

# st. matthew's UNITING CHURCH SUNITING CHURCH 2022 Focus growing together St. Matthew's Monthly Newsletter

## NEIGHBOURS .....

Some years ago now I was invited to attend a conference in Edinburgh. There were a number of streams of workshops being held at the same time. If memory serves me right I called mine 'Home and Away' but in the advertising brochure I had also referred to other Australian television soaps, like 'Neighbours' and 'Kath and Kim'. I have a funny feeling I also inserted the name of Dame Edna. I made no reference to the occasional story that features in the media under the heading 'The Neighbours From Hell'. The turn-up for my session surprised me. When you are presenting at a conference like this, the fear that you hide away from view is that no one will turn up! On this occasion the exact opposite happened.

I hope the people who came were not too disappointed. There were no television celebrities on display, no theme tunes, no cameras on site and not the slightest hint of an abduction, a family fall-out, a tiff with the neighbours. The thing about these soaps is that they invite us to consider life in the neighbourhood, in the postcodes where we live and relax. I wanted to talk about 'who is my neighbour?' in the time I had allotted to me in Edinburgh. It was time for some 'postcode theology'.

At that time we were living in Dundas, NSW 2118. Our street had once been full of Australian-born families with many children playing out on the street: it was never busy. Now the neighbours came from many different cultures and only one husband and wife, now elderly, seemed to have the stamp 'Made in Australia' imprinted upon them. I was working at UTC where one-third of the students were from an Anglo background, one-third from a Pacific island background, one third from an Asian background (mainly Korean) - and, if you could have more than three-thirds, then the rest came from a mix of African and Middle East countries. We shopped in Parramatta. Our son played cricket in Carlingford where half the team was Indian-born. Mary was minister at Centenary Uniting Church and ran an interfaith celebration at a regular intervals on a Sunday evening, along with English language classes during the week. The garden provided an area for those living in apartments to come down and sit and enjoy being outside among the flowers, the insects, the birds. One Muslim doctor from a country that no one wanted to talk about at that time (so he said) - Afghanistan declared 'this is my church'.

Neighbours. Our neighbourhood was nothing like the neighbourhoods shown then on those television soaps. At that point in time nearly every one had a white skin. And so I reflected on how, in a city like Sydney, we move in and between many different postcodes in the course of our daily living - and how they can differ from each other. Baulkham Hills is not like Auburn, for example.

There was a theological reason behind this talk of postcodes. It has to do with who comes to our church and how it intersects with the surrounding neighbourhood. In a rather different way it has been a matter of interest to Simon Carey Holt down in Melbourne as well. He is a Baptist minister formerly in Collins Street and has been a chef as well. He wrote a couple of lovely books about neighbourhoods. The first was called *The God Next Door*; the second was a bit more tasty, Eating the Kingdom of Heaven where he reflected on different cultures that were in the neighbourhood and did so with the assistance of a recipe from each one. Food for thought!

Neighbours: we are called to love our neighbour as ourselves. We are very familiar with that call from Jesus' summary of the law and the way in which it provides the background for one of the key parables for worship in July - the good Samaritan. It is, of course, to be found also in the book of Leviticus. That book of the Old Testament often gets a bad press these days: it is full of instructions some of which do not travel so well into our time and contemporary culture. And yet, it is here, that we first encounter to 'love the neighbour as yourself' (Leviticus 19:17). It is set alongside commands not to commit injustice against your neighbour, to rob them, nor hate them in your heart etc.

I think that we find ourselves dwelling in a time and place where we need to think through how we respond in Christ to the neighbourhoods that make up the personal postcodes where we live, work, play, shop, rest. It is true that we can think of neighbours in the big sense of how everyone on the planet is now in this globalized world a neighbour to each other. We should not lose sight of that - but that should not come at the expense of taking a close look at our local neighbourhoods close at hand and how we understand who Christ is for them as well as ourselves.

