



Bible Reading

9am and 6.45pm



1 Corinthians 3: 1-9

Matthew 5:21-37

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 9.30AM



Epiphany
6

Livestreaming

at all worship services

8am, 9.30am and 6.45pm

8am—Worship

Led by Pamela Leslie
and Clive Pearson

9.30am—Worship

Led by Clive Pearson

KUCA Preschool, Years K-2 & Years 3-8

6.45pm—Worship

Led by Nicola Lawless
and Clive Pearson

Thank you for worshipping with us today.

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

MONDAY 13 FEBRUARY

9am—*Sorting and Pricing*
for Op Shop lower hall

TUESDAY 14 FEBRUARY

9am-2pm—Op Shop

9.30-11am—*Christian Meditation*

in the Church

7.30pm—*Bible Study*

“Reading Matthew” Week 2/Final

in the church

WEDNESDAY 15 FEBRUARY

9am-2pm—Op Shop

10am-12pm—*In Stitches*

upstairs hall

THURSDAY 16 FEBRUARY

9am-2pm—Op Shop

7.30pm—*Bible Study*

“Reading Matthew”

Week 2/Final on **ZOOM**

Zoom link:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3602745736)

[j/3602745736](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3602745736)

FRIDAY 17 FEBRUARY

5pm-7pm—*Fusion*

Youth Group

upstairs hall

SATURDAY 18 FEBRUARY

No Scheduled Events

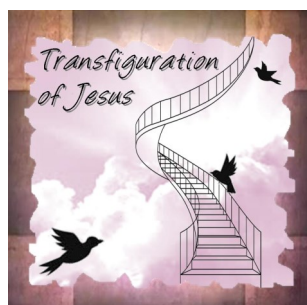
**SUNDAY
19 FEBRUARY**

8am—*Worship*

9.30am—*Worship*

KUCA Preschool, Years K-2 & Years 3-8

6.45pm—*Worship*



Transfiguration
of Jesus

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

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PRE-SCHOOL DIRECTOR 9639 8570

SONALI WANIGESEKERA

PO Box 321 BAULKHAM HILLS 2153

EMAIL: director@stmatthewsps.net.au

12 February

Epiphany 6

Making Choices: Identity

1 Corinthians 3: 1-9 Matthew 5:21-37

The Sermon on the Mount continues: the church for which Matthew is writing is Jewish in heritage with some Gentiles: they are in the process of creating a fresh identity in Christ. The writer is well versed in the Hebrew Scriptures: his task is to address a number of issues arising in this emerging community as it seeks to move into a new way of being that discerns that heritage but appropriates it in new ways.

In the background to our readings for this morning lies Deuteronomy 30:15-20. YHWH invites us 'to choose life'. Through that lens we might say that Paul's epistle invites the deeply divided members of the church in Corinth to consider how they might overcome their differences and become a life-giving community. It is not straightforward: they are a deeply divided community. Some see themselves as a spiritual elite and look down on those they regard as spiritual 'clodhoppers'; a few are wealthy and prefer their own food over the community options; there are differences of conviction over what to believe. And then there is the notion of congregational party politics: who baptized whom? Was it Apollo or was it Paul? They are quarrelling.

Paul does not always enjoy such a good press these days: he deserves better because he has a keen eye on how to nurture and edify congregational life. He does this not by some special program but by seeking to feed the body of the church. In other words, he is inviting them to leave behind the idolatry of poor decision-making, poor choices that are 'all too human'. The Corinthians are not as mature in the faith as some of them might believe: Paul has been feeding them 'milk' rather than on 'solid food' as if they are infants.

Paul exposes one of the great obstacles to the Christian life: the tendency to make choices that are 'fleshly'—that is, according to party and personal interest. What the reading hints at lies beyond the text itself but in this epistle Paul is asking the church in Corinth to think through what their service of the word of the cross (the gospel) should look like.

