




**Bible Reading**  
*9am and 6.45pm*



**John 4: 5-42**

*Response after Bible Readings*  
**Leader:** Hear the word of the Lord  
**Response:** Thanks be to God



**8am—Worship**  
Led by Pamela Leslie and Clive Pearson

**9am—Worship @ the Willow's**  
Led by Warren Arthur

**9.30am—Worship**  
Led by Hugh Darling and Clive Pearson  
**KUCA** Preschool, Years K-2 & Years 3-8  
Followed by Mystery Morning Tea

**6.45pm—Worship**  
Led by Jane Cole and Clive Pearson  
**Includes Lenten Study Week 1**

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**

**Livestreaming**  
at  
**8am & 9.30am only**

Thank you for worshipping with us today.

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

**MONDAY 13 MARCH**  
*9am—Sorting and Pricing for Op Shop* lower hall

**TUESDAY 14 MARCH**  
*9am-2pm—Op Shop*  
*9.30-11am—Christian Meditation* in the Church  
*11am—Lenten Bible Study Week 2* at the church

**WEDNESDAY 15 MARCH**  
*9am-2pm—Op Shop*  
*10am-12pm—In Stitches* upstairs hall  
*10am-12pm—Men's Moring Tea* Mckel's Café, Shop 14, Circa Boulevard Bella Vista.

**THURSDAY 16 MARCH**  
*9am-2pm—Op Shop*  
*7.30pm—Lenten Bible Study Week 2 on ZOOM*  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3602745736>

**FRIDAY 17 MARCH**  
*5pm-7pm—Fusion* upstairs hall

**SATURDAY 18 MARCH**  
*No Scheduled Events*

**SUNDAY 19 MARCH**  
**8am—Worship**  
**9.30am—Worship**  
**KUCA** Preschool, Years K-2 & Years 3-8  
**10.45am—Congregation Meeting** followed by light lunch  
**5pm—Shine** in the upstairs hall  
**6.45pm—Worship** includes **Lenten Bible Study Week 2**



**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  
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## 3rd Sunday in Lent

# Thirsting for Life

Exodus 17: 1-7 John 4: 5-42

**Water:** so necessary for life but as we discovered last year too much water can be a threat to life. With rising temperatures the atmosphere holds more moisture: for every 1 degree Celsius the air holds 7% more moisture. And so we have intense rains and floods – while other parts of the world might have less. In our readings water features in way that represents both its absence and its life-giving qualities. It is a theme rich in meaning.

In the gospel of John water is associated with baptism (including in this reading where the disciples of Jesus are baptizing more people than is Joh the Baptist), the wedding at Cana (water into wine); it will be associated with healing, footwashing, and when Jesus' side is pierced while he is on the cross "at once blood and water came out". Jesus will cry out how he is 'thirsty' from the cross.

The Lenten period is often likened to a time spent in the wilderness and, like the people of Israel, being tested. They had been an enslaved people back in Egypt. The irony is how the precariousness of being a slave had also provided some degree of security. It can be so much more of a challenge stepping out into the unknown, into uncharted territory. In their case they find themselves having been threatened not simply by the chasing Egyptian army: that was difficult enough. Being in this wilderness and no longer settled exposes them to the prospect of starvation and thirst. They very basics of life are at risk and not unnaturally that leads to protest. The people camp at Rephidim which was perhaps a *wadi* where one might expect there to have been water—but there is none. They quarrel with Moses; their livestock, their children need water. Moses is at his wits' end: in response to his urgent petition the Lord advises him to take his staff with which he struck the Nile and now to strike the rock at Horeb. Water pours forth. The climax of the story lies in the name of the place, Meribah or Massah: it is a place of testing and quarrelling and ultimately one of whether or not 'the Lord among us'. The temptation is to lose hope, lose conviction in the midst of desperate circumstances, that God is with us.

In the case of the John reading the quarrel that is presupposed is between the Samaritans and 'the Jews'. The Samaritans are descended from two of the twelve tribes of Israel. Following the Assyrian invasion of the 8<sup>th</sup> century BCE they were not deported and hence came to think of themselves as the true Israel. They considered Mount Gerizim rather than the Temple Mount in Jerusalem to be the holiest place on earth. The initial exchange between Jesus and the woman reflects this tension which had lasted through time. The well (which today is in the city of Nablus) was reckoned by the Samaritans to have been given to them by the patriarch, Jacob. It becomes the site of one of several one-on-one encounters in John's gospel – and in this instance because the other is a Samaritan and a woman, it is doubly counter-cultural. The comparison can be made with Nicodemus, a male and a 'leader of the Jews'. She has no name in the text but the Orthodox tradition has named her Photina.