**NEIGHBOURS ..... CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE** 

#### **NEIGHBOURS ..... CONTINUED**

Throughout July I will be running a workshop/study on the two questions Jesus put to his disciples: 'who do people say that I am?' and 'who do you say that I am?'. It will be a chance for us to reflect on who Christ is for us individually and as a community of faith. It will also be a chance to read our neighbourhoods, our postcodes through the eyes of faith. You might like to start thinking about that ahead of time. It can be done in a couple of ways.

I have often used the following question for such purposes:

What is it about the human condition as it is lived out by this particular people, in this particular place, at this particular time that requires healing, wholeness, forgiveness, mercy, justice, compassion, truthfulness .... *the presence of Christ?* 

The second way I have approached this task is through a list of situations that resonates or echoes the ministry of Jesus. This list was devised by Clive Marsh in his book, Christ in Practice where he sought to address the question: where is Christ to be found outside the church? Marsh offered the following suggestions:

Wherever people suffer innocently or for a just cause;

When solidarity is shown with those who are mistreated;

Wherever forgiveness occurs:

When people experience a transformation in life; Wherever people discover what they believe to be their true identity:

Whenever truth is told, however painful truth-telling may

Wherever the abuse of power is challenged;

Whenever creativity blossoms:

Whenever people renounce reliance on wealth; and

The parable of the good Samaritan is the key text for us this July. It ends with Jesus saying to the lawyer, 'go and do likewise'. We are called to love our neighbour as ourselves.

Clive

## Coming Soon

Over the next few months I would like to offer a weeks) will be to consider number of events and workshops that might help deepen our grasp of the faith.

#### Why?

Each one is designed to help those interested explore key aspects of our faith in a time and place where the Christian faith is often on the back foot. It is easy to lose confidence and become uncertain as to what the gospel is and how it might be received. The surrounding society is much more diverse than it used to be: sometimes the Christian faith is treated with indifference; sometimes the response is very negative. And sometimes people have been hurt along the way and do not know how to negotiate that awkward space what the church professes to believe and do and what their own experience to face: 10.30am & 7.30pm at the church tells them.

#### Timing:

One of the most challenging things about running workshops and studies is to find the right time. No one time suits all who would like to attend. The intention is to offer two face to face times and one zoom session. If you would still like to participate in some way and none of these options, please let the office know and we will see how we can meet your needs.

#### What's On?

#### 'Who do you say that I am?'

This is a very important exercise. It allows us to talk about (in a guided way) how we understand who Jesus is, how he helps us, and how we reflect that in our everyday lives. It will include some input from a programme that Clive has devised and used in the past – but also be very conversational.

It is designed to help this congregation in a time of being in-between ministers. We might say it supports the profile with which the JNC will be working,

This question put by Jesus to the disciples has been described as a 'continuing interrogation'. How we answer may change from one period of our life to the next. The purpose of this study (over three

- how we answer that question for our individual selves:
- how we might negotiate a common congregational understanding (you can still have your own personal response, but it will now be placed within the fold of the congregation as a whole).
- Finally we will note that Jesus prefaced that core question with another, 'who do people say that I am?' We will set out to explore how our understanding of Jesus addresses life in our neighbourhood.

Times: 3 sessions in July

Tuesday 5, 12, & 19 July

Zoom: Wednesday 6, 13 & 20 July

7:30pm on ZOOM

#### https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3602745736

#### The two workshops below will take place a little later in the year

Believing'. In days gone by there used to be confirmation classes where people might be given instruction on the core beliefs of the Christian faith. We will come at this a little differently. It will be a chance to chat about what Christians believe and what they find difficult - or hard to believe. We will do this for a couple for

How did we get the Bible? Later in the year we will have a chance to examine the absolutely fascinating story of how the Bible came into being, how it was translated into vernacular languages (like English) and at what cost, and why have we got so many different versions. Most of the time we simply stand before the lectern and read from the Bible without realizing what its history is. Some parts of this story are X rated due to violence!

