

Signs of the Times

The practice of a public theology is designed to read the signs of the times. It does so in order to explore how we understand the Christian faith as it seeks to express itself in society in general. Under the umbrella of a public theology faith takes seriously what is happening in our world and expresses a desire to contribute to the well-being of society, the common good, and a civil society. It recognizes that in a multifaith / secular society it is one voice among many and cannot lay claim to having a privileged position and impose its point of view on others. It seeks to persuade – to be like salt and leaven to use a couple of images taken from Jesus' teaching in the synoptic (the first three) gospels.

Our daily lives are currently being lived out against a background of many global crises or points of concern. There is quite a line-up: weather/the climate/the floods; the war in the Ukraine and its impact on prices and the cost of living; and, then there is still COVID. The moment you have one booster it seems as if another variant is on the way.

Perhaps one can create a space, a time for quite reflection to the two songs below. They both come with a back story.

The first is 'It is well with my soul'. The words are by Horatio Spafford after a series of traumatic events: the sequence began with the Great Chicago Fire of 1871 which ruined him financially. It coincided with the death of his four year old son. Then, a couple of years later, his wife and four daughters were crossing the Atlantic when it was hit by another vessel. Only his wife survived – 'saved alone'—by a fisherman who spotted her lying in the water. Soon afterwards, Spafford set sail to join his wife and he composed these words as his ship passed nearby where his daughters had lost their lives. The tune was composed by Philip Bliss and named after the ship his daughters had been on—*Ville du Havre*.

It has been a song that has spoken to many through confusing times.

It is well with my soul:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AHe_qmo3gX4

The second is by a young composer from across the Tasman—Malcolm Gordon. 'Christ before me' began its life as a poem as a paraphrase from lines taken from St Patrick's Breastplate. He wrote the words out at regular intervals as a spiritual practice. On a plane trip from Frankfurt he was carrying on this practice and had just written 'Christ behind me' when a cantankerous elderly gentleman began thumping Malcolm's seat. Rather than call the steward for assistance he wondered about how Christ might be behind him in and through 'this old codger' and 'his unpleasant exterior'.

Malcolm Gordon, 'Christ behind me'.

On Being the Church

Over the last several weeks we have been exploring what might be our understanding of the gospel. The second study in the set of three workshops focused on what kind of gospel do we think the life of St. Matthew's proclaims in word and deed. We thought about which texts from the gospels might best illustrate that understanding and practice. In pursuit of this aim we thought about how we understand what is the church: there is a distinction to be made here between 'what the church happens to be' and 'what the church ought to be'. There is always a gap between an all-too-human institution and a gathering of flawed people—on the one hand—and what God expects the church to be—the body of Christ.

There is also a distinction between the church and how it participates in the mission of God. The church has no mission. It is God's mission. We participate in that mission in order to bear witness to the kingdom of God.

We also spent some time thinking about different models of the church; we wondered how we might rank them in order beginning with what we think best reflects St. Matthew's to what least does. Once the choice is made, then the question arises: is that the best fit for the present time? Do we need to make some shifts in emphases? And, if so, how do we do that? It is a familiar story.

The six models are:

- institutional
- sacramental
- preaching / proclamation
- fellowship of the Spirit
- diaconal / advocacy / social justice
- making disciples

Coming Up

How on earth did we get the Bible? Is there an original copy anywhere? Who translated it into English? Why have we got so many versions? What difference did new technology (the printing press) make?

The forming of the Bible took time: decisions had to be made. Should the gospel of John be in—or out? Translating the Bible in vernacular languages like English was high risk. You might need to flee the country—or, after burial, your body might be exhumed, burned and your ashes thrown into a river. It sounds like an episode out of the children's series, 'Horrible Histories'.

The next series of studies/workshop will be on how we got the Bible and what might be some tools for interpreting its meaning

Clive

Coffee & Discovery Musical Concert

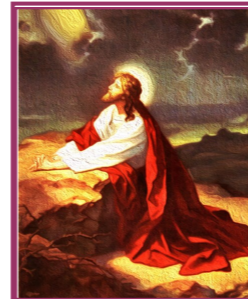
At our Coffee & Discovery morning on Thursday 7th July we had the great pleasure and enjoyment of a wonderful musical concert presented by Noeleen and David Neideck. They delighted us with their amazing talents as they entertained with duets as well as individual items, using a selection of instruments; David playing his special Yamaha Stagea organ with its versatile range of accompaniment options, also the church Conn



organ, with Noeleen playing the Oboe and the larger Cor Anglais, also the electric piano.

So a big "Thank You" to you both for sharing your musical gifts to provide such an uplifting experience for a gathering of 40 + recipients.

