



Faith - Part 1

A small group of people were sharing together about faith. It seemed each person wasn't aware they were using this vital word in different ways. While it is a specifically religious word, it also is a common word in the wider community. For example, the adventurer had faith that he could climb the mountain, the distressed person had faith that it would all work out, and the architect had faith the building would hold up in cyclonic winds. In the Bible there are at least five particular ways that the word faith is used. Abraham is declared to be righteous by faith, Jesus tells blind Bartimeus, the ten lepers and the woman who touched the hem of his robe, that "their faith had made them whole". Paul declares that through our faith in Jesus our relationship with God is restored by God, and in Hebrews Jesus is the "pioneer and perfecter of our faith".

Some years ago I decided not to use the word faith for a while because it was such a loaded term and could have quite different meanings. It forced me to look for other words that could be used in place of faith. It was helpful to find other words and their limitations.

In June the lectionary readings are focused on the season of Pentecost – the next 26 Sundays all in all. The overall theme is 'how do the people of God live the Christian life?' It is the call to live the life of faith. The word and its meaning is so central that either the word faith or some near equivalent needs to be used.

The word 'trust' gets close, but also can lead astray. Faith is a special form of trust. Trust is used as a verb, so it is not only personal trust, but where that trust is placed. Faith is trust placed in something. And the key to trust is the something where that trust is placed.

In the common uses of the word trust, the focus is usually on what we ourselves are able to do. In the previous examples it is our ability to climb the mountain, come through the distress, and depend upon what was built. While that is OK it doesn't come within a bull's roar of how trust is used in the Bible. There the emphasis is on trusting the Lord, for the vital matter is not to trust in oneself but to trust beyond oneself. Paul is the one who puts this most directly. His words provide the most complete summary of the New Testament use of trust (or belief, or faith). It is the trust in God who raised our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead. The person trusting is principally focused on what happened as they trusted in God's action bringing forgiveness and new life. They are not lead astray to just focus on themselves.

It is so encouraging to hear a person sharing how God in Christ has freed them from their previous life to live alive in the presence of God. This is the clear centre of the biblical story. **In trust and thus faith we are living in the reality of what God has done.** In the New Testament the key is that faith is in the faithfulness of God.

Response. I invite you to listen in on yourself and others as you use the word faith. Where is the emphasis in the sharing? Is faith a window word into the reality of God? Further reading. Romans 4:20-5:5, Hebrews 11:1-3; 12:1-2

Dean Drayton

SHINE in the Philippines

SHINE, a friendship group of special needs people, has been supporting close to 500 children in the Philippines on the islands of Panay and Guimaras.

The small villages of Bilidan, Damires and Ravina as well as a special needs school and the local government hospital have been excited when the freight boxes arrive crammed with shoeboxes containing all manner of goodies.

Goodies that allow them to have all they need to study at school, toiletries to keep healthy and no gift is complete without a treat, a doll, a ball, a toy car or plane, a puzzle or two.



The gang from SHINE works really hard to make sure that all their friends across the sea know that they are remembered and the boxes are packed with love each year with a signed card included.

During the COVID pandemic, our friends were hit hard, no work, no pensions, massive isolation! SHINE and St Matts made sure the boxes still arrived.

The message from one mum said it all. Translated from her native dialect..." We were all depressed, even the kids, then this came to our small place from people in Australia. It gave us hope. Even the kids were happy again."

From then on the gifts to that area became known as "*A Box of Hope*".

Another of our contacts told me that she had taken small, new toys to thirty children living on the river bank. She told me that these precious children thought they had received a blessing from God because they had each been given a toy and that toy was new!!

St. Matt's have supported this initiative from the beginning with donations of all sorts coming in. The Op Shop has been a major supporter finding all sorts of treasures that are carefully put aside for "our kids" others have been amazingly generous in popping goodies in the box in the church foyer.

The mission has extended further with members of Warrah day program at Dural wrapping the shoe boxes for us in wonderfully bright papers. Group homes from Stanhope to Baulkham Hills have been part of the sorting and packing, and wonderful individuals who have little connection with us, sew, knit and collect for our kids.



SHINE meet monthly for all sorts of activities, a meal and if they want to, church service. The carers coming with our friends feel welcomed by the church.

Jane Cole

Welcoming everyone especially newcomers at St. Matthew's

Romans 15:7

'Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.'

At the beginning of the year Clive asked me to look at how we could improve the way we make everyone feel welcome at St. Matthew's and especially any newcomers. You have probably seen references to 'Newcomers' in the Weekly Newsletters.

