



st. matthew's
UNITING CHURCH
BAULKHAM HILLS 
 growing together

Weekly Newsletter

10 September 2023

Pentecost 15

Bible Reading

Matthew 18: 15-20
Romans 13: 8-14

Response after Bible Readings

Leader: *Hear the word of the Lord*

Response: *Thanks be to God*



8am—Worship

Led by Mike Strong
 and Rosalie Clarke

9am—Worship @ the Willow's

9.30am—Worship

Led by Hugh Darling
 and Rosalie Clarke

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

6.45pm—Worship

Led by Daniel Gibb
 and Chris Eagles

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 11 SEPTEMBER

9am—Sorting & Pricing
for Op Shop lower hall

TUESDAY 12 SEPTEMBER

9am-2pm—Op Shop
9.30am—Christian Meditation
 in the church

WEDNESDAY 13 SEPTEMBER

9am-2pm—Op Shop
10am-12pm—Women's
Fellowship upstairs hall

THURSDAY 14 SEPTEMBER

9am-2pm—Op Shop
7.30pm-9pm—
"Is Global Warming Real?
Am I Not Your Neighbour?"
 at the church

FRIDAY 15 SEPTEMBER

No Scheduled Events

SATURDAY 16 SEPTEMBER

No Scheduled Events

SUNDAY 17 SEPTEMBER

8am—Worship

9.30am—Worship

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

6.45pm—Worship



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
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Thank you to all who have
 contributed to this publication.

Lectionary Notes

Pentecost 15 September 10

Exodus 12:1-14

This is the crunch time. Moses, directed by God, confronted Pharaoh with God's word to let the persecuted and enslaved people of Israel go from Egypt. Instead Pharaoh imposed harsher conditions upon the people. Over 9 chapters the confrontation escalates. God sends a series of plagues. Each time Pharaoh hardens his heart. After nine plagues God prepares the Israelites for a last and decisive event. This event is predicted earlier in Chapter 4 (some time after the burning bush) when it was safe for Moses to return from Midian to Egypt.

So Moses took his wife and his sons, put them on a donkey and went back to the land of Egypt (from Midian) and Moses carried the staff of God in his hand.

And the Lord said to Moses, "When you go back to Egypt, see that you perform before Pharaoh all the wonders that I have put in your power; but I will harden his heart, so that he will not let the people go.

Then you shall say to Pharaoh, "Thus says the Lord: Israel is my first born son. I said to you, 'Let my son go that he may worship me' But you refused to let him go; now I will kill your first born son." (Ex 4:20-23)

In this last terrible event, the Lord the Destroyer, passes through Egypt and all the first born sons of each family die, from Pharaoh's family, to the family of a prisoner in jail. The angel of death kills all except those who have the blood of a lamb on the lintel of the doorway. Forewarned by Moses, the angel of death passes over the blood soaked lintels of the people of Israel. Pharaoh relents - for a while and lets the Israelites go. The people are ready and go. This day is the first day of the month for a new exodus people, their national day ever after, when by God's act a new nation is created from an enslaved people, the family of Jacob. "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, the house of slavery." So begin the ten commandments."

In this creation of a new nation, the power of God faced down the power of the Egyptian Empire. This disturbing use of power by God has disturbed many ever since. Paul wrestles with this in Romans 9:14. Is there injustice on God's part? He answers by saying "God has mercy on whomever he chooses and he hardens the heart of whomever he chooses." And then "who are we as human beings to argue with God"; the clay calling in question the potter. For Paul this first Passover is only known through another Passover more than a thousand years later, the Passover that led to Jesus' death and resurrection. There the character of God is seen most clearly. In this Passover the Son of God is the place where death strikes. The blood of the Son of God was shed on a cross, and through him death itself is destroyed. The Lord the destroyer suffers destruction, to bring God's mercy to all.

Psalm 119:33-40

Another 8 verses reflecting hereon a letter in the Hebrew Alphabet; three verses speaking to the Lord, and five verses asking God to deflect us from that which does not reflect God's goodness.

Give me understanding, that I may keep your law and observe it with my whole heart. Lead me in the path of your commandments, for I delight in it.

Romans 13:8-14

The logic is quite clear. Love does no wrong to a neighbor: therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law. The commandments are quite clear about honouring God and honouring all others. "The commandments, 'You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not covet'; (and any other commandment), are summed up in this word, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"

Paul starts from the second of Jesus' commandments when it comes to living our life together in the church and in the community. Jesus spells out the first commandment, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart mind soul and strength." Paul is here spelling out the second in greater detail, "Love your neighbor as yourself."

