



15 January 2023

Epiphany 2

Bible Reading

9am and 6.45pm

Isaiah 49: 1-7

John 1: 29-42



Response after Bible Readings

Leader: Hear the word of the Lord

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 9AM



Livestreaming

at both services

- . 9am Summer Worship Service**
- . 6.45pm Worship Service**

Thank you for worshipping with us today.

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

MONDAY 16 JANUARY

No Scheduled activities

TUESDAY 17 JANUARY

9.30–11am—Christian Meditation

in the Church

WEDNESDAY 18 JANUARY

In Stitches returns for 2023

10am in upstairs hall

THURSDAY 19 JANUARY

No Scheduled activities

FRIDAY 20 JANUARY

No Scheduled activities

SATURDAY 21 JANUARY

No Scheduled Activities

**SUNDAY
22 JANUARY**

9am—Worship

KUCA in recess

6.45pm—Worship



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 BULKHAM HILLS 1755

WEB SITE: www.stmatthewsuniting.net.au

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15 January – Epiphany 2

Calling—Take 4

Isaiah 49: 1-7 John 1: 29-42

The lectionary is playing tricks on us this week! All of a sudden we take leave of Matthew and for one week only feature John—and what's more, we skip over Jesus being tempted in the wilderness. That is not the end of the matter. The way in which the gospel of John describes the exchange between Jesus and John the Baptist differs from the other three gospels. There is no reference to John's fashion sense nor his preferred diet. There is no hint of a warning to Pharisees and Sadducees, let alone unquenchable fire, winnowing forks, and axes already at the root of the tree making ready to cut down any tree that does not bear good fruit.

We are inside a very different storyline. The emphasis is on identity. Immediately prior to our reading for today John has informed the priests and Levites that he is not the Messiah: nor is he Elijah and he is not a prophet. In the gospel of John his role is to bear witness and to point away from himself towards the 'one who is coming after me'.

Through this role of testimony the baptism of Jesus merges into the calling of the first disciples. And again John takes a different route. There is no talk about fishermen becoming fishers of people; there is no reference to the Sea of Galilee. John bears witness to the 'one who ranks before him' but 'whom he does not know'. It is John the Baptist in the gospel who sees the Spirit descending like a dove and declares him to be the chosen one. There is no voice from heaven or declaration to the effect, 'this is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased'. Through the witness of John the Baptist the gospel effectively transforms the understanding of Jesus' name – he shall save his people from their sins – into the sacrificial image of the lamb of God.

John's testimony moves into the calling of the first disciples of Jesus; in this gospel the first two disciples to follow Jesus were previously disciples of John the Baptist. They respond to the words 'lamb of God'. Jesus does not say 'follow me'. Instead he asks 'what are you looking for?' The response is 'where are you staying?'. In this gospel these two remain with Jesus until four in the afternoon: he has said to them 'come and see'. They declare Jesus to be the messiah. One of the two is Andrew: though him his brother Simon follows: in this opening chapter of John Simon is now renamed Cephas, the Aramaic for the Greek word, Peter, meaning a rock.

'What are you looking for?'. 'Come and see'.

The lectionary places alongside this reading from John the second servant song from Isaiah. That is a little bit strange as well Isaiah scarcely features in

John-unlike Matthew. The book of Isaiah is conventionally divided into three parts. It does so because it covers different periods in time. Second Isaiah begins at chapter 40 and runs through to the end of chapter 55. It begins with those familiar words of comfort, comfort my people and a voice crying in the wilderness. It is most noted for four servant songs. Our reading this morning is the second of these. In the royal terminology of the ancient Near East, a servant was a "trusted envoy," a "confidential representative," or "one who is chosen."

In this song the servant addresses the coastlands – that is, region to the west of their captivity in Babylon. It is possible that the prophet is addressing those who were not carried off into captivity. As is the case with other prophets the servant was called while in the womb and given sharp speech. There is a contrast made between the sword (the weapon for close encounters) and the arrow (for more distant attack). The servant is well equipped for every situation.

His first calling was to gather the people of Israel back to God; he is aware that this was a task beyond his strength; now YHWH announces that the people a despised Israel (abhorred by the nations, the slave of rulers will be the people through whom 'my salvation will reach to the end of the earth'.

This servant song represents a major turning point in Isaiah's narrative. Up unto this point the prophet has addressed Jacob / Israel. Now the focus becomes Jerusalem / Zion, hence the people's homeland, royal city, sanctuary, site of the Temple and its restoration. None of those exiles have ever seen this city.

