



Bible Readings

8am and 9.30am Services



Exodus 20:1-17
John 2:13-22

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
 Includes Communion
 Led by Jon Humphries

9.30am—Worship
 Includes Communion
 Led by Hugh Darling
 and Jon Humphries
KUCA Preschool, Years K-2 & Years 3-8
Followed by morning tea

6.45pm—Worship
 Includes Communion
 Led by Barbara Gibb
 and Jon Humphries

Thank you for worshipping with us today.

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

MONDAY 4 March
9am—Sorting and Pricing for Op Shop lower hall

TUESDAY 5 March
9am-2pm—Op Shop
9.30am-11am—Christian Meditation community room
11.30am—Care and Prayer community room and church
7.30pm—Thrive Bible Study lower hall

WEDNESDAY 6 March
9am-2pm—Op Shop
10am-12pm—In Stitches upstairs hall
7pm—Upstairs hall and church in use

THURSDAY 7 March
9am-2pm—Op Shop
10am-12pm—Coffee and Discovery upstairs hall and church

FRIDAY 8 March
5pm-7pm—Fusion Youth Group upstairs hall

SATURDAY 9 MARCH
No Scheduled Activities

**SUNDAY
 10 MARCH**

8am—Worship
9.30am—Worship
KUCA Preschool, Years K-2 & Years 3-8
Followed by morning tea
6.45pm—Worship
 Community Meal



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:

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 PO Box 773 BAULKHAM HILLS 1755

WEB SITE: www.stmatthewsuniting.net.au
 Weekly newsletter available on website

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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

3rd March

3rd Sunday in Lent

Lectionary Readings:

Exodus 20:1-17
Psalm 19
1 Corinthians 1:18-25
John 2:13-22

Being the Temple of God

A Temple is a place where people go to worship a god or deity or to practice faith spirituality, and religion. God has resisted being in a temple and in Jesus we see the temple torn down and rebuilt. At least that is what Jesus is saying in this week's Gospel reading after he cleared the Temple forecourt.

"Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.'
...he was speaking of the temple of his body."

John 2: 19 & 21

Jesus leads us to what we should understand the temple to be. To make this theology really clear we first hear Jesus being proclaimed by angels as 'Immanuel – which means God is with us (Matthew 1:23). Then at the climax of Jesus's ministry we have the curtain in the Temple torn in two from top to bottom. The curtain which separated everything and everyone from the Holy Holies where God was thought to be most present is ripped open. God has fully left the building. Then Jesus breathes his Spirit on the disciples (John 20:22) and just before his ascension he declared that he is with them to the end of the age (Matthew 28:20). We then have the story of Pentecost and the growth of the Church with people receiving the Spirit of God. We are the Body of Christ who is the temple of God.

"Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. All of you together are Christ's body, and each of you is a part of it."

- 1 Corinthians 12:27

"As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him— you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ."

- 1 Peter 2: 4&5

I really encourage you to watch the Bible Project's video about "Why the Temple Is So Important in the Bible." Here is the link or you can search it on Google or YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wTnq6l3vUbU>

The Bible Project helps us understand how the locus – the position of presence of God - is with people, not in a building. It got stuck in a building for a while, not literally or actually stuck in a box, for God is always everywhere. However, in the physical temple God got stuck in people's minds as being there. In Jesus the presence of God moves toward us and then into us. Thus, our religion is not about worshipping in a temple, but in living out the presence and love of God into the world. Our worship doesn't now happen in a temple or a temple like building, but happens in our living and being incarnations of the love of God as we seek to be the Body of Christ together.

Continued next page.

Being the Temple of God continued

Unfortunately, probably when Christianity became the state religion of Rome, we have sort of put God back into the box of a temple (being temple-like) building, with priests and altars and with the Church calling what we do in these spaces "worship." Even, in protestant traditions such as the Uniting Church where we don't have priests, and we have a 'Communion table' not an altar, and we have 'ministers' and it is only they (plus a few licenced lay people) who can preside over the sacred ritual that take place on these altar-like places. It is in these Church spaces, which we even call churches, that we gather to worship. We hold our worship services, and even in our meetings we have devotional elements which we call 'worship.' Worship has become religious ritual limited to mostly a specific time and place each week.