The imagery of life-giving water is to be found in the Hebrew Scriptures but in a way which is denied to the Samaritans. They only recognized the first five books of the Bible, the Torah, where water is most literal – like in the story of Meribah and Massah. The more symbolic meanings are to be found in the prophets and the writings including the psalms and the wisdom books. The latter includes the deer panting for water (Psalm 42).

This well-known account of Jesus and the woman at the well at Sychar is full of themes. At one level these have to do with the woman: why had she come to the well at noon? Is she 'flirting with Jesus'? How did Jesus know her life situation? She has had five husbands and the man who lives with her now is not her husband. Is there a hint of a link between the five marriages and the fact that the Samaritans only recognize five books of the Bible? In the background lies the scriptural witness of a number of betrothal scenes that happened at the site of wells. This domestic situation leads into a discussion on true worship and the rival claims of the Samaritans and Jews. The prophetic literature would often liken the relationship between God and the people of Israel to a 'marriage' – and, at times they have worshipped falsely and 'played the harlot'.

This exchange then turns on the imagery of water. Jesus himself is tired and thirsty – and, obviously hungry, for the disciples had gone into the city to buy food. The woman has come to draw water from a well that reaches back deep into their ancestry. The contrast is made between the water from the well (which will need to be drawn time and time again) and the 'living water' that Jesus will give becomes water that will gush up to

eternal life. The woman does not fully understand Jesus' words – in a way similar to Nicodemus' uncertainty around the imagery of needing to be born from above. She will only be able to receive the Jesus offers of living water once her own immediate needs have been overcome. Jesus advises the woman that the historic tensions between Jew and Samaritan will eventually count for nothing as 'the hour is coming' when worship of God will not be on this mountain, nor the Temple, but in spirit and truth.

The encounter then begins to turn on the recurring theme in John of who Jesus is. Initially the woman had referred to him as a 'Jew greater than ... Jacob' and then a 'prophet'. He is a 'man' and a 'rabbi'. She knows that the 'messiah is coming'. In the midst of this exchange we have the first of the claims Jesus makes about himself using the formula of 'I am': in this instance, he is 'the one who is speaking to you' and as such is the Messiah who is called the Christ.

The woman is the first to bear witness to who Jesus is – after John the Baptist's testimony. Whereas in the other gospels Jesus may pass through Samaritan territory quickly, in the account he stays for two days: the Samaritans listen to him and declare him to be 'the Saviour of the world'.

### On-line resources:

#### (i). Music:

Sam Cooke and the Soul Stirrers 'Jesus gave me water'.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jNfpA5IZDeU>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=slxQ8FG2Zhg>

Bob Dylan 'Jesus met the woman at the well'.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q4m4DtHdn64>

Peter, Paul and Mary 'Jesus met the woman at the well'.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fan\\_Ew1OaFA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fan_Ew1OaFA)

Olivia Lane, 'Woman at the well'.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JVfl1b2aK64>

Robin Mark, 'As the deer pants for water'.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FBppKZ0eJIQ>

Charlotte Church, 'Guide me, O thou great redeemer'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4XSHiggeXgw>

Harry Secombe and Treorchy Male Choir,

'Guide me, O thou great redeemer'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dm93QW08yZQ>

Wales v England, 'Bread of heaven'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ahm7j4IL15U>

#### (ii). On film

The Chosen <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ordhsDeAt60>

#### (iii). Bible and Theology:

Faith in Focus, Elizabeth Johnson on female images of God in the Bible

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wkGM8rWVF80>

Dorothy Lee, The Ministry of Women in the New Testament.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bQZHA5-vmyY&t=768s>

Harold Attridge,

The Gospel of John – Jesus and 'Photina': Yale Bible Study.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dcJMOzolZk0>

#### (iv). Water:

Mayo Health Clinic, Water: Essential for your body

<https://www.mayoclinichealthsystem.org/hometown-health/speaking-of-health/water-essential-to-your-body>

Sydney Water <https://www.sydneywater.com.au>

The water cycle and climate change

<https://scied.ucar.edu/learning-zone/climate-change-impacts/water-cycle-climate-change>

NASA, Understanding Air and Water

<https://sealevel.jpl.nasa.gov/ocean-observation/understanding-climate/air-and-water/>

*Yours in Christ,  
Clive*



## PEOPLE NEWS

Anne Oliver

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

## Ecumenical Prayer Cycle 12—18 March



*Scandinavia: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden*

**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](http://www.stmatthewsuniting.net.au)

**Click on the metal dove image / publications.**

## Congregation Meeting

Join us for a congregation meeting on **19 March at 10.45am** following the 9.30am worship service.

