



**Bible Readings**

**Genesis 45: 3-11, 15**

**Luke 6: 27-38**

**1 Corinthians 15: 35-38 & 42-50**



**Response after Bible Readings**

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

**Response:** *Thanks be to God*



*Epiphany 7*

**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 Clive Pearson  
 and Jon Humphries  
**Followed by morning tea**

**9.30am—Worship**

Led by Sharon Underwood  
 and Jon Humphries  
**Followed by morning tea**

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

**5pm— Shine**

**6.45pm—Worship**

Led by Nicola Lawless  
 and Jon Humphries

Thank you for worshipping with us today.

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

**MONDAY 24 February**

*Church Office Closed*

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

**7.30pm—Christian Meditation**  
 community room and church

**TUESDAY 25 February**

**8am-2.30pm—Church Office Open**

**9am-2pm—Op Shop open**

**9.30am-11am—Christian Meditation**

community room and church

**7-8.30pm— Lectionary Bible Study**

**WEDNESDAY 26 February**

**8am-2.30pm—Church Office Open**

**9am-2pm—Op Shop**

**7.30pm—Church Council meeting**  
 upstairs hall

**THURSDAY 27 February**

**8am-2.30pm—Church Office Open**

**9am-2pm—Op Shop**

**2.15pm— Op Shop volunteers meeting**  
 Upstairs hall

**FRIDAY 28 February**

**No Scheduled Activities**  
*Church Office Closed*

**SATURDAY 1 March**

**9am-12pm Op Shop**

**9am-12pm Garage Sale**  
 lower hall

**SUNDAY  
 2 MARCH**

**8am— Worship**  
 Includes Communion

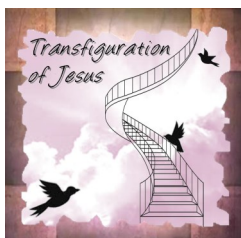
**9.30am—Worship**  
 Includes Communion

**KUCA**

Preschool, Years K-2 & Years 3-8

Followed by morning tea

**6.45pm—Worship**  
 Includes Communion



**MINISTER**

REV JON HUMPHRIES

Email: jon@stmatthewsuniting.net.au

**CHURCH OFFICE SECRETARY:**

LYNN SAMUEL

**CHURCH OFFICE HOURS** 8AM-2.30PM

TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY

**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

## 23rd February

### Epiphany 7

#### Lectionary Readings:

Genesis 45:3-11, 15

Psalms 37:1-11, 39-40

1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50

Luke 6:27-38

#### So, a Young Person Walks into Church?

Most of us who have been in the Church for a while probably rejoice when a young person walks into our Church space. Many of us pray that this would be a common occurrence, and that they would not simply visit but stay and become part of the community. However, there will be some of us who welcome this kind of happening but don't always know what to do, or feel comfortable about what to do, when it happens.

David Toogood, Education and Resourcing Facilitator – for Pulse, the Synod Youth Ministry Growth team, presented a master class on this topic this week. Uniting Mission and Education has established these master classes, not so much as lectures, but as free online monthly forums designed to support active ministry leaders by exploring contemporary perspectives and fostering networks of support and collaboration. Ministry Masterclasses seek to provide input and support for people who are keen to build networks and gain new insights from thought leaders.

As I write this on Tuesday morning, I haven't yet joined in the masterclass which is to be held in the afternoon. So, I am not sure what will be shared, but the program has a summary of what David will speak about, and he asks the following questions about a person's experience in joining with a Church: Is it safe? Is Jesus in the centre? Is it fun? Now I don't yet know how David will shape his presentation around these questions, but I thought that they were worth considering. You can ask me when you see me about what he actually presented.

I don't know what David will present, but I agree that they are good and important questions to consider, it is worth doing some thinking about. The first question, "Is it safe?" does refer to physical safety, but safety goes much deeper than that. Safety for young people as it is for all of us is also about psychological, emotional, spiritual and theological safety. Anyone coming to be part of the Church or our activities should not experience any kind of abuse. We should be fully living out the Fruit of the Spirit [love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness, generosity and faithfulness and self-control]. We should be a community of love, which has all the marks of love that the Apostle Paul describes in 1 Corinthians 13. People should be safe to exercise and explore who they are, as they are, how they are and what they are without comment or criticism, but with acceptance and welcome and human-kindness as we seek to join in community with each other in mutual respect, love and commonality of being people cared for by God.

*Continued next page*



So, a young person walks into church-continued

When David, asks, "Is Jesus at the centre?" there are many ways we can understand that. We are the Body of Christ, who was Jesus – Immanuel: God with us. Thus, if we are not living as disciples and a community whose life is centred on joining in the work of God, which Christ as the Word of God, announced as helping break open this world to the Kingdom of God and its communion of the common good, then Jesus is not at the centre. So, the teachings of Jesus should be at the centre and we should be honouring in the way we live the commandment to love God with all our being and to love our neighbour as ourselves and as we go about doing this, to disciple others, baptising them, that is plunging them into the faith and family of Jesus/God, and teaching them all Jesus commanded. However, God is also present with us and within us as Spirit, and thus we cannot be the Church, who seeks to be the body of Christ, without using our gifts given to us as God as Spirit in ministry of loving service to other as per the example of Jesus.

