

st. matthew's UNITING CHURCH BAULKHAM HILLS growing together

April 2025



St. Matthew's Monthly Newsletter



Uniting Together

You may have wondered at why we have been having pulpit swaps between Rev. Ness Williams-Henke and I. This is an attempt to keep our congregations thinking beyond the limits of our local context and to keep us connected to the wider Church which we are a part of. We have called this collaboration, Uniting Together.' As I wrote in my ministry report for February, the Uniting Together initiative is about exploring common links between our congregations and looking to ways where, as appropriate,

we might support each other in mission and ministry. Similar to the purpose of hubs in our presbytery, where we are linked with Wesley Castle Hill, Quakers Hill and Galston Uniting, I and some colleagues from Uniting Heart and Soul in Woollahra and Turramurra Uniting Church have been meeting to consider how our congregations might look beyond our own local patch and the existing use synergies, gifts and capacities to help us think missionally.

Why Turramurra Uniting and Uniting Heart and Soul in Woollahra? It is just because we have interconnections through our ministry leaders and a of bunch already established connections. Phil Rev. Swain Turramurra had the vision for this. Lynda and I were part of Turramurra Uniting for many years before I started at St. Matthew's. Our previous youth worker, Daniel Gibb. moved to Turramurra, and like our congregation, they have three services, run a big community Flea market, have an attached day-care similarities. and other Cornford **Pastor** Jonty works at Uniting Heart and Soul doing digital ministry and also attends does and some lav leadership at Turramurra.

Continued next page

Uniting together cont'd ..

Ness and I have a longstanding friendship and have worked together for many years. My daughter Rachel leads music at Uniting Heart and Soul, and before coming to St. Matthew's I have helped with music and led services there. So, given the existing connections, and the fact that we are part of the Uniting Church, which implicitly calls us in connection which unites, we thought that it might be helpful to explore opportunities which might become apparent or which God might lead us into as we build upon them.

This initiative is simply about three vital, similar, but different congregations in three different areas of Sydney cooperating to use their gifts and strengths to share in God's mission together. Together we might be able to achieve more, be more effective as we share ideas and resources, and

help each other in ways not possible as one congregation alone.

There is no underlying or ulterior motive in this. There are no plans to merge congregations or anything like this. It is simply a desire to explore how together we might help each other to achieve more and share resources as appropriate which leads to more effective life and witness in each of our contexts.

The Uniting Church regulations allow for it and it just seemed to make sense to take up any opportunity which might lead to more effective ministry.

I have presented this idea to Church Council who are supportive of this initiative.
As mentioned already we had a first pulpit swap in November, and one recently in Lent. We don't know where this might lead or what exactly might come of

it.

However, we who are involved seemed to feel God leading us into this as Spirit and it fits within our Uniting Church ethos. Our hope is that our congregations might look to these connections and increasingly get creative in our thinking as to how we might help each other as the opportunity arises grow in our life and witness.



God bless

Jon







Everyone is invited to come along.

Bible Study Tuesday Evenings

Focusing on the Lectionary readings from the previous Sunday.

Where: St. Matthew's UC Church or Community Room Time: 7pm-8.30pm Weekly: On a Tuesday night

Will recommence after Easter on Tuesday 22 April.

Led by Jon Humphries and Alastair Burn





10am-12noon

" How long until the next bus?.... and other transport secrets.



Warren and Colleen have over 45 years experience in the bus and transport industry. Join them to discover just what makes the system work.



1st Saturday of the month 9am-12pm

Upcoming dates

- 5 April
- 3 May
- 7 June

Pre-loved
Household items,
Electrical, Toys & Books
(Fiction, Non -fiction & children's books)

St. Matthew's Lower hall

Parramatta Mission Hats for Homeless

A new St. Matthew's initiative is collecting knitted, crochet or loomed beanies and scarves and soap for Parramatta Mission for distribution to homeless and disadvantaged people who access their services.