Music online:

U2 'I still haven't found what I'm looking for'.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fmxOUIddBm0>

U2 / Harlem Gospel Choir

'I still haven't found what I'm looking for'.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M8Wt3dhF4fU>

U2 / NPR radio article

<https://www.npr.org/2019/07/26/743620996/u2-i-still-havent-found-what-im-looking-for-american-anthem>

Stu Townend 'Behold! The Lamb of God'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ACHPwx7EGQA>

On Second Isaiah / Servant Songs

NT Wright

<https://www.ntwrightonline.org/the-fifth-gospel-why-isaiah-matters/>

Yours in Christ,

Clive



PEOPLE NEWS

Helen Olley
Alastair Burn
Jeff Cameron

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



Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

15—21 JANUARY

Arabian Peninsula: Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Yemen

Volunteers needed to help with gardening and trimming the hedges on the lower side of the church in January or February.

Also if anyone has a mulcher that we can borrow for that time. Please contact George Haines, Bruce Court or Katherine Pedersen if you can help or loan us a mulcher.

The St. Matthew's Uniting Church weekly Newsletter is available to view at the end of each week for the upcoming Sunday on the St. Matthew's website www.stmatthewsuniting.net.au

Click on the metal dove image / publications.



West Epping
Uniting Church

**WEST EPPING
UNITING CHURCH
LEISURE MINISTRY**

**There are a number of places still available.
Please phone Joan and book your seat today.**

Coach Trip

Tuesday 17th January

Total Cost of \$60 includes comfortable coach travel, morning tea and admission to

**Alison Homestead Museum and
Central Coast Zoo
and Amazement Farm & Fun Park.
Café on site.**

Departure time at West Epping Uniting Church 8.30am. BYO lunch

Bookings - M. & J. Ross **9873 3713**

Calling all plant lovers

If you enjoy propagating plants and would like to have some fun as an individual or group of people creating potted plants to sell in the Op Shop, please speak with Pamela Leslie, Katherine Pedersen or call the office on T: 9686 3003.

A message to all groups and individuals using the Church property

When using any part of the Church property at any time, please ensure that when you leave, you turn off all lights, fans, air con's and properly lock and alarm the premises if required. This is the responsibility of all groups and individuals, please don't think that someone else will do it for you.



NETBALL

PLAY LOCAL - PLAY SOCIAL



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SATURDAY AFTERNOON COMPETITION
GOODEN RESERVE BAULKHAM HILLS

www.stmatthewsnetballclub.com

And so begins the public ministry of Jesus: the timing and place are quite striking. They represent a fundamental shift in the life of Jesus.

We do not know why he waits until the imprisonment of John the Baptist before he begins his public ministry. It is not as if his ministry is identical to that of the Baptist. Jesus does not make his way to the banks of the Jordan and continue John's practice of baptizing. As a matter of fact we do not know if Jesus ever baptized anyone! It is true that he proclaims the kingdom of heaven drawing near but here it is described in relation to curing every disease and illness.

Jesus has not only waited until John is imprisoned: he has changed where he is living. He leaves the Nazareth of his childhood behind and makes his home in Capernaum—a fishing village located on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee. The name of the village is a Romanized form of the Hebrew ‘the village of Nahum’. The origins of the village go back to the 2nd century BCE through to the eleventh century. It had at least one and possibly two synagogues. Nazareth was a little over 30 kilometres to the southwest.

Matthew does not specify why Jesus leaves Nazareth for Capernaum: Luke suggests that Jesus was driven out of Nazareth.

Those responsible for the lectionary once more turn to Isaiah. In this instance it is implied that the beginning of this new ministry is an acting out of the Isaiah vision of the people who sat in darkness now seeing a great light. Matthew makes much use of Isaiah.

For Matthew this shift in home represents a fulfilment of scripture – the text to do with the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light. The move to Capernaum enables Jesus to call fishermen as his disciples—Simon and Andrew. They are mending their nets; they are called to follow. They are not called to be disciples, nor teachers, or preachers: they are called to become fishers of men. This calling is not for their own sake but for the sake of others.

In a similar vein James and John were mending nets and Jesus calls them: they leave their father and follow. They have a change of ‘careers’, we might say, exchanging the family business (as the sons of Zebedee) for a gospel that is for all.

\$100 / PLAYER

Active Kids Vouchers welcome

St. Matthew's Netball Club

Registration for 2023 season now open.

Will close on Friday 5 February.

Competition games available for girls from Year 2 above at school. Women's comp for 18 & over age group.

FunNet which is a program where children learn fundamental netball skills and is for children in Kindergarten & Year 1 at school.

For further information or to complete your registration, go to club website

www.stmatthewsnetballclub.com

Being prepared for next week's worship:

22 January

Theme:
Epiphany 3
For the sake of others

**Sunday 22 January:
9am and 6.45pm**

Bible Readings:

Isaiah 9:1-4
Matthew 4:12-23

