



Bible Readings

8am & 9.30am

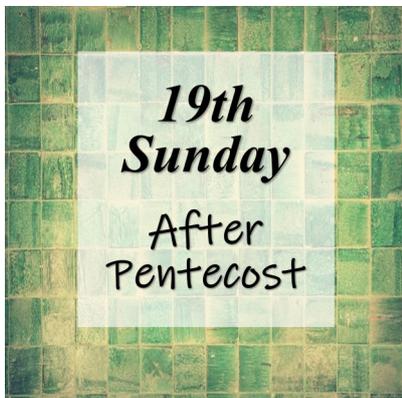
Mark 9: 38-50



Response after Bible Readings

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

Response: *Thanks be to God*



**19th
 Sunday**

**After
 Pentecost**

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
 8am and 9.30am only**

8am—Worship
 Led by Roland Bryant
 and Jon Humphries
Followed by morning tea

9.30—Worship
 Led by Jon Humphries
KUCA in recess
Followed by morning tea

6.45pm—Worship
 Led by Abby Sim
 and Jon Humphries

Thank you for worshipping with us today.

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

MONDAY 30 September

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

7.30pm—Christian Meditation
 community room and church

TUESDAY 1 October

9am-2pm—Op Shop

9.30am-11am—Christian Meditation

community room and church

11.30am—Care and Prayer

community room and church

7.30pm—Thrive Bible Study

lower hall

WEDNESDAY 2 October

9am-2pm—Op Shop

10am-12pm—In Stitches

upstairs hall

THURSDAY 3 October

9am-2pm—Op Shop

10am-12pm—Coffee and Discovery

Guest Speaker: Ron Ray

"Bass and Flinders"

upstairs hall and church

FRIDAY 4 October

No Schedule Activities

SATURDAY 5 October

9am-12pm—Op Shop

9am-12pm—Garage Sale

lower hall

**SUNDAY
 6 OCTOBER**



8am—Worship
 include Communion

9.30am—Worship
KUCA in recess

include Communion
 Followed by morning tea

6.45pm—Worship
 include Communion



**20th Sunday
 After Pentecost**

MINISTER

REV JON HUMPHRIES

Email: jon@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

PRESCHOOL 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

29th September

19th Sunday after Pentecost

Lectionary Readings:

Esther 7:1-6, 9-10; 9:20-22

Psalm 124

James 5:13-20

Mark 9:38-50

Focus passage for our Service:

Mark 9:38-50

Understanding the Seriousness

Last week we explored the wisdom of God. True wisdom comes from God, and we get much of our wisdom teaching in its most intense, even purest form (*purest because we get it straight from God's mouth – albeit recalled and interpreted and conveyed by the writers of the Gospels*), from Jesus who was the incarnation of God. The key thing about wisdom is that it is not enough to have it just in itself. Possessing wisdom is not the goal or aim. Wisdom for the wise teaches that wisdom is only good if it guides us in our living. Therefore, how we live is ultimately the measure of our true wisdom. For us as Christians we are only wise and righteous when we seek wisdom from God and then make the effort to apply that wisdom in our living.

This week we have some harsh wisdom from God in the person of Jesus. "If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life maimed than to have two hands and to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire." Jesus doesn't pull any punches when he speaks about the seriousness of what is at stake.

Whether it is hand, eye or foot (or any other symbolic part of the body) if it causes us to σκανδαλίζη (*skandalizē - to put a snare in the way, to cause to stumble, to give offense*) then it is better to enter into ζωὴν (zoeyn - life) than end up in γέενναν (*gehennan* – hell). Maybe Jesus is using a degree of hyperbole (exaggeration) and we are not literally supposed to maim ourselves, but the point of his metaphorical denunciation of sin is still the same and emphasises just how serious this issue of sin is.

So, let's do a bit of Bible study to look at some of the key terms so that we might gain better insight and wisdom. And, just so you know, all of this can be done by yourself using the Internet using a Greek interlinear translation of the Bible passage and then some Googling to find the meaning of key Greek words.

hell – the Greek word used, as we have noted above is γέενναν (*gehennan*). There are eight occurrences of this word in the Bible. Gehenna is an English transliteration of the Greek word γέενναν, which in turn is from the Hebrew word gē' hinnom, literally the valley of Hinnom. The valley of Hinnom, south of Jerusalem, once celebrated for the horrid worship of Moloch, and afterwards polluted with every species of filth, as well as the carcasses of animals, and dead bodies of malefactors; to consume which, in order to avert the pestilence which such a mass of corruption would occasion, constant fires were kept burning; hence, hell, the fires of Tartarus, the place of punishment in Hades. Source: <https://www.billmounce.com/greek-dictionary/geenna>

Understanding the Seriousness—Continued

sin – There are at least eight basic words in Hebrew for sin: עַר[ra], bad (Genesis 38:7); רָשָׁע[rasha], wickedness (Exodus 2:13); אָשָׁם[asham], guilt (Hosea 4:15); חַטָּאת[chata], sin / miss the mark (Exodus 20:20); אִיִּץ[ayon], iniquity (I Samuel 3:13); אָשָׂא[shagag], err (Isaiah 28:7); אָטָּה[ta-u], wander away (Ezekiel 48:11); פָּשָׁע[pasha], rebel (I Kings 8:50).