In the gospel reading Matthew lists a raft of practical and ethical issues that require choices, decisions to be made. Some reflect the cultural and religious expectations of the day. On a surface reading they can create the impression that God keeps a moral register –

you do this and this is what you should expect. What might be the case, though, if we read these injunctions as if they were seeking to address the question of how we can live together as God's people and be a blessing to others?

In some ways the list does represent an intensification of the: 'you have heard it said in ancient times ... I say unto you'. The list of issues covers anger, potential court cases, adultery, divorce, and oaths. There is underlying concern for integrity in this line up – both for the person concerned and for the quality of relationships.

What is rather noticeable in the Uniting Church is how in matters to do with sexuality the emphasis has become placed in the quality of the relationship with a due awareness of how complicated matters can be. In the past the call to settle grievances at the altar lest a matter goes to court has also been placed under scrutiny. In a rather notable article by a Samoan lecturer the Corinthian correspondence was examined from the perspective of how sometimes it might be necessary to take the church to court in order for it to be more truly the church. There have at times been instances where a church has failed to live up to its own polity or has breached the principles of human rights which the law extends to citizens.

Music On-line:

Chris Brunelle The Beatitudes
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bcUJyBKgp64>

Arvo Part The Beatitudes
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=weo-mBK6U2o&t=6s>

James Biery. The Beatitudes
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DOEylQdCok0>

John Greene. The Beatitudes
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SsaMoJwHerc>

Sweet Honey in the Rock On Children
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kYAkcl36aCE>

Art:

The Hayward Street fresco
<https://visit.haywoodstreetfresco.org>

Visual Commentary, Rebekah Eklund
<https://thevcs.org/blessed>

Yours in Christ,

Clive



PEOPLE NEWS

Ron McIntosh	Lynn Samuel
Gavin Mathew	Hugh Darling
Katherine Pedersen	Ben Mathewson

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

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.



2 week study Reading Matthew

1) *Matthew loses 'priority':*

Why is it no longer regarded as the first gospel to be written down.

2) *Matthew's account of Jesus teaching:*

How does it differ from other gospels?

What are the main ideas/themes?

What are the implications for us today?

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

Onsite at the church at 7.30pm

Tuesday – 7 and 14 February

Or

ZOOM online at 7.30pm

Thursday – 9 and 16 February

Zoom link:

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

FEBRUARY SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES

at the church

5 February - 8am, 9.30am & 6.45pm
includes Communion

12 February - 8am, 9.30am & 6.45pm

19 February - 8am, 9.30am & 6.45pm

26 February - 8am, 9.30am & 6.45pm

Live streaming continues for all services

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

12 – 18 February

Austria, Liechtenstein, Switzerland

Church Council Congregation Representatives

Positions for Representatives from 9.30am and 6.45pm worship congregations are required for Church Council. These positions are for a two-year period.

Please contact Barbara Gibb if you are interested in representing your worship community, for more information.

Please prayer consider being involved.

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.

Anyone that will be participating in Clive's study via Zoom Online and would like a copy of the study, please contact the Church office and a copy will be sent to you. Thank you

**Being prepared
for next week's
worship:**

19 February

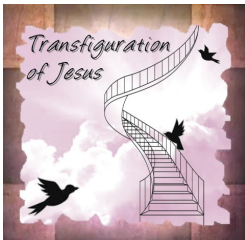
**Theme:
The
Transfiguration
of Jesus**

**Good to Be
Here!**

**Sunday
19 February:
8am ,9.30am and
6.45pm**

Bible Readings:

**Exodus 24: 12-18
Matthew 17: 1-9**



It is not unusual for reflections on the transfiguration to focus upon mountain-top experiences and the need to return to the valley below. The contrast is made between the experience of the disciples and their descent back down to where the crowd is and them being told to tell no one until after Easter has run its course. It is a common theme.

Sometimes the focus falls upon the words of the voice coming out of the cloud, 'listen to him'. That makes a great deal of sense in Matthew's version of the gospel because of the way it is structured. There are five blocks of teaching, the first ending with 'each of those who hears my words and does them is like the wise man/woman who builds their house on rock'.