Finally comes the question of 'fun.' Many have challenged me over the years when I have sought to make faith and discipleship fun, even despite all the exhortations in Scripture to "rejoice in the Lord" and make a joyful noise to God. It seems that if things are fun, then people feel that we are not taking faith and discipleship seriously or seriously enough. I would argue that the opposite is true. We know that joy is a powerful emotion. We know that we want people to have a positive experience of being part of the Church, and fun plays a part in that. Church should be seriously fun - that is not just frivolous for frivolity's sake, but fun in the way that we feel engaged and motivated. Shared fun provides a powerful shared experience which creates a greater sense of community and develops relationships and connections. We know this because it is a key part of friendships, especially for young people. We also know that memory is very much linked to our emotions. So, fun seriously helps people learn and remember what they have learnt. If we are disciples and seek to learn and help others learn about God and faith and discipleship, then fun has its place amongst other helpful emotions.

Sadly, strong negative emotions also lock things in our memory. If people, especially young people, who may not have the life experience or developed sense of self and self-esteem which helps them be resilient, come to Church and have a strongly negative experience, where they do not feel welcomed or accepted for who they are and who they are becoming, or worse experience harm or hurt then they may be turned off faith for life. No one should experience abuse in any form, but neither should they experience discrimination, judgement, hypocrisy, condemnation, unacceptance or other aspects of negative, unhelpful and hurtful behaviour that the Church is sadly too often known for.

Whilst we might consider ourselves to be welcoming and in no way like that kind of negative space, we should dodge the questions, and if our answer to the questions to be, yes, our Church is safe, it is Christ/Jesus/God/Spirit-centred we need to be able to also answer and give evidence how we know, and that it is not mostly safe and mostly Christ-centred and mostly welcoming. For anyone who walks into our space they should encounter the grace and love and mercy and blessing etc of God, and not just from some of our members but from all of us, and not just some of the time but all of the time.

When a young person walks into our community as the Church, whether they are here for the first time or a member of it, we should be asking ourselves: Is it safe? Is Jesus in the centre? Is it fun? This gives us something to continually think about.

God bless  
Jon

PEOPLE NEWS

**HAPPY  
BIRTHDAY**



Merilyn Philip

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

## Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

23 February — 1 March

*France, Germany, Monaco*



**We need your help  
teaching KUCA**

**During the 9.30am  
service**

**Preschool, Year K-2 and  
Years 3-8**

**Please see Jon if you can help.**

## Weekly SYNOD SPOTLIGHT

Uniting Church Synod of NSW and the ACT

Uniting Church Synod Spotlight Newsletter

For (14 February 2025) please see link :

[New Insights](#) ( [Synod Weekly](#) )

## Seniors Golf Day in Seniors week put on by Cumberland Council

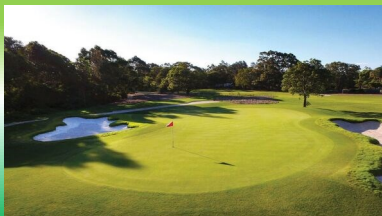
Dates:

- Monday 10 March Sefton Golf Course \$10 entry fee
- Thursday 13 March Woodville course

**Free lunch**

First in best dressed

**Please  
contact Earl  
Gray**



## Friday 7 March Saturday 8 March

The Property Committee will be holding the next working bee over 2 days to make it easier for volunteers to attend. The focus of the working bee is to be ready for Erin Matthewson & Sam Lam wedding on the 15th March which is being held at St. Matthew's together with afternoon tea and Easter soon after. We want the church to sparkle for these events.

**Times and dates:**

- ◇ **Friday 7th March:** from 2.00pm to 6.00 pm
- ◇ **Saturday 8th March:** from 8.00am to 11.00am (morning tea provided)

Please come along for a little while or the whole time. Many hands make light work and would be most appreciated.



**Youth @ St Matts**  
Term 1, 2025

**5-7PM FORTNIGHTLY ON FRIDAYS**  
Year 3-9 \$10 (includes supper)

**WEEK 4**

21 February

**Youth vs  
Leaders**



**WEEK 8**

21 March

**Games  
Show Night**



**WEEK 6**

7 March

**Park Night**

**FUN!**



**WEEK 9**

4 April

**Engineering  
Challenge**



st. matthew's  
UNITING CHURCH  
BAULKHAM HILLS  
growing together

For more information contact Jon Humphries  
[jonestmatthewsuniting.net.au](mailto:jonestmatthewsuniting.net.au) 9686 3003



**WORLD  
DAY  
of Prayer  
2025**

**Focus country: The  
Cook Islands**

**7.30pm**

**Friday 7th March**

**Holy Trinity Anglican Church  
295 Windsor Road, Baulkham  
Hills.**

**Join your local one-hour prayer  
service**

***The Easter Experience***  
**2025**

**at Gordon-Pymble Uniting Church  
Sunday 6th, Monday 7th, Tuesday 8th  
& Wednesday 9th April**

**If you would like to take part please contact  
Gordon-Pymble Uniting Church at [info@gpuc.org.au](mailto:info@gpuc.org.au)**

The Easter experience staged each year with volunteer actors from Gordon/Pymble congregation and others, an outreach to the local primary schools (year 4) telling them the story of Easter.



