



St Stephen's

WILLOUGHBY
VISION SUNDAY

WE LONG TO BE A CHURCH MADE

beautiful, diverse and large

by the gracious work of Christ

TODAY'S 9:45AM SERVICE

Sunday 5 May 2024

Our 9:45am service is live streamed to our YouTube and Facebook Channels.

- Welcome
- Songs
- Spotlight
- Bible Reading:
Romans 10:5-21
(page 1135)
- Sermon
- Interview with the
B Family
- Prayers
- Lord's Supper
- Announcements
- Song
- Conclusion

Welcome to St Stephen's. We're glad you could join us today. Every week we have new people and visitors join us. We're so glad! We think there is no better place to be than church on a Sunday.



We encourage you to participate fully in the life of our church community. Have a read through this booklet, engage in the service, chat with one of the staff and respond using the Connect Card (accessible via the QR code too). We would love to welcome you in.

Today is the start of Term 2 and a chance for us to refresh our sense of God's particular calling on this church. We want to be people who bring our friends to faith in Christ. We know we need God to work, so we start the term with prayer and his word - we invite you to join us.

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.

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 26 May. 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 on the 2nd of June from 12-3pm. Belonging is the gateway to our GaP Groups, serving and deeper connection with the community.

Or if you'd like to learn more sooner, you may also like to arrange a coffee with Prash or Jill. Simply reach out - they'd love to chat.

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

Bringing our Friends to Faith | Romans 10:5-21

Preacher: Prash Colombage

1. Strangely beautiful

*“Christians and non-Christians have something in common.
We’re both uptight about evangelism.”*

- Rebecca Pippert

2. Hearing brings beauty

Real & Important Change

“In heaven, joy squeezes out any opportunity for sadness. In hell, sadness squeezes out any opportunity for joy... We tend to think that the default destiny of all people is heaven, and hell is reserved for the particularly wicked. But in truth our default destiny is hell, and heaven is reserved for those who have the honesty to admit it and look to Christ.”

- Dane Ortland, Is Hell Real

Necessity of Words

3 Implications:

1. Bring
2. Share
3. Support

3. Beauty to the resistant

The most important implication

Gospel and Prayer (GaP) Group Study

A reminder that this week is a week of prayer. Each weeknight from 7:30-8:30pm in the chapel hall a prayer meeting will be run. Please join us once or more times to pray to our Lord – the Lord of the Harvest.

1. How do you think the world thinks about the church? We say we would like to be beautiful, diverse & large as a church? Is this possible in your opinion?

Read Romans 10:5-21

Getting your head around the passage:

Choose as many of these questions as you need to get your head around the passage.

- A. Where do we find God's word?
- B. How do we take hold of the salvation offered by God?
- C. Who is the offer open to?
- D. What is required if people are to come to faith?
- E. What is noticeable about God's activity according to Paul?

2. Do you find sharing your faith a beautiful activity? Why? Why not?

3. Have you experienced hostility when sharing your faith? Take the time to share this and how it impacted your willingness to share again. Be mindful of others in your group as you do this.

4. Why is sharing the gospel with people necessary and needed in our city?

5. How do you respond to the quote by Dane Ortlund in the Sermon Outline?

6. What is the central message of the gospel and how might that make the task of sharing our faith more beautiful?

Prayer Time

1. Consider who you are called to share the Christian gospel (and your faith in it) with this week. Share a name or two with the group and ready you feel for that task.

2. Confess your times of inaction or fear of reputation (or worse) and ask God to encourage you in your beautiful responsibility.

Plan to attend a night in our Prayer Week as a group.

Read the Bible with us!

1. What about God is being revealed to us?

2. What are we called to do?

3. How does 1 give us confidence to do 2?
Ask God to send you this week.

Monday - [Matthew 28:19-20](#)

Tuesday - [1 Peter 3:15](#)

Wednesday - [1 Corinthians 2:1-5](#)

Thursday - [Matthew 9:36-38](#)

Friday - [Matthew 10:39](#)

Notices

Conversations about Hope Event

We would love help reaching our local area. Can you drop off some flyers? Chat with Gordon or use the Connect Card to offer your help in this area.



MEET OUR PANEL

ROGER MONTGOMERY
Roger is the founder of Montgomery Investment Management, where he manages \$1.5 billion worth of investment portfolios. He has authored a best-seller on buying stocks and regularly contributes on ABC's *The Business* and *The Weekend Australian*.

LEISA AITKEN
Leisa is a clinical psychologist and currently completing a PhD in the psychology of hope, researching Australians' hopes for their own lives and also their hopes for humanity. She has spoken publicly on hope and its links with philosophy and psychology.

PRASHANTH COLOMBAGE
Prashanth is the Senior Minister at St Stephen's Willoughby and has degrees in English Literature, Law and Theology. Previously, he worked as a commercial litigation lawyer at Hunt & Hunt. His clients included Boral, NRMA and a bunch of truck drivers who took on a global company and won.

Scan to book your spot.
[ST-STEPHENS.COM.AU/AUTUMN](https://st-stephens.com.au/autumn)



B Family Visit

The B Family, one of our Parish Link Missionaries, are visiting our church this week. You will get to hear them in church today.

There are other opportunities to connect with them too. Come tomorrow to Day 1 of Week of Prayer, send your kids to Friday Kids or HPS to give them the chance to interact and be encouraged by the B Family too!



Notices

A Beautiful Story: God's Vision for Sexuality & Gender

From 12 May – 2 June we will be looking at the issues of Sexuality and Gender from the Bible's perspective. It is a great series to bring friends to. The content will help them to view the issue with the Christian story as a lens.



Do you have questions or issues you would like addressed in the series? You can submit your questions or thoughts via this QR Code

Prayer Week | 6-10 May

From May 6 - 10 we will be focussing on our Prayer Week. We encourage every person at St Stephen's to join us in the great and holy task of prayer.

Each weeknight we will meet in the Chapel Hall from 7:30-8:30pm to pray for the world, the spread of the gospel and our church.



There is no more effective way to bring about personal and corporate change than to commit to prayer.

GaP Groups are highly encouraged to attend the prayer night corresponding to their usual day/night of meeting. While it is tempting to skip prayer – we encourage you there are few better ways to prepare for all that will come.

What's Coming Up

1 - 10 May	The B Family Visit to St Stephens
6 - 10 May	Prayer Week
7 May	Playtime (9:30am to 11:30am)
14 May	Encounter for Seniors
23 May	Conversations About Hope

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

Our Staff - Contact Us!



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