



Bible Readings

8am and 9.30am

Hebrews 9: 11-14

Mark 12: 28-34

Response after Bible Readings

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

Response: *Thanks be to God*



8am—Worship
Includes communion
 Led by Pamela Leslie
 and Jon Humphries

9.30—Worship
Includes communion
 Led by Jon Humphries
KUCA Preschool, Years K-2 & Years 3-8
Followed by morning tea

6.45pm—Worship
Includes communion
 Led by Jane Cole
 and 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
8am and 9.30am only

Thank you for worshipping with us today.

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

MONDAY 4 November
9am—Sorting and Pricing for Op Shop and Garage Sale
 lower hall
7.30pm—Christian Meditation
 community room and church

TUESDAY 5 November
9am-2pm—Op Shop
9.30am-11am—Christian Meditation
 community room and church
11.30am—Care & Prayer
 community room
7pm-9pm—NEW Bible Study
 In church or community room

WEDNESDAY 6 November
9am-2pm—Op Shop
10am-12pm—In Stitches
 upstairs hall
7pm—Finance Committee Meeting upstairs hall

THURSDAY 7 November
9am-2pm—Op Shop
10am-12pm
Coffee and Discovery
 Guest Speaker: Allan Williams
"From Humble Beginnings"
Transport Heritage NSW

FRIDAY 8 November
No Scheduled Activities
SATURDAY 9 November
No Scheduled Activities

SUNDAY
10 NOVEMBER
8am—Worship
Includes Elders Elections
9am—Worship @ the Willows
9.30am—Worship
Includes Elders Elections
KUCA Preschool, Years K-2 & Years 3-8
 Followed by morning tea
6.45pm—Worship
Includes Elders Elections



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

3rd November

24th Sunday after Pentecost

Lectionary Readings:

Ruth 1:1-18

Psalm 146

Hebrews 9:11-14

Mark 12:28-34

Inhabit

In Christ we are free. There is no 'but' to this truth, but there is. The reality is that we are constrained in many ways, not so much by God, but by the habits and strictures of culture, religion, society etc. I was pondering the weird word inhabit. It doesn't seem weird at first. Yet, the more that we dig into it, the stranger it becomes. My understanding of the word was that it is about in live in a place where we are. However, I noticed for the first time that the word was in essence composed of 'in' and 'habit.' Being in a habit can be both positive and negative depending on the outcome the habit has in our life, and habits certainly shape the pattern of our lives.

The etymology of inhabit seems to go back to the Latin inhabitare which is comprised of 'in' meaning in and 'habitare' meaning to dwell. So, inhabitare literally means to dwell in. Yet, there seems to be an older and deeper root which is habere which means to hold or have. However, there is an even deeper root which relates to the word 'have' which is ghabh, also be ghebh, which is a proto-Indo-European word with the root meaning "to give or receive." Here having seems linked with giving and receiving or offering and accepting. There appears to have been a selfish flip in understanding of inhabit from giving and offering to being about holding and having at some stage.

Habitat is often understood to be the place where we live or can live. Habitation is the act of living in a place. A habitat is a place which holds a certain collection of conditions for an organism or organisms to live. Here the conditions offer and shape how the organisms can find life and therefore shapes the way that they live. Again, this meaning is truer to the root of what is given or offered rather than what is held or possessed.

Sadly, too often, like how the understanding of the word has evolved, we understand inhabiting to be about possessing. We are in the habit of thinking about what we hold and own and, by implication, what we control in relation to a place. Our habit of living in the world is too often more about taking and making than receiving and accepting.

Continued next page

Inhabit — Continued

Yet, in all this is choice. Habits are formed. They aren't innate. We develop them over time through repeated behaviours. They become habits as they are neuroplastically hard-wired into our brains as the repetitions shape neural patterns and pathways. Once formed, they usually take a lot of work and effort to change. We should therefore take great care of what habits we take hold of. Our habits of mind become mindsets and our mindsets and habits of mind lead us into habits of behaviour.

Over the past year we have heard that God is love and those who live in love live in God and God lives in them. [1 John 4: 16] This is about our habitation and God's habitation as Spirit with us or within us. In Jesus' response to a scribe as to what the greatest commandment is in Mark 12:28-34 Jesus centres our thinking and doing to be about love. We should love God with all our being and we should love our neighbour as ourselves. Commandments are about setting a moral framework in our minds which should guide our living. Here Jesus links loving God with loving others as we ourselves are loved. This is set as to what should be our deepest and most ingrained habit. It should shape all our living.

So, we inhabit spaces and times. In those spaces and times we establish patterns of behaviour and living which we call habits. Rather than just thinking that to inhabit something is to take and own it or to have and hold it, as part of our faith in God and our spirituality and discipleship, we are challenged to explore what life in any certain place or time, in any certain situation or circumstance, and with any certain people and relationships might offer to us and shape our living. We are called to be mindful that God inhabits our living, and that offers us a different way of being. We are called to take up habits of love which are about self-giving and the offering of our gifts in service to others rather than habits of consuming and using others and things for our own self-interest.

