

Week 8

Sunday 22 March 2026

What's on tonight:

- Welcome
- Songs
- Confession & Assurance
- Prayers
- Interview
- Break
- Song
- Bible Reading
- Sermon
- Vision Spot
- Song
- Conclusion

Welcome to Night Church! Whether you're visiting or part of our regular community, we're glad you're here as we continue our series **Learning to Pray Like Jesus**. Throughout this term we've been asking God to supercharge our prayer lives—helping us depend on Him more deeply and seek Him together.



Connect Card

Tonight we're exploring confessional prayer. Jesus teaches in Matthew 6 to pray, "Forgive us our debts," and in Matthew 5 He reminds us that prayer and reconciliation belong together. Psalm 51 gives us a powerful example of what confession looks like: honest, humble, and hopeful in God's mercy.

In our culture it's common to manage our image or minimise our failures. But the gospel invites us into something far better.

Because of Jesus, we can bring our sin and brokenness into the light, confident that God's grace is greater.

Confession is not about shame—it's about restoration. As God forgives and renews us, He reshapes our relationships with Him and with each other.

We long to be a church made beautiful, diverse and large by the gracious work of Christ—a people marked by humility, forgiveness, and the transforming grace of God.

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? **Catch up** with Gordon or Jill to share your story and hear about St Stephen's church life.

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 sooner, you may also like to arrange a coffee with Gordon 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.

"Our Lord Jesus Christ said:

'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.'

(Matthew 22:37-40)

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 anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins

(1 John 2:1b-2a)

Collect for the day

A 'Collect' is an Anglican prayer written in the 1600s and tailored for this day each year.

We ask you, Almighty God,
mercifully to look upon your people;
that by your great goodness they may be governed and preserved
evermore,
both in body and soul;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Almighty and everlasting God, who hates nothing that you have made and forgives the sins of all that are sorrowful; Create and make in us new and contrite hearts,
that we, worthily lamenting our sins,
and acknowledging our wretchedness,
may obtain of thee, the God of all mercy,
perfect remission and forgiveness;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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

Title: Learning to Pray Like Jesus - Confession

Passage: Matt 5:21-26 & Psalm 51

Preacher: Prashanth Colombage

How do I Repent?

Do I need to repent?

Why I should treasure repentance?

Gospel and Prayer (GaP) Group Study

Discuss together

When you look at the people around you in everyday life, what do you tend to notice first?

Going deep in God's Word

Read Psalm 90 and Matthew 9:35-10:4

1. There are 3 (groups of) characters in this passage. List all the things we're told about them.

(a) The crowds

(b) The disciples

(c) Jesus

2. Reflecting on (a) and (b) above, and also our answers from the opening question. What strikes you about how Jesus sees these people? Do you notice any parallels with how Psalm 90 describes the human condition?

3. How does Jesus' command to pray for workers (v. 38) come from how He sees people? What challenge is there to how you see people? What comfort is there in knowing how Jesus sees you?

Praying big prayers shaped by the gospel

As we go through Matthew on Sundays, we want to help you spend time with God each day. The Psalms are song-prayers about Jesus. He prayed these words as a man, and they speak about Him as the Messiah, the Son of David. Use these questions to guide your reflection and prayer:

1. What stands out to you about Jesus when you imagine Him praying this Psalm on earth?

2. What does this Psalm show you about God your Father?

3. How can the Spirit use this Psalm to shape your prayers now?

- what you confess to God,
- what you thank Him for,
- what you ask Him for

Spend time with God each day!

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Monday - [Psalm 41](#)

Tuesday - [Psalm 42](#)

Wednesday - [Psalm 43](#)

Thursday - [Psalm 44](#)

Friday - [Psalm 45](#)

Notices

Serving Stories - Friday Kids

Suzie McLeod joined the Friday Kids walking bus team this term. We asked her a few questions about her experiences in this ministry.

Q. What have you enjoyed about helping with the Friday Kids walking bus?

A. Chatting with the other walker, getting to know them on our way to school. It is also a great way to increase my steps, its a short walk when we are chatting.

Q. How has serving helped you grow in love for Jesus?

A. As Jesus said "let the little children come to me" I feel privileged to walk the children to St Stephens to learn more about Him. It also reminds me of the adults who showed Jesus love to me in my Sunday school years.



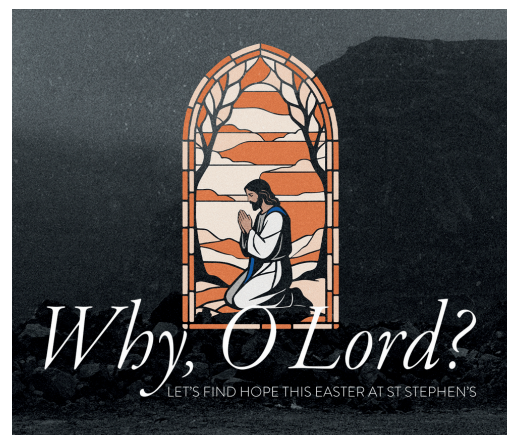
Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Every year we hold our Annual General Meeting on the final Monday of March. If you are baptised and have been attending our church for 3 months or more you are entitled to attend and vote. Come hear about the ministry, needs and opportunities that lie ahead for 2026/27. We will be considering such things as the church refurbishment, new staffing, office holders and plans for the year ahead - Monday 30 March at 7:30pm in the Church.

Easter - Save The Date

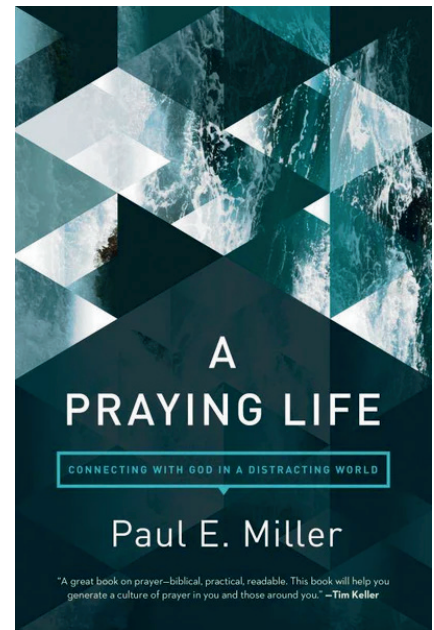
This year our Easter celebrations are earlier - the 1st weekend in April. We kick off with an organ concert helping us remember the night of Jesus's arrest on Maundy Thursday (2 April). This is a night that is designed for visitors who would like to taste Christianity without committing. We will have a light meal after. Good Friday will be marked by a 9:30 Service and Easter Day will have our usual Sunday Services.

Please pray for many many guests.



Prayer Development Resources

Having you been enjoying our sermon series and looking to grow in your prayer life? We've got a range of excellent, trusted Christian books available at our Chapel Hall bookstall—and you can also browse and order them online (at 20-30% discount!). Whether you're just starting out or wanting to go deeper, there's something for you. One standout we highly recommend is *A Praying Life* by Paul E. Miller, a warm, practical guide that helps you move from duty to delight in prayer. It's honest, encouraging, and deeply rooted in the gospel. Drop by the bookstall after the service or explore online to find resources that will help you draw closer to God.



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