Dulcie



The Lord's Prayer

Over the years, there have been a number of different versions of the Lord's Prayer set to music. One, called the *Millenium Prayer* was set to the music of Auld Lang Syne and recorded by Cliff Richard. Another well-known version was recorded by Sister Janet Meade in 1973. Indisputably the most well-known version was written by the American Christian Albert Hay Malotte in 1935. There are a number of stories about Malotte's motivation for writing the song, some of which are highly dubious. However, before writing the song, Malotte told a friend that he had the conviction to do it because "I feel so close to God". When asked later why he set *The Lord's Prayer* to music he replied "You can't answer a question like that intelligently – it came from within".

First published as a vocal solo for Malotte's close friend John Charles Thomas, the music has arguably become one of the best-known religious songs of the 20th century.

More than two dozen arrangements have appeared in hymnals since 1976.

Many artists have recorded it, ranging from concert and operatic stars to popular singers, country and gospel singers and solo instrumentalists. Some of the artists who have recorded this version include Mario Lanza, Andrea Bocelli, Charlotte Church and Susan Boyle. It has been sung at events of national and international significance, including the 2001 Service of National Prayer and Remembrance at Washington National Cathedral following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 and Billy Graham Crusades around the world. As well as solo versions of the song, there have been choral arrangements, instrumental, ensemble and orchestral settings. It is clear from the number of recordings and editions available that Malotte's work can be performed with great leeway in interpretation, including the highly rhythmic versions from the Caribbean and Latin America.

This morning we will be listening to Susan Boyle's recording of Malotte's *The Lord's Prayer*.

David Short delivered this reflection at the 8am service on 24 July.

The Role of Synod COO

No, this isn't a role in the Synod that's reason for existence is to record the calls of a Morning Dove. It is the Chief Operating Officer, COO, role that I believe I was called to fulfil as part of my walk with our Lord Jesus Christ.

The church is an interesting organisation to work for, as a church we are called to three core activities worship, witness and service, word and deed (for those who like two word descriptions), and within the Synod we need to keep our ministry balanced in all three areas because it's very easy to allow service to takeover worship and witness. As a church, we are viewed as a basic religious charity, a for purpose non-government organisation operating a charitable business, but strive to operate as though we are not a business but a church. Within the workplace there is a very diverse group of people with approximately 1/3 being ordained ministers and the other 2/3 lay staff, giving us a workplace where some people are following a calling to ministry for their whole life, others fulfilling their Christian calling for a season exercising their various gifts and talents, and others who get joy from working in an organisation that makes a positive impact on community and the lives of vulnerable people.

Being in the Synod Office is a different space to that of a state corporate office or the head office of an organisation, because our role is to support presbyteries and encourage congregations, that often means we are working hand in hand with the presbyteries to support congregations like ours in the ministries we deliver to the faithful and the wider community - worship, witness and service.

The area of the Synod that I lead is called Synod Operations, which is code for if it is not ministers, education or mission related one of my team will most probably be the person able to support you, but then the lines are blurry. For instance, anything to do with property, insurance, legal, work health & safety, HR, Payroll, IT, governance, risk, compliance, project, records, fleet, facilities, procurement, property trust, church institutions, governance and constitutions, etc.. We also manage key relationships with government regulators and external agencies.

This means that we get involved in the best of the best, the worst of the worst, and everything in between, and interact with people when they are at their best and worst. Examples of the range of activities I get involved with or lead include supporting set-up of new ministries and missions,

leading a review of parish mission governance and structures, supporting congregations or church entities who are having financial challenges and helping them work their way back to health, supporting the UAICC Ministry Centres ensuring they have the resources they require, leading incorporation of five of our schools, developing the Future Directions Resourcing Framework, balancing the Synod Office budget, etc..

My role incorporates being the Synod Property Officer and a Member of the NSW and the ACT Property Trusts. Both of these roles come with a number of specific responsibilities either in the Act of Parliament that created the Church or the Regulations.

My days vary dramatically. They can include and vary from:

- celebrating the hope we provide year 9—12 students and their families at Margaret Jurd College while attending their mid-year celebration to discussing future options for burial and internment while representing the church at a stakeholder forum with the Catholic Cemeteries and Crematoria,
- overseeing and shaping major, multi-million dollar, property developments to approving small property work in congregations,
- reviewing and endorsing congregation grant applications to government funders for as low as \$5k to reviewing and recommending or being part of the approval committee for \$100m proposals,
- conversation and providing supporting congregation church council leaders solve local issues to negotiating deals with global CEO's of major consulting businesses or senior legal counsel, and
- leading congregational worship to presenting proposals at Presbytery, Synod Standing Committee or Synod meetings.

Personally, I feel blessed to be able to utilise the gifts, talents and life experiences to be a servant leader within the wider church, however, recognising that all roles are only for a season so whilst the Spirit is leading I'm following as quickly as I can and seeking to provide through my team a safe place for the staff and a capability to support congregations and presbyteries etc. pursue their ministry and mission visions.