Thirteen members at St. Matthew's have already generously shared their personal experiences of what it was like being new here at St. Matthew's and this **forms a little booklet** <https://stmatthewsuniting.net.au/assets/uploads/files/1687307522300-ucnewcomersebookleted2.pdf> that we share here with you all.

Over the past few months, a small team has been working away at updating our procedures for those of you that kindly assist as **Door Welcomers** at our morning services. This is a vitally important contact point for you all and also any visitors to our church. Welcoming all members, visitors and potential newcomers to St. Matthew's is core to who we are and say we are. So, if we pride ourselves on being 'friendly' and reaching out in friendship then, how can we continue?

Over the coming weeks you may see some welcoming suggestions in our Weekly Newsletter.

We would like everyone to consider these suggestions and try some to see if you like them. Please make more suggestions too, and of course let us know what you think.

And, we would love more people to help in the important role of **Door Welcomers** too. Maybe you and a friend who haven't done this role before might like to join our Door Welcomers.

Thank you to Sandra Gordon, Sandra Drayton and Barbara Fiedler for your kind and helpful contributions and hard work in developing our processes for welcoming everyone here at St. Matthew's. Judy Mann 0414 591 548 judy ruthmann@gmail.com

Matthew 25:40.

'And the King will answer them, "Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me."

Church Banners



We are looking for any interested people to help tidy, sort and create our church banners.

If you would like to be involved in this project, please

contact the office. We will contact you with a proposed date for meeting together to beginning this task.

Barbara Gibb



AGM
Annual General Meeting

CHURCH AGM SUNDAY 23 JULY

Our Annual General Meeting will be held on Sunday 23 July following a combined 9.00am 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.

This will be an opportunity to hear from our Focus Groups and our financed Committee.

There will time of fellowship after the meeting with a shared meal. If you are interested in staying for lunch, please provide a plate of ready to serve finger food to share.



Growing up in Singapore

Yee Cheng will present various aspects of her life experiences while growing up in her birth country of Singapore before arriving in Australia in 1984.



Guest Speaker
Yee Cheng Eldridge

Thursday
6 July
10am until 12noon

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

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



6.45pm Service community meals

Community Meal

Over the past few months, the 6.45pm congregation has been exploring different ways to develop our community. One of the ways we have done this is through a monthly community meal in which we gather together for dinner and discussion in place of our regular worship service.

These meals have given us a chance to connect with each other on a deeper level while also eating some amazing food.

The meal is provided by all members of the congregation as we each bring a dish to share with everyone. This makes for some interesting combinations, from Lasagne to soup to fried rice and chocolate cake, you never know what we will be eating.

If you would like to join in, our community meals happen each month on the second Sunday. This month's meal will be on 9th July. Feel free to contact me if you would like more details.

Daniel Gibb

Jesus said,
"Come to me,
all you who are
weary and
burdened,
and I will
give you rest."

A small, quiet group
are here to pray for
your needs.

Whatever your faith,
you are truly welcome.

Care and Prayer

All Welcome

3pm

on the first Monday
of each month
at St. Matthew's

February to November

Next Date: July 3rd



**Saturday
1 July**

9am-12pm

Pre-loved
Household Items,
Electrical, Toys & Books
(Fiction, Non-fiction & Children's Books)

St. Matthew's Lower Hall

St. Matthew's
Boulevard Hills United Church
"Growth Together"

**Women's Fellowship
Wednesday 12th July
@ 10am**



*Auction - Jane is going to talk
about her trip*

All ladies are welcome to join with us in a
relaxed and friendly time together.

Enquires: Dulcie Duncum



**MEN'S MORNING TEA
Wednesday 19th July**

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.



CHRISTIAN MEDITATION

You are invited to come along to the
church on

**Tuesdays at 9.30am—11am
All are welcome**

"The important aim in Christian meditation is
to allow God's mysterious and silent
presence within us to become more and more
not only a reality but the reality which gives
meaning, shape and purpose to everything
we do, everything we are"

John Main.

www.WCCM.org
www.christianmeditationaustralia.org

The World Community for Christian
Meditation (WCCM)

Katherine Pedersen. Facilitator of the Tuesday
9.30am sessions. and for information.

kathped56@gmail.com

Recycling Appeal

St. Matthew's Community
Engagement Focus Group
will be collecting
glass and plastic
bottles as well as
cans for this year
again.



We have raised \$83.60
so far! Thank you to
everyone who has
participated in this initiative.

The money raised will be donated to various
organisations who support women and children
who have been affected by domestic violence.
Plastic and glass bottles need to have their
barcode and plastic wrapper still attached.
Cans should be left uncrushed as the machine
needs to read the barcode.
We appreciated all the donations and look
forward to a successful year.