Matthew 18:15-20

Two weeks ago in the Lectionary Commentary we heard there were only two passages in the gospels in which the life of the church is directly discussed in Jesus' ministry. In the first passage in Matthew the keys of the kingdom were given to Peter when he declared that Jesus is the Messiah, that is the one who brings in the kingdom of God. Whatever you (it is a plural you, so the church) bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

In today's passage, Matthew 18, the life of the church is discussed and once again the keys of the kingdom feature. A second time it is stated. Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. It is an important passage yet rarely is it commented upon or referred to.

For Josephus, writing contemporaneously with Matthew, binding and loosing meant decisions about banishing people from the community or returning people to it. In this divisive time after the destruction of the temple, the wisdom of Jesus was needed as the people met to decide who were or who were not members of the community. The decisions of the church were important. Since the decisions are also endorsed by heaven, for the passage indicates God will stand by the decisions of God's people.

What an important word for our time, when the church has recognised that much of what was bound in the past needs to be loosed. There is a new openness evident in the councils of the church and in congregations, a renewed awareness of being inclusive for men and women, for people of differing genders, and of other cultures. It is not enough to use the bible like a law book on one hand, or as a source of my individual opinions. We need to listen to the decisions of the church in the light of the biblical word, which is Jesus Christ. It is always important to be aware what the basis is for the decisions that denominations make, the decisions the Uniting Church makes.

This Matthew reading celebrates the importance of the community agreeing together, the reason why the Uniting Church seeks decisions by consensus. And the reading affirms as well, the discovery that where two or three are gathered together, we not forget Jesus' words, "I am there among you." While this passage addresses the importance of a clear process for the sins that can occur in a community of faith, next week, a parable of Jesus tempers the process in a remarkable way.

In grace and peace,

Dean



PEOPLE NEWS

Vivienne Strong
Graeme Gordon

Blake Wood
Noni Medcalf

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

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle 10 – 16 September

Ghana, Nigeria

SEPTEMBER SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES

at the church

3 September - 8am, 9.30am & 6.45pm
includes Communion

10 September - 8am, 9.30am & 6.45pm

17 September - 8am, 9.30am & 6.45pm

24 September - 8am, 9.30am & 6.45pm

Live streaming morning services only



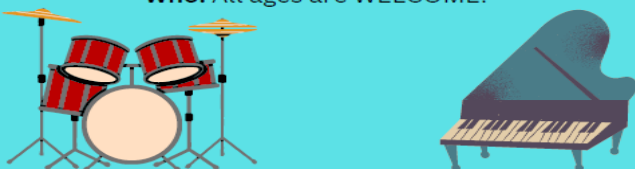
Come and join us each month for an evening of live music, dinner and fellowship.

When: Sep 17 and Oct 15 from 6-8pm

Where: Northmead Uniting Church, 3-7 Hammers Rd Northmead

Cost: Donations welcome for pot luck dinner

Who: All ages are WELCOME!



For more information contact Noni Medcalf: nones81@gmail.com

Am I Not Your Neighbour?

Is Global Warming Real?

Does Climate Change Matter?

Come and listen to Dr. Clive Pearson in conversation with Dr. Maina Talia

The theme of the neighbour is based on a reading of the parable of the Good Samaritan.

Thursday 14th September, 7:30 to 9:00 pm.

St Matthews Uniting Church, Baulkham Hills

Crn. Edgar & Charles St. BH

Maina Talia is a former co-chair of Global Indigenous Forum on Climate Change, author, climate activist. Maina has participated in every COP conference since Paris 2015; he has organized numerous workshops; addressed the German Parliament; been reported in major Australian and overseas newspapers. He recently completed his doctoral thesis on the situation in Tuvalu: three of the world's leading theologians on climate change believe his thesis should be published immediately.

RSVP: Email St. Matthew's Uniting Church office@stmatthewsuniting.net.au

Save the date

Rev Jon Humphries
Induction Service

3pm Sunday 15 October

at St. Matthew's Uniting Church

Please join Jon as he begins his ministry with us.

More details to follow.

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 or find in recent posts.

market stalls

HILLS FAIR TRADE MARKET

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SATURDAY 30th SEPTEMBER
10AM-2PM



all undercover at St Paul's Castle Hill

421 Old Northern Rd