



Bible Readings

9am Service

Jonah 3:1-5, 10

Mark 1:14-20

Response after Bible Readings

Leader: Hear the word of the Lord

Response: Thanks be to God



9am—Combined Worship

Led by Pamela Leslie
and Jon Humphries

KUCA In recess

5pm—Shine

6.45pm—Worship

Led by Abbey Sim
and Jon Humphries

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 9AM

**Livestreaming at
9am only**

Thank you for worshipping with us today.

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

MONDAY 22 JANUARY

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

TUESDAY 23 JANUARY

**9am—Sorting and Pricing for
Op Shop** lower hall
9.30am-11am—Christian Meditation
Community Room

WEDNESDAY 24 JANUARY

**9am—Sorting and Pricing for
Op Shop** lower hall
1pm-4pm—Upstairs Hall in use

THURSDAY 25 JANUARY

No Scheduled Activities

FRIDAY 26 JANUARY

**Australia Day
Public Holiday**

SATURDAY 27 JANUARY

No Scheduled Activities

**SUNDAY
28 JANUARY**

9am—Summer Worship

KUCA in recess

6.45pm—Worship



MINISTER

REV JON HUMPHRIES

Email: jon@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

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LOCATION:

CNR CHARLES & EDGAR STREETS
BAULKHAM HILLS

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Thank you to all who have
contributed to this publication.

Something to think about

21 January
3rd Sunday of After Epiphany

Lectionary Readings:

Jonah 3:1-5, 10
Psalm 62:5-12
1 Corinthians 7:29-31
Mark 1:14-20

After Epiphany

Things Change After Epiphany

This week in the Gospel reading of Mark 1: 14-20 Jesus comes and calls Simon and Andrew and then James and John to come and follow him. They literally leave what they are doing and who they are with and follow Jesus. This is pretty radical stuff. If it literally happened as it is told in Mark, then you can imagine the shock for the families, the shock for those reading this account. You might also be shocked, because if someone did something like that. Then, like me, you might be amazed and wonder if they knew what they were doing. When I told my parents that I was going to leave teaching to go into ordained ministry, whilst in the end they were happy and proud, their first reaction was to ask if I was sure. Radical changes in life to follow the call of God often seem questionable or strange to others.

Of course, did the four disciples know what they were doing? This kind of has two answers. Yes, they knew that they wanted to follow Jesus and that they chose to leave their lives as fishermen and leave their families, their way of life and their livelihood. This they knew that in that moment. However, I am fairly sure that they did not know what it truly meant, what would happen, or how things would end up or work out. I don't think that they probably even

really understood what Jesus was talking about, what he was asking them to do or what might happen next. It was truly an act of amazing faith.

In all this and the idea that Jesus told James and John that they would be made into "fishers of men," it is easy to overlook the first part of this passage and what Jesus proclaimed. We can sometimes get caught up in a focus on being called to mission or to prophetically proclaim the Gospel. Jesus came saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news." Even if we do take notice, I am not sure that we really understand or fully appreciate this. After all, we know what repent means, but do we actually comprehend a lot of the time what we are supposed to repent of and how we should be different having repented? Yet, the reason for repenting is to believe in the 'good news.' What is this 'good news'? What does it really mean?

The Good News, like many of our words in Christianity, is something that we think we know, but when asked to explain it, many of us begin to stumble because what we think we know well is not as well-known by us as we think. The Good News is often called the Gospel, and is even sometimes translated as that, but this is not from the Greek words. The Greek word used by the writer/s of Mark is εὐαγγέλιον [euangelion]. The word 'gospel' is apparently derived from the Anglo-Saxon term god-spell, meaning "good story," a rendering of the Latin evangelium and the Greek euangelion, meaning "good news" or "good telling." This is all well and good to know what the word means and how we got the term, but what is the news that is so good?

