



Bible Readings

9am

Ephesians 4:1-7 & 10-5:21

Response after Bible Readings

Leader: *In this we hear the word of God*

Response: *Thanks be to God*



9am—Combined Worship

Led by Jon Humphries

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

Followed by morning tea

10am—Church AGM

6.45pm—Worship

Led by 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 Combined only**

Thank you for worshipping with us today.

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

MONDAY 19 August

**9am—Sorting & Pricing for
 Op Shop & Garage Sale**

lower hall

7.30pm—Christian Meditation

All Welcome

community room and church

TUESDAY 20 August

9am-2pm—Op Shop

9.30am-11am—Christian Meditation

community room and church

7.30pm— Thrive

WEDNESDAY 21 August

9am-2pm—Op Shop

10am-12pm—In Stitches.

upstairs hall

10am-12noon—Men's Morning Tea
 McKels Café Bella Vista

THURSDAY 22 August

9am-2pm—Op Shop

FRIDAY 23 August

No Scheduled Activities

SATURDAY 24 August

**9.30am-12.30pm— Floral
 Demonstration and workshop**

lower hall

**SUNDAY
 25 AUGUST**

8am—Worship

Followed by morning tea

9.30am—Worship

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

Followed by morning tea

5pm—Shine

6.45pm—Worship



MINISTER

REV JON HUMPHRIES

Email: jon@stmatthewsuniting.net.au

CHURCH OFFICE SECRETARIES:

ROBYN MORRALL AND LYNN SAMUEL

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 BAULKHAM HILLS

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**Thank you to all who have
 contributed to this publication.**

Something to think about

18th August

13th Sunday after Pentecost

Lectionary Readings:

1 Kings 2:10-12; 3:3-14

Psalm 111

Ephesians 5:15-20

John 6:51-58

Reading for Our Service:

Ephesians 4:1-7 & 10-5:21

I Am / We Are

Who are we? This is a great and widely pondered philosophical question as well as one of identity. René Descartes offered the world the well-known statement in French, "Je pense, donc je suis" in his 1637 Discourse on the Method. In Latin it is cogito, ergo sum, which is usually translated into English as what many of us know it as, being, "I think, therefore I am." It is the first principle of René Descartes's philosophy. I am – that is I must exist – because I am thinking. What we think or how we think is not addressed in this simple statement, nor is the nature of our existence. The only answer offered to the question of who we are in this simple statement is that we are a thinking existence. Whilst this is a good first principle and a helpful starting point, most of us would like to think that we are more than this.

In faith, we are because God is. God is the source and creator of all being. God

is, and because God is, and because God has created all things in accordance with God's own nature, we are. The Bible states that we are created in the image of God as part of Creation. Because God is we exist, and we are what we are and how we are - at least in essence of our being, because of who God is. We are because God is.

In last week's exploration of John 6 in our services we looked at how Jesus spoke about being one with the Father and that we must eat his flesh and drink his blood in order to abide in him who abides with God. Jesus is God and God is Jesus. They are the same and one is in the other. Jesus abides in God because Jesus is God in human flesh – incarnated. Eating of his flesh suggests that we metaphorically and spiritually take his being into ours. Jesus is the incarnation of God and in being spiritually and theologically carnivorous, we take on that incarnation, becoming the incarnation of God's love ourselves – that is if we choose to be. When we become the embodiment of the love of God, just as Jesus was the embodiment of God's love, then we become God's Church – The Body of Christ.

I am not, though, the Church. I am part of the Church. We are the Church together, at least when we are living in accordance with the way of God which we learn and learn through God in the person of Jesus, the Christ. Again, because God is, we are. It is important here to distinguish appearance and reality. We may hold the name of the Church and be a group who claims to bear the name of Jesus, the Christ.

Continued next page

I Am / We Are—Continued

However, if we do not live in the way of Christ and truly embody God's love, then we are not truly God's Church. Those who live in love live in God and God in them. The opposite is logically true. If we do not live in love, then God does not truly live in us or us in God. Of course, God is always present with us and in us, but we are not manifesting God if we are not manifesting love – the love which lays down life in the service of others, just as God did for us in the person of Jesus.

So, I can think I am, but I maybe not. We can think we are, but maybe we are not. Jesus spoke of this in such things as the Parable of the Sheep and Goats where those who do not live in the way of God are not known by God. Jesus also used the image of a grape vine. He is the vine, and we are the branches. If we abide in him, we bear fruit. However, if we don't abide in him – live in his way and bear fruit – his life does not abide in us, and we are only good for being pruned or cast into the fire. We can think we are in Christ, but if our living does not demonstrate it, then perhaps we are not.

