



Bible Readings

9am Service

Deuteronomy 18:15-20
 1 Corinthians 8: 1-13
 Mark 1:21-28



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 9AM



Livestreaming at 9am only

9am—Combined Worship

Led by Vivienne Strong and Jon Humphries
 Followed by Morning Tea

KUCA In recess

6.45pm—Worship

Led by Daniel Gibb and Jon Humphries

Thank you for worshipping with us today.

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

MONDAY 29 JANUARY

9am—Sorting and Pricing for Op Shop lower hall
7pm-9.30pm—KYB (know your bible) in church and upstairs hall

TUESDAY 30 JANUARY

9am-2pm—Op Shop re-opens for 2024
9.30am-11am—Christian Meditation Community Room

WEDNESDAY 31 JANUARY

9am-2pm—Op Shop
10am-12pm—In Stitches upstairs hall
7.30pm—Elders Meeting upstairs hall

THURSDAY 1 FEBRUARY

9am-2pm—Op Shop

FRIDAY 2 FEBRUARY

No Scheduled Activities

SATURDAY 3 FEBRUARY

9am-12pm—Op Shop and Garage Sale in lower hall

SUNDAY 4 FEBRUARY

8am—Worship Includes Communion

9.30am—Worship Includes Communion

KUCA Preschool, Years K-2 & Years 3-8 Resumes for 2024

6.45pm—Worship Includes Communion



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
 Email: office@stmatthewsuniting.net.au

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

FACEBOOK:

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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.

Something to think about

28 January
4th Sunday of After Epiphany

Lectionary Readings:

Deuteronomy 18:15-20

Psalm 111

1 Corinthians 8:1-1

Mark 1:21-28

Changing Our Minds After Epiphany

Last week we heard in Mark 1, verses 14 and 15, how Jesus proclaimed that the good news of the Kingdom of God has come near and so we should repent and believe the good news. Repentance and repenting has become a loaded word for many people. It is not a popular word for people in or outside of the Church. It has become in Christian culture all about turning from sin, and sin has become all about all that we do wrong, and so repentance is often seen about confessing our sin to God. All of this is theologically correct to a degree, but it can lead us to miss the point of what real repentance is. Seeing repentance as about asking for forgiveness can lead to a fixation with a doctrine that Jesus died on the cross to forgive us our sin, and that if we believe in Jesus Christ and confess our sin we can be forgiven and enter into heaven. Whilst this is a true and right belief we can miss the deeper focus and mission of God when we don't understand the deeper meaning of repentance.

The word that Jesus is quoted as using and which is translated as 'repent' in Greek is μετανοέω [metanoeo] (or the participle form of it). This word in essence means to change one's mind. This changing of mind is not only a cognitive thing that just happens in our head, but it is supposed to result in a changing of our attitude and behaviour. Repent it's sometimes reduced to being described as a turning around and heading in the opposite direction, or as simply confessing our wrongdoing. I referenced the notion of turning around in my sermon last Sunday and even had an image of it in the active discipleship and applied learning activity sheet. This isn't wrong, but what we should remember is why we need to turn around and go in a different way. This is about changing our minds, and not just changing them like we sometimes do on a whim or because we need to go back and get something we forgot before we continue on our way. It is a realisation that we are going in the wrong direction, and in this case, it is about our thinking being set on the wrong notion of where we should be heading. That is why we need to change our mind about our direction and then work to turn ourselves around and go the way that we should. We need to align our direction to that of the coming Kingdom of God.

Continued next page

Changing Our Minds After Epiphany continued

Thus, repentance / μετάνοια [metanoia] isn't simply confessing our sin in order to be forgiven. As our minds are changed from wrong thinking to right thinking, then that will lead to an acceptance that we were doing the wrong thing or not doing the right thing which itself was failing to be the people God calls us to be. Confessing this is important, but it isn't just about being forgiven. When we get stuck in that kind of thinking around sin and forgiveness then faith or religion becomes about guilt. The focus gets caught up with the negative being about wrongdoing. Here is where the notion of repentance as metanoia as a changing of our minds becomes really important.

If we get our thinking right, then we get our behaviour right. God is calling us to a better way – to right thinking and right doing. The Kingdom of God comes near and shows us a better way of being. This way leads to life in abundance and life full of meaning and purpose. We discover a joy of living and a sense of peace. Our focus is a positive and constructive one about the right thing and heading in the right direction. When we get off track or get caught in the wrong stuff or wrong way, it is about a return to the right way. It is about correction not fear of punishment.