**Due to the possibility of storms and severe weather, this event has been deferred until 22 March.**

**More details will follow.**

## **INVITATION**

This is an urgent request and invitation for people to be a part of an audiovisual production, which is a modern adaptation of the story of the Life and Teachings of Jesus.

In this production, the voice and face of God is the Rev Geoff Stevenson, the voice and face of Jesus is the Rev Kent Crawford, the Rev 'Oto Favia is a member of God's committee and the Rev Ian Pearson is one of the 17 narrators, who have already recorded the audio channel for this production.

We need at least 200 people to be the members of a large crowd, to take part in a photography session during a relaxed picnic

lunch on the banks of the Hawkesbury River, in the grounds of the Ebenezer Church, from 11 AM on **Saturday 22 March. (please see change of date)**

All that is required is to arrive at Ebenezer by about 11 AM, then set up your picnic blanket or chairs and your lunch in the designated area, before enjoying everybody's company.

Photos will be taken of Kent Crawford, speaking as in the Sermon on the Mount and the feeding of the 5000, and of the assembled crowd of extras.

Any questions should be directed to John Law, who is the writer, director and producer at Cosmic Publications and Productions. John's phone number is 0414 409 098 and his email address is [jvl@dutg.com.au](mailto:jvl@dutg.com.au).



**Uniting Church**  
SYNOD OF NSW & ACT

### **Join Us for the First 2025 Missional Reading Group!**

Whether you're deeply involved in mission or exploring fresh perspectives on church, culture, and creation, this reading group promises enriching discussions that deepen our understanding of a blended ecology of the church, mission in Australia, First Nations voices, and key issues of intercultural life, gender, and creation care.

**When: Tuesday, 25 February, 7–9 PM**

**Where: Online via Zoom**

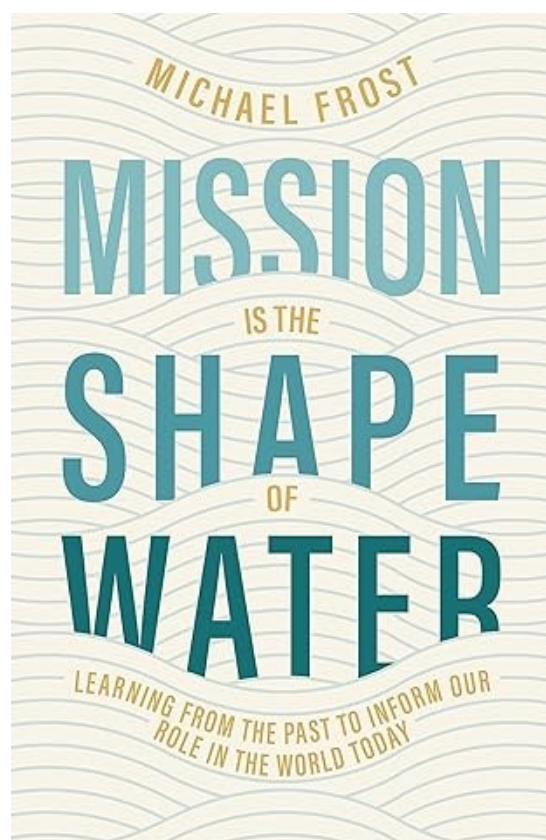
**Book: [Mission Is the Shape of Water: Learning From the Past to Inform Our Role in the World Today](#) by Michael Frost**

Discover how mission, like water, adapts and flows through changing contexts. Let's explore how lessons from history can shape our role in today's world.

**Special Guest:** We are thrilled that the author, Michael Frost, will be joining us for a conversation about the themes of this powerful book!

**Open to everyone across our churches and Synod!**

**[Missional Reading Group – First Gathering - UCA](#)**





The first Thursday of each month from March until December

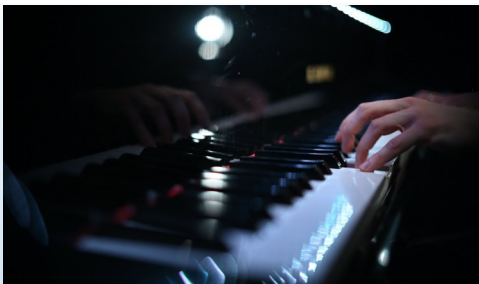
Next meeting will be **6th March**  
**10am—12noon**



Speaker: Jennifer Philps  
"Genetics Medical Research Institute"

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

\*\*\*\*\* ALL WELCOME \*\*\*\*\*



## Recital of Piano Repertoire

Presented by

**Colin Watts**

2.30pm

Saturday 8th March

Holy Trinity Anglican Church

Windsor Road, Baulkham Hills

Contact: Christine Haines 0401 344 800

Entry by donation in aid of a project to build a well in Uganda

**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](http://www.stmatthewsuniting.net.au)**

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