

The Bible in the Twenty-First Century

The Bible has been described as one foundation blocks of the Christian faith. It bears witness to the covenantal relationship that Yahweh ('I am who I am' / or 'I will be who I will be') established with the people of Israel. It is the only written record that we have that bears witness to the ministry of Jesus Christ that comes to us from the first century – other than a small passing reference in one of the works of a Jewish historian by the name of Josephus. It is the only source we have for the writings of Paul and how the early church came into existence.

The word Bible comes from the Greek word for 'books'. It is really a library of books made up of many styles and genres, and with many different authors (most of whom are anonymous). Its contents being written down and then being closed into the books and order we have to day took many centuries. It is as such a most unusual book – and yet it is not only foundational to the Christian faith. It has played an important part in the evolution of the English language; it has led to works of art and music; its influence is well beyond the culture of the church.

Something of this process of coming into being is caught in the following contemporary hymn by Brian Wren. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OfBnZ0C8Tj4>)

*Deep in the shadows of the past,
Far out from settled lands,
Some nomads travelled with their God
Across the desert sands.
The dawn of hope for humankind
Was glimpsed by them alone—
A promise calling them ahead,
A future yet unknown.*

*While others bowed to changeless gods,
They met a mystery:
God with an uncompleted name,
'I am what I will be';
And by their tents, around their fires,
In story, song and law,
They praised, remembered, handed on
A past that promised more.*

*From Abraham to Nazareth
The promise changed and grew,
While some, remembering the past,
Recorded what they knew.
And some, in letters or laments,
In prophecy and praise,
Recovered, held, and re-expressed
New hope for changing days.*

*For all the writings that survived,
For leaders, long ago,
Who sifted, chose, and then preserved
The Bible that we know,
Give thanks, and find its promise yet
Our comfort, strength, and call,
The working model for our faith,
Alive with hope for all.*

Making Sense of the Bible



- How did the Bible come into being?
- How (and when) was it translated into English?
- Why do we have so many versions?
- How do we 'use' the Bible (an ancient book) in our world today – or let it 'use' us?
- How might we seek not to 'misuse' the Bible?

The studies advertised above will be held at the following times:

Tuesday – 18 and 25 October onsite 7.30pm.
Tuesday – 1 and 8 November onsite 7:30 pm.

Wednesday – 19 and 26 October.
Wednesday – 2 and 16 November.
online 7:30 pm.

Zoom link:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3602745736>

Clive

CHRISTIAN MEDITATION

You are invited to come along to the church on

Tuesdays at 9.30am—10.30am

All are welcome



The Muscle of Attention

During September and October the Tuesday morning Christian Meditation Group will be listening to these 10 - 20 minute talks given in 2021 by Laurence Freeman as part of the hour long session. We then do the work of silently repeating our mantra, giving attention only to the mantra to take the attention off our distracting thoughts.

We meet in either the Community Room or Church Sanctuary. Everyone is welcome to join this group to find out how exercising our muscle of attention produces love and community.

Please contact Rosemary Sexton or Katherine Pedersen 043 777 2011 kathped56@gmail.com to find out more about the World Community for Christian Meditation. There are groups all over the world and you can join many online groups, watch podcasts, seminars, introductory sessions and undertake courses online.

<https://meditationtalks.wccm.org/cd/cwkSXCfLd4mXpGb6pFGc>

These talks reflect on the meaning of attention because attention is at the centre of human meaning, Laurence Freeman says. In moments of crisis, as during the present pandemic, what really matters is our encounter with love through the attention we receive. Meditation is a way of exercising our muscle of attention. In repeating the mantra selflessly, we are learning to pay attention to God, and as we enter into that experience, the Word of God is born in us, and begins to divinise us. Contemplatives therefore are portals through which divine love can enter the human condition.