CLIVE

## **Church Property News**

We have the exciting news that the Church roof & Preschool extension / office renovation are due to kick off at some time during July. The exact date will be confirmed shortly.

The start date advice follows our recent announcement that after many months of meetings, conversations with Synod, Presbytery and building experts, the Church Council has approved the decision to replace the existing tiled roof of the Church, Hall and Preschool with Colorbond Steel sheeting. This has been a tough, but essential decision as we have advice about the poor condition of the roof. Due to the low pitch of the roof, the existing tiles have caused a lot of leakage and damage to both the roof and ceiling.

The Preschool will be undergoing a small extension to increase their storage facilities and extra staff facilities, as well as a revamp of the entry area. This will be funded by the Preschool. The Preschool have also very generously offered to cover the cost of the Preschool component of the roof replacement.

Operationally, in terms of the Church precinct, this will mean works going on around the Church grounds for approx. 1-2 months for the roof, and 4-5 months for the Preschool works. There will be some impact on external areas especially with scaffolding, work equipment, materials and workers moving around. The lower side playground of the Preschool adjoining Edgar St will be closed off throughout the Preschool build, as well as 2-3 car parking spaces in St Matthews Lane. The Church hall will also be utilised at times by Preschool staff.

Please bear with us as this is undertaken.

This is an exciting time for the St. Matthew's Community and we look forward to when it is all completed.

# Saint Matthew's **Community Race Day** Come try Simulator Racing for a small donation



# Saturday 2nd **July 2022**

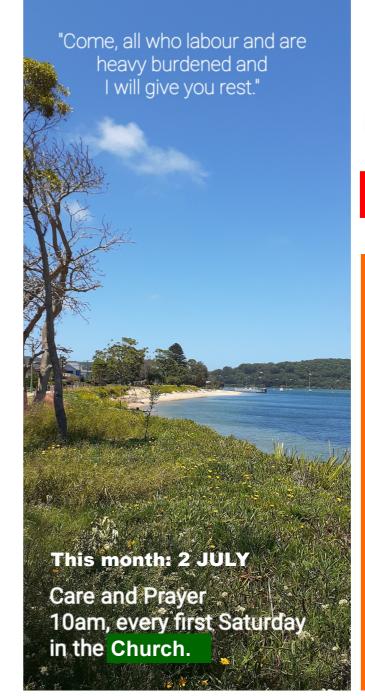
Time Tracks 10am Adelaide 1998 11am Oran Park 12pm Philip Island 1pm Wakefield Park **2pm Surfers Paradise 3pm Classic Bathurst** 4pm Eastern Creek

st. matthew's UNITING CHURCH

Sometimes members of the three congregations do not know much about those in one of the other services. It seems like a good idea, then, to include short notes about different people from the different congregations that make up St. Matthew's. First up is Erin Mathewson. Given the name of the congregation it seems rather fitting that we begin with a 'daughter' of St. Matthew's.

I have grown up in the church and have some great influences in my Christian life. My whole family has encouraged me in word and action to serve in the community I am in. In the church I help out with KUCA and the Youth group. My parents have always helped out with these as I grew up. I can see the influence that they have on me and on the people around me.

I enjoy helping with the youth and children because I enjoy seeing the children and youth growing in faith and just having fun. To me it is important that the kids have a balance of fun and lessons from the Bible. If there is no fun then why would you keep on coming back. 1 am thankful for the love and support 1 have in my life and this is what helped me in my growth with Christ.





## **Saturday** 2 July 9am-12pm

Electrical, Toys and Books

(Fiction, Non-fiction & Children's Books)

#### St. Matthew's Lower Hall





invites everyone to an event on SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE, part 2 of

THE FUTURE OF INTELLIGENCE SERIES Saturday 23rd of July from 11am - 3pm

in the lower hall of St Matthews Uniting Church, corner of Charles and Edgar Streets, Baulkham Hills, behind IGA and Arthur Street, Baulkham Hills.