Albert Olley



**All are welcome
at
Coffee & Discovery**

Guest Speaker – Graham Simms
Topic -- How Sweet It Was!

After a long break due to the covid situation, we welcome back Graham, who will bring us a lighted hearted presentation as he asks, "Do you remember the sweets of our childhood" which for many, would have been rare and treasured treats – lollies, slate pencils, sherbets, Penguin ice cream, Joyce biscuits etc.



continuing on the
**1st Thursday of each month and will
run from March to December.**

10am until 12 noon

Our next meeting

Thursday 4th August



Specially prepared for the tropics.


Lightly salted and packed in air-tight tins, the JOYCE BISCUITS reach you crisp and fresh. There's a magic about these biscuits and their taste is the most wonderful. Ask also for JOYCE Milk Biscuits, Wholesome, Cream Cookies, Mince and Cakes.

JOYCE BISCUITS

Made in N.S.W. by J. Confection, N.S.W. Pty. Ltd.

These informal morning gatherings include devotions, morning tea and guest speakers which cover a large range of interesting and informative topics.

***** ALL WELCOME *****



**CHRISTMAS TWILIGHT
MARKETS**

at Aminya Village

Friday 11th November 4pm to 8pm

**CALLING ALL CREATIVE PEOPLE and
MARKET STALL HOLDERS**

Aminya Village will be hosting our first Christmas Twilight Markets so if you, or someone you know, would like to have a Stall at our Markets, we would like to know.

Sweets and Treats
Or Arts and Crafts
Pots and Plants or Curiosities for sale
Handmade clothing or Knitwear creations

Please contact Jane Cooke for further information
Aminya Village Customer Relations Ph: 8896 3905
jcooke@baptistcare.org.au



"Come, all who labour and are heavy burdened and I will give you rest."

This month: 6 August
Care and Prayer
10am, every first Saturday
in the Church.

Mini MART
Thursday 4 August 9am-2pm
and
Saturday 6 August 9am-12pm
 Electrical, Toys and Books
 (Fiction, Non-fiction & Children's Books)
St. Matthew's Lower Hall

MEN'S MORNING TEA
Wednesday 17 August
10am to 12noon
 Mckel's Café, Shop 14, Circa Boulevard Bella Vista.
 Enquiries: Alan Wright
 We are allocated external seating to ensure compliance with the recommended Covid situation.

Women's Fellowship
Wednesday 10 August @ 10am
 The Women's Fellowship meeting on Wednesday
Shamali Perera tells us about Sri Lanka.
Please join us Enquiries: Barbara McIntosh

CHRISTIAN MEDITATION
 You are invited to come along to the church on
Tuesdays at 9.30am—10.30am
All are welcome
 "The important aim in Christian meditation is to allow God's mysterious and silent presence within us to become more and more not only a reality but the reality which gives meaning, shape and purpose to everything we do, everything we are"
 John Main.
www.WCCM.org www.christianmeditationaustralia.org
 The World Community for Christian Meditation (WCCM)
 Katherine Pedersen. Facilitator of the Tuesday 9.30am sessions and for information.
kathped56@gmail.com

MONTHLY ACTIVITIES and REGULAR GROUPS

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP.....
 Second Wednesday of this month
 Next event: **10 August at 10am**

Enquiries: Dulcie Duncum
 Meet in the upstairs hall and church

MEN'S MORNING TEA.....
 Meet 3rd Wednesday of each month.
 Next Event: **17 August at 10am**

Contact: Alan Wright
Mckel's Café, Shop 14, Circa Boulevard Bella Vista. We are allocated external seating to ensure compliance with current Covid restrictions.

CARE & PRAYER.....
 Meet on the 1st Saturday of each month in church and Community room @ 10am
 All welcome
This Month: 6 August

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.

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:
 Account Name: Baulkham Hills Uniting Church
 BSB: 634634
 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!

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.
 Fortnightly
 Contact Daniel Gibb
daniel@stmatthewsuniting.net.au

THRIVE SOCIAL GROUP.....
 Contact Daniel Gibb
daniel@stmatthewsuniting.net.au

SHINE.....
 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 in the church foyer.