In keeping with another of Matthew's themes it is not unusual to place the transfiguration of Jesus alongside Moses' ascent of Mount Sinai. The cloud covers the mountain for six days before Moses enters the cloud, beholds the 'glory of the Lord' and remains on the mountain for forty days and nights.

The theological reading of the text notes that this is the second time that a 'voice' breaks in and declares Jesus to be the beloved son, the chosen one, 'the one with whom I am well pleased'. The first occasion was the baptism of Jesus. These 'episodes' (as they are sometimes called) are well worth-noting. One of the temptations of an Australian reading of Jesus to make him rather 'matey'. We run the risk of domesticating him into the fashion of a rather familiar contemporary of ours

through a particular way of looking at his humanity. These 'voices' break in upon that practice and remind us of the otherness, the divinity, Godward side of Jesus.

One of the responses in the narrative that might be worth lingering upon longer is Peter's aside, 'it is good to be here'. This encounter with the transfigured Jesus, the voice and the figures of Moses and Elijah is far removed from his beginnings as a fisherman in Capernaum. Peter wishes to erect tents, a shelter, for the presence of God.

In the account before us the disciples head back down the mountain with Jesus: the underlying message is that we must return to our ordinary, everyday world—which is true, of course. But what if we dwelt just a little bit longer on our transfigured moments, our mountain-tops. In the normal sequence of events we usually slide down the mountain top pretty quickly. It can become rather difficult to find the path of ascent once that descent has been done.

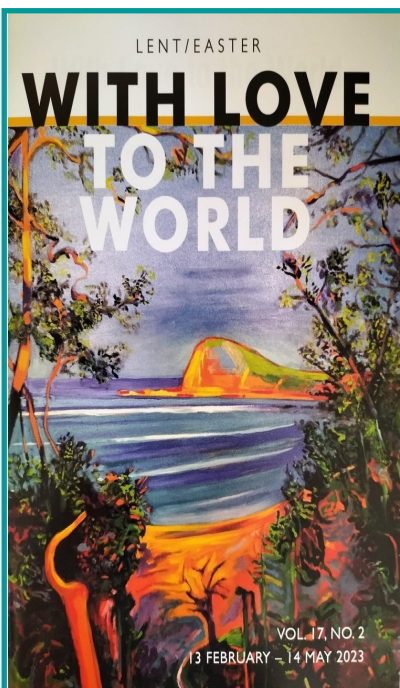
Peter declares 'it is good to be here'. Note how the disciples are afraid—and then Jesus 'came and touched them'. The transfigured Christ has touched them. The word for glory in Hebrew is *kabod*: it conveys a sense of heaviness, weight, gravitas (a seriousness of purpose): it is 'good to be here' and 'touched' – the most overlooked but perhaps the most foundational of all our senses. Why not allow yourself to be on the mountain top a little longer – recall those times you felt yourself to be 'touched' in some way or other by Christ or 'the good news'?

Used stamps

We are still collecting used stamps for Synod. Please bring in your old stamps pre-cut with a 2cm border around the stamps. There will be a box available in the cupboard in the foyer to place your stamps. Or you can drop them in to the church office.

Eulalie has very kindly volunteered to take them to Synod for us.

In January 2022, the stamp room was reopened to volunteers and customers and to receive many donations of private stamp collections and material from congregations. To all the volunteers who have collected, trimmed and sorted stamps has enabled the stamp committee to give away \$31,200 from the sale of used pieces of paper. A total of \$31,200 was distributed to forty six congregations in NSW and ACT to assist volunteers to provide resources for community projects.



LENT/EASTER

**WITH LOVE
TO THE
WORLD**

a daily Bible reading
guide based on the
Revised Common Lectionary

**Volume 17,
Number 2
13 February
to
14 May 2023**

is available
in the church foyer.

**Please place \$6
in offering bag
to cover costs.**

VOL. 17, NO. 2
13 FEBRUARY – 14 MAY 2023