Thank you



**JULY
Meeting
Dates
5 & 19**

1st, 3rd & 5th Wednesdays
of the month in the upstairs church hall.
10.00am to 12.00pm
Bring your craft along to do.

Share fun and fellowship with other crafty ladies.
Morning Tea supplied. Enquiries: Jane Cole

Calendar of Events for July 2023

School Holidays

Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday Sunday

<div>31</div> <div>9am Sorting & Pricing for Op Shop lower hall</div> <div></div>	<div>st. matthew's UNITING CHURCH BAULKHAM HILLS</div> <div>growing together</div> <div></div>				<div>1</div> <div>9am-12pm Op Shop</div> <div>9am-12pm Mini Mart lower hall</div> <div></div>	<div>2</div> <div>8am Worship</div> <div>9.30am—Worship KUCA in recess</div> <div>6.45pm—Worship includes Communion</div> <div></div>
<div>3</div> <div>9am Sorting & Pricing for Op Shop lower hall</div> <div></div> <div>3pm Care and Prayer In the church</div> <div></div>	<div>4</div> <div>9am-2pm Op Shop</div> <div>9.30–11am Christian Meditation in the Church</div> <div></div> <div></div>	<div>5</div> <div>9am-2pm Op Shop</div> <div>10am-12pm In Stitches upstairs hall</div> <div></div> <div></div>	<div>6</div> <div>9am-2pm Op Shop</div> <div>10am-12pm Coffee & Discovery</div> <div>Speaker: Yee Cheng Eldridge</div> <div></div> <div></div>	<div>7</div> <div>No scheduled events</div>	<div>8</div> <div>No Scheduled Events</div>	<div>9</div> <div>8am Worship</div> <div>9am—Worship @ the Willow's</div> <div>9.30am—Worship KUCA in recess</div> <div>6.45pm—Worship</div> <div></div>
<div>10</div> <div>9am Sorting & Pricing for Op Shop lower hall</div> <div></div>	<div>11</div> <div>9am-2pm Op Shop</div> <div>9.30–11am Christian Meditation in the Church</div> <div>7.30pm Thrive Bible Study lower hall</div> <div></div> <div></div>	<div>12</div> <div>9am-2pm Op Shop</div> <div>10am-12noon Women's Fellowship in the upstairs hall & church</div> <div></div> <div></div>	<div>13</div> <div>9am-2pm Op Shop</div> <div></div>	<div>14</div> <div>No scheduled events</div>	<div>15</div> <div>No scheduled events</div>	<div>16</div> <div>8am Worship</div> <div>9.30am—Worship KUCA in recess</div> <div>6.45pm—Worship</div> <div></div>
<div>17</div> <div>9am Sorting & Pricing for Op Shop lower hall</div> <div></div>	<div>18</div> <div>9am-2pm Op Shop</div> <div>9.30–11am Christian Meditation in the Church</div> <div></div> <div></div>	<div>19</div> <div>9am-2pm Op Shop</div> <div>10am-12noon Men's Morning Tea McKels Café Bella Vista.</div> <div>10am-12pm In Stitches upstairs hall</div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div>	<div>20</div> <div>9am-2pm Op Shop</div> <div></div>	<div>21</div> <div>10am— Upper hall in use by Preschool</div>	<div>22</div> <div>No scheduled events</div>	<div>23</div> <div>9am— Worship KUCA Preschool, Years K-2 & Years 3-8</div> <div>Followed by Church AGM Followed by lunch</div> <div>5pm—Shine</div> <div>6.45pm—Worship</div> <div></div>
<div>24</div> <div>9am Sorting & Pricing for Op Shop lower hall</div> <div></div>	<div>25</div> <div>9am-2pm Op Shop</div> <div>9.30–11am Christian Meditation in the Church</div> <div>7.30pm Thrive Bible Study lower hall</div> <div></div> <div></div>	<div>26</div> <div>9am-2pm Op Shop</div> <div></div>	<div>27</div> <div>9am-2pm Op Shop</div> <div></div>	<div>28</div> <div>5pm-7pm Fusion Youth Group upstairs hall</div>	<div>29</div> <div>No scheduled events</div>	<div>30</div> <div>8am Worship</div> <div>9.30am—Worship KUCA Preschool, Years K-2 & Years 3-8</div> <div>6.45pm—Worship</div> <div></div>

EMAIL: director@stmatthewsps.net.au

For your support of God's work here at St. Matthew's, a big thank you!

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

EMAIL: director@stmatthewsps.net.au