What we think, then, is not as important as what God thinks. We can think all kinds of things, but that does not make it so. Yet, what God thinks is true and God makes it so. Our thinking may be evidence of our existence, but it does not determine or create our existence. Yet, at the same time what we think and how we think does shape the way we live and behave. How we live and behave shapes our identity, both how others perceive us and as an expression of our character. How we live and act and treat others, regardless of what we think about ourselves, is evidence of our being in tune with God or not and is shaped by our thinking in response to God's love and call on our lives. Thus, I think therefore I am becomes true in the

sense that if I think selfishly and have not love, then I am not in God or a part of God's work or Church. Yet, if I meditate on the nature of God and the way of God, better still if I love God and love in the way of God because of my thinking of God, then I am more likely to be the person God is calling me to be, and be a person who truly is part of God's Church, the Body of Christ. It gets back to because God is, we can be who we are called to be.

Therefore, my thinking does shape who I am. Who I am is more evident in the way I live than how I might give voice to my thoughts. Yet how I live is shaped by my thinking. My actions are a better indication of my character than any claims of self-identity in themselves, but my actions are a result of choices and choices are a result of thinking. If I think I am God's and a part of the Body of Christ, who is how God embodied love and grace, then I need to live the grace and love of God for this to be true. What I think and how I think are important, but it is how that thinking shapes my living which is more important. Thinking by itself is not enough. We can believe, that is think many things, but if we don't love and live them into being, then they don't really become a part of who we are. Our thinking shapes our actions and our actions express who we are. Yet, in the end it is God who calls us into true being.

Thinking and being gives us much to ponder with God's help.

God bless

Jon

PEOPLE NEWS

**HAPPY
BIRTHDAY**



Don Dixon

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

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

18—24 August
Liberia, Sierra Leone

st. matthew's
UNITING CHURCH
BAULKHAM HILLS
growing together

AGM

Annual General Meeting

**Sunday
18 August 10am**

Following the 9am Combined Worship Service

AUGUST 2024 SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES at the church

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

11th August - 8am, 9.30am, 6.45pm
Community Meal

18th August - 9am Combined AGM

25th August - 8am, 9.30am, 6.45pm

Live streaming at morning services

Weekly SYNOD SPOTLIGHT

Uniting Church Synod of NSW and the ACT

Uniting Church Synod Spotlight Newsletter
for last week (9 August 2024) please see

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

SEPTEMBER 2024 SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES at the church

1st September - 8am, 9.30am, 6.45pm
includes Communion

8th September - 8am, 9.30am, 6.45pm
Community Meal

15th September - 8am, 9.30am, 6.45pm

22nd September - 8am, 9.30am, 6.45pm

29th September - 8am, 9.30am, 6.45pm

Live streaming at morning services

ROSTERS

Worship Rosters for 8am and 9.30am,
for September, October, November 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.*



CREATION WITH LOVE TO THE WORLD



VOL. 17, NO. 8
12 AUGUST - 10 NOVEMBER 2024

CREATION WITH LOVE TO THE WORLD

a daily Bible reading
guide based on the
Revised Common Lectionary

Volume 17, Number 8
12 August 2024 to 10 November
is available in the church foyer.

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

ST MATTHEWS PRESCHOOL REPORT FOR 2024 AGM

It's been a solid 12 months for the Preschool. We have an excellent team of staff who are led extremely well by Sonali Wanigesekera. We continue to receive glowing feedback about the team from the Preschool families. The settled and stable staff have energy, enthusiasm and a great structure for the future. I, and others in our Church community who interact closely with the Preschool, can attest to the positive and happy atmosphere.

Our preschool continues to be endorsed and sort after, now by multi generations (yes grandchildren of previous students are now amongst attendees). Pleasingly we continue to have full enrolments and looking to next year, the enrolments appear to again be 100% or close to already. There continues to be a diverse group of cultural backgrounds that attend and with that comes varying religious backgrounds.

In late 2023 the Preschool had its Assessment & Ratings Assessment, receiving ratings of 2 "Exceeding" ratings out of 7 quality areas and an overall rating of Meeting standards which is great in the context of very strict assessment. Having the extension and renovation behind us and having a great, functional space to work in continues to be a positive for everyone. The Open Day in November 2023 with a co-ordinated church BBQ was a nice event and it was good to be able to showcase the upgraded premises and have people attend who have previously been heavily involved with the Preschool including former staff and church committee members.