Of course this is not an easy way of living, nor is it a comfortable way of living, after all the way is called 'The Way of the Cross.' However, just like healthy living requires physical effort and exercise and discipline in what we eat, health living also requires spiritual and theological effort and exercise

and discipline in the ideas and values we consume. When we get healthy in our thinking, we get healthy in our living, and the emphasis is on wellness not on flaws and failings. Flaws and failings do need to be addressed, but it is in the context of becoming healthier and having a better quality of life.

Here also it is important to change some of our thinking from seeing all this as just being about ourselves as individuals. The Kingdom of God is greatly focused also on its as communities and as a society. The metanoia repentance is as much about a changing of our minds about how we relate to each other and our world. God's presence with us as the person, Jesus who is the Christ reminds us that we need to change our minds as we hear God's Word and the call to justice, equity, grace, love and transformation of not only ourselves as single people, but as a people together so that all are cared for and no-one goes without what is essential.

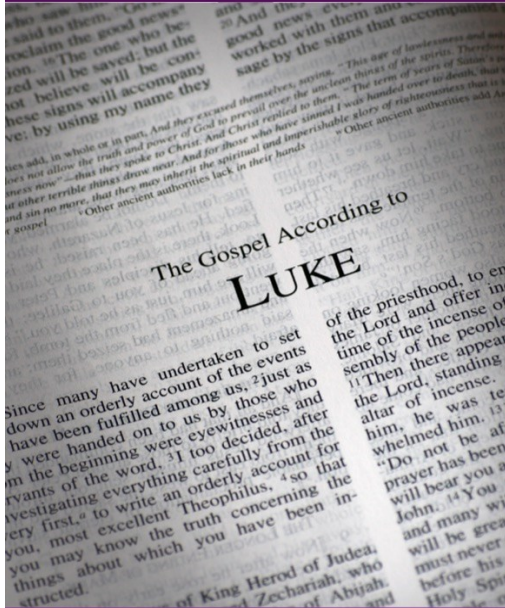
As always this is about knowing God, the God who is near, not just as a comfort, but also as a discomfort. God discomforts us by changing our minds. In knowing God, we come to know what is good, just as we come to know good in our lives. Knowing God and knowing good then flows into good living, which isn't just good and comfortable living for us, but good and healthy living which then moves us to share that with all. Repentance is about changing our minds for good and that is definitely something good to think about.

God bless.

Jon



KYB TERM 1 INTRODUCTION



The Hills Committee warmly invites you to a combined KYB Introduction to the Gospel of Luke. Please bring your group and any other interested ladies.

SPEAKER: JOAN YOUNG

7:30 pm

Monday 29th January, 2024
St Matthews Uniting Church
Corner of Charles St & Edgar St
Baulkham Hills

COST: \$5

Light supper will be served

Cards will be for sale - cash only

Unfortunately, we are unable to cater for children at this event.

RSVP: Lynne 0416 285 044

Sharon 0412 929 260

Christian Women Communicating International in Australia Inc Growing women in Christ through sharing the Bible at Events, KYB study groups and Safaris. www.cwciaus.org.au

Ladies, Maybe you already attend a bible study or were thinking of joining one or are just interested in hearing about the bible. This will be an introduction to the book of Luke chapters 1-9.

For more information

speak to

Sharon Underwood

FEBRUARY 2024 SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES at the church

4th February - 8am, 9.30am 6.45pm
includes Communion

11th February - 8am, 9.30am & 6.45pm
includes Community Meal

18th February - 8am, 9.30am & 6.45pm

25th February - 8am, 9.30am & 6.45pm

Live streaming at morning services



Garage

Saturday 3rd February 9am-12pm

SALE

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

St. Matthew's Lower Hall

St. Matthew's Baulkham Hills Uniting Church growing together

Coffee and Discovery

SAVE THE DATE

Thursday 7th March 10am-12noon

Please see February In Focus for details

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

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



PEOPLE NEWS

Beau Cameron
Peter Jenkyn
Garry Bindley

Bruce Chivers
Eric Gronlund

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

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

28 January – 3 February

North Africa: Algeria, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia

OP SHOP RE-OPENS ON TUESDAY 30 JAN



Open Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday 9am-2pm
and
1st Saturday of the month 9-12pm
Pre-loved clothes & accessories,
Books, Haberdashery,
Bric-a-brac, Pot Plants.

COMMUNITY CONTACT LIST 2023

The community directory is now available - those that have entered their family details are welcome to have a copy by email (please request from the church office by email) OR get a printed copy by calling into the office. The information will not be published on any website or sent out in bulk.

Need to update, fix an error or add your family? Version 1.2 is now open – please click [HERE](#) . Thanks

David Neideck

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.



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.

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.



st. matthew's
UNITING CHURCH
BAULKHAM HILLS
growing together

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