The recorded talk and discussion is part of the FUTURE OF INTELLIGENCE series which is produced by the WCCM In partnership with the SCIENTIFIC a and MEDICAL NETWORK. This talk is live on the 21st and will be shared on the 23rd.

A light lunch and refreshments will be included OR bring your own special diet.

Suggested donation \$10.

**RSVP** for enquires

20th Katherine Pedersen 043 777 2011

**JULY** or the church office.

All Donations go to the Church Roof



#### All are welcome at **Coffee & Discovery**

Our guest musicians will be

#### David and Noeleen Neideck

Just a reminder we will be continuing on the 1st Thursday of each month and will run from March to December.

> 10am until 12 noon Our next meeting Thursday 7th July



You are invited to come along to hear the wonderful music stylings of Noeleen and David Neideck. Noeleen and David will be entertaining you with a short concert of their favourite musical items. Please ioin us for a uplifting morning that you do not want to miss!



**Enquiries** 

Alan

Wright

#### **MEN'S MORNING TEA**

Wednesday 20 July 10am to 12noon

Mckel's Café, Shop 14, Circa Boulevarde Bella Vista.

We are allocated external seating to ensure compliance with the current Covid restrictions.

Every third Wednesday of the month



#### Women's Fellowship Wednesday 13 July @ 10am

The Women's Fellowship meeting on Wednesday 13 July will have Shamali Perera telling us about her trip to Sri Lanka.

Please join us Enquiries: Barbara McIntosh

and children

across Gaza,

recover from

Frauma they

chance at the

childhood they

experienced and

have

reserve.

Amid this

division and

Christmas Bowl

remains a vital

expressing our

chaos, the

channel for

helping families

Thank you for 'Sharing Christmas' with refugees in Ethiopia and supporting communities around the world affected by conflict and disaster.

#### Dear friends at Baulkham Hills St. Matthew's Uniting Church,

Thank you so much for joining once again churches across Australia and sharing God's love through last year's Christmas Bowl.

I know that so much has happened in the short space of time since Christmas. With the recent flooding affecting communities across Australia and the outbreak of war in Ukraine. it is easy to feel overwhelmed by the challenges we face in the world just now.

Last Christmas can't have been an easy one for your church with the coronavirus pandemic continuing to impact us, and many congregations again having to connect virtually, and many community members

Yet despite all the difficulties and we are living through, thousands of Australian united in taking practical action, shared Christmas with refugee in Ethiopia—and with communities around the world who have been forced from their homes by conflict and

Thanks to the generosity of our Australian churches, our local partner in Ethiopia, The Ethiopian Orthodox Church Development and Inter-Church Aid Commission (DICAC), can now provide more refugees with food, shelter and lifesaving support. We are helping more refugees overcome the challenges and trauma thay have been through and live in safety and dignity. Together, we are reminding Syrian families



families in Jordon that they are not forgotten, despite no longer making headline news. Through our local partner, the Near East Council of Churches' Department of Service to Palestinian Refugees (DSPR), we are providing food rations and hygiene kits, along with psychosocial care. Syrian families can access livelihood training so they can earn an income and rebuild their future.

In India, the Organisation for Eelam Refugees Rehabilitation (OfEER) provided food and medicine for Sri Lankan refuges during the pandemic. They are continuing to help families with the documentation they need so they can finally return to their need so they can finally return to their homeland in Sri Lankan.

Our local partner in Gaza, the Near East Council of Churches (NECC), is providing critical mental health care services to women

unity in Christ . We are providing a powerful mechanism for sharing God's love, with those who need it, through practical Christian action and care. I have enclosed a certificate of appreciation for your generosity through the Christmas Bowl which I hope you will display on your notice board to share with your community.

Thank you for being part of this important tradition. With your committed support, the inspiration dedication of our local partners and the resilience of displaced people, we continue, together, to create a world where people uprooted by conflict and disaster have a safe place to belong.

