

Open Door

4 • 11 • 18 • 25 January 2026

St Stephen's
WILLOUGHBY

Week 3

TODAY'S 9:30AM SERVICE

- Welcome
- Songs
- Spotlight
- Prayers
- Vision Spot
- Bible Readings:
Hosea 3:1-5 &
John 3:16-17
(p. 900)
- Sermon
- Song
- Confession &
Assurance
- 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.

Sunday 18 January 2026

Our 9:30am service is live streamed to our YouTube and Facebook Channels.

Welcome! We're glad you're with us as we continue our series **An Open Door**, where we're exploring big questions many people have about Christianity. Today we're asking: **What if Christianity believes the problem with the world—and with us—actually has a solution?**



Connect Card

Many people agree that something isn't quite right with the world: broken relationships, injustice, violence, and the quiet sense that even our best efforts fall short. The Bible doesn't deny this. Instead, it names the problem honestly and points us to a surprising answer. In Hosea 3 and John 3:16-17, we see a God who responds to human failure not with abandonment, but with costly love.

Here on the Lower North Shore, we're encouraged to fix ourselves and keep moving forward. Christianity offers a different hope—not self-improvement, but rescue. We hope today opens space to consider whether Jesus might be the solution our hearts and world are longing for.

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 22 February. 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 1 March 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 at another time, you can arrange a coffee with Prash or Jill. Simply reach out – they'd love to chat.

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.

Words of Assurance

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:9

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

Open door to Grace: What if the problem with the world (and us) has a solution? | Hosea 3:1-3, John 3:16-17

Preacher: Gordon Luk

1. The problem with the world:

- a. There is something wrong with the world...

Psalm 90:10

“Our days may come to seventy years or eighty, if our strength endures; yet the best of them are but trouble and sorrow, for they quickly pass...”

- b. And we’re not sure what the solution is...

- c. What if we don’t have a solution because we don’t know what the real problem is?

Genesis 6:5

“The LORD saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time.”

2. The Bible’s diagnosis and solution:

- a. The Bible is not a ‘how-to’ manual with quick fixes, but a coherent message: the gospel of grace (gospel means “good news”)

- b. Good news is only good if you get how bad the bad news is first

- c. You can only get grace when you see that you don’t deserve it

3. What if it’s not about you, but about Jesus?

To help you go deeper in God's Word this week

Most of our Gospel and Prayer (GaP) groups are restarting in February. Why not take a moment this week by yourself with God and use the following questions to help you go deeper in His Word? You may like to do this in one sitting or spread it out over a few days.

Read Luke 15:1-32

Prayer: "Gracious Father, thank you for your heart for me and for redeeming me in Your Son when I was lost. Please give me your heart so that I care about what you care about, and love who you love. In Jesus' Name, Amen."

1. When you look at the world right now, what feels most broken to you? (This could be at a global, national and personal level).
2. Do you think the problems with the world are external (ie. systems, governments, structures) or internal (human desires, motivations, selfishness)?
3. How do you think the sinful human heart leads to the brokenness of the world at a global, national, personal level? Can you see that from how Luke 15:12-13 portrays the sinful human heart?

Read Genesis 6:5 and Hosea 3:1-3

4. What do you find shocking about these passages? Have you ever seen your sin as spiritual unfaithfulness to God (as opposed to 'just doing the wrong thing')?

5. What do these passages show us about God's heart when He experiences our sin? How does this challenge how you see your sin?

Read John 3:16

6. Avoid skimming this verse but take a moment to look at every word in this sentence. Make a note of the words that strike you most.

7. What are all the things this verse tells you about God?

a. What is His heart?

b. Who He is a one God, 3 persons?

c. What He did because of His love for the world?

8. What amazes you about God loving a world set against Him, and loving you even though He already knows your brokenness and sinful heart?

9. How does this show you that the solution to the world is not about you or us, but God?

10. What do you think it means to 'believe in Him'?

Notices

Sign up for a Gospel and Prayer (GaP) group this year

As a new year begins, it's a great time to (re)commit to growing together in the gospel. Gospel and Prayer (GaP) Groups are small groups that meet regularly at various times throughout the week to encourage one another with the truths of the Bible, to shape our prayers around the gospel, to care for each other in light of the gospel, and to see God's church grow.

Whether you've been part of a GaP Group before or you've never joined one, GaP Groups are a wonderful way to grow in your relationship with God, deepen your prayer life, build meaningful relationships, and support one another as we follow Jesus together.

We'd love for you to join a GaP Group this year. GaP groups will start in February.



Kids & Youth Flyers

There are **thousands of children and young people in our area who do not yet know Jesus**. God has placed us here so they might hear the good news. One simple way you can help is by handing out flyers — inviting families to programs where kids can learn from the Bible, meet Christians, and hear about Jesus. Please **grab a bundle of flyers from the back of church**, and be praying that God would use these invitations to bring many to faith.

Almighty God, who desires that all should come to know the truth, open hearts to receive this invitation, and bring many kids and youth to faith in your Son. Amen.

Kick off Sunday

On Sunday Feb 1 we will kick off our year together. Come to church, stay for great food at our brunch (after the morning service) or dinner (after Night Church). God has given us his gospel & his people to encounter this world and prepare us for eternity.

The week following (2-6 Feb) will be our 1st Prayer Week. Come and invest in eternal things by praying together.



Notices

Lunar New Year Banquet



St Stephen's
WILLOUGHBY

invites you to our

Lunar New Year Banquet

**MONDAY 23RD FEBRUARY
7-9:30PM**

3 COURSE BANQUET | DRINKS INCL. | \$25 PP

WITH

A TASTE OF THE ALPHA COURSE

A chance to explore life, faith & meaning,
through the 1st instalment of the world-
renowned Alpha Course.

211 Mowbray Rd,
Willoughby

st-stephens.com.au

Scan to
book
your
spot.



Friday Kids BBQ

Join us for a Friday Kids BBQ on Friday 30 January, 5:30-7:00pm at Bales Park. It's a great opportunity to connect with local families and enjoy a relaxed evening together. If you know anyone with kids in Kindy to Year 5, bring them along – everyone is welcome!



**FRIDAY KIDS
Summer
BBQ**

Join us for a
delicious BBQ
and a chance to
catch up and get
to know other
families at Friday
Kids.

**30 JAN,
2026**

**START AT
5:30PM**

BALES PARK - 42 STANLEY ST, CHATSWOOD

What's Coming Up

21-25 January LiT Camp
27 January Crafternoon
30 January Friday Kids BBQ
1 February Kick off Sunday
2-6 February Week of Prayer

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

Our Staff - Contact Us!



Prashanth Colombage
Senior Minister & Sunday Services
M: 0432 314 466
E: prash@st-stephens.com.au



Gordon Luk
Outreach & GaP Groups
E: gordon@st-stephens.com.au



Pippie Krebs
Kids & Youth Minister & Training
E: pippie@st-stephens.com.au



Jill Chilton
Membership Minister
E: jill@st-stephens.com.au



Bec Simmons
Off-site Administrator
E: office@st-stephens.com.au