

Open Door

4 • 11 • 18 • 25 January 2026

St Stephen's
WILLOUGHBY

Week 4

TODAY'S 9:30AM SERVICE

- Welcome
- Songs
- Confession & Assurance
- Spotlight
- Song
- Bible Readings: Psalm 16:5-11 & John 20:24-29 (p. 542)
- Sermon
- Prayers
- Vision Spot
- Song
- Conclusion

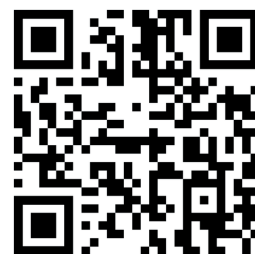
Most St Stephen's collection is received electronically.
BSB: 062 272
Account Number: 00490436

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

Sunday 25 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**, exploring questions many people carry—often quietly. Today we ask: **What if death isn't the end?**



Connect Card

In a culture that prefers not to talk about death, we're encouraged to stay busy, stay positive, and move on. Yet loss, fear, and the limits of life eventually confront us all. The Bible doesn't avoid these realities. In Psalm 16, we hear a hope that reaches beyond the grave; in John 20, we meet a risen Jesus who invites honest doubt and offers solid reassurance.

Here on the Lower North Shore, we value evidence and thoughtful reflection. Christianity doesn't ask us to switch those off—it invites us to look carefully at the resurrection of Jesus and consider what it means for life, hope, and the future.

Today we're grateful to hear from our Ministry Trainee, Emlyn. We hope this time opens space for reflection and renewed hope in Christ.

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

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.

Words of Assurance

I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand.

John 10:28-29

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

What if death isn't the end? | Psalm 16:5-11, John 20:24-29

Preacher: Emlyn Hoyt

1. Why does death strip life of meaning?

2. How is death not the end?

3. What does resurrection life look like now?

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.

Prayer: "Blessed Lord,
who has caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning:
grant us to hear, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them,
that by patience and comfort of your holy word, we may embrace and ever
hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life,
which you have given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen

1. What are some stories, events, or technologies that might have shaped our cultural view of death?

Read Genesis 3:1-20

2. What is the purpose and origin of death, according to this passage?

3. How does that differ from common cultural stories about the purpose and origin of death?

Read Ecclesiastes 2:15-16; 3:19-22

4. How do these verses resonate or clash with your experience of life?

5. How do these verses set up a need for Jesus to come?

Read Psalm 16

6. How does the 'for' in verse 1 set up the 'therefore' of verse 9?

7. How is this psalm fulfilled in Jesus' life? (Hint: Read Acts 2:22-32)

8. While this psalm is chiefly about Jesus, we who take refuge in him can pray these words too!

Spend some time praying through this psalm, and praying that God would make this your prayer more and more.

Read John 20:24-31

9. What blockers might your unbelieving friends/family have to the resurrection that make them say, like Thomas, "I will not believe" (v25)?

10. Reflect on the people and events God has used in your life which led you to say "my Lord and my God". Thank God for his grace in these things.

Read Revelation 21:1-5

11. How are the truths of this passage anchored in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus?

12. How does knowledge of this future shape your reaction to the big moments of your life?

Notices

Kids & Youth Relaunch dates



TERM 1

Kids and Youth

Jesus said 'Let the Little Children come to me'

SUNDAY

Sunday Kids	1st Febuary
Sunday Youth	1st Febuary

BALES PARK BBQ FOR FAMILIES 30TH JAN

FRIDAY

Friday kids	6th Febuary
Half Past Six	6th Febuary

TUESDAY

Playtime	Febuary 10th
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Finances

Last year we had the joy of experiencing abundant generosity from God and from each other. We managed to make our budget, improve ministry and our site and reach lots of people from our community.

Again this year we have lots of opportunities but the financial cost of ministry goes up (like everything else). Our 2026 budget aims for a 5% increase to cover CPI increases. We encourage members to intentionally and prayerfully consider their giving for this year. If you do not give regularly, perhaps this is the year to start partnering with us in this way?

More details can be found at st-stephens.com.au/give

Notices

Prayer Week



Prayer Week
2-6 February
7.30-8.30pm (1-2pm Fri)

**Praying big prayers
shaped by the gospel**

Lunar New Year Banquet

Our Alpha course is kicking off on Monday night 23 February with our annual Lunar New Year Banquet. If you're exploring life, meaning and faith, we'd love to invite you to come along. It is a great evening with lots of food from different Asian cultures and a chance to connect with others meaningfully about what's important in life. During the night, there will be a 3 course banquet with matching drinks and a taste of the first video from the Alpha course: Is there more to life?

Come along and bring a friend too! Registration details are on our website and in the flier.



**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.**

What's Coming Up

27 January	Crafternoon
30 January	Friday Kids BBQ
1 February	Kick off Sunday
2-6 February	Week of Prayer
2 February	Come and See

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