With gratitude. Janet Cousens CEO-Act for Peace

## **MONTHLY ACTIVITIES**

#### **REGULAR GROUPS**

#### NOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP......

Second Wednesday of this month Next event: 13 July at 10am

Meet in the upstairs hall and church

Enquiries: Dulcie Duncum

### MEN'S MORNING TEA.......

Meet 3rd Wednesday of each month.

Next Event: 20 July at 10am

compliance with current Covid resrtictions.

Contact: Alan Wright

Mckel's Café, Shop 14, Circa Boulevarde Bella Vista. We are allocated external seating to ensure

#### CARE & PRAYER.....

Meet on the 1st Saturday of each month

in church and Community room @ 10am All welcome

This Month: 2 July

Contact: Rosemary Sexton

#### CHRISTIAN MEDITATION....

Tuesdays in the Church 9.30am-10.30am

All welcome.

For more information or to express your interest in attending please contact Katherine Pedersen 043 777 2011.

#### OP-SHOP.....

Open Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday 9am-2pm and 1st Saturday of the month 9-12pm

Pre-loved clothes & accessories, Books. Haberdashery, Bric-a-brac.

#### **YOUNG FAMILIES**

#### KUCA......

#### @ 9.30am service during term

for Preschool, Years K-2, and Years 3-8

#### **YOUTH and YOUNG ADULTS**

#### Fusion Youth Group......

Years 3 to 8. Meet Friday evenings at the church during term time. 5pm—7pm Contact Daniel Gibb daniel@stmatthewsuniting.net.au

#### Alive Youth Group......

Years 9 to 12

Meet Friday evenings at the church during term time. 7pm—9pm

Contact Daniel Gibb daniel@stmatthewsuniting.net.au

#### THRIVE BIBLE STUDY.......

year 11 up to the age of 25. Fortniahtly

Contact Daniel Gibb daniel@stmatthewsuniting.net.au

#### THRIVE SOCIAL GROUP......

Contact Daniel Gibb daniel@stmatthewsuniting.net.au

in the church foyer.

is a special needs social group for all ages from high school up. Meets Sundays fortnightly for dinner & fun. We are still collecting in 2022 for their shoebox appeal supporting a school in the Philippines. Donations of small educational items, soaps & combs are greatly appreciated. Please place donations in the box provided at the top of the stairs

If you are interested in any of the above groups or activities please contact the church office.

# 9.30am worship

**UPCOMING EVENTS & DATES** 

ST. MATTHEW'S

**Sunday 31 July** 

at 10.30am

following the

MINISTERS - EVERYONE

#### SUPPLY MINISTER

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

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

DANIEL GIBE

Part Time Email: daniel@stmatthewsuniting.net.au

Part Time

#### SENIORS PASTORAL CARER

MICHAEL STRONG

Email: mike@stmatthewsuniting.net.au

#### CHURCH OFFICE SECRETARIES: ROBYN MORRALL AND LYNN SAMUEL

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS 9AM-3PM MON-FRI

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

Weekly newsletter available on website

EMAIL: office@stmatthewsuniting.net.au

@stmatthewsunitingchurchbaulkhamhills

#### PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR

Sonali Wanigesekera

PO Box 321 Baulkham Hills 2153

Email: director@stmatthewsps.net.au

**Giving** From time to time, we receive questions on how someone can make donations to St. Matthew's Uniting Church Baulkham Hills, to further support God's work through the Ministry team and congregation, in the wider Community. To assist with this, we have set up the following account with Uniting Financial Services:

Baulkham Hills Uniting Church Account Name: - Giving Direct 634634 BSB:

Account Number: 100025924 If required a Direct Debit Request Form is available in the foyer or speak with Barry Gregory.

For your support of God's work here at St. Matthew's, a big thank you!

If you wish to find out more, please contact the Church Office.