On top of the word for sin in the passage from Mark 9 we are exploring, which is σκανδαλίζη [skandalizē] - to put a snare in the way, to cause to stumble, to give offense), there are at least twelve other words for sin in the New Testament: κακός [kakos], bad (Romans 13:3); πονηρός [poneros], evil (Matthew 5:45); ἄσεβής [asebes], godless (Romans 1:18); ἔνοχος [enochos], guilt (Matthew 5:21); ἁμαρτία [hamartia], sin (I Corinthians 6:18); ἀδικία [adikia], unrighteousness (I Corinthians 6:9); ἄνομος [anomos], lawlessness (I Timothy 1:9); παραβάτης [parabates], transgression (Romans 5:14); ἀγνοεῖν [agnoein], to be ignorant (Romans 1:13); πλανᾶω [planao], to go astray (I Corinthians 6:9); παράπτωμα [paraptoma], to fall away (Galatians 6:1); and ὑποκριτής [hupocrites], hypocrite (I Timothy 4:2) Source: <https://bible.org/article/doctrine-sin>

NOTE: Each of these words have nuances of meaning and need to be read and understood in context. It is worth spending some time do more study on these to better understand the fullness of the doctrine

Sin is a big deal. If it wasn't then there wouldn't be so much attention given to it in the Scriptures. It is something to take very seriously. It has potential eternal consequences, BUT it is not the be all and end all of Christian doctrine. It is not the be all and end all for human nature. In the beginning we are created in the image of God who is without sin. We have full potential for good and this is what God calls us into and how God calls us to live. The doctrine of sin is not the most important teaching of Christian theology but it is a contributing aspect or subset of the doctrines of love and grace. God is love and those who live in love live in God and God live in them.

We do sin but we shouldn't, and we should make every effort not to. "If we do the dos we don't have time to do the don'ts." (Mike Warnke). We do sin, but this is not something to get obsessed about. Too much emphasis on sin leads us into fearful living, and that is a falling-short in itself. Love trumps sin. It is love, not fear of punishment, which should drive our desire to live well. The wisdom of God and God's love is what leads us to avoid living in sinful ways because our focus is on living love.

Knowing what sin is can be a start of some wisdom. Knowing what leads us into sin – falling short of the glory of God, is a wise thing to know. However, knowing what it is and what leads us into it, and what it leads us into (aka hell), is of little use if we don't draw on that knowledge to live well. The seriousness of sin – falling short of the glory of God – is something to think about. However, the love of God and the ways we should live it and embody it to others far outweighs any focus on sin and should be what drives us in our living as we seek to love God whom we love.

God bless

Jon

PEOPLE NEWS

**HAPPY
BIRTHDAY**



David Short
David Neideck

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

Sympathy to the family and friends of Sue Tarlinton who died on Saturday 21 September.



Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

29 September — 5 October
Costa Rica, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Panama

Weekly SYNOD SPOTLIGHT
Uniting Church Synod of NSW and the ACT

Uniting Church Synod Spotlight Newsletter for last week (20 September 2024) please see

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

**OCTOBER 2024
SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES**
at the church

6th October - 8am, 9.30am, 6.45pm
Includes Communion

13th October - 8am, 9.30am, 6.45pm
Community Meal

20th October - 8am, 9.30am, 6.45pm

27th October - 8am, 9.30am, 6.45pm

Live streaming at morning services

Nominations for Elders

We are now accepting nominations for Church Elders

Nominations need to be in by Friday 4th October.

Elders nomination forms are located in the upstairs foyer. Please place in the basket provided.

Elections will take place on Sunday 20 October at all 3 worship services.

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.



Thursday 3 October
10am-12pm

Bass & Flinders

Guest Speaker: **Ron Ray OAM**

Ron Ray OAM has been a volunteer guide and member of the Australian National Maritime Museum for 15 years. Ron will talk about the backgrounds of these two famous Australian maritime explorers, their fates and their voyages of exploration around coasts of NSW, Tasmania and Terra Australis.



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

THE OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD PROJECT

St Matthews Preschool is inviting our church congregation to support Operation Christmas Child (OCC), a global project to fill up shoeboxes with gifts that will be distributed to disadvantaged children at Christmas time. For children living in poverty, the shoebox is usually the first gift they have ever received. After collecting 10.5 million shoeboxes globally in 2021, Operation Christmas Child hopes to collect more shoeboxes each year to follow.

St Matthews Preschool aims to collect 100 shoeboxes this year.

Please pick up an empty shoebox along with a brochure which provides more information, from the table in the church foyer. Please write your name, contact number and number of boxes taken on the form provided.

The shoeboxes will be available to collect from Sunday 15th September.



Please note that we will need all the **boxes returned by latest Sunday 13th October**. Please return boxes to area marked **SHOEBOXES RETURNED HERE** in the church foyer.

A Donation of \$12.50 per box is essential to cover shipping costs. You can pay the \$12.50 through the website or by filling out the form on the brochure and enclosing the money it in your shoebox.

Here is a video link for more information about Operation Christmas Child.

<https://vimeo.com/user148429611/review/742905291/9ab41f44a5>

Thank you for your generosity, care, and participation!
Warmest Regards
St Matthews Preschool