



**Bible Readings**

8am and 9.30am Services

Exodus 34: 29-35

1 Kings 19: 1-13

2 Corinthians 3: 12-4: 2

Mark 9: 2-9

*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 and 9.30am only**

**8am—Worship**

Led by Daniel Gibb  
 and Jon Humphries

**9am—Worship @ the Willows**

**9.30am—Worship**

Led by Dean Drayton  
 and Jon Humphries

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

**6.45pm—Worship**

Community Meal

Thank you for worshipping with us today.

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

**MONDAY 12 FEBRUARY**

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

**TUESDAY 13 FEBRUARY**

9am-2pm—*Op Shop*

9.30am-11am—*Christian Meditation*

Community Room

**WEDNESDAY 14 FEBRUARY** *ASH Wednesday*

9am-2pm—*Op Shop*

10am-12pm—*Women's Fellowship*

"Welcome everyone to 2024, and please bring your ideas for our program for the year". upstairs hall

7.30pm—*Ash Wednesday Service* in the Church

8pm—*Church Council Exec Meeting*

**THURSDAY 15 FEBRUARY**

9am-2pm—*Op Shop*

**FRIDAY 16 FEBRUARY**

**No Scheduled Activities**

**SATURDAY 17 FEBRUARY**

2pm-5pm—*Learn About Healing Prayer Ministry*

in the church and community room

For more information see advert page 5

**SUNDAY 18 FEBRUARY**

8am—*Worship*

9.30am—*Worship*

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

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

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:**

@stmatthewsunitingchurchbaulkhamhills

**PRE-SCHOOL DIRECTOR** 9639 8570

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

11th February  
6th Sunday after Epiphany

## Transfiguration of Jesus

### Lectionary Readings:

2 Kings 2:1-12  
Psalm 50:1-6  
2 Corinthians 4:3-6  
Mark 9:2-9

### Reading Being Used in Service:

Exodus 34:29-35  
1 Kings 19:1-13  
2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2  
Mark 9:2-9

## Manger to Mountaintop and Beyond

It is human nature to want to feel good. It is hardwired, or at least chemically wired into our brains. The hormones serotonin, dopamine, endorphins, and oxytocin help promote happiness and pleasure while reducing depression and anxiety. We have a whole means of accessing these feel-good neurochemicals. Nature, positive emotions and positive relationships, exercise, sunlight, food, music, meditation, and romance are all great triggers for the release of these hormones. It is not unusual that Christmas feels such a lovely time for many people, nor for us to seek literal or metaphorical mountaintop experiences.

Of course, we have other ways of accessing these brain buzzes, some of which can become unhelpful when we overuse them. These include risk and reward, adrenaline activities (which naturally releases adrenaline which is another hormone), and chemical substances such as drugs (including nicotine and alcohol). Many people find these addictive, and it has been shown that even computer games and social media can give us the same neurotransmitter feel-goodness, hence their addictiveness.

In the liturgical year, we have work to do. Work can be rewarding, but it takes effort and application. The highs of celebrations are there intentionally after each season of growth and then preparation as in-built rewards and circuit breakers in each cycle. The risk is that we get tempted to stay in the feel-good space of celebration.

In our Gospel reading this week and on Transfiguration Sunday Peter, James and John get go up on a "high mountain" with Jesus and there they have an amazing experience. He is "transfigured before them. 3 His clothes became dazzling white, whiter than anyone in the world could bleach them. ....A cloud appeared and covered them, and a voice came from the cloud: "This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!" This would have been quite something to witness and experience.

**Continued next page.**

### **Manger to Mountaintop and Beyond continued**

The Greek word for transfigured is μεταμορφώθη [metemorphōthē] which means to be transformed, transfigured, changed in form and to change the external form. It can also mean a spiritual transformation. You might see the connection with the English word metamorphosis. In this there are some things that are worth considering. Firstly, we believe that Jesus was not just the son of God, but God incarnate (in flesh) in the person of Jesus. So, whilst his appearance may have changed, he didn't change. In fact, it could be argued that the disciples simply saw Jesus in a state of divine unity. Some scholars point out the connection with Moses ascending the mountain to connect with God and his face glowing with radiance on his return, so much so that he ended up wearing a veil. In many ways Jesus, particularly in Mark and Matthew is portrayed as the new Moses. Secondly, although the three disciples (just a quarter of the Twelve) did experience this, it wasn't really their experience. It was an experience of affirmation which helped prepare Jesus for the road to the cross which he was about to really set his direction towards.

It always stands out for me how the impetuous Peter impulsively suggests that they should build some tents or tabernacles, completely missing the point, just as he is portrayed as being prone to doing at times. I then usually notice that I miss the fact that he was very frightened, and we all know that our cognitive function declines in heightened states of emotion. What would we have done? What would we want from this kind of experience? What would we do with it?

Perhaps, there are lessons to learn. The primary one, is maybe that these kinds of mountaintop experiences, as exhilarating and inspiring as they are, are rare and special, and possibly only for the few. The next is that they are temporary, and in the Bible they are not about self-indulgence or a spiritual highs, but are usually there to teach a lesson or resource people in faith so that they might be resilient and maintain their passion and purpose in the face of hardships and troubles which may lie ahead in their journey. The last is that as great as it might be to vicariously share in such experiences, we should not seek to contrive or create them because they are a gift of God to those God sees the need to provide them for.

