



st. matthew's  
**UNITING CHURCH**  
**BAULKHAM HILLS**  
growing together

## Weekly Newsletter

16 April 2023

**Easter 2**

### Bible Readings



**Acts 2:22-36**

**Matthew 28:11-15**

*Response after Bible Readings*

**Leader:** Hear the word of the Lord

**Response:** Thanks be to God

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**

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

**9.30am—Worship**  
Led by Hugh Darling  
and Clive Pearson  
**KUCA** in recess

**6.45pm—Worship**  
Led by Abbey Sim  
and Alexander Lawless

Thank you for worshipping with us today.

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

#### MONDAY 17 APRIL

**9am Sorting & Pricing for**  
**Op Shop** lower hall

#### TUESDAY 18 APRIL

**9am-2pm—Op Shop**

**9.30-11am—Christian Meditation**  
in the Church

**7.30pm—Property Committee**  
**meeting** in community room

#### WEDNESDAY 19 APRIL

**9am-2pm—Op Shop**

**10am-12pm—In Stitches**  
upstairs hall

**10am-12pm—Men's Morning Tea**  
McKell's Café Circa Shopping Centre  
Norwest

#### THURSDAY 20 APRIL

**9am-2pm—Op Shop**

**7.30pm—Pastoral care meeting**

#### FRIDAY 21 APRIL

No Scheduled Activities

#### SATURDAY 22 APRIL

**KUCA Campout**

### SUNDAY 23 APRIL

**8am—Worship**

**9.30am—Worship**

**KUCA Campout**



**5pm—Shine**

**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 BAULKHAM HILLS 1755

**WEB SITE:** www.stmatthewsuniting.net.au  
**Weekly newsletter available on website**

**EMAIL:** office@stmatthewsuniting.net.au

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SONALI WANIGESEKERA

PO Box 321 BAULKHAM HILLS 2153

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Thank you to all who have  
contributed to this publication.

# Easter 2 *Competing Truths*

16 April

**Acts 2:22-36 Matthew 28:11-15**

The Easter observances invariably get caught up in a mish mash of images and habits: think Hot Cross Buns, Easter eggs, the Easter Bunny—then throw in Easter holidays, Easter shows and don't forget to add in the Muslim observance of Ramadan and the Jewish celebration of Passover. Imagery and symbolism overload! In the midst of all this the Christian faith wrestles with an 'idle tale' (Luke) told by the women who made their way to the tomb: Jesus is risen.

The Christian faith depends on the resurrection. It is an extraordinary claim. It leaves me wondering whether you encountered anyone over this past week who does not share your faith and challenges you with a counter-claim. What nonsense is this? Are you not deluded? There are some atheist writers like Christopher Hitchens and Richard Dawkins who are not averse to such statements. But it is probably more likely that the Christian claim that Christ is risen is by-passed, not talked about, ignored in a culture of indifference. That is a pity. Perhaps a dialogue, a debate, some explicit counter-claims might lead to a stimulating discussion. Perhaps those of us in the Christian faith would be able to heed the call found in 1 Peter that summons us 'to give an account of the hope that is within us'. (By way of an aside that is one of my favourite texts, an organizing text).

There is no description in Matthew of the encounter that took place between the two Marys and the disciples. It is simply glossed over. Instead Matthew turns his attention to a rumour that 'is still told among the Judeans to this day'—meaning the time he is writing his gospel. This is a mainly Christian community needing to understand how Christ is a fulfilment of scripture as well as determining where the boundary line with the ongoing worship at the synagogue lies. There is a parting of the ways. This point of tension can be seen in the two readings that have been brought together. Neither were set down in the lectionary. The two of them placed alongside each other, nevertheless, help illustrate the difference.

The Matthew passage is peculiar to this gospel. It is not told in any of the others. It follows on from the secret meeting that the Jewish leaders had had with Pilate: they had expressed their fear that the disciples would steal the body and say that Jesus had been raised. They had requested that a guard be placed at the tomb.

The guards now take their leave of the tomb. Their departure marks the beginning of this parting of the ways; The women had left to tell the disciples that the risen Jesus would meet with them in Galilee. The guards make their way to the priests (and not Pilate); they assemble the elders. How might they hear the guards' news? The

Pharisees believed in the resurrection; the Sadducees / the priests did not. The way in which the story unfolds it shows that they are still fearful of the response of Pilate and the Romans. Their position is this compromised. And so alternative accounts constructed: the body was stolen by the disciples.