This is a great opportunity to catch up with friends from all worship services and to keep up to date with what is happening at St. Matthew's.

Following our meeting will be a time of sharing with a meal. If you are interested in staying for lunch, please provide a plate of ready to serve finger food to share.

Looking forward to seeing you all there.

Barbara Gibb

## MARCH SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES at the church

12 March - 8am, 9.30am & 6.45pm  
19 March - 8am, 9.30am & 6.45pm  
26 March - 8am, 9.30am & 6.45pm

*Live streaming for 8am and 9.30am services only*

## MYSTERY MORNING TEA

**WHEN:** 12th March  
straight after the  
9:30 service

**ALL WELCOME!**

**WHERE:** St Matthew's  
Uniting Church  
Baulkham Hills

Morning tea  
supplied

**ST MATTHEW'S UNITING  
CHURCH** By Evelyn

Hi everyone,

We are excited to be putting on our first special morning tea for 2023 with a 'Mystery' morning tea on the **12th March** after the **9.30am service**.

We hope to see you there to share some tasty treats and to have a chance to enjoy a longer chat.

If you would like to cook or create something, please email me at [nones81@gmail.com](mailto:nones81@gmail.com).

With many thanks from  
*Noni and the family team.*



**The days, location and times are:**

**Tuesday** in the church at 11:00am

**Thursday** on line (ZOOM) at 7:30pm

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

Please contact church office for study notes

**Sunday** in church during the 6:45pm service

**The dates in March are:**

**Tuesdays** 7<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>

**Thursdays** 9<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>

**Sundays** 12<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> April

## The Passion of St Matthew

*Our Lenten study this year will take place throughout March. This is an important season in the church's life as we make ready for Easter. There will be three different times in which you can participate.*

The studies will be led by Clive Pearson and Mike Strong; they will include works of art as well as musical references.

We will be following through on Matthew's account of the passion and resurrection.

1. Setting the Stage (Matthew 26:1-46)
2. Trials and denials (Matthew 26:47-27:31)
3. Crucified (Matthew 27:32-66)
4. Risen (Matthew 28:1-20)

A Guide to St Matthew's Passion (Bach)

James Gilchrist

King's College Choir

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=591fCQvRjmo&t=112s>



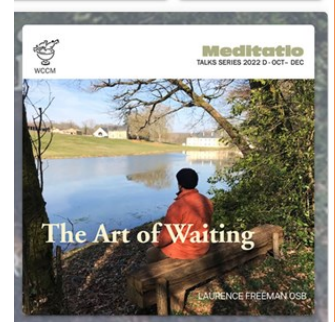
## Meditation Talks Series beginning on the first Tuesday in April

Tuesdays at 9.30am—11am at the church

All are welcome

**"The Art of Waiting"**

By Laurence Freeman OSB



These talks invite us to understand patience as an essential condition for spiritual growth. The ability to be fully present to the moment that we are in, without the need for answers or control, is the poverty of spirit that allows God's power to manifest in our lives. In a culture accustomed to speed and instant outcomes, this insight presents a challenge. Laurence Freeman says we need to relearn the art of waiting through the practice of meditation. The twice-daily discipline of reciting the mantra without expectations teaches us gradually to just be in the present moment, giving God the space to do his transforming work in us.

- Week 1—Conditions for Breakthrough
- Week 2—The Art of Waiting
- Week 3—God is waiting for us
- Week 4—Conversion
- Week 5—Fruits of the Spirit & Divinisation
- Week 6—Unified Consciousness
- Week 7—State of Assurance
- Week 8—The last stage of saying the Mantra
- Week 9—Beatitudes; The new way of Being

Enq: Katherine Pedersen 0437 772 011, Rosemary Sexton

# Blankets for Refugees

We are collecting blankets for Ukrainian refugees, some who have arrived in Australia and some who are in Poland. A lady whose family in Poland is supporting the refugees is organising a shipment of clothes and would like to include blankets. Her group is also supporting refugees who have arrived in Australia.