Patterns are available on Hats for Homeless Facebook page.

If you are able to help, there is a collection tub at the top of the stairs.

For more information contact Christine Haines 0401 344 800





Working Bee News



A big thank you to those who took the time to help out at the working bee:

With Katherine Pederson on the Friday; Jon, Belinda Schuster, Peter sexton, Keith Pentland and Cindy from the meditation team.

On the Saturday with myself, Peter Jenkyn, Bruce Court, George Haines, David Porter, Robyn & Doug Matthewson and Rosemary Sexton.

Two productive days

The upstairs bathroom walls were bleached. The kitchen door and the below the fover kitchen bench were cleaned. The kitchen exhaust fan covers were also cleaned. Thank you Keith.

6 new plants were planted in the preschool area. Thank you Katherine and Cindy.

Church entry and floors were washed. Thank you Cindy.

tray which sprayed and cleaned on the Saturday. Thank you Belinda.

The skirting boards downstairs were given a 2nd coat of paint. Thank you Jon.

The outside areas were high-pressure cleaned. Thank you Peter.

Saturday

4 of us spent time on the hall dividing doors to remove all the stains. A number of products were used with success. Thank George, Robyn and Doug.

The hall cupboards were cleaned of all marks and sticky spots. Thank you Robyn. The already cleaned area under the kitchen was painted. The area near the upstairs toilet was painted recently. The outside windows sill near front door was also painted. Thank you Bruce, such an improvement.

The windows in the hall and foyer were cleaned. Thank you Peter.

The cleaning cupboard inside and out were cleaned. While the walls were wiped down. Thanks Doug.

The oven was cleaned except for the baking A lot of time was spent on cleaning the grout in the floor of the upstairs bathroom. Thank you David.

Jane Jenkyn

Secretary of the Property Committee

From the Social Issues Focus Group at St Matthew's

'Doing little things can make a big difference'.

Wesley Mission recently circulated a report completed by Equity Economics on 'Gambling

Australia's Cost-Of-Living Crisis: the unspoken black hole in household budgets', released in March 2025. The statistics here are from page 4 of the report and are concerning. Wesley are encouraging the community to contact their representatives federal and radio stations prior the regards election, in to the regulation of gambling advertising.

Reminders for upcoming dates for social issues:

On Friday 2nd May 2025 there will be a 'Hills March for Change' for DFV, assemble from around 6:30am under the covered area at the front of the entrance to the carpark nearest the Event Cinemas at Castle Towers. March to Castle Hill Bowling Club (next to Castle Hill RSL).

30th May 2025 from 5pm to

Lost on gambling Australians in a si year (2022-23) Average loss for each Australian adult in 2022-23 Average loss who gambled in 2022-23 Increased losses for each Australian gambling adult on pre-pandemic levels Decreased real wages over the same period

Snapshot of findings Gambling in Australia's cost-of-living crisis

Gambling losses in Australia are the highest on record, despite the cost-of-living crisis. This new research from Equity Economics shows that while the costs of essential goods and services have been rising, and real wages have been declining – gambling losses have also been rising rapidly.



8pm: There will also be a DFV prayer vigil at Wesley Uniting Church, Showground Road, Castle Hill

To ask about joining the Social Issues Group at St Matthew's email: Alexander on <u>alexander.lawless7@gmail.com</u>

Blessings, Alexander

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 Uniting Church at info@guc.org.au

For 20 consecutive years just before the end of term 1, the Gordon Uniting Church building has been transformed into Jerusalem 2000 years ago. The place comes alive with people from ancient times telling the story of Jesus' last week on earth, in a production called "The Easter Experience".

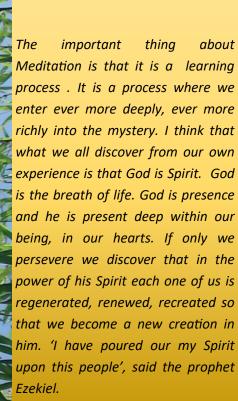
This is an outreach to the local primary schools (year 4) telling them the story of Easter. The even is participatory, children walk down a time tunnel into a world 2000 years ago, into a marketplace in Jerusalem. They then walk through the last week of Jesus' life.

