable me to lay aside the sin that clings so closely, and run with perseverance the race set before me, looking to you, the pioneer and perfecter of my faith. Amen.

Prayers adapted from Redeemer Presbyterian Church, New York.

Lord's Prayer

This is the prayer that Jesus taught his disciples to pray (Matthew 6:5-14).

Our Father in heaven hallowed be your name

Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as in heaven

Give us today our daily bread and forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil

For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and forever

Amen

Sermon Notes

What does Dad love? | Passage: [Luke 15:11-32](#)

The hearts of our fathers

A story about a father's two sons:

1. The younger son (v. 11-24)

2. The older son (v. 25-32)

Our Father's heart

Gospel and Prayer (GaP) Group Questions

1. What do you find helpful and difficult about God being like a father?

Read Luke 15:1-32

Getting your head around the passage:

Use as many questions as you need to ensure you understand the passage's contents.

1. Why does Jesus tell these parables? (v.1-2)
 2. What are the similarities between the three parables?
 3. What makes the third parable different?
 4. What groups of people do you think the two sons represent? (refer back to v. 1-2)
 5. Summarise the message given by Jesus to both these groups of people.
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2. Based on his actions in the story, what do you think the father cares about?
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3. Do you think you are more like the younger son or the older son?

4. Discuss the following quote. “The name Father is not merely a simile (as if God were simply like a father) or even a metaphor... but it is a definite personal name. ‘Father’ is the proper name for God and does not merely describe what he is like.” – Robert Letham, *The Holy Trinity: In Scripture, History, Theology, and Worship*



GaP Group Reflection

Watch the video provided to your group leader.

1. When have you experienced generosity from someone that has made a meaningful impact on your life at the time?
2. How are you challenged to practice generosity toward God’s people for the sake of God’s mission?

Prayer

1. Pray that we would (like God) rejoice and long for sinners to repent and be saved.
2. Think of the person you know who is most like the younger son. Pray that they would repent.

Read the Bible with us!

1. From these Parables of Jesus, what do you think is important to God?
2. Pray that God will give you the understanding to see what is important to Him.

Monday - [Luke 14:12-24](#)

Tuesday - [Luke 16:1-15](#)

Wednesday - [Luke 16:17-31](#)

Thursday - [Luke 18:1-8](#)

Friday - [Luke 18:9-14](#)

Notices

Mission Gift Day - Update

Last week we had the privilege of remembering our Link Missionaries in prayer and giving. Thank you to the many who have already given to Mission Gift Day. So far, we have raised **\$17,000** (as of Tuesday). This generosity is wonderfully encouraging. Our generosity will help our Link Missionaries in their ministry. Each of them relies on the giving of supporting churches to pay for their costs. Their salaries comprise of donations. Our generosity is also an opportunity to put the gospel into practice. It is an opportunity to respond to what God has given us. He has chosen to love us and rescue us at great cost to himself. He has willingly done so. He has done this regardless of our generosity to him or others. However, when this truth takes hold in our hearts it should spur us to be generous to others. You can give to our Link Missionaries by using the Give page of our website – st-stephens.com.au/give.



Next Sermon Series

From next Sunday, we continue a sermon series we started last year, working through the Psalms of the Old Testament. Psalms are wonderful poems and songs written by a collection of authors inspired by the Holy Spirit. Their emotional depth contrasts powerfully with the engaging narratives, reasoned letters, pastoral encouragements and prophetic visions we find elsewhere in God's word. During the series, we will get a chance to hear and support our Student Ministers as they preach alongside Gordon.

Warden's Update

Wardens are church members who oversee the property and finances of our church. Since our last update in May, we have completed all work on both apartments. We have leased them successfully. We have also engaged the services of 'Open Box Technology.' Open Box specialises in the installation of audio-visual equipment for a Church. In the run-up to Christmas, you can expect upgrades to the LED screens, lights at the front of the church, speakers and video equipment. We hope that this makes the church and the gospel message more accessible.



Belonging Course

On Sunday 18 September we will hold our next Belonging Course. The Belonging Course is an in-depth look at our church, its culture, vision, future priorities and your place in it. We are encouraging all regulars to sign up. There are twenty-five spots available for the course this term. So, sign-up ASAP using the Connect Card. The Course begins at noon and runs for three hours. It includes lunch and

afternoon tea. Those who attended our first course found it extremely helpful in 'finding a place at the centre of our church life'.

Simply Christianity

On average, Simply Christianity sees an attendance of around fifteen people. We read Luke's Gospel during the week and ponder over the nuances along with dinner. Many of the attendees are not regular members of St. Stephen's. They were perplexed by Jesus as they read about his life. On the one hand, he seems like any of us who grew up in a working-class family. He worked as a carpenter, yet the Gospel records him doing things only God can do. Simply Christianity is on again this Friday, 6:30pm to 8:30pm. If you missed out on the first two weeks, you can still [join us](#).

Lego Afternoon - K-6 Students

On Wednesday, 7th September, we are holding a lego afternoon for kids in Kindergarten to Year 6. It's a chance for kids to invite their friends to have a fun afternoon playing with lego and hearing about Jesus. Pray this will be a great connection point with our wider community. The afternoon is being held in conjunction with the International Chinese School students that are on site. Who can you bring along?



When: Wednesday, 7th September
Time: 3:30-4:30pm **Where:** Chapel Hall

What's Coming Up

Sunday 4th	Father's Day - free doughnut decorating session after the 9:45am Service.
Monday 5th	Weekly Prayer Meeting - Zoom Link Meeting ID: 837 9111 9200 Passcode: qKga12
Tuesday 6th	Playtime - Week 5 - Register
Friday 9th	Half Past Six Simply Christianity - Week 3.
Saturday 10th	Prayer Morning 8:30-8:55am - Zoom Link Meeting ID: 878 2345 9321 Passcode: 836532
Thursday 15th	Encounter for Seniors - 10am to 1pm - Chapel Hall.

Our Staff - Contact Us!



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