



Bible Readings

8am and 9.30am Services



Genesis 9:8-17
1 Peter 3:18-22
Mark 1:9-15

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 Pamela Leslie
 and Jon Humphries

9.30am—Worship

Led by Sharon Underwood
 and Jon Humphries

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

6.45pm—Worship

Led by Nicola Lawless
 and Daniel Gibb

Thank you for worshipping with us today.

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

MONDAY 19 FEBRUARY

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

TUESDAY 20 FEBRUARY

9am-2pm—*Op Shop*

9.30am-11am—*Christian Meditation*

Community Room

7.30pm—*Thrive Bible Study*

lower hall

WEDNESDAY 21 FEBRUARY

9am-2pm—*Op Shop*

10am-12pm—*In Stitches*

upstairs hall

THURSDAY 22 FEBRUARY

9am-2pm—*Op Shop*

FRIDAY 23 FEBRUARY

5pm-7pm—*Fusion Youth Group*

upstairs hall

SATURDAY 24 FEBRUARY

No Scheduled Activities

**SUNDAY
 25 FEBRUARY**

8am—Worship

Followed by morning tea

9.30am—Worship

Followed by morning tea

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

5pm—Shine

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

EMAIL: director@stmatthewsps.net.au

Thank you to all who have
 contributed to this publication.

Something to think about

18th February

Lent 1

Lectionary Readings:

Genesis 9:8-17

Psalms 25:1-10

1 Peter 3:18-22

Mark 1:9-15

Baptism – Plunged into the Faith and Family of Jesus

Have you been baptised?

If not, would you like to be. Please talk with me or with one of the elders if you would like to be baptised or confirmed.

We all know what baptism is, but do we know what it means? And, even if we do, have we got more to learn?

It is interesting, even as someone who has been doing baptisms for decades, that I am still learning what it means. I am learning about baptism itself and discovering new understandings about how the rite and sacrament developed and how Church understands baptism to mean – i.e. our doctrine or teaching. I am also learning what it means to be personally and what my baptism baptises me into and what I am supposed to do about all that.

The word translated as 'baptism' is βαπτίζω [baptizo] in Greek and it means plunging and immersing. It is interesting to note that it isn't just about a sacrament or ritual. The Church has teachings and doctrines about baptism and how it should be carried out, where and when it should be practised, and who can be baptised, and what they need to do in order to be baptised. These are all well and good, as well as being helpful and constructive, but the reality is that baptism is a bit enigmatic and there is a degree of mystery to it. This is partly to do with the fact that the Bible doesn't have a clear set of instructions as to what it means, nor how it should be done. The Biblical witness about baptism is quite complex.

John the Baptist baptised people. His according to Luke was a baptism of repentance and the forgiveness of sin. (Luke 3:1–3). We don't know a lot about how John developed his understanding of baptism, or about how this tradition (if it was actually a tradition – for John may have created the ritual himself). If you are interested in learning more about baptism and its link with the Jewish tradition here is a great video from the YouTube channel, 'Religion for Breakfast' which might be worth watching: The Pre-Christian Origins of Baptism. It is only five minutes long. Here is the link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D8ycXJMGILQ&t=46s>

Continued next page.

Baptism – Plunged into the Faith and Family of Jesus continued

Jesus was baptised by John in the Jordan River. Here we get our first mystery.

If John's baptism was about repentance for the forgiveness of sin, why would Jesus be baptised in this way being, as the traditional Christian doctrine proclaims, that he was without sin. Anyway, Jesus is baptised, and an amazing epiphany occurs, which is probably the reason it is often included in the first week of Lent, which is the first Sunday after the season of After Epiphany. However, later in the gospels, Jesus goes on to talk about baptism in a different way and infer that it is about the cross and the disciples will be baptised in this kind of baptism like he was. James and John ask to sit at Jesus's left- and right-hand side "in glory" and Jesus replied with the question, "Can you drink the cup I drink or be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?" (Mark 10: 38) he then tells them, "You will drink the cup I drink and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with," and we might assume that it applies to all the disciples and to us. So, baptism has to do with the cross and the way of the cross.

Later at the end of the Gospel of Matthew we have Jesus giving the disciples what we call, 'The Great Commission' when he says, "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you." It is this that perhaps has had the greatest (excuse the pun) influence on baptism and the Church.

As the story of the Church unfolds, we have

a range of stories, of people being baptised by the side of the road, others having whole households baptised. Some receive the Holy Spirit at their Baptism others have the Spirit, but haven't been baptised and so are then baptised. Theologically, it is a complexity to weave into our understanding. There is also the question of God already being present at all times and in all places with us as Spirit. So, it is not strange that there is a lot to consider and learn, even after all these years about what baptism is and what it means for us.

The Gospel reading this week also jumps us back to the call of Jesus to repent and believe the good news that the Kingdom of God has come near. So, baptism seems to also have something to do with the Kingdom. It is more than just a membership rite or a one-off ceremony to mark our conversion, and more than confirmation in the faith and family of Jesus. It is actually more about our acceptance and commitment to being immersed in the new way of the Kingdom and all that that means. It is a dying and rising to self, and whilst there is a sense of washing away of sin and transgression, our baptism is an ongoing metanoia (changing of our heart, mind and being) to be soaked in God's grace, but knowing the need for transformation of ourselves, our living and our world. It is captured in a rite and sacrament, but is something that we can recall, remember, and re-affirm at any time. In fact, maybe it is part of our big list of things to be mindful of all the time. It is certainly something to think about.