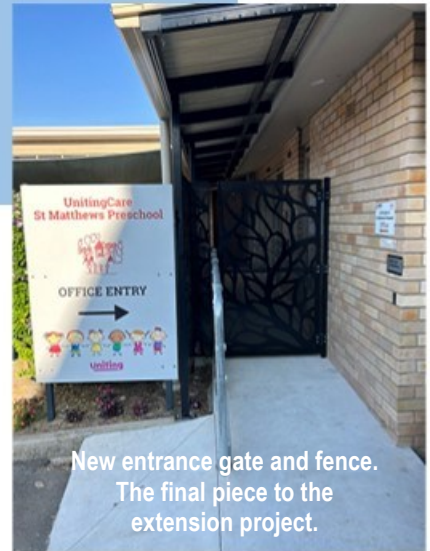
Daniel's regular visits to talk to the children were very well received by the children, as are Jon's regular interactions, and are much appreciated by the staff. We continue to think of ways to build on and continue the strong connection.

We plan on continuing the Beanie Day fundraisers to support Brain Cancer, a nice way to work together and support an important cause that is

significant for many people in our community. Truly it is great as part of our outreach of St Matthews to be behind the preschool, and this was a wonderful way to do so previously.

Financially the Preschool is in a solid position with reserves post renovation of over \$350,000. It contributes over \$70,000 per year to the church by way of occupancy fee, which includes a temporary lift in contributions to help pay the loan down from the new Roof. It is wonderful to continue to contribute to the life of the church from this perspective as well as others.

A brief word on structure and why having a preschool is important. Aside from the financial contribution of the occupancy fee, it is an important outreach for the church. The Shared Governance model is important for the continued vibrancy of the Preschool, having a Management Committee enables autonomy over local decisions and we control our own finances. We have a supportive committee which is very important to this. I'd like to acknowledge our church committee members – Hugh Darling, Amanda Manson, Daniel Gibb, Nicole Gibb, and Marijke Prinsloo. We welcome Jon on board now after Daniel & Nicole stepped down earlier this year. I'd also like to thank Helen Olley & Belinda Schuster for their hard work and continued dedication.



New entrance gate and fence.
The final piece to the extension project.



The Preschool Team
celebrating Christmas
December 2023.

Over the next 12 months we plan to do some playground upgrades, and continue to build our reserves & our connection between the church and preschool.

David Porter
Chairperson
St Matthews Preschool
10/8/2024





Floral Demonstration & Practical Workshop Saturday 24 August

Do you love flowers?
Do you love growing, picking, giving, receiving and buying them and then are not sure how to arrange them in a way to make them look good and last longer?

Everyone is welcome to come to a basic demonstration of how to prepare and arrange fresh flowers from the flower markets then you can make your own to take home. \$20 includes all materials and fresh flowers and basic morning tea. Maximum number of participants is 20 people.

Please reserve your spot by calling or visiting the church office by 17th August.

Date: Saturday 24 August
Time: 9.30am to 12.30pm
Where: St. Matthew's lower hall, Cnr Edgar & Charles Street's, Baulkham Hills. 9686 3003
office@stmatthewsuniting.net.au

All you need to bring is a good pair of secateurs or scissors and **\$20 - cash only** and be seated ready to start at 9.30 am.



The Galston Concerts Sunday 25 August 2024

a pre-concert chat c. 1.40, the concert (& players' relaxed comments) 2 till 3.15ish, then 'meet the musos' afternoon tea, in Galston Uniting Church, 11 School Road, Galston

Around the World ... Piano!

An all-new program of favourites: from Debussy & Puccini, songs of Naples and the cafes of Paris, sounds of the Orient with *Lotus Land*, *Love is a many Splendored Thing* & more.



Australian international virtuoso pianist **Glenn Amer** ('piano wizardry' say his reviews), with gentle humour shares his musical travels & triumphs in over 70 countries



Bookings advised on trybooking.com
(search *Galston 25 August*)
Cash-only sales at the door on the day.
Enquiries phone 9653 2039



St Matthew's

HAPPY HOUR!

At The Winston

170 Caroline Chisholm Drive, Winston Hills

13
SEPTEMBER

5 PM
FRIDAY



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

RSVP to Belinda on belinda.schuster0709@gmail.com



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.