We should also not get tempted or addicted to the rush of feel-good spiritual moments and miss the point of their purpose. We shouldn't seek the highs without then seeking the lows that they are meant to be a resource to help cope with. Furthermore, we shouldn't forget that God is always present with us, always at work in us, always available to us, for we are part of the Body of Christ and we are gifted with God with us as Holy Spirit. Finally, if we are to venerate God in the person of Jesus and hold to his teachings, along with those of the prophets, then it is the still, small voice which God is more likely to speak to us and call us into joining God's work in God's mission through love, justice, mercy, grace and other good works. Like the sheepish and the goatish people in the parable, we may not feel or even notice God with us, but those who live in love and live God's love, live in God and God lives in us for God is love.

All this might help shape our expectations of coming and being Church together. We don't come to a temple to experience God, we gather as the temple to be reminded of our call and purpose to be sent into the world to meet God and join with God in bringing the Kingdom nearer and nearer. That is something to think about.

God bless.

*Jon*



## PEOPLE NEWS

Ron McIntosh  
Katherine Pedersen  
Lynn Samuel

Hugh Darling  
Ben Mathewson

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

## Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

**11—17 February**

**Austria, Liechtenstein, Switzerland**

## 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 Rd, Winston Hills.



## 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*

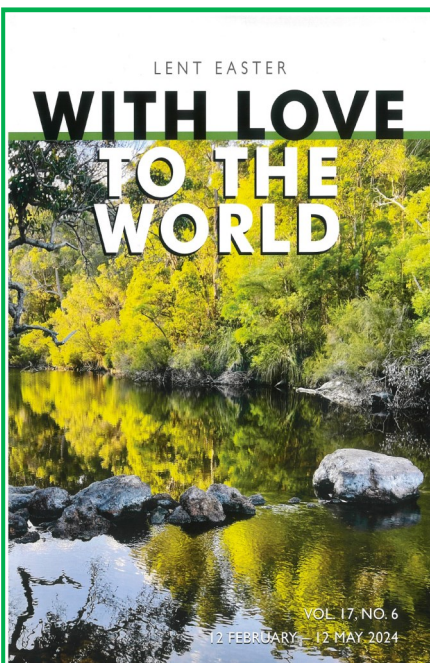
18th February - 8am, 9.30am & 6.45pm

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

*Live streaming at morning services*

**Weekly SYNOD SPOTLIGHT**  
Uniting Church Synod of NSW and the ACT

**For Uniting Church Synod Spotlight Newsletter for 2 February 2023 please see link :**  
[New Insights \(uca.org.au\)](https://uca.org.au)



## LENT EASTER

### WITH LOVE TO THE WORLD

a daily Bible reading guide based on the Revised Common Lectionary

**Volume 17, Number 6**



**12 February to 12 May 2024**

is available in the church foyer.

**Please place \$7 in offering bag to cover costs.**

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.

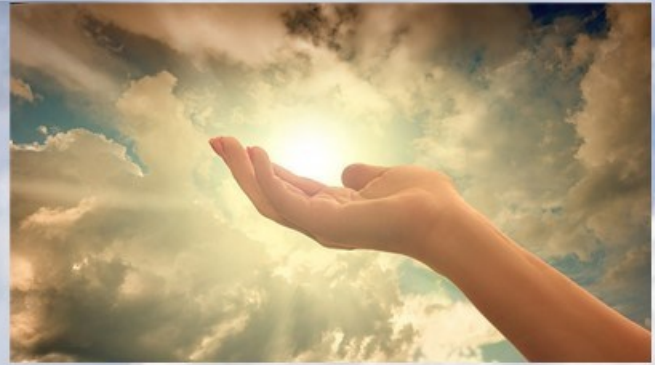
You can scan the QR code below or use the link below.



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

# Learn About Healing Prayer Ministry

While following scripture we begin to see that Jesus, and Father God's true nature are revealed. Jesus never turned away from anyone in need. He was always thanking the Father, compassionate and ready to heal. Because we know God is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow we need to work on our own childlike trust and receive wise instruction to follow Jesus and his clear directions to his disciples to heal the sick in his name.



- \* Recorded talks by Rev. Mike Endicott
- \* Rev. Dean Drayton will guide us about the necessary focus on the Kingdom of God
- \* Care and Prayer members will share their own experiences in carrying out this Ministry

We hope you can join us for these 2 sessions Saturday afternoons in the church at St. Matthew's.

**10<sup>th</sup> February and 17<sup>th</sup> February - 2pm to 5pm**

Session 1

Session 2

RSVP : The Church office on 9686 3003 or [office@stmatthewsuniting.net.au](mailto:office@stmatthewsuniting.net.au)



Cnr Edgar and Charles Sts Baulkham Hills



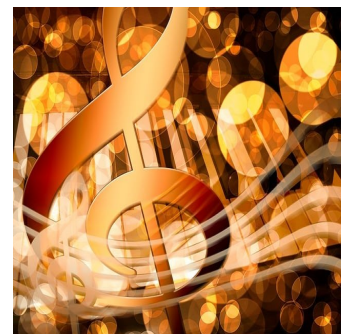
**Thursday  
7th  
March**

**10am—12noon**

**Entertainers**

**NOELEEN & DAVID  
NEIDECK**

Noleen and David will present some keyboard duets and oboe solos, and we are very excited to welcome back a **guest vocalist Henry Wilden** who performed with Noleen & David some 10 years ago at St. Matthew's. Henry will choose some show tunes and ballads in the style of Anthony Warlow and Josh Groban. All will be very welcome.



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

\*\*\*\*\* ALL WELCOME \*\*\*\*\*

**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](http://www.stmatthewsuniting.net.au)  
Click on the metal dove image / publications or find in recent posts.**