The tracks are entitled: Love one another, The essential teachings of meditation, Self-knowledge, Evolution of WCCM, Listening and paying attention, The muscle of attention, Pure prayer, Meditation for children, Kenosis and the emptying out, The power of attention and The equivoillance of love and attention.

So you may say, 'You know, I have a very busy mind. And I am doing a lot of things, I am multitasking all the day.' But a hyperactive, hyper active mind, too much multitasking, constant distraction, jumping from one thing to another without resting in this work of attention; or rapid bursts of stimulation, which is what we like today – that might seem as if the faculty of attention is being exercised a lot, but it is not. Actually, the muscle of attention is atrophying, is wasting away. It is wasting away and it needs exercise. It needs therapy. The therapy of the soul is prayer.



**Saturday
1 October
9am-12pm**

**Electrical, Toys
and Books**
(Fiction, Non-fiction
& Children's Books)

St. Matthew's Lower Hall



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



This month: 1st October

Care and Prayer
10am, every first Saturday
in the Church.



MEN'S MORNING TEA

Wednesday 19th October

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.
Every third Wednesday of the month

**Women's Fellowship
Wednesday 12 October
@ 10am**

The Women's Fellowship meeting on Wednesday

Please join us

Enquiries: Barbara McIntosh



St. Matthew's Roof Repair update from Church Council

I have been fascinated by the renovations that are underway with the church buildings. There are 2 projects that are being undertaken concurrently involving an extension to the preschool and the entire building roof replacement.

The extension to the preschool will provide many benefits to their operation, adding storage space, staff facilities, bathroom upgrades and more.

The roof replacement involves all three building sections – preschool, church and hall. The original concrete roof tiles are being replaced with Colorbond Dune coloured sheet roofing, the hall and preschool high-level timber windows will be replaced with aluminum windows. This is the most substantial renovation ever to the buildings that date from the mid-seventies.



How is this project being funded?

The Preschool extension is being fully funded by the Preschool itself, and it is important to note that the Preschool is providing funding for close to half the roofing upgrade of the whole building. We are very grateful that the Preschool is able to provide these funds, and the Church finances must fund the remainder.

Total roof repair cost, inc. GST = \$357000. Preschool contribution = \$157000

St. Matthew's is approved for a loan from Uniting Church for \$200,000.

Does St. Matthew's have cash available to fund this project? Yes – partially, but we are advised to keep the cash in the bank. We are fortunate that St. Matthew's can retain all its assets (that does include the Watkins Rd Manse).

BUT (yes there is a but...)

The congregation did approve the FY23 budget at the recent AGM held in July.

That budget puts some responsibility on the St. Matthew's community to help to service the loan that is currently being drawn down as the building project continues. In the past this community is always able to step up when there is a fund-raising challenge, we are especially grateful that the community kept up the direct debits, envelopes and Pushpay recurring gifts throughout the last 2 years of stop/start due to the pandemic.

Now we have yet another challenge to meet.

\$1600.00 per month is the target suggested and accepted by the congregation.

If the community can provide that funding – we are able to service the loan without compromising our staffing and general budget.

This is our starting point – certainly not the end of the matter because ideally we would like to dispose of the whole principal, as do all mortgage holders. Clearly that will take some time and many fund-raising initiatives – but we need to get started...

Continued on next page



We are immensely grateful to the church community members that have been at the forefront of the project, in particular Terry Oliver (Congregation Secretary) and David Porter (Pre School Chairperson) – from the design stages, the building specification, the tenders from various builders, the negotiations with the Presbytery and Uniting Church finance, and that's just to get it all started.

A project manager was contracted to co-ordinate with the builder, Skope Constructions – this ensures that the pre-school and church remain operational as the building progresses.

So where are we up to now – mid September?

If you have been anywhere around the church – you will notice a lot of scaffolding. The roofing installation is progressing. Additionally, the Church Council has approved 2 important additional works to be done.

- Repairs to wooden frames around the stained glass windows in the church that are affected by dry rot.
- Full hi-pressure water cleaning of the exterior brickwork around the building which has been stained by leaking and guttering problems.

