



Bible Readings

Luke 13: 31-35
Philippians 3: 17-4: 1
Psalms 27



Response after Bible Readings

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

Response: *Thanks be to God*



LENT 2

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 Michael Strong and Roland Bryant

9.30am—Worship

Led by Jon Humphries
Includes the baptism of Imogen Hain. We welcome the family and friends of Imogen to worship today.

Followed by morning tea

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

6.45pm—Worship

Led by Jon Humphries

Thank you for worshipping with us today.

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

MONDAY 17 March

Church Office Closed

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

7.30pm—Christian Meditation
 community room and church

TUESDAY 18 March

9am-2pm—Op Shop open

9.30am-11am—Christian Meditation
 community room and church

7-8.30pm—Lenten Studies
 In the church

WEDNESDAY 19 March

9am-2pm—Op Shop

10am-12pm—In Stitches

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

7.30pm—Elders Meeting

THURSDAY 20 March

9am-2pm—Op Shop

FRIDAY 21 March

7pm—Fusion "Games show night"

Church Office Closed

SATURDAY 22 March

No Scheduled Activities

SUNDAY 23 MARCH

8am—Worship

9.30am—Worship

KUCA
 Preschool, Years K-2 & Years 3-8
 Followed by morning tea

5pm—Shine

6.45pm—Worship



LENT 3

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

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FACEBOOK:

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PRE-SCHOOL DIRECTOR 9639 8570

SONALI WANIGESKERA

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

16 March

LENT 2

Lectionary Readings:

Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18
Psalm 27
Philippians 3:17-4:1
Luke 13:31-35

Both/And Rather than Either/Or

It is amazing that in God we discover a breaking from boxes and boundaries. God stretches our understanding and opens us to the reality of complexity and the enigmatic nature of truth. This is not to say that there is no such thing as truth, it is just that it lies with God and not always within the limited reach of our understanding. This often leads to discomfort and tends to upset religion which has a tendency towards a degree of rigidity and conformity to an order. However, in Christ, who is God and through God who is Spirit, who is at work in us and with us, we have freedom which comes from faith which brings us into the wonder of grace.

Too often we want things to be nice and neat. This is in terms of our physical environments but also applies a lot to our thinking. We like things to fit into categories and compartments which require us to think less. However, this usually leads us to judging more. "Either/or" thinking can be simple and comfortable. There is here or there, us or them, in or out and one that is a favourite of human[un]kind which is right or wrong. To maintain this seems to require a

simple logic, where we have rules or classifications or standards and then we simply apply them to whomever, whatever or whenever is needed.

Uncomfortably and inconveniently, as soon as we bring God into our lives and let God shape our thinking, we encounter the enigmatic truth that rather than either/or a disturbing amount of life, the universe and reality is actually both/and. God is both three persons and one God. We are usually both sinners and saints. Compassion and the unity we are called to brings us into a community of faith where our identity in Christ is comprised as both us and them. In grace, boundaries and distinctions which might lead us to think about who is either in or out those classed as 'God's people' are dissolved by the reality that is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus [Galatians 3:8]. We are faithful and faithless. Although we are called in discipleship to love as God loves giving of ourselves as God gave of Godself in the person of Christ, we are both selfish self-less at the same time. We are both dead to sin and alive in Christ, yet the way we really live much of the time suggests that sin is alive and well in our living and we are too often dead to the way of Jesus.

It gets no better as we delve into the mysteries of the universe and how things work to create what we believe to be our reality. Things often turn out to be both/and rather than either/or. Light is both a wave and a 'particle' [although in physics it is more likely to be referred to as a quantum or packet of energy]. There are many theories and what has been held to be either true or not, which can now be described as both true and false, depending on one's relative perspective or position of observation.

Continued next page

Ethics, the consideration of what is more right and less wrong, in the complexity of life where situations can lead to things or actions being both right and wrong, rather than simply right or wrong. Where morals are in tension with each other there can be times where doing something which in a moral absolute would be considered wrong, can be also considered the right thing to do in the relative circumstances. Killing for example is universally held to be wrong, but there are many ethical debates about such instances as war or assisted dying, where a case can be made for it to be the right thing to do. The complexity of what can be both right and wrong can also apply to many of our doctrines and theology.

Jesus is both the Son of God and God incarnate. We can both know God whilst at the same time not knowing the reality of God. God is both transcendent (beyond our limits of perception) and immanent (perceivably close and near). Loving our neighbour is both simple to do and very hard at the same time. We can believe in God and at the same time have many doubts, just like the father of a boy who was wracked with seizures and who came to Jesus asking for healing for his son (Mark 9:24). The reality is that many can be doing good, whilst at the same time be guilty of doing evil. It is not easy to categorise some things and less helpful to categorise people. This therefore is something that we can leave to God.