If you have any spare woolen blankets that you would like to donate please drop them in to the Op Shop. They can be in any condition as they can be washed and mended if needed.

Contact Pamela Leslie 0404 023 588 or Amanda Manson 0407 221 374

*Being prepared  
for next week's  
worship:*

**19 March**

**Theme:  
Lent 4**

**Truth to  
Power**

**Sunday**

**19 March:**

**8am**

**9.30am**

**6.45pm**

**Bible Readings:**

**1 Samuel 16: 1-13  
John 9: 1-41**



It can be very difficult to make a stand for what is right and declare truth to power. It takes courage: there are risks aplenty. That is especially the case when there is a regime change in place; the same is true when those who hold power are faced with an alternative voice and vision.

In the case of Samuel he is confronted with the withdrawal of the Lord's support for Saul, the first king. Samuel had anointed Saul. As king Saul had embarked upon many victorious campaigns but he then failed to perform the necessary rites and lost God's favour. The focus is on Samuel: he is to oversee, in a manner of speaking, a change in kings (as is indicated through the command to fill his horn with oil). He knows only too well that there is potential here for Saul to have him put to death. The elders of Bethlehem are well aware of how dangerous the time is: they ask whether Samuel comes 'peaceably'. Samuel sets in place the steps by which David will replace Saul.

In the gospel of John we have another 'sign' and another one of those 'I am' sayings—this time, 'I am the light of the world'. The controversy with the Pharisees arises out of the healing of man blind from birth. The default understanding that is current, it seems, is that either the man or his parents must have sinned. Jesus refutes that understanding in favour of a reading whereby God's healing works (rather than that of judgement) can be seen in the man regaining sight. The evidence of the man being able to see is now before his neighbours but they are unsure if it is him, or 'someone like him'.

The complaint against Jesus is intensified because this healing took place in the Sabbath. The issue at stake becomes one of whether 'this man' (Jesus) is from God or not: some argue that he cannot be because he does not properly observe the Sabbath. Under questioning the man born blind has to make a stand for what he believes to be right, despite the skepticism of some neighbours and the inquest of the Pharisees. He believes Jesus must be a 'prophet'; his parents testify to the Pharisees that the man had been born blind. The parents are under pressure and are fearful that if they say Jesus is the Messiah, then they will be 'put out of the synagogue'. The blind man is of age and must speak for himself. More pressure is brought to bear upon him but he does not relent on what he knows. He concludes that 'this man' must be from God; he pays a price for the Pharisees 'drive him out'. They justify their actions on the ground that the man was born entirely in sin (witness his blindness and the common understanding) and he now tries to teach those well versed in Scripture and the law.

Jesus hears what happens: he seeks the man out who confesses that he believes Jesus to be 'the son of man'. Some of the Pharisees are at hand: they hear the conversation between Jesus and the blind man. It concludes with the warning that some who see may be blind and remain in sin.

# *News from the Finance Committee*

## *Church Budget 2023/24*

Here we are in March already! The Finance Committee will soon be commencing work on the church budget for the next financial year. Groups and committees at St Matthew's should start estimating their budgets for the next financial year. During March, Amanda from the Finance Committee will again be contacting leaders of groups and committees to gather their budget information so that the church budget can be compiled.

## *Roof Fundraising*

The loans for the new roof are in two parts, the Schofield Loan and the repayment to Presbytery. The total of both loans is currently \$1500 per month. The repayment to Presbytery is a variable interest loan and is subject to interest rate fluctuations. The Finance Committee gratefully acknowledges the extra contributions that church members are giving via PushPay or by extra cash offerings, in a separate labelled envelope, to help with repaying these loans.

A Schofield Loan is a low-interest loan available to Uniting Church organisations for repairs to church buildings and manse properties and for installing solar power. Established in 1898, Schofield Loans were created following a bequest from the late Reverend William Schofield, who died in 1878 and left a sum of £22,000 in his will to be employed as a perpetual loan fund for churches. We are most grateful for the foresight of Reverend Schofield.

## *New Members of the Finance Committee*

Are you interested in helping to guide the financial decisions for St Matthew's? St Matthew's Finance Committee is actively seeking new members. We meet on the first Wednesday in February, May, August and November, to review the previous quarter's financial accounts and to make suggestions and decisions on financial matters occurring within our church. We also have a special meeting in mid-June to finalise the church budget for the following financial year. If you are interested, please make yourself known to Dom or Alastair or any of the other members of the Finance Committee.

Best wishes

Dom Schuster and Alastair Burn