The guards are to say that they were 'asleep'. Being asleep is both a need in Matthew's gospel but is also a metaphor for not being awake and being able to notice the coming of Christ / the kingdom. They are paid for their deceit—the comparison can be made with Judas who was paid for his betrayal.

Peter's confession takes place after the day of Pentecost in the book of Acts. It is the first time that the Christian faith presents itself in the form of an address to 'fellow Jews and all who live in Jerusalem'. Peter openly declares that 'God has God raised him up, having released him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for him to be held in its power'. Furthermore, those whom the crowd think were 'drunk' are actually 'witnesses' to his having been raised up.

## Easter Music

Cassandra and Callahan Star Easter Hallelujah  
(based on Leonard Cohen's Hallelujah)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dszpVNJKIM>

The Sheehan Family 'Christ is Risen' / Kriste Aghdha  
(Georgian Paschal Hymn)  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uzfOnj\\_Dhcc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uzfOnj_Dhcc)

Orthodox Quarantine Virtual Choir 'Christ is Risen'  
<https://artandtheology.org>

Taverener, 'When the sabbath was passed'.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pTLx7aL7dIQ>

SFDS Choir and Friends, 'I will rise'  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VD4joM7INws>

'Christ is alive' (organ only)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FS4n-JidZYM>

(congregation)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GRQoeitN5nA>

The Spiritual Choir, 'Resurrection' / the Easter Project  
(Lambeth Palace)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kmBZsFLxXh8>

## A Short Easter Day Service During Covid (2020).

Archbishop of Canterbury from the kitchen;  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rfkVhZr2MHg>

*Yours in Christ,  
Clive*





## PEOPLE NEWS

Rosalie Cameron

Doreen Philbrick

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

## Ecumenical Prayer Cycle 16—22 April



*Belarus, Moldova, Russia, Ukraine*

## All St. Matthew's Groups Leaders

We are currently updating our 2023 details for all St. Matthew's groups. Group leaders please send your group information to the church office by 15 April. This includes

- name of group
- description of group
- meeting days, times & place
- position holders and titles
- current members

*Many thanks*



## 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 woollen 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

## APRIL SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES

*at the church*

2 April - 8am, 9.30am & 6.45pm  
*includes Communion*

9 April - 8am, 9.30am & 6.45pm

16 April - 8am, 9.30am & 6.45pm

23 April - 8am, 9.30am & 6.45pm

30 April - 8am, 9.30am & 6.45pm

*Live streaming continues for 8am & 9.30am services only*

## Newcomers - and how we make them feel welcome and included at St. Matthew's

I am collecting recollections from people about their own experiences as a newcomer here at St. Matthews. That's when they first came to St. Matthews and as they settled into our church family.

If you would like your own story to be included in a small booklet for newcomers please send me just a paragraph about your experience, when you first arrived at St. Matthew's and then as you got to feel at home here. You might like to include why you stay.

We are currently reviewing all our processes for making sure newcomers are always welcomed well!

Please email your paragraph to Judy Mann as soon as you can at:

[judyruithmann@gmail.com](mailto:judyruithmann@gmail.com)

or ring or text Judy with your story on:  
0414 591 548



**Please  
return  
completed  
forms by  
30 April**

## Worship Roster Non Availability Forms for June, July & August 2023 FOR BOTH MORNING SERVICES

are available in the church foyer.

An email will be sent out next week with a electronic copy. New helpers welcome.



Please return forms to the blue mail tray or church office.

# Katherine Pedersen Open Garden

## Dates for APRIL

Wednesday mornings of 19 & 26 April at 9.30am- 12noon

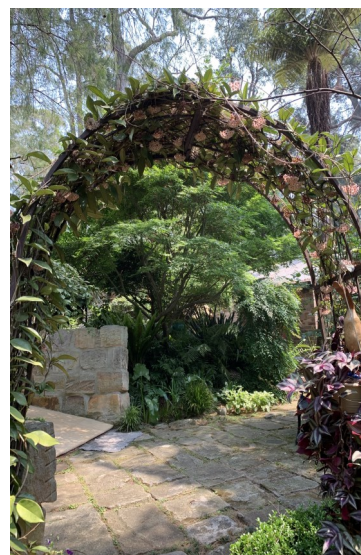
Saturday afternoons of 1st, 22 & 29 April at 1.30pm-3.30pm

## Dates for May

Wednesday mornings of 3, 10 & 31 May at 9.30am- 12noon

Friday afternoon of 12 May at 1.30pm-3.30pm

Saturday afternoons of 6 May at 1.30pm-3.30pm



**Up to 8 people can visit on any open day.**

\$10 adults 18 years and over includes drink and sweet or savoury offering of the day.