God bless.

Jon



PEOPLE NEWS

Warren Arthur
Robyn Mathewson

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

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

18—24 February

France, Germany, Monaco

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.

MARCH 2024 SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES at the church

3rd March - 8am, 9.30am, 6.45pm
includes Communion

10th March - 8am, 9.30am, 6.45pm
Community Meal

17th March - 8am, 9.30am, 6.45pm

24th March - 8am, 9.30am, 6.45pm

31st March - 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 9 February 2023 please see link :

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



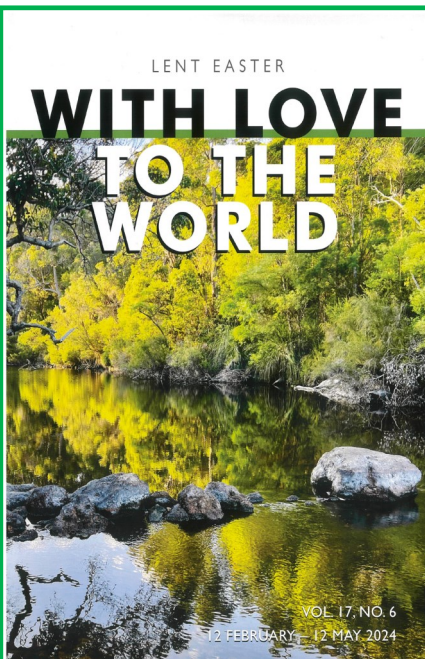
**Saturday
2nd MARCH**

9am-12pm

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

St. Matthew's Lower Hall

st. matthew's
BRICKLAKEMAN THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE
growing together



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.

VOL 17, NO. 6
12 FEBRUARY - 12 MAY 2024

St Matthew's

HAPPY HOUR!

At NBC

166 Windsor Rd, Northmead

**15
MARCH**

**5 PM
FRIDAY**



COME AND SHARE IN SOME HAPPY
CONVERSATION, A DRINK AND SOME FOOD
WITH FRIENDS FROM ST MATTHEW'S.

RSVP to Belinda or just come along
bdschuster@optusnet.com.au





lentevent
14 FEBRUARY – 28 MARCH 2024
40 DAYS OF FAITHFUL ACTION
FOR GOD'S CREATION

  **UnitingWorld**
connecting communities for life

Receive daily reflections and our weekly video series straight to your email inbox.
[Subscribe here.](#)

WWW.LENTEVENT.COM.AU



lentevent
14 FEBRUARY – 28 MARCH 2024
40 DAYS OF FAITHFUL ACTION
FOR GOD'S CREATION


  **UnitingWorld**
connecting communities for life

WWW.LENTEVENT.COM.AU

Supports critical climate action in Vulnerable communities who are fighting to build resilience and mitigate climate impacts.

By supporting Lent Event, you're making a real difference in the lives of those who need it most.

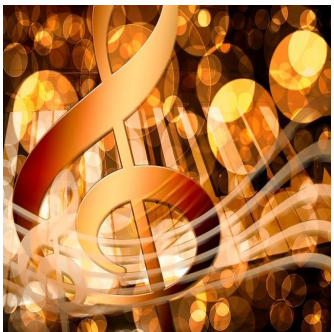
Support Lent Event go to the website : [here](#)



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
Click on the metal dove image / publications or find in recent posts.

Church Working Bee



St. Matthew's
Saturday 16 March
8.30am-12pm

Many hands make light work.
Please come along and lend a
hand.

Morning tea supplied.

ROSTERS

Worship Rosters for 8am and 9.30am,
for March, April and May 2024
have been emailed.

If you do not have email or would
like an A3 copy please collect a copy
from the table in the church foyer.

If you are able
to help with any of the gaps
please contact the church office.

Thank you to everyone who has helped on the
last 3 month roster and to those who have been
able to help on this roster.



Found

A ladies jacket has been found in the lower
foyer on Monday 12 February. If you have
visited the church recently for worship or for
any of the other groups that have met and
have lost a jacket, please contact the
church office.



Thank you so much for your
kind donation of food.

Gifts such as yours help to keep our
operational costs down. This enables me and my team
to put more resources into our frontline services such
as the Loaves & Fishes free Restaurant, primary health
care, and crisis support for our guests. Your
contribution is a vital part of the foundation that brings
people together and restores hope and dignity to our
forgotten friends.

Rev Bill Crews

*The Bill Crews foundation recently picked up the
contents of two full containers of non perishable food
items that were donated by the St. Matthew's
community. All donations can be left in the containers
marked Exodus in the lower foyer.*

UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA SYNOD OF NSW & ACT STAMP COMMITTEE

Although 2023 was a challenging year, the support of volunteers in collecting, trimming and sorting stamps together with the donation of personal collections was very much appreciated. Unfortunately there were insufficient funds available to give to Congregations as grants. The Philatelic Assoc of NSW sold their premises in Darlinghurst and relocated to a larger building in Silverwater. As a result, no income was received from the auction of stamp material. Auctions will resume in April and hopefully there will be sufficient funds available for grants at the end of this year.

Thank you to Eulalie who collects the stamps that people bring to the church as donations and takes them to Synod.