




Bible Reading

8am & 9.30am: Luke 24:1-12,
 Luke 23:50-55, Psalm 118:23-24
6.45pm: Luke 24:13-15

Response after Bible Readings 
Leader: Hear the word of the Lord
Response: Thanks be to God



8am—Worship

Led by Vivienne Strong and
 Clive Pearson

9.30am—Worship

Led by Hugh Darling and
 Clive Pearson

KUCA in recess for school holidays

6.45pm—Worship

Led by Daniel Gibb and
 Clive Pearson

Welcome to St. Matthew's Community Room.

Children are very welcome at St. Matthew's and that means their noise is welcome too. This room is here if you feel the need to step out of the service or would like some more privacy but still want to see and hear what's going on in the service.

OPEN FROM 9.30AM

Livestreaming

at all . **8am**
 three . **9.30am**
 worship .
 services . **6.45pm**

Thank you for worshipping with us today.

What's happening this week at St. Matthew's

Easter
MONDAY
18 APRIL
 Public
 Holiday



SUNDAY
24 APRIL



8am—Worship
9.30am—Worship
KUCA in recess for school holidays
6.45pm—Worship

TUESDAY
19 APRIL
9am-2pm—Op Shop
9.30am—Christian Meditation
 in the church

WEDNESDAY
20 APRIL
9am-2pm—Op Shop

THURSDAY
21 APRIL
9am-2pm—Op Shop

FRIDAY 22 APRIL
 No Scheduled Activities

SATURDAY 23 APRIL
 No Scheduled Activities



MINISTERS - EVERYONE

SUPPLY MINISTER

REV. CLIVE PEARSON 0409 523 024
 Email: minister@stmatthewsuniting.net.au

**CHILDREN, YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS
 MINISTRY WORKER**

DANIEL GIBB Part Time
 Email: daniel@stmatthewsuniting.net.au

SENIORS PASTORAL CARER

MICHAEL STRONG Part Time
 Email: mike@stmatthewsuniting.net.au

CHURCH OFFICE SECRETARIES:

ROBYN MORRALL AND LYNN SAMUEL

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS 9AM-3PM MON-FRI

OFFICE : 9686 3003

LOCATION:

CNR CHARLES & EDGAR STREETS
 BAULKHAM HILLS

POSTAL ADDRESS:

BAULKHAM HILLS UNITING CHURCH
 PO Box 773 BAULKHAM HILLS 1755

WEB SITE: www.stmatthewsuniting.net.au

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 PO Box 321 BAULKHAM HILLS 2153

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We are an Easter people

One of the common refrains in the gospels is the call to have 'eyes to see' and 'ears to hear'. In the midst of so much noise and busyness of our contemporary world these words from long ago are asking us to consider how we discern the gospel, the breaking in of the kingdom of God and how we respond. The initiative lies not with us but with God. It may come as a surprise but the gospel writers try to slow us down at this time of the year. That is most noticeably the case in Mark but it is true in the other gospels as well. When we come to the final week of Jesus' life there is a much greater awareness of how time is passing from one day to the next, and then on Good Friday, from one 'hour' to the next.

This habit of seeking to slow us down is deliberate. So often in our lives of faith we weave together the various movements in the Christian life into a whole in too hurried a fashion. I have mentioned in the studies that we did on Luke's gospel of how I once organized a Good Friday service around a theme borrowed from Elton John's song 'Funeral for a Friend'. I asked three members of the congregation to deliver a eulogy for the occasion. I gave one 'instruction': let Good Friday be Good Friday. Don't rush too quickly on to Easter Day. Ethel was doing superbly well, keeping to instructions – and then she blew it! Her last sentence was 'But I know that everything is OK, because he will be raised from the dead on Sunday'.

Our services through Lent and Holy Week this year have been designed to slow us down and help us pay attention to what Luke is saying. We have been seeking to 'hear' how this gospel understands the Christ event and 'see' what it might mean for us. In so doing we stand in a very long tradition. From the very first days Easter was the primary Christian festival.

The way in which Luke relates the Easter story for us is rather striking: this is the only gospel where Jesus says 'Father, forgive them for they know what they do'; it is the only one where there is an exchange with 'the good thief'; the curtain in the Temple is

torn in two before Jesus dies: there is a recurring emphasis on his innocence. In the terms of the resurrection narrative the disciples believe the women's account of an empty tomb to be an 'idle tale'. On the road to Emmaus the two taking leave of Jerusalem are familiar with the Easter events but it does not yet enthuse them. That can only come about when Christ, as the risen stranger, falls into their company and explains how what has happened should be interpreted in the light of the Scriptures, 'beginning with Moses and the prophets'.

This emphasis on an idle tale is rather interesting for us today. For many people outside the church, in a secular and somewhat indifferent Australia, this Easter story is somewhat unknown. And, even if the events of Good Friday and Easter day are known, it does not necessarily mean that their 'hearts burn within'. Our society has changed a great deal.

