

JUNE-JULY 2023

GENESIS

Mercy for a messy family



Wk 1

Sunday 4 June 2023

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

TODAY'S 9:45AM SERVICE

- Welcome
- Song
- Baptism
- Bible Reading:
Genesis 12:1-9 (p. 11), 15:1-21 (p. 13),
17:1-27 (p. 15)
- Sermon
- Song
- Prayers
- Lord's Supper
- Song
- Conclusion

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

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

Welcome to St Stephen's! It's great to have you join us for the first Sunday of winter. We hope you find a warm welcome, an encouraging time hearing from the Bible and a firm reminder of the hope God is offering. We would love to hear from you.

Would you take a moment to fill in the Connect Card (enclosed or accessible via the QR code)? We appreciate feedback & prayer requests.



This morning we celebrate the baptism of Hannah Dobra. Hannah's parents, Jason & Ella both love Jesus. Their prayer is that God would kindly reveal himself to Hannah too. Baptism symbolises the gracious work of God on a believer. Having done nothing to receive his mercy, God offers to pour it out freely and fully. As God's people we come before him in prayer asking him to do that for Hannah. We commit to encourage and nurture the whole family in their faith.

Next Steps

Are you new? We encourage you to join us for the final week of the [Hope Explored Course](#) on Wednesday Night at Willoughby Hotel from 7-9pm

Are you a regular? Join us for the [Belonging Course](#) which runs today from 12-3pm. Chat with Prash or Jill for more details.

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.

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 forever.

Amen

Sermon Notes

Our story through our ancestor's | Genesis 12:1-9, 15:1-21, 17:1-27

Preacher: Gordon Luk

1. God's gracious call (Gen 12:1-9)

2. God's gracious covenant (Gen 15:1-21)

3. God's gracious sign (Gen 17:1-27)

Gospel and Prayer (GaP) Group Study

1. What do you know about your ancestors? What do you wish you knew about them and why?

Read Gen 11:27-12:20

Getting your head around the passage:

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

- A. What are the 7 promises God gives to Abram in verses 2-3?
- B. Describe how Abram responds to God's word?
- C. What is the questionable thing Abram does in Egypt after this?
- D. How does God act towards Abram during/after this incident in Egypt?
- E. How does God act towards Abram in this chapter?

2. How does Gen 12:10-20 make God's calling of Abram in Gen 12:1-3 even more remarkable?

3. How does the story of Babel in Genesis 11 make God's calling of Abram in Gen 12:1-3 even more remarkable?

4. Abraham's story with God reflects the Christian story with God too. Work through the following passages to see how the New Testament talks about this.

Passage	What does this say about Christ and/or the Christian?
Matt 1:1 (cf. Gen 12:3)	
Rom 4:1-5, 13-16	
Gal 3:5-9	
Heb 11:1-2, 8-12	

5. In what ways is your story with God based on His grace and our faith, not our works? Discuss how this is not just when/how you became a Christian, but your ongoing walk with Christ.

6. Spend time in prayer thanking God for His grace to us and to ask him to increase our faith in Him.



GaP Group Reflection

Watch the video provided to your GaP Group leader and consider the following questions:

- i. What do you find most encouraging about the ministry to young people that takes place at St Stephen's?
- ii. Why do you think ministering to young people is difficult in our current setting? How can you pray for this ministry?

Read the Bible with us!

Follow the story of Abraham and use these questions to guide you:

1. What does this show me about God's gracious character?
2. What does this show me about the fallenness and/or the faithfulness of Abraham?

Monday - [Genesis 13](#)

Tuesday - [Genesis 14](#)

Wednesday - [Genesis 15](#)

Thursday - [Genesis 16](#)

Friday - [Genesis 17](#)

Notices

Belonging Course

Our Belonging course is the gateway into the deeper life of St Stephen's. At St Stephen's, our mission statement is that as a church captivated by Christ we commit to:

- Praying big prayers shaped by the gospel
- Bringing friends to faith
- Growing the young in their devotion to God's word
- Celebrating together for the glory of Christ



The course includes lunch, time with all the staff, hearing about what it means to be part of the church, and how you might be able to be involved.

If you haven't been a part of the course before, join in today after the service from 12-3pm or chat with Jill Chilton about coming to the next course in September. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Evangelism Training Nights



ii. Bringing friends to faith

God has placed our church at the centre of what 60,000 people call their home: Willoughby, Chatswood and Artarmon. He has called us to share His gospel message of salvation with this part of His world. This is why we want to keep bringing our friends to faith. Yet this is something we all find difficult and needing help. This is why we are running two Evangelism Training nights in June: **Wed 14 and 21, 7-9pm in the Chapel Hall.**



On Wed 14 Kit Ng, who is a Senior Staff worker at Sydney University's Evangelical Union, will be coming to help us in ***Sharing Jesus in everyday conversations.***



On Wed 21 Amelia Hohne, who heads up the cross-cultural area of Anglicare, will be coming to help us in ***Sharing Jesus across cultures.***

If you feel stuck in either of these areas, come along and be equipped. \$10 dinner will be provided. Register at st-stephens.com.au/winter

Hope Explored Course

The Apostle Peter says in 1 Peter 1:3 **“In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead”**. If Jesus did not rise from the dead, there is no real hope to be found in Christianity. But if he did rise from the dead, there is not just a certain hope beyond death, but it changes everything about life in the present.

This Wednesday night is the final week of the Hope Explored course and we are exploring the resurrection of Jesus. If you have missed the first two weeks of the course, you can still join us this Wednesday night, 7-9pm at the Willoughby Hotel (upstairs in the Penshurst Room). Who could you bring?

Special Religious Education (SRE)

In NSW we have the great opportunity to share the core message of the Bible with students in our public schools. At Willoughby Public School we run SRE for 250 students. The Tax Office allows donations to SRE to be tax deductible. We have a limited amount that can be allocated toward this tax-free component. If you would like to make an additional gift toward this before the financial year ends, please speak to our treasurer for details – nhenderson007@gmail.com

Thank you to those who generously support the ministry of our church. If you would like to consider your giving visit st-stephens.com.au/give to find more details. Supporting gospel ministry in the local church results in eternal benefit and is the best way to use our temporary resources.

HPS Update

Half Past Six is our youth group which meets on Friday nights. This year we have split the program into juniors and seniors. While this has been great for the kids coming our group continues to be small (around 5-10 each week). With some many young people in our area who do not know Jesus we know we need to do something different.



One way we are trying to reach the young people in our area is through ‘Big weeks’. Big weeks is bigger and better version of a usual youth night. We hope that they will encourage youth to bring friends. As part of Big weeks we are doing ‘Amazing Race’, Lazer tag and ‘In the Dark’ night. **Please pray that God might use this ministry to save young people in our area.**

What's Coming Up

5 June	Prayer Meeting: Mondays 1pm on Zoom
5 June	Wardens' Meeting
7 June	Hope Explored Course at Willoughby Hotel (Week 3)
10 June	Prayer Meeting: Saturdays 8:30am in Chapel Hall
14 June	Evangelism Training Night: Sharing Jesus in everyday conversations with Kit Ng
21 June	Evangelism Training Night: Sharing Jesus across cultures with Amelia Hohne

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