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

To include your activity in the
SEPTEMBER In FOCUS
St. Matthew's Monthly Newsletter
 please send details to Robyn and Lynn in the Church Office by **15 AUGUST.**
 Thank you
 Please check St. Matthew's weekly Newsletter

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

UPCOMING EVENTS & DATES

Save these SEPTEMBER Dates

Coffee and Discovery
 1st September
 10am-12pm
 St. Matt's Endurance Car Series
 3rd September
 10am-3pm

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
Weekly newsletter available on website
EMAIL: office@stmatthewsuniting.net.au
FACEBOOK:
 @stmatthewsunitingchurchbaulkhamhills
PRE-SCHOOL DIRECTOR 9639 8570
 SONALI WANIGESEKERA
 PO Box 321 BAULKHAM HILLS 2153
EMAIL: director@stmatthewsps.net.au

Calendar of Events for August 2022

Monday

Tuesday



















Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Sunday

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	
<p>1</p> <p>9am—Sorting & Pricing for Op Shop lower hall</p> <p>12pm—upstairs hall in use by preschool</p>	<p>2</p> <p>9am-2pm—Op Shop open </p> <p>12pm—upstairs hall in use by preschool</p> <p>7.30pm—Thrive in lower hall In the church</p>	<p>3</p> <p>9am-2pm—Op Shop open </p> <p>10am-12pm—In Stitches </p> <p>In the upstairs hall</p> <p>12pm—upstairs hall in use by preschool</p>	<p>4</p> <p>9am-2pm—Op Shop & Mini Mart in lower hall </p> <p>10am-12pm—Coffee & Discovery in the upstairs hall and church </p> <p>12pm—upstairs hall in use by preschool</p>	<p>5</p> <p>12pm—upstairs hall in use by preschool</p> <p>7pm-9pm—Youth Group ALIVE upstairs hall </p>	<p>6</p> <p>9am-12pm—Op Shop & Mini Mart in lower hall </p> <p>10am—Care and Prayer Meet in the Church</p> <p>10am-3pm—St. Matt's Endurance Series contact Brad Turner</p>	<p>7</p> <p>8am—Worship includes Communion</p> <p>9.30am—Worship includes Communion KUCA Preschool, Years K-2 & Years 3-8</p> <p>6.45pm—Worship includes Communion</p> 	
<p>8</p> <p>9am—Sorting & Pricing for Op Shop lower hall</p>	<p>9</p> <p>9am-2pm—Op Shop open </p> <p>9.30-11am—Christian Meditation in the Church</p> 	<p>10</p> <p>9am-2pm—Op Shop open </p> <p>10am-12noon—Women's Fellowship in the upstairs hall and church </p> <p>7.30pm—Church Council Executive meeting at the church</p>	<p>11</p> <p>9am-2pm—Op Shop open</p> 	<p>12</p> <p>5pm-7pm—FUSION Youth Group upstairs hall</p>	<p>13</p> <p>No scheduled events</p>	<p>14</p> <p>8am—Worship</p> <p>9am—Worship @ the Willow's</p> <p>9.30am—Worship KUCA Preschool, Years K-2 & Years 3-8</p> 	
<p>15</p> <p>9am—Sorting & Pricing for Op Shop lower hall</p>	<p>16</p> <p>9am-2pm—Op Shop open </p> <p>9.30-11am—Christian Meditation in the Church </p> <p>7.30pm—Thrive in lower hall In the church</p>	<p>17</p> <p>9am-2pm—Op Shop open </p> <p>10am-12pm—In Stitches In the upstairs hall </p> <p>10am-12noon—Men's Morning Tea at McKels Café Bella Vista. See back page for details </p>	<p>18</p> <p>9am-2pm—Op Shop open</p> 	<p>19</p> <p>7pm-9pm—Youth Group ALIVE Upstairs hall </p>	<p>20</p> <p>2pm-4pm—Church and Community Room in use</p>	<p>21</p> <p>8am—Worship</p> <p>9.30am—Worship KUCA Preschool, Years K-2 & Years 3-8</p> <p>5pm—Shine</p> <p>6.45pm—Worship</p> 	
<p>22</p> <p>9am—Sorting & Pricing for Op Shop lower hall</p>	<p>23</p> <p>9am-2pm—Op Shop open </p> <p>9.30-11am—Christian Meditation in the Church </p>	<p>24</p> <p>9am-2pm—Op Shop open </p> <p>7.30pm—Church Council Meeting at the church</p>	<p>25</p> <p>9am-2pm—Op Shop open</p> 	<p>26</p> <p>5pm-7pm FUSION Youth Group upstairs hall</p>	<p>27</p> <p>No scheduled events</p>	<p>28</p> <p>8am—Worship</p> <p>9.30am—Worship KUCA Preschool, Years K-2 & Years 3-8</p> <p>6.45pm—Worship</p> 	
<p>29</p> <p>9am—Sorting & Pricing for Op Shop lower hall</p>	<p>30</p> <p>9am-2pm—Op Shop open </p> <p>9.30-11am—Christian Meditation in the Church</p> 	<p>31</p> <p>9am-2pm—Op Shop open </p> <p>10am-12pm—In Stitches In the upstairs hall </p>				<p>st. matthew's UNITING CHURCH BAULKHAM HILLS </p> <p>growing together</p>	