



# A Church for the Future

1 Thessalonians | 15 Oct - 3 Dec



Wk 6

## Sunday 19 November 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
- Spotlight
- Confession & Assurance
- Micah's Confirmation
- Bible Reading:  
1 Thessalonians  
5:1-11 (p. 1188)
- 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 you can be with us this morning. We think there is no better place to be on a Sunday than here - with the people of God. Enjoy your time, be encouraged by the community, dive into the message, be challenged and respond.



We would love to hear how you found church and how we can help you. Please say hi to one of the staff or use the Connect Card (accessible via the QR Code). In this booklet you find a taste of the many things God is doing in our church community. We invite you to taste and see the life of St Stephen's.

Mid way through November we realise the year is ending fast. We have been sustained through the usual and unexpected challenges of life. Each Sunday at church we are reminded that it is Jesus who sustains us by his Spirit working in his people.

### Next Steps

**Are you new?** We would love to meet you. Hear a brief intro on the life of our church at our next [Newish Morning Tea](#) on Sunday 26 November. It runs for ½ an hour straight after the service.

**Been regularly coming?** If you are a regular member of our church, we encourage you to attend our next [Belonging Course](#) which runs today from 12-3pm. 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

Lord God,  
we have sinned against you;  
we have done evil in your sight.  
We are sorry and repent.  
Have mercy on us according to your love.  
Wash away our wrongdoing and cleanse us from our sin.  
Renew a right spirit within us  
and restore us to the joy of your salvation,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

As 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 forever  
Amen.

# Sermon Notes

## We Belong to the Future | 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

Preacher: Gordon Luk

1. The Day of the Lord (v. 1-3)

2. We belong to the Day (v. 4-7)

3. Our Future Destiny is Salvation through Christ (v. 8-11)

# Gospel and Prayer (GaP) Group Study

1. Do you think your friends or family are mostly optimistic or pessimistic about the future of our world? Discuss why.

## Read 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

### Getting your head around the passage:

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

- A. What is Paul writing to them about (v.1)? What do you think is the question he's seeking to address?
- B. How does Paul answer that question (v.2-3)?
- C. What is Paul's encouragement (v.6)?
- D. What kind of reasoning does he use (v.5, 7)?
- E. What does it mean to "be sober" (v.8)?
- F. Which parts of this passage relate to what God is doing in the future, what He's done in the past, and what we should do in the present?

2. There are two errors that we can fall into regarding the Day of the Lord. One is to over-obsess about it beyond what the Scriptures tell us—what are the times and dates etc. (v.1)? The other error is to not think about it at all—being "asleep" and not alert/sober (v.6-8). Which error are you more tempted to fall into? What are the dangers of it?

3. How does "belonging to the night or to the darkness" (v.5) explain how most people live and act in the present? How does it relate to what they know about the future of the world?

4. When do you find it hard to "be sober" and "alert" to the future Day? What makes it hard?

5. The gospel articulated in verses 9-10 are more than just true events in the past, but how they secure our future. Why do you think Paul puts this after his encouragement to the Thessalonians to be sober? What did Christ endure in the past that changes our present identity and our future hope?

6. Our identity in the gospel is that we are children of the light and of the day (v.5). How will knowing that this is who you are change you and how you face the next:

- a. Day,
- b. Few weeks/months, and
- c. Year?

## Prayer Time

*Split into smaller groups:*

1. Confess to God your struggles and failures where you haven't been living in light of the Day and have been "asleep".
2. Ask God to remind your heart of the gospel truths and its future realities, so that you can live in light of your glorious eternal future.



### GaP Group Reflection

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

- i. Think of a recent conversation with a friend, how much balance was there between your listening and your speaking?
- ii. What are some helpful questions you could ask to restart a conversation or keep one going?

## Read the Bible with us!

1. What does Jesus promise?
2. What encouragement/warning does He give concerning how we should live in preparation for the future?

