

Jesus above all

The Letter to the Colossians



Wk 8

TODAY'S 9:45AM SERVICE:

- Welcome
- Songs
- Confession
- Spotlight
- Bible Reading:
[Colossians 4:2-18](#)
(Bible p.1185)
- Sermon
- Prayer
- Song
- 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 27 November 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. Great to have you visit us today! We hope you find a warm welcome from our regulars, a service that helpfully engages you with the message of Jesus and presents opportunities to immerse yourself in the community here. Would you take a moment to fill in the Connect Card (scan the QR Code or use the hardcopy)?



Today is our final instalment in the Colossians series. We've spent eight weeks in total looking at one of Paul's letters. The series has reminded us that Jesus should be central to our life. We have been shown how our lives need to change, the way we should treat others and the way we should think of ourselves. At the heart of the life of Jesus is his willingness to give himself up for us. He, who is worthy of all honour, willingly submitted himself to the cross – such was his love for us!

As we come to the end of the year – a year filled with good and bad – we want to take time to remind our friends of the hope this Godman, Jesus offers. Would you invite your friends to the Carols on the Grass event?

Prayers for the Service

These prayers are used during the service. Prayer is a privilege we are given because Christ died for us. His death & resurrection means we can confidently approach God seeking forgiveness (Hebrews 10:22). If you believe that Christ died to deal with your failings then you should be confident to pray with us. If you are still exploring who Christ is then feel free to listen in.

A Prayer of Confession

Merciful God,
our maker and our judge,
we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed:
we have not loved you with our whole heart,
we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves:
we repent, and are sorry for all our sins.
Father, forgive us.
Strengthen us to love and obey you in newness of life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

¹²as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

Psalm 103:12

The 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.
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 for ever.
Amen.

Sermon Notes

Part of something bigger | Passage: Colossians 4:2-18

The Final Word: Look outward!

1. Outward-focussed Prayer (vv. 2-4)

2. Outward-focussed Witness (vv. 5-6)

Making the most of our opportunities this summer

Our mission is Christ's mission (vv. 7-18)

Gospel and Prayer (GaP) Group Questions

1. Think of all the reasons why we find evangelism hard. Which of these reasons are down to us (i.e. internal factors)? Which of these reasons are not down to us (i.e. external factors)?

Read Colossians 4:2-6

Getting your head around the passage:

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

1. What should our prayer be marked by (v. 2)? What do you think this means?
 2. What does Paul ask us to prayer for (vv. 3-4)? What do you think this means?
 3. How should we act towards non-Christians, and why?
 4. What should be the nature of our conversation with non-Christians, and why? (v. 6)
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2. Why do you think Paul gives us instructions on evangelistic prayer and witness as his last instructions in Colossians?
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3. Discuss this quote summarised from Sam Chan's book, ***How to Talk about Jesus (Without Being That Guy)***:
"To overcome the higher barriers to evangelism today, Christians need to be more involved in the lives of non-Christians, whether it is attending events that matter to them, showing hospitality through meals...It also means that listening (and asking questions) matters as much as talking, to understand the people with whom we share. Telling simple stories about Jesus or sharing the story of Jesus in your life is a powerful way of evangelising through our conversations."

4. Which of the following statements best represents you, and why?
 - (a) “I have no problem making friends with non-Christians, but I find it hard to mention Jesus in those friendships.”
 - (b) “My non-Christian friends know about my faith, but none wants to talk about it, and none have taken up my invitations to come to church events.”
 - (c) “I’m relatively confident talking to others about Jesus, but I don’t have many close non-Christian friendships.”

5. How can we help each other in our struggles mentioned above?



GaP Group Reflection

Watch the video provided to your group leader.

1. Do you have a friend with whom you want to share Jesus? What does this friend think about Jesus?
2. What will you do (this summer) to strengthen your friendship with them, so you can be a more confident about sharing the Gospel?

Prayer

1. In pairs, pray for the friend that you have shared about in the GaP Group Reflection.
2. Choose one of our mission partners and pray that God may open a door for them to share the gospel.

Read the Bible with us!

1. Read the suggested verses for the day seven times. What strikes you after the 1st time and the 7th time?
2. How should this shape your prayers?
3. Who can you pray for?

Monday - [Col 4:2](#)
Tuesday - [Col 4:3](#)
Wednesday - [Col 4:4](#)
Thursday - [Col 4:5](#)
Friday - [Col 4:6](#)

Notices

Sermon series coming up next!

From next week, we start a short series preparing us for Christmas. Each week we will look at a promise in the Old Testament and how the birth of Christ fulfilled the promise. Christmas is the moment when God fulfilled many of the promises he made. Why? The whole Old Testament is a preparation for us to meet Jesus. God's ultimate plan always centred on the arrival of Jesus, his death for us and his powerful resurrection from the dead. We hope it's a series that gives us a glimpse of God's faithfulness to his promises.

Carols on the Grass.

Book your tickets early!

Christmas celebrations at St Stephen's begins with our Carols on the Grass event.

This event is for the entire community to celebrate Christmas with us. We will have carols, kids' activities, a nativity play and dinner on the church grass (we will be fencing off the car park). More than three hundred people attended the event last

year. Carols on the Grass will feature the Willoughby Public School band and a community choir. Kids' games and dinner will begin at 5pm, and carols start at 5:30pm. The evening will finish at 7pm. Buy your tickets early, as places are limited. Tickets are available at st-stephens.com.au/summer.



Church working bee!

We are having a **church working bee on 3rd Dec** and everyone's help would be greatly appreciated! Let's make our church a welcoming place for the friends we are bringing to 'Carols on the Grass.' Several jobs need our attention, and we start at 8:00am. Jobs can be done on the day or in the lead up - email the office for more details or simply turn up on the day.

Summer of Opportunities

At St Stephen's, we are committed to Bringing Friends to Faith as one of four ministry priorities. During the school holidays period, our regular church programs pause for 6-7 weeks. It is an ideal time to connect and have fun with our non-church friends. You may reconnect with older friends or invest in making new friends. We want to pray that they move one step closer to faith in Jesus. A Summer of Opportunities is not another church program during the summer. It's an encouragement to spend time with your friends this summer as a Christian. It is a chance to do that with support, prayer and coaching from others as well as Gordon.



Kids afternoon program

Last Friday, we hosted a kid's afternoon program. It was a chance for the Christian kids to invite non-Christian friends to hear about Jesus and to strengthen our ties with the International Chinese School. Attended by 29 kids, the event was a great success. The kids had a great time doing relay races and learning about Jesus.

Praise God! Please pray for the families who came last Friday. Pray, that they will partake again (in 2023) in our weekly kids' afternoon program.

Christmas Services

On **Christmas Eve** we have:

1. A Christmas service for the whole family at 4pm with a sausage sizzle afterwards.
2. A Christmas supper with champagne supper at 10pm
3. A late-night Christmas Eve Lessons and Carols at 11pm.

We have two services on **Christmas Day**

1. 7:45am will be a traditional service
2. All ages service at 9:45am.



What's Coming Up

Sunday 27th	Belonging Course, Noon to 3pm. Chapel Hall.
Monday 28th	Weekly Prayer Meeting - Zoom Link Meeting ID: 837 9111 9200 Passcode: qKga12
Tuesday 29th	Playtime - 9:30am to 11:30am — December—
Friday 2nd	Half Past Six Youth Group. 6:30-8:30pm
Tuesday 6th	Playtime Christmas Party
Saturday 10th	Carols on the Grass, 5pm to 7pm. Tickets available @ st-stephens.com.au/summer .

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