Jesus hits us with this calling to not judge unless we wish to be judged by the same measure (Matthew 7:1-3). In this we need to be clear that we are both to judge behaviour as right or wrong, both our own and others, and at the same time not make judgements of who is in or out of God's love, grace, mercy or communion as the Church. Paul's


letters are full of this complexity of both/and dualities, for he understood what it means to be human and to be in God and God's grace whilst at the same time not being able to live rightly or do what is good and proper in the way of Jesus. Romans 7:15-20 is a great example where he speaks about both knowing what is right and good and not being able to do it., where he writes, "I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do." We are both "dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus" [Romans 6:11] and yet, sin continues to live in us leading us to do wrongly and act un-rightly [Romans 7:17].

So, as Jesus once said, "you shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free." [John 8:32] The truth sets us firmly in a both/and reality. Things are not as clear-cut or as right and wrong as we, and this truth sets us free from human-created boundaries and categories. We are freed in faith to give God the glory of judging, and our work becomes both reflecting on our own lives and what needs repenting and the work of joining God in God's mission by our using of our gifts and talents. Lent is a time for us to think about such things as we seek to re-invigorate our faith and discipleship on the journey towards the cross and resurrection.

God bless.

Jon

PEOPLE NEWS



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Anne Oliver
Yee-Cheng Eldridge
Dennis Bell

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



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.

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

16 — 22 March



Scandinavia: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden

Weekly

SYNOD SPOTLIGHT

Uniting Church Synod of NSW and the ACT

Uniting Church Synod Spotlight Newsletter

For (7 March 2025) please see link to Synod weekly:

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

Services at the Willow's

St. Matthew's is responsible for leading services at the Willow's on the 2nd Sunday and one fifth Sunday if there is one.

Sermon/message needs to be only 6-8 minutes. There are usually 3 songs included and a couple of prayers and a bible reading.

We require someone to lead the service on Sunday 13 April (Palm Sunday) at 9am.

If this something you think you might be able to do, please contact the Church office.



Youth @ St Matts

Term 1, 2025

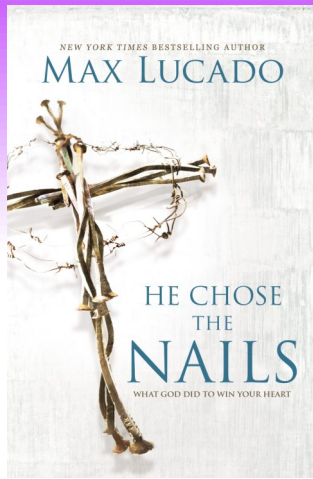
5-7PM FORTNIGHTLY ON FRIDAYS

Year 3-9 \$10 (includes supper)

<p>WEEK 4 21 February Youth vs Leaders</p>	<p>WEEK 8 21 March Games Show Night</p> 
<p>WEEK 6 7 March Park Night</p> 	<p>WEEK 9 4 April Engineering Challenge</p> 




For more information contact Jon Humphries
jonestmatthewsuniting.net.au 9686 3003



Lenten Bible Study Max Lucado "He Chose The Nails"

Where: St. Matthew's UC in the Church

Time: 7pm-8.30pm

When: Tuesday nights

beginning 11 March to Tuesday 15 April

Everyone is invited to come along.

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**

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.

lentevent

5 MARCH - 17 APRIL 2025

40 days of faith-filled
action for God's Creation

*"The impact of climate change
is very real in the lives of our
people in Tonga.*

*It means a lot to us that the
people of the Uniting Church in
Australia are standing with us,
through UnitingWorld."*

*-Rev Makoni Pulu, Free
Wesleyan Church in Tonga*



Take on a climate challenge! For 40 days, transform the way you eat, shop, travel or use energy. Set a fundraising goal and inspire your friends and family to sponsor you

Give generously to create a big impact. Your donation will support climate action led by people and communities on the frontlines of climate change.



Donate



Keep faith

Explore how your faith can inspire action, change lives and spread much-needed hope to face the climate crisis. We have great resources to inspire you on the journey.

\$20 can help our partners **plant trees** to stabilise landslide-prone areas and absorb carbon.

\$90 can help provide **seeds and tools** for a family to grow their own food.

\$200 can help equip local churches to lead **disaster preparedness and recovery** efforts.

\$500 can help supply **clean drinking water** to a remote community impacted by drought.

<https://donate.unitingworld.org.au/event/lent-event/resources>



KIDS CAMP OUT 2025

WHO: Primary School Families (all kids under 18 welcome with their parents)

WHEN: March 21-23

WHERE: Wedderburn Christian Campsite

WHAT TO EXPECT:

Worship | Big Activities | Small Groups | Games
| Free Time | Swimming | Starlight Movies

REGISTER NOW:

kidscampout.uca.org.au



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.