In the midst of this increasing diversity we remain an Easter people. This idle tale lies at the foundation of our Christian life. It may at times be easier to relate to people outside the church on the basis of Jesus' teaching – the love of neighbour, the parable of the good Samaritan, accounts of mercy, compassion and hospitality, not to mention his concern for the disadvantaged. What is more of a challenge – perhaps – is how we bear witness to the cross, its significance and an tomb and a handful of accounts of appearances. One of the challenges before us is how do we bear witness to these Easter events – a folly, a scandal, a stumbling block, an idle tale. How might you then speak of Easter and your being an 'Easter person' to someone who does not share your faith?

Thank you:

Thank you to all those who have assisted in services through Lent and Holy Week. It has been much appreciated.

It is Yours in Christ,

Clive



PEOPLE NEWS BIRTHDAYS

Rosalie Cameron

Doreen Philbrick

Our very best wishes to all the St. Matthew's community who are celebrating their birthdays this week.

Road Works: Seven Hills Road Baulkham Hills
Between Windsor Rd and 16 Seven Hills Rd.
Tuesday 20 April between 7pm and 5am.
Weather permitting.

Hall Preschool room Repairs

The floor of the hall preschool room will be resurfaced during these school holidays. Preparation will begin on Saturday the 16th April and installation on Wednesday the 20th April.

Some of the preschool furniture will be stored in the upstairs hall during this time.

Apologies to anyone who uses the hall for any inconvenience this may cause.

Church Council Executive.

**Being prepared for
next week's worship:
24 April Easter 2**

Making sense of Easter

24 April Sunday:

8am, 9:30am and 6:45pm.

Bible Readings:

Acts:5:27-32, John 20:19-31



In the wake of the resurrection Luke's account is carried on through the book of Acts. In his gospel news of the risen Christ was first regarded as an idle tale by the disciples who struggled to believe what the women who had been the tomb reported; on the road to Emmaus the two into whose company the risen Christ comes as a stranger are initially downhearted. In John's gospel the struggle to believe is mediated to us through the narrative to do with Thomas. In popular opinion Thomas has suffered

the misfortune of attracting a reputation for doubting. There is more to this story, though: he is the first to confess that Jesus is 'my Lord and my God'. In the book of Acts the responsibility for interpreting the Easter events lies with Peter. It is a delicate task: in these early days the church was like a minority sect within Judaism – but the very nature of the crucifixion and resurrections means Peter must proclaim a message that is critical of the majority.

What we see in these texts is how the witness to the resurrection transforms fearful and doubting disciples. In our society today the confession that Jesus has been raised from the dead is likely to seem fanciful, a myth and 'idle tale'. And yet it is belief in the resurrection which brings the church to life and will lead those who bear the name of Christ to acquire a reputation of care for each other. – and also for others in times of plague - and a willingness to withstand persecution.

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

17—23 April



Belarus, Moldova, Russia, Ukraine

Our ecumenical prayer cycle today brings together **Russia, Belarus and Ukraine, along with Moldova.** It is a difficult pairing. It is so especially since Patriarch Kirill of Moscow has declared that Putin's actions in Ukraine are compatible with the gospel. The Patriarch declared the invasion as part of the struggle against liberal values

(<https://www.ncronline.org/news/people/russias-patriarch-kirill-defends-invasion-ukraine-stoking-orthodox-tensions>).

His comments have attracted worldwide condemnation. The former Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, voiced his criticism among many others:

(<https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2022/8-april/news/world/rowan-williams-adds-his-voice-to-calls-for-the-wcc-to-eject-russian-orthodox-church>).

In the circumstances our prayers for this week can be for the besieged citizens of Ukraine, for those in Russia who have bravely stood against the war and done so at great personal cost and for the leaders of the Russian Orthodox Church – that they may come to see that this act of aggression is not consistent with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

For a perspective in music on the Ukrainian situation listen to the Kyiv Symphony Orchestra and Chorus sing John Rutter's arrangement of 'Down by the riverside' with its refrain "I ain't going to study war no more". This recording comes from 2019.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qJCI22_GDjI

For the response of John Rutter, see: 'A Ukrainian Prayer',

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IJ3kVwI2-U>

Act of Peace is running an Emergency Appeal for the Ukraine crisis. Donation envelopes are available from the church foyer.

EMERGENCY APPEAL: UKRAINE CRISIS



In just over a week, more than 15 million refugees, like those on the platform of Lviv railway station on 27th February, have fled Ukraine to neighbouring countries, taking the few belongings they could carry.

**PLEASE
GIVE
TODAY**

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has created a humanitarian crisis. Millions could become refugees, forced from their homes and loved ones.

Please give generously to provide urgently needed food, medicine and temporary shelter to displaced families.



**CALL: 1800 025 101, SCAN QR CODE OR
GIVE ONLINE: AFP.ORG.AU/HELPUKRAINE**



The international humanitarian agency of the National Council of Churches in Australia. ABN 86 619 970 188



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LIVING WITH PEACE AND JUSTICE