St. Matthew's Roof repair continued

Here is an idea that I presented to both morning congregations last week.

Join 40/40? What is 40/40?

Here is the proposal. Can 40 families give \$40 per month? That make the task easy and affordable, I'm sure the \$40 is less than most households coffee expenses. 40 x 40 = 1600



The best way to get this going is to use our Pushpay facility which allows you to use Visa/Mastercard debit or credit cards. In this way we can measure the specific gifts towards the roof project.

If you are currently using Pushpay – it's easy to start another recurring gift from your mobile, tablet or computer. If you are new to Pushpay, here is a QR code that links directly to the account setup.

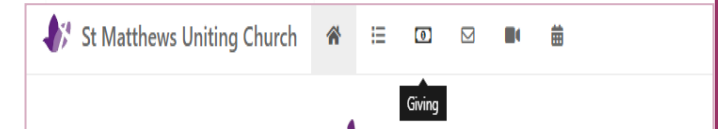
You add your mobile phone, email address and card details – once setup you can access and change the gift at any time. The frequency can be weekly, fortnightly or monthly. When a gift is processed you receive a receipt in your email.



St Matthew's Uniting Church
Roof project
<https://ppay.colyPISBTS-1DA>



You can also connect from St Matthew's website. Click the 'Giving' icon on the top line.



St Matthew's Uniting Church

Make a gift

Amount

Repeat this gift? No, just one time Yes, set up recurring

How often?

Starts on

Fund

Ideas for further fundraising. Special event planning is already underway. If you are in any St. Matthew's small group - please consider other special initiatives that could raise further funds.

You are welcome to email myself with further questions or ideas- neideck@isp.net.au. We will be providing further updates – watch this space.

David Neideck

On behalf of St Matthew's Church Council.



All are welcome at Coffee & Discovery

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

10am until 12 noon

Our next meeting

Thursday 6th October

Guest Speaker – Jane Cole

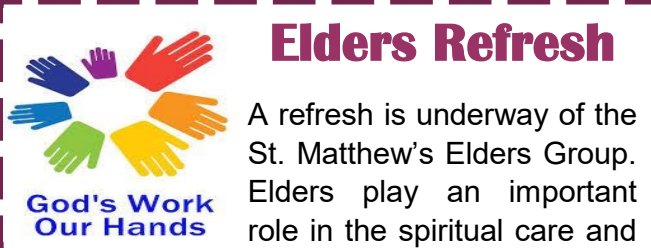
Topic – "St. Matt's in the Philippines"



Jane will speak about the mission which was commenced by the St. Matthew's "Shine Group" and how, along with help from the St. Matthew's Church community, it has continued to grow, providing amazing and caring support in so many areas of need in the Philippines.

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

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



Elders Refresh

A refresh is underway of the St. Matthew's Elders Group. Elders play an important role in the spiritual care and worship support of the congregation, as well as facilitate some community outreach and education.

After a suspension of activity related to COVID, a new program has been planned based on Elder feedback. Regular Elders meetings will be reinstated in late 2022 and a new program, with a focus on community and skill development, is being coordinated. As well as an Elders meeting every two months or so, and some focus group participation, we are also planning a couple of guest speakers, and a more informal linking up. We hope that 2023 will be an interesting and invigorating year, and an opportunity for those involved to extend their skills and caring.

We will be seeking new Elders in late 2022. Representation across all congregations is important, so please consider expressing interest or let us know if you have any questions.

Helen Olley and Melissa Gibson Darling



Walking Together, Listening Together, Advocating Together

The Synod of NSW and the ACT, United Theological College, Uniting Mission and Education, and Newtown Mission are pleased to host the inaugural First Peoples' Theological Conference – an opportunity to hear the voices and perspectives of First Peoples on issues relating to the Uniting Church, Theology, and Reconciliation.