The Easter Experience is staged each year with volunteer actors from our congregation and others. For many children it is their first experience of the Easter story, and they walk through the scenes of The Last Supper, the Garden of Gethsemane, the Trial of Jesus in the courtroom scene, and then experience the impact of the empty tomb, with Jesus re-appearing to assure them that he is alive.



From the book Silence & Stillness in Every Season





about And the Spirit is the presence of power, the power of arning love.

Meditation teaches us that this is the foundational wisdom on which to build life and true religion. What we discover is that we can only live our lives fully if we are always open to this mysterious presence of the Spirit, and always open to the presence more profoundly. That is the pilgrimage we enter upon every time we sit down to meditate. We open our minds, our hearts, our consciousness more permanently to the ultimate reality that is, that is now, that is here.

The Heart of Creation

Will you join with the Hills Community and March for Change?

TOGETHER WE STAND AGAINST DOMESTIC AND GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

2 May 2025 Starting at 7am Meeting at Castle Place, Castle Hill

For more information or to register click on the QR code



Thanks to Castle Hill RSL, Castle Hills Police, Castle Towers, the Hills Soroptimists, Baulkham Hills Lions and the Hills Domestic Violence Prevention Network for being part of this important march for change.









candleligh

END THE VIOLENCE



Wesley Uniting Church, Showground Rd, Castle Hill

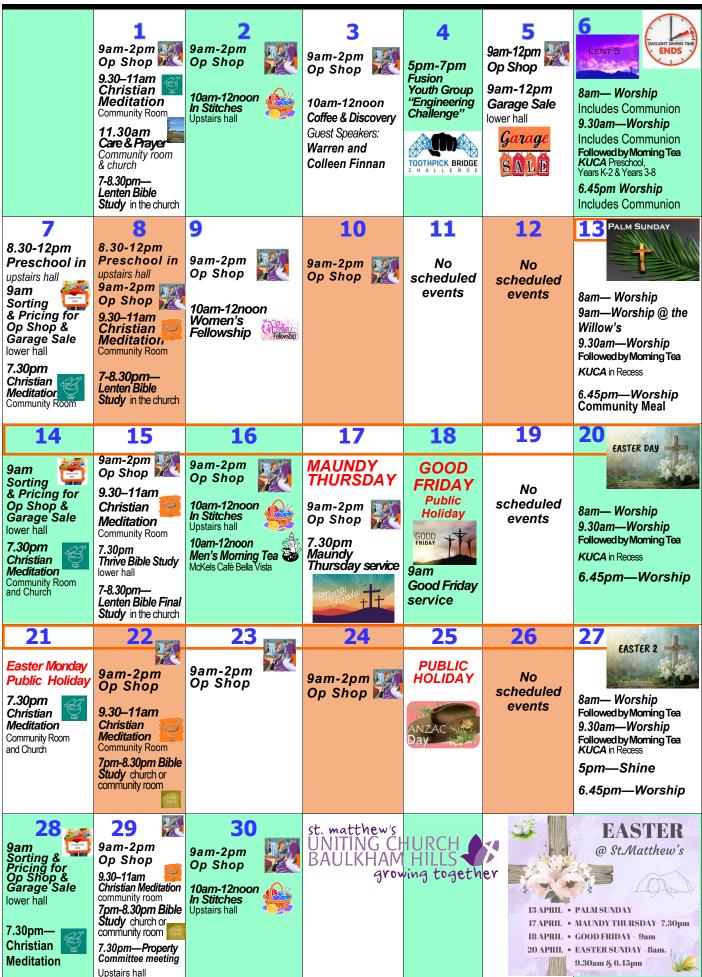
Friday, 30 May 5.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.