Continued next page

Something to think about After Epiphany continued

I really encourage you to watch the Bible Project video, 'Euangelion / Gospel.' It does a great job of explaining it better than I could. Here is the link <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/euangelion-gospel/>

To give you the heart of what Tim Mackie speaks about in the video, he says, "*While it might look like the rulers of our world are in charge and can do whatever they want, the good news is that the crucified and risen Jesus is the true Lord of the world, the real King of all creation. And in Jesus' Kingdom, things are different. It's where the real leaders are the servants because the last are first and the first go to the back of the line. It's where the hungry are fed and the homeless are welcomed because love is the most powerful reality of God's Kingdom.*"

This good news which comes with God being present as Jesus leads to some big changes. As Tim goes on to say this is not really easy to believe and in fact sounds kind of crazy. What's more believing in it kind of gives us a lot to repent about – or as the Greek word for repent means to change one's mind for better and heartily to amend ones way of living. The four people in the story who leave everything normal in their lives to become disciples had the epiphany that this was really that important and then came to understand what it all means. That is how we came to know about it because they shared it with others, and in time this has come to us.

In After Epiphany we remember that God is with us. God came in the person of Jesus who we know. We also look ahead a little in the calendar to Pentecost when we remember that God is with us as Christ when we live out God's love to others, but just as powerfully God is present with us as the Holy Spirit.

Now is the time of the Kingdom of God coming near. In the Corinthians reading we might get the sense that that Paul and those he was writing to had the sense that the Kingdom of God was about to come in some heavenly revelation as he writes "For the present form of this world is passing away." (1 Corinthians 7: 31) We know a couple of millennia on that this is yet to happen in some supernatural way. However, the Kingdom of God has come near and so, albeit slower than God would will, the present form of the world is passing away. We just have to join in God in helping this come into being. Part of ur work in this time of After Epiphany is to work out what needs to change in our living so that we might be better in tune with what God is calling us to and to better live the Kingdom of God in to being. I can't tell you what that work involves for you, but can tell you it is not likely to be easy at times. If we want to know what might be involved, then we can start with the Greatest Commandment and then get into Scripture to read what the Word of God might be saying to us in general. We can then enter into prayer so that God as Spirit might guide us as to what it means for us in our daily living.

May God help us and bless us as we strive to be more faithful. May God help us to believe in the good news and repent what needs repenting.

God bless.

Jon



PEOPLE NEWS

Jeff Cameron

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

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

21 – 27 January
Cyrus, Greece, Turkey

The Op Shop is CLOSED and will Re-open on Tuesday 30 January. Please hold on to your donations until we reopen.

Weekly SYNOD SPOTLIGHT

Uniting Church Synod of NSW and the ACT

For Uniting Church Synod Spotlight Newsletter for 15 December 2023 please see link :

[New Insights \(uca.org.au\)](http://uca.org.au)

The downstairs foyer and hall are getting a makeover.

Thank you to David Porter and all his team who have provided their invaluable time, help and support with the removal of the compactus storage and the huge paint job which has given St. Matthew's downstairs foyer and hall a welcoming and updated look and feel. The new flooring has been laid and is looking great.

Barbara Gibb

The Church Council and Elders are working with Jon to gather some feedback about how we can continue to grow ways nurture people in faith and discipleship. There is a survey that we are asking you to complete. It also asks for feedback about some of the new things that Jon has introduced in recent times. You can scan the QR code below or use the link below.



<https://forms.office.com/r/EV8b6YqQmY>

Worship Leader Needed

After numerous years of service Warren Arthur has retired from leading the 9am Uniting Church Worship @ the Willows service.

The Willow's community is extremely appreciative for having this service each month and would greatly like it to continue.

If you can help and use your worship leader talents to run the once a month, service please speak with Jon Humphries.

Worship @ the Willows is held at 9am, once a month on the second Sunday, at The Willows 226 Windsor Road, Winston Hills.



Saturday
3rd February
9am-12pm

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

St. Matthew's Lower Hall



SAVE THE DATE

Thursday
10am—12noon 7th March 2024

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

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



Report on St. Matthew's Christmas Bowl Giving

Our response to the plight of refugees over the last six weeks has been forwarded to the Christmas Bowl Appeal. As a congregation we gave \$4,270 to Refugees in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Syria and Sri Lankans in Indian camps.

\$1,131.00 was given through envelopes and credit cards

\$ 715.00 through the Christmas Day offering

\$2,423.00 to the special St. Matthew's Christmas Bowl Donation site 48551

It is good to give in the name of Jesus Christ