\$5 school children to 18 years includes drink and sweet or savoury offering of the day.

**(Children must be constantly supervised by their parents or carers and follow the Instructions for their safety.)**

**Cash is required for payment and some extra as there are plants for sale**

**Visitors must be physically able to walk down 100metres including a couple of hills. There is Water, steps, trip hazards, wildlife in the garden .**

The garden will be open at various times each month of this year, sometimes on other days of the week.

**For bookings and enquiries, please contact the owners, Gary and Katherine Pedersen, [kathped56@gmail.com](mailto:kathped56@gmail.com)**

This initiative is a fundraiser to assist with the cost of replacing the St. Matthew's roofing.



Common Grace (the interdenominational Christian social justice advocacy organisation I work for) is running a training event on **Saturday, April 29 from 10am to 12:30pm at Northside Baptist Church in Crows Nest**, around the Voice to Parliament.

The training will be conducted by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Christian leaders. Common Grace is advocating for a Yes vote in the anticipated referendum and for implementing the Uluru Statement from the Heart in full.

The event is free and registrations are through [https://www.listentotheheart.org.au/sydney\\_training\\_event](https://www.listentotheheart.org.au/sydney_training_event).

Abbey Sim

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

**23 April**

**Theme:  
Easter 3**

***'So I Send You'***

**Sunday**

**23 April:**

**8am**

**9.30am**

**6.45pm**

**Bible Readings:**

**1 Peter 2:4-10**

**John 20:19-31**



The way in which the gospel of John gives an account of the resurrection is very different from what we find in Matthew. Here we have the disciples still in Jerusalem. They are fearful. It is the evening of the first day. Placed alongside Matthew's story there is no hint yet of them heeding the advice of the women and making their way to Galilee where they will see Jesus: instead Jesus appears to them, even though 'the doors were locked'. One week later (when Jesus again appears to them) they are still in Jerusalem. This particular incident with the locked doors has often led to debates over whether the resurrection of Jesus was physical or spiritual. It so happens that both possibilities are represented in the combined resurrection narratives. The sceptical response is made by Thomas [the Twin]: we are not told why, but he was not present when Jesus appeared to the other disciples in this way.

In this encounter with the risen Christ he does not tell the disciples to not be afraid—though that is what they are. Instead he bids them 'peace'. He does so on more than one occasion. In terms of witness Jesus shows them the wounds on his hands and side: that is a gesture that seeks to confirm that he is the one who is crucified and that he is now raised. That witness is further emphasized later when Thomas is invited to overcome his reluctance to believe by putting his finger here and his hand there to see the wounds made by the nails. Thomas is known through history as 'doubting Thomas' but actually he is the

first one to acknowledge that Jesus is not simply the Lord but 'my God'.

The tradition in which John writes is very different from the first three synoptic gospels. The tendency is to write from the perspective of the son who is already back in the presence of God. The outline of his public ministry is designed to show through a series of 'signs' and 'I am' sayings who he truly is. This reading concludes with an intimation of 'many signs' that have not been described 'in this book'. The purpose of these signs in general to nurture the belief that 'Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God' so that you may have 'life in his name'.

There is no need then for an ascension or Pentecost. These things are already assumed. So in this locked room Jesus effectively merges together in this first evening of the resurrection John's equivalent of the Pentecost and the great commission. Rather than tongues of fire and speaking in different languages—and the crowd of onlookers thinking they are drunk—Jesus breathes on them so that they might 'receive the Holy Spirit'. The commission is, in effect, to continue the ministry on the basis of who is the one who sends them. Jesus refers back to how he was sent and now he sends them. There is no reference to going to all nations, baptizing and teaching (as in Matthew). The core of their being sent is to forgive sins.



## **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