Jesus, who is God with us, opens a different understanding of life to that of our consumeristic, capitalistic society and culture. He radically shifts things back to the root understanding of being where there is a synergy between giving and receiving and offering and taking. Jesus, who is God as Word, calls us to hold onto and inhabit a way of being which is centred and focused on sacrificial and other-serving not self-serving lust for more and for comfort. When we live in love we live in God and God lives in us. This is a habit worth thinking about and taking up.

God bless

Jon

PEOPLE NEWS

HAPPY BIRTHDAY



Judy Yeoh

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

NOVEMBER 2024 SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES
at the church

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

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

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

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

Live streaming at morning services

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

3 — 9 November

Oceania: French Polynesia, Kanaky, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu

Church Council and Elders Elections

Elections will take place on **Sunday 10 November** at all 3 worship services.

Weekly
SYNOD SPOTLIGHT

Uniting Church Synod of NSW and the ACT

Uniting Church Synod Spotlight Newsletter

For (25 October 2024) please see link :

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

Church Diary for 2025

A note to all group leaders — If your group is planning to use a part of the church property please ensure the area is available before finalizing your program. Even if you will be continuing to use the same space as this year, we still need your confirmation.

Please send your 2025 programs to the church office ASAP.

ADVENT CHRISTMAS EPIPHANY
WITH LOVE TO THE WORLD

THE HOLY FAMILY



VOL. 17, NO. 9
11 NOVEMBER 2024 — 9 FEBRUARY 2025

ADVENT CHRISTMAS EPIPHANY

WITH LOVE TO THE WORLD

a daily Bible reading guide based on the Revised Common Lectionary

Volume 17, Number 9
11 NOVEMBER 2024 to 9 FEBRUARY 2025

is available in the church foyer.

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

To find out what's happening at St. Matthew's during November click below:



Or go to the St. Matthew's website.
www.stmatthewsuniting.net.au

To be included in the combined December/January edition of In FOCUS please send your articles and group activities to the church office by **15 November**.



LECTIONARY READINGS

Bible Study Tuesday Evenings

Everyone is invited
to come along.

Commencing
Tuesday 22 October

*We will be Focusing on the Lectionary
readings from the previous Sunday.*

First readings—20 October 2024

Start Date: Tuesday 22 October 2024

Where: St. Matthew's UC

Church or Community Room

Time: 7pm-9pm

(last half hour will be supper)

Weekly: On a Tuesday night
until 17 December 2024
(excluding 10 December)

Will restart weekly from
Tuesday 28 January 2025

Led by Jon Humphries and Alastair Burn



LECTIONARY READINGS

On Tuesday 22 October we had our first **Weekly Bible study**. Although the turnout was small in number we covered quite a lot. We explored the Revised Common Lectionary readings set for last Sunday, 20 October 2023.

We covered such topics as who was Melchizedek? We sought to better understand the book of Job and how it deals with the problem of suffering. We explored what priesthood meant in the Bible, how Jesus was our Great High Priest, and related it to how we are all part of the priesthood of all believers.

And, if that wasn't quite an achievement, we also thought about how the sacrifice of Jesus, as the Son of God and the incarnation of God related to the idea of ransom which is mentioned by Jesus in Mark 10 45, also managing to touch on the story of Abraham - which sort of brought us full circle.

The aim of this series of Bible studies is to allow people to shape what we learn about by suggesting questions and what they would like to understand better, as we look for links between the set readings and what might have been covered in the sermon the previous Sunday.

If you would like to know more about the enigmatic and mysterious character of Melchizedek whom Jesus is compared to and surpasses, here is a YouTube video you might like to watch.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zt31DHTGmNw&t=1s>

If you would like to join in the fun and learning, we are meeting in the main Church space each Tuesday night from 7pm-8.30pm (with time to share some supper at the end if people are up for it)

Thanks and blessings,

Jon



Thursday 7 November
10am-12pm

**“From Humble Beginnings”
 Transport Heritages NSW**

Guest Speaker: **Allan Williams**

Allan will share his interest and experiences with this organization which is committed to preserving our State’s transport history.



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



To all our beautiful customers. In the lead up to Christmas the Op Shop are requesting donations of:



- Ceramic glazed, decorative pots
- Large good quality black plastic pots
- Unwanted/unloved pot plants
- Hanging baskets
- Bird baths
- Chimes
- Statues
- Hose reels
- Hose hangers
- Sprinklers
- Gardening tools
- Unwanted plant food, fertilizer
- Plants stands/patio plant display/shelving/small round tables

• Pick-up may be available depending upon location, weight etc.

If you require items to be collected, please contact the church office.

St Matthew's
HAPPY HOUR!

At NBC

166 Windsor Rd, Northmead

29 NOVEMBER | **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 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.