\*\*\*\* To include your activity in the

#### AUGUST IN FOCUS St. Matthew's Monthly Newsletter

please send details to Robyn and Lynn in the Church Office by 15 JULY. Thank vou

Please check St. Matthew's weekly Newsletter for details of Worship on Sunday and last minute changes to scheduled activities.

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Maintaining contact with you and

your family is very important to us. We would be grateful if you change your address phone/mobile or email details that you let us know by phoning and leaving a message on 9686 3003

## **Calendar of Events for JULY 2022**

**School Holidays** 

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
BAULKHA	SHURCH M HILLS Towing together	Pentecost		7pm-9pm— Youth Group ALIVE	9am-12pm—Op Shop & Mini Mart in lower hall  10am— Care and Prayer Meet in the Church 10am-3pm—St. Matt's Endurance Series contact Brad Turner meet in the upstairs hall	8am— Worship includes Communion  9.30am—Worship includes Communion KUCA in recess for school holidays 5pm—Shine 6.45pm—Worship includes Communion
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9am—Sorting & Pricing for Op Shop lower hall	9am-2pm—Op Shop open 9.30–11am—Christian Meditation in the Church  10.30am—Clive's workshops Week 1 "Who do you say that I am?" in the church  7.30pm—Thrive in lower hall  7.30pm—Clive's workshops Week 1 "Who do you say that I am?" in the church	9am-2pm—Op Shop open  7.30pm—ZOOM Clive's workshops Week 1 "Who do you say that I am?"	9am-2pm—Op Shop open  10am-12pm —Coffee & Discovery Special Guest Musicians David & Noeleen Neideck in the upstairs hall and church		No scheduled events	8am— Worship 9am— Worship @ the Willow's 9.30am—Worship KUCA in recess 6.45pm—Worship
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
9am—Sorting & Pricing for Op Shop lower hall	9am-2pm—Op Shop open 9.30–11am—Christian Meditation in the Church 10.30am—Clive's workshops Week 2 "Who do you say that I am?" in the church 7.30pm—Clive's workshops Week 2 "Who do you say that I am?" in the church	9am-2pm—Op Shop open  10am-12noon—Women's Fellowship in the upstairs hall and church  7.30pm—ZOOM Clive's workshop Week 2 "Who do you say that I am?"	9am-2pm—Op Shop open	No scheduled events	2pm-4pm—Church and Community Room in use	8am— Worship 9.30am—Worship KUCA in recess 6.45pm—Worship
9am—Sorting & Pricing for Op Shop lower hall	9am-2pm—Op Shop open 9.30–11am—Christian Meditation in the Church 10.30am—Clive's workshops Week 3 Final "Who do you say that I am?" in the church 7.30pm—Thrive in lower hall 7.30pm—Clive's workshops Week 3 Final "Who do you say that I am?" in the church	9am-2pm—Op Shop open  10am-12noon—Men's Morning Tea at McKels Café Bella Vista. See back page for details  7.30pm—ZOOM Clive's workshop Week 3 Final "Who do you say that I am?"	21 9am-2pm—Op Shop open	5pm-7pm 7pm-9pm FUSION Of ALIVE Youth Group Check with Term 3 Program upstairs hall	INTELLIGENCE, part 2 of THE FUTURE OF INTELLIGENCE SERIES	8am— Worship  9.30am—Worship  KUCA Preschool, Years K-2 & Years 3-8
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
9am—Sorting & Pricing for Op Shop lower hall 7.30pm—Netball Meeting upstairs Hall	9am-2pm—Op Shop open 9.30–11am—Christian Meditation in the Church	9am-2pm—Op Shop open	9am-2pm—Op Shop open	5pm-7pm 7pm-9pm  FUSION Of ALIVE Youth Group Check with Term 3 Program upstairs hall	No scheduled events	8am—Worship 9.30am—Worship KUCA Preschool, Years K-2 & Years 3-8 10.30am—AGM 6.45pm—Worship