Monday - [Matthew 24:36-51](#)

Tuesday - [Matthew 25:1-13](#)

Wednesday - [Matthew 25:14-30](#)

Thursday - [Hebrews 10:19-25](#)

Friday - [2 Peter 3:1-18](#)

# Notices

## Gift Day

### Gift Day | 12 Nov

Support the life, ministry, and outreach of St Stephen's Willoughby



2023 Target: \$35,000

TRANSFER REF:  
GIFTDAY

Last Sunday we marked our annual Gift Day. We spent a moment to reflect on the many great ways God has been at work in our church family over the past year. He has brought many new faces into our midst. He has refreshed people's faith in Christ – bringing some back to their first love. He has provided many opportunities to share the gospel with our community. He has deepened Christian friendships through GaP Groups. He has introduced members of the next generation to the life changing love of Jesus through our kids & youth ministries.

Gift Day is our way to invest in the ministry of the church with gratitude in our hearts. We encourage our church members to prayerfully consider making an additional, one-off gift, to help our ministry for 2024 continue and grow. Our target for this year's campaign is \$35,000.00. Thank you to those who have already given. To give, visit our website for details - [st-stephens.com.au/give](https://st-stephens.com.au/give)

## SRE

What a year it's been in our SRE ministry! A year ago, one of our teachers challenged a particularly opinionated Year 5 boy to read the Bible before he declared himself an atheist. She bought him a Bible. He started to read the Bible and then attend HPS. Last week, he sat with Sam and asked God for forgiveness. Wow! SRE is the doorway for many young people encountering God's word for the 1st time through our kids & youth programs. Each week we get to teach the Bible to over 200 students at Willoughby Public School.

Would you consider joining the ministry team? Chat with Pippie. Would you pray that many students at Willoughby would come to know and love Jesus too.

## LIFE

The LIFE course looks into what life with Jesus is all about and is perfect place for anyone with questions about the Christian faith or exploring life's big questions. Last Tuesday was our last week of the Life Course. We looked at what it means to be a Christian and the place of repentance and faith. Please pray for those who attended as they continue to explore the Christian faith.

## Christmas at St Stephen's

Christmas at St Stephen's is always a wonderful time! We celebrate God's love to us in sending His Son. It's always a great opportunity to bring friends and family. This year, we're inviting everyone to "unwrap the ancient" with us—to explore the ancient but timeless story of how the Son of God was born and entered our world as human. Our Carols on the Grass event is on Saturday 9 December, and we have services on Christmas Eve (4pm and 11pm) and Christmas Day (9am). On Christmas Eve, we have a champagne supper just before our Candlelight Reading and Carols service at 11pm. These are all great opportunities for our friends, family and neighbours. We'd love your help with the letterbox drop, please grab a bundle of cards up the back. Grab some cards to give out yourself too, there is a blank page on the inside to write your own personal note.

Join  
us for

# CAROLS *on the grass*

Saturday 9th Dec at 5pm



What better way to celebrate the hope of Christmas than with carols?

Join us on Saturday 9th December at 5pm for a Kids Fair and dinner. Carols will begin at 5:30pm, featuring Willoughby Public School band, children's activities, a nativity play and carolling.

The evening will finish at 7pm.

Cost: \$15 per person, \$5 for children, \$30 for a family.

\*Bring your own picnic blanket and any additional drinks and snacks. Places are limited.

For more information visit: [st-stephens.com.au](http://st-stephens.com.au)



St Stephen's  
WILLOUGHBY



## What's Coming Up

21 November	Playtime
24 November	Friday Kids & HPS Youth
25 November	Weekly Prayer Meeting: Saturdays 8:30am in Chapel Hall
26 November	Newish Morning Tea
9 December	Carols on the Grass

For more on what's happening this spring at St Stephen's, visit [st-stephens.com.au/spring](http://st-stephens.com.au/spring)

## Our Staff - Contact Us!



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