The theme - *Walking Together: How can the Church embrace First Peoples' Theology in a post-colonial Australia* - comes at an important time with the Uluru Statement of the Heart and plans to enshrine a First Nations Voice into the constitution.

We encourage people to engage with and advocate for this process, and bring our best theological resources with us on the journey.

Saturday 22 October 9:30 am - 4:45pm
Wesley Conference Centre, Sydney
In person and online tickets available now!

The conference will provide:

- An opportunity to hear the voices of First Nations people, and their perspectives on the current and future relationship between First Peoples and the Uniting Church.
- Opportunities for discussion and discernment.
- Opportunities for relationship building over lunch and afternoon tea, with time allowed for networking and discussions.



Please reach out to us via email at mission@nswact.uca.org.au if you have any questions or would like more information.

REGISTER NOW!



MONTHLY ACTIVITIES and REGULAR GROUPS

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP.....
 Second Wednesday of this month
 Next event: **12th October at 10am**

Enquiries: Dulcie Duncum
 Meet in the upstairs hall and church

MEN'S MORNING TEA.....
 Meet 3rd Wednesday of each month.
 Next Event: **19th October 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: 1st October

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.
 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.

UPCOMING EVENTS & DATES

ST MATTHEW'S TRIVIA NIGHT 2022



TABLES OF 8 - \$15 PER PERSON
 ST MATTHEW'S UNITING CHURCH BAULKHAM HILLS
 FOR MORE DETAILS CONTACT [DANIEL@STMATTHEWSUNITING.NET.AU](mailto:daniel@stmatthewsuniting.net.au)

St. Matthew's Trivia Night
Saturday 19 November 7pm
 Contact Daniel Gibb
daniel@stmatthewsuniting.net.au

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](https://www.facebook.com/stmatthewsunitingchurchbaulkhamhills)

PRE-SCHOOL DIRECTOR 9639 8570
 SONALI WANIGESEKERA
 PO Box 321 BAULKHAM HILLS 2153
EMAIL: director@stmatthewsps.net.au

The recycled Christmas tree project

Giving kids a Christmas

The recycled Christmas tree @ St. Matthew's Uniting Baulkham Hills



offers us a chance to do our bit as a community in recycling our 10c cans and bottles and providing a gift for children who are victims of domestic violence.

Place your cans in the marked containers which will be located at both entrances of the Church. From there they will be collected and recycled on a weekly basis.

For any enquiries please contact Marijke Prinsloo: 0423641477

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!

To include your activity in the **NOVEMBER In FOCUS** St. Matthew's Monthly Newsletter please send details to Robyn and Lynn in the Church Office by **15 OCTOBER**.
 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

