

JUNE-JULY 2023

GENESIS

Mercy for a messy family



Wk 4

Sunday 25 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
- Songs
- Confession & Assurance
- Spotlight
- Bible Reading: Genesis 25:19-34 (p. 24), 26:34-27:46 (p. 27), 28:10-22 (p. 28)
- Sermon
- Prayers
- Announcements
- 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. We're glad to have you with us today. There is no better place to be on a Sunday! If today is a your first time, we would love to hear how you found church. Would you mind filling out the Connect Card (inside the booklet or accessible via the QR code).



Last Thursday was the shortest day of the year. We're on our way to summer! Most people prefer the day to the night. The warmth and clarity of daylight brings us a sense of safety, optimism and hope. The Bible refers to Jesus as the 'light of the world' because he is the one who ultimately brings us hope, optimism and safety. It's why we spend our Sundays reminding ourselves about Jesus. We hope as we meet together and hear the Bible read, explained and reflected upon Jesus will become more and more central to our lives.

Next Steps

Are you new? Join us at our Newish Morning Tea today after the 9:45am Service.

Been regularly coming? If you are a regular member of our church, we encourage you to attend our next Belonging Course on Sunday 10 September. Belonging is the gateway to our GaP Groups, serving and deeper connection with the community.

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.

For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God.

1 Peter 3:18a

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

Who does God choose? | Genesis 25:19-34, 26:34-27:46,
28:10-22

Preacher: Gordon Luk

1. God does not choose based on human categories (Gen 25:19-34)
2. God does not choose based on human merit (Gen 26:34-27:46)
3. God chooses to open heaven up to unworthy people through Christ (Gen 28:10-22)

Gospel and Prayer (GaP) Group Study

1. What is the strangest dream you've had?

Read Gen 28:1-22

Getting your head around the passage:

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

- A. What is "the blessing of Abraham" (v. 4) from your memory of Genesis so far?
- B. Why is Jacob running away?
- C. Draw a picture of his dream (v. 12-15)
- D. List out the promises God gives to Jacob in this dream (v. 13-15)
- E. What is Jacob's feeling and response to God after seeing the vision?

Read Gen 22:17-18

2. How does God's promises to Jacob (Gen 28:13-15) compare with His promises to Abraham? Why does this matter?

3. What do you think the vision of the ladder/stairway to heaven is all about? (See how Jacob reacts to the vision in v. 17) What do you think God is trying to show Jacob?

4. Given what Jacob has done in Genesis 27, why is it remarkable that God shows this vision to Jacob and makes these promises to him?

Read John 1:51

5. How is Jacob's vision of the ladder to heaven actually a picture of Jesus and what He has come to do?

6. Discuss how God chose to reveal the way to heaven to an unworthy man in Jacob is a reflection of how He chose to meet us in Jesus.

Prayer

A. Pray that God would help us marvel at His grace to us in choosing us not based on our works or merit.

B. Pray that we would not restrict anyone in our hearts from coming to Christ, who is the only way to heaven.



GaP Group Reflection

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

- i. What parts of the Bible are you currently reading? Do you find it easy or hard to regularly read the Bible?
- ii. How can your group encourage each other to read, reflect and respond to the Bible on a regular basis through the week?

Read the Bible with us!

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

1. What makes me uncomfortable about how God relates with Isaac/Jacob? What does this show me about God that I need to see?
2. What gives me comfort in how God relates with Isaac/Jacob? Is this how Jesus relates with me or not?

Monday - [Genesis 25:19-34](#)

Tuesday - [Genesis 26](#)

Wednesday - [Genesis 27](#)

Thursday - [Genesis 28](#)

Friday - [Romans 9:6-24](#)

Notices

Newish Morning Tea

If you consider yourself new to St Stephen's then we want to welcome you. We run Newish Morning Teas every month to help people get their bearings, meet staff and other new people and take a step further into church life. Our next Newish Morning Tea is on today straight after the 9:45am service.

Alpha @ Playtime

Playtime is running an Alpha course. Playtime seeks to connect with families in our area and help them explore faith in Jesus. In the past we have struggled to help people take further steps in exploring Jesus. Many of our outreach courses run at times that are not suitable for parents with young kids. So we are running a group straight after Playtime.



Parents can stay for lunch, watch the video and have a chance to discuss deeper things of life. Praise God we have had 6 people coming and many good conversations!

Please pray for a great last week and that God would save those who are coming!

Prayer Night

There have been so many great events and ministries running lately in our church; so many opportunities for you and others to grow in faith and introduce friends to Jesus. However, the life of our church is not sustained by our efforts but the gracious work of Christ. We are only ever as healthy as God allows. Therefore, prayer is the key task for us and every Christian.

We will be holding our next quarterly prayer meeting on Wednesday July 26 at 7:30pm.

We will spend an hour together praying for the life of our church, the needs of God's people, the local community and those who are currently exploring the Christian faith. Prayer nights are open to young and old, new and long term members.

Half Past Six

Half Past Six is our youth group that runs on Friday nights. This year we have been averaging 5-8 youth, which is a significant drop from last year. Our group now consists of youth from church families and one or two others. It's been hard for the youth and the leaders to see youth stop coming. Our youth are doing an amazing job of inviting friends along but this remains a slow process.

- Please pray for our HPS team as they work to grow the ministry.
- Pray for wisdom and creativity as we seek to connect with the young people in our community in new ways. Pray that God would give young people open hearts and that God might use the ministry of HPS to save many people.



Dumpling Making Night - Save the Date

Save the date—Friday 11 August, 6:30pm to 8:30pm for Dumpling Making Night. Last year, we had 140 people (including adults, kids and youth) in our Chapel Hall. It was fantastic! We had so much fun making and eating Chinese-style dumplings. More importantly, we were able to share about Jesus to over 80 non-St Stephen's guests.

We'd be silly not to do another Dumpling Making Night again this year. If you'd like to volunteer to help out in any way, please get in touch with Gordon. This is an event for all ages—adults, kids and youth.

What's Coming Up

3 July	Wardens' Meeting
10 July	Parish Council
21 July	Half Past Six Leaders Training
22 July	Prayer Meeting: Saturdays 8:30am in Chapel Hall
26 July	St Stephen's Prayer Night: 7:30-8:30pm in Chapel Hall

For more on what's happening this winter at St Stephen's, visit st-stephens.com.au/winter

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