Join us and light a candle in remembrance honouring those we have lost, those who have suffered violence and those who still suffer.

Stay for as long or as little as you like

Tea, coffee and conversation available

Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday Sunday



MONTHLY ACTIVITIES and REGULAR GROUPS



Bible Study Tuesday Evenings 7pm-8.30pm

in church or community room

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

Led by Jon Humphries & Alastair Burn

Please join us ALL WELCOME



Wednesday 9th April @ 10am

"Share your Favourite Hymn or Bible reading"

Dulcie Duncum & Margaret Gray



3rd Wednesday of the month 10am to 12noon

Mckel's Café, Shop 14, Circa Boulevarde Bella Vista

Every third Wednesday of the month Enquiries Alan Wright



1st,3rd & 5th Wednesdays of the month in the upstairs church hall.10.00am to 12.00pm Bring your craft along to do.

Share fun and fellowship with other crafty ladies. Morning Tea supplied. Enquiries: Jane Cole



Care and Prayer

All Welcome 11.30am on the first TUESDAY of each month at St. Matthew's February to November

Next meeting 1st April





NEW GROUP MONDAY Evenings 7.30pm—8.30pm Tuesdays at the Church 9.30am-10.30am For more information or to express your interest in attending please contact

Katherine Pedersen
Facilitator kathped56@gmail.com

ALL WELCOME

OP SHOP

Open Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday 9am-2pm and 1st Saturday of the month 9-12pm

Pre-loved clothes & accessories, Books, Haberdashery, Bric-a-brac, Pot Plants.



5th April 9am-12pm

Pre-loved Household Items, Electrical, Toys & Books (Fiction, Non-fiction & Childrens Books)

St. Matthew's lower hall Edgar St



SHINE is a special needs social group for all ages after High school. Meets Sundays Monthly for dinner & fun. Cost \$5

Still collecting for their shoebox appeal supporting a school in the Philippines. Donations of small educational items, soaps & combs are greatly appreciated. Please place donations in the box provided at the top of the stairs in the church foyer.

Giving From time to time, we receive questions on how someone can make donations to St. Matthew's Uniting Church Baulkham Hills, to further support God's work through the Ministry team and congregation, in the wider Community. To assist with this, we have set up the following account with Uniting Financial Services:

Account Name:

Baulkham Hills Uniting Church-Giving Direct BSB: 634634 Account Number: 100025924 If required a Direct Debit Request Form is available in the foyer or speak with Barry Gregory. For your support of God's work here at St. Matthew's, a big thank you! If you wish to find out more, please contact the Church Office.

YOUNG FAMILIES

@ 9.30am service during term for Preschool, Years K-2, and Years 3-8

YOUTH and YOUNG ADULTS

Fusion Youth Group....

Years 3 to 9. Meet Friday evenings at the church during term time. 5pm—7pm Contact Jon Humphries

jon@stmatthewsuniting.net.au

THRIVE BIBLE STUDY......

For young adults

Fortnightly on Tuesday evenings Contact Jon Humphries jon@stmatthewsuniting.net.au

****** To include your activity in the May

In Focus

St. Matthew's Monthly Newsletter please send details to Lynn in the Church Office by 15 April Thank you

Maintaining contact with you and your family is very important to us.
We would be grateful if you change your address, phone/mobile or email details that you let us know by phoning and leaving a message on 9686 3003 or by email: office@stmatthewsuniting.net.au

hank you to all who have contributed to this publication.

MINISTER

REV JON HUMPHRIES

CHURCH OFFICE SECRETARY:

LYNN SAMUEL

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS 8AM-2.30PM

TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY

OFFICE:

9686 3003

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

EMAIL: office@stmatthewsuniting.net.au

FACEBOOK.

@stmatthewsunitingchurchbaulkhamhills

PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR 9639 8570

SONALI WANIGESEKERA

PO Box 321 Baulkham Hills 2153

EMAIL: director@stmatthewsps.net.au