Calendar of Events for October 2022

School Holidays

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Sunday

30	31					1	2
<p>9am—Sorting & Pricing for Op Shop lower hall</p> <p>12pm—upstairs hall in use by preschool</p>	<p>9am-2pm—Op Shop open</p> <p>9.30–11am—Christian Meditation in the Church</p> <p>12pm—upstairs hall in use by preschool</p>		<p>st. matthew's UNITING CHURCH BAULKHAM HILLS <i>growing together</i></p> 			<p>9am-12pm—Op Shop & Mini Mart in lower hall</p> <p>10am—Care and Prayer Meet in the Church</p>	<p>8am—Worship</p> <p>9.30am—Worship KUCA In Recess</p> <p>6.45pm—Worship</p>
<p>3</p> <p>9am—Sorting & Pricing for Op Shop lower hall</p>	<p>4</p> <p>9am-2pm—Op Shop open</p> <p>9.30–11am—Christian Meditation in the Church</p>	<p>5</p> <p>9am-2pm—Op Shop open</p> <p>10am-12pm—In Stitches In the upstairs hall</p>	<p>6</p> <p>9am-2pm—Op Shop open</p> <p>10am-12pm—Coffee & Discovery Speaker Jane Cole "St. Matt's in the Philippines" upstairs hall & Church</p>	<p>7</p> <p>No scheduled events</p>	<p>8</p> <p>10am-3pm—St. Matt's Endurance Series contact Brad Turner In the upstairs hall</p>	<p>9</p> <p>8am—Worship includes Communion</p> <p>9am—Worship @ the Willow's 9.30am—Worship includes Communion</p> <p>KUCA In Recess</p> <p>6.45pm—Worship includes Communion</p>	
<p>10</p> <p>9am—Sorting & Pricing for Op Shop lower hall</p> <p>12pm—upstairs hall in use by preschool</p>	<p>11</p> <p>9am-2pm—Op Shop open</p> <p>9.30–11am—Christian Meditation in the Church</p> <p>12pm—upstairs hall in use by preschool</p> <p>7.30pm—Thrive in lower hall In the church</p>	<p>12</p> <p>9am-2pm—Op Shop open</p> <p>10am-12noon—Women's Fellowship in the upstairs hall and church</p> <p>12pm—upstairs hall in use by preschool</p>	<p>13</p> <p>9am-2pm—Op Shop open</p> <p>12pm—upstairs hall in use by preschool</p>	<p>14</p> <p>12pm—upstairs hall in use by preschool</p> <p>7pm-9pm—Youth Group ALIVE upstairs hall</p>	<p>15</p> <p>2pm-4pm—Church and Community Room in use</p>	<p>16</p> <p>8am—Worship</p> <p>9.30am—Worship KUCA Preschool, Years K-2 & Years 3-8</p> <p>6.45pm—Worship</p>	
<p>17</p> <p>9am—Sorting & Pricing for Op Shop lower hall</p> <p>12pm—upstairs hall in use by preschool</p>	<p>18</p> <p>9am-2pm—Op Shop open</p> <p>9.30–11am—Christian Meditation in the Church</p> <p>12pm—upstairs hall in use by Preschool</p> <p>7.30pm—Clive study "Making sense of the Bible" At the church</p>	<p>19</p> <p>9am-2pm—Op Shop open</p> <p>10am-12noon—Men's Morning Tea at McKels Café Bella Vista. See back page for details</p> <p>10am-12pm—In Stitches in the upstairs hall</p> <p>12pm—Preschool using U/hall</p> <p>7.30pm—Clive study "Making sense of the Bible" Zoom</p>	<p>20</p> <p>9am-2pm—Op Shop open</p> <p>12pm—upstairs hall in use by preschool</p>	<p>21</p> <p>12pm—upstairs hall in use by preschool</p> <p>5pm-7pm FUSION Youth Group "Minute to Win it" upstairs hall</p>	<p>22</p> <p>No scheduled events</p>	<p>23</p> <p>8am—Worship</p> <p>9.30am—Worship Includes Baptism</p> <p>KUCA Preschool, Years K-2 & Years 3-8</p> <p>6.45pm—Worship</p>	
<p>24</p> <p>9am—Sorting & Pricing for Op Shop lower hall</p> <p>12pm—upstairs hall in use by preschool</p>	<p>25</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>7.30pm—Clive study "Making sense of the Bible" at the church</p>	<p>26</p> <p>9am-2pm—Op Shop open</p> <p>12pm—upstairs hall in use by Preschool</p> <p>7.30pm—Clive study "Making sense of the Bible" Zoom</p>	<p>27</p> <p>9am-2pm—Op Shop open</p> <p>12pm—upstairs hall in use by preschool</p>	<p>28</p> <p>12pm—upstairs hall in use by preschool</p> <p>7pm-9pm—Youth Group ALIVE upstairs hall</p>	<p>29</p> <p>No scheduled events</p>	<p>30</p> <p>8am—Worship</p> <p>9.30am—Worship KUCA Preschool, Years K-2 & Years 3-8</p> <p>6.45pm—Worship</p>	