Our gatherings as the Church connect with God and each other and assist us to be renewed and reinvigorated in faith and sent out into the world to live the love of God. They are in some way worship. However, if this is the majority of what we think worship is, and most of our worship is focused, centred and predominantly expressed in our 'worship services' then we have missed the core message of the Gospel which Jesus proclaimed, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news." (Mark 1:15)

Our English word, 'worship' is derived from the Old English *weorthscipe* which means 'worthiness, acknowledgement of worth.' If we truly want to acknowledge the worth of God and express God's worthiness in our lives then it gets down to loving God with all our being all the time and this is best express, at least according to Jesus who was God incarnate, as loving our neighbour as ourselves. This is our true and deepest worship. Gathering is important for us to service our worship by reconnecting with God and God's mission, but it is the joining in God's mission and living faithfully which is how we demonstrate our being as the temple of God.

Jesus said, "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.

In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."

- Matthew 5: 13-16

Have we put our light into a box in understanding worship as our Church services? Have we lost our saltiness as the Body of Christ, or are we losing it? Have put God back into a temple instead of being the temple and coming to worship God in all we do and say? Do people look at us, the Church, and see our good deeds and glorify God, or do they see a bunch of people stuck in a temple-like building showing religion to be somewhat irrelevant and disconnected with their living? There is a lot of somethings to think about here.

God bless.

Jon



PEOPLE NEWS

Margaret Benoit
Noeleen Neideck

Warwick Hayes

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

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

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

3- 9 March

Ireland, and United Kingdom: England,
Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales

Weekly SYNOD SPOTLIGHT

Uniting Church Synod of NSW and the ACT

For Uniting Church Synod Spotlight Newsletter
for 23 February 2023 please see link :

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

Easter Services at St. Matthew's

Palm Sunday
24 March
8am, 9.30am & 6.45pm

Maundy Thursday
28 March 7.30pm

Good Friday
29 March 9am

Easter Sunday
31 March
8am, 9.30am & 6.45pm



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.*



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.

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





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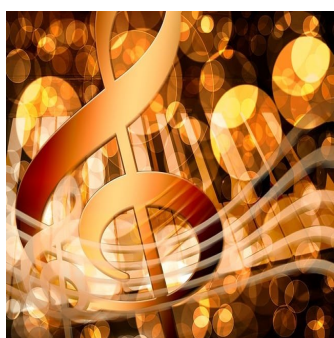
**Thursday
7th
March**

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.

Volunteers are invited to take part in ***The Easter Experience***

at **Gordon Uniting Church**
18th, 19th & 20th March



If you would like to take part please contact
Gordon Uniting Church at info@gpuc.org.au

For 20 consecutive years just before the end of term 1, the Gordon Uniting Church building has been transformed into Jerusalem 2000 years ago. The place comes alive with people from ancient times telling the story of Jesus' last week on earth, in a production called "The Easter Experience".

We invite Year 4 children from local schools to come and experience this important story in an interactive way. In addition we run a Year 7 program in the afternoon, challenging the students to look at the Easter story in a new way, relevant to today.



The Easter Experience is staged each year with volunteer actors from our congregation and others. For many children it is their first experience of the Easter story, and they walk through the scenes of The Last Supper, the Garden of Gethsemane, the Trial of Jesus in the courtroom scene, and then experience the impact of the empty tomb, with Jesus re-appearing to assure them that he is alive.

Smart debit regular giving

Do your own direct debit direct to St Matthew's

1. Login to your online banking
2. Create a schedule to 'Pay Anyone' from your acct
3. Create St Matthew's as a payee
BSB 634-634
Acc 1000 25924
4. Use reference :
Offering 8.00 or 9.30 or 6.45
5. Set the amount and frequency as you wish – weekly/monthly
6. Done!

- ✓ Similar to Pushpay but uses your savings accounts not credit card
- ✓ More flexible than a direct debit form lodged at a branch
- ✓ Start/vary/stop as you choose
- ✓ No fees
- ✓ Regular recurring gifts allows St Matthew's to budget more accurately

Thankyou to all St Matthew's regular givers whatever method – cash, envelopes, direct debit and Pushpay!