



Bible Readings

Acts 9: 36-43

John 10: 22-30



Response after Bible Readings

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

Response: *Thanks be to God who speaks to us as spirit.*

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 Jon Humphries

9am—Worship @ the Willow's

9.30am—Worship
 Led by Jon Humphries
 Followed by morning tea

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

6.45pm—Worship
 Community Meal

Thank you for worshipping with us today.

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

MONDAY 12 MAY

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

**2pm—Thanksgiving service for
 the life of Bruce Chivers**

7.30pm—Christian Meditation

TUESDAY 13 MAY

9am-2pm—Op Shop open

**9.30am-11am—Christian
 Meditation**

community room and church

**Lectionary bible study in recess
 for May**

WEDNESDAY 14 MAY

9am-2pm—Op Shop

10am-12pm—Women's Fellowship
 upstairs hall & Church

7.30pm—Church Council Exec
 upstairs hall

THURSDAY 15 MAY

9am-2pm—Op Shop

FRIDAY 16 MAY

5-7pm—Fusion Youth Group
 "Dude Perfect night"

SATURDAY 17 MAY

**10am—Op Shop volunteers &
 customers Morning tea**

**SUNDAY
 18 MAY**

8am—Worship

9.30am—Worship

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

2pm-4pm—Upstairs hall in use

6.45pm—Worship



MINISTER

REV JON HUMPHRIES

Email: jon@stmatthewsuniting.net.au
 jhumphries@nswact.uca.org.au

PASTORAL CARE WORKER

SARA WIENAND

CHURCH OFFICE SECRETARY

LYNN SAMUEL

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS 8AM-2.30PM
 TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY

OFFICE : 9686 3003
Email: office@stmatthewsuniting.net.au

CHURCH COUNCIL CHAIRPERSON

MIKE UNDERWOOD

Email: mikeu@nswact.uca.org.au

CHAIRPERSON OF ELDERS

HELEN OLLEY

Email: helen.olley@optusnet.com.au

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 BAULKHAM HILLS

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PO BOX 321 BAULKHAM HILLS 2153

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Something to think about

11 MAY

4th Sunday of Easter

Lectionary Readings:

Acts 9: 36-43

Psalm 23

Revelation 7: 9-17

John 10: 22-30

What is Welcome to Country? Why do we acknowledge Country in our services?

Contrary to what was presented in some of the provocative, misguided and misleading advertisements and statements by some politicians in the recent election campaign, a welcome to country is not a welcome of Australians to Australia. For our indigenous First Nations People, Country is about identity and spirituality. I learnt from my engagement with Guringgai elders that Country is the land waters, all living things, dreaming, song lines, ancestors and ask things which contribute to spirituality and identity for the people. So, whilst 'country' can mean nation in our English language, the term "Country" can have different meanings depending on the specific Aboriginal group and their connection to a particular area.

Acknowledging Country begins with physical and living things. It directs us to nature, but also then moves our attention to spirituality and identity. For most Aboriginal nations, of which there historically over 250, none of which ceded sovereignty to English colonisation and invasion, Country is at heart of Culture and identity and spirituality. It encompasses lore and law in many First Nations cultures. Why do we acknowledge Country in our services? Firstly the Scriptures speak of all creation declaring the wonder of God. As we meet in a closed in building, with little direct connection to the outside natural world, it is good to be led into praise and thanksgiving by considering in awe the wonder of Creation and how that speaks to the majestic nature of the Creator, God. Acknowledging Country is a means to do this and also connect with an ancient tradition of people who are part of our multicultural Uniting Church. We celebrate diversity and create a sense of welcome through this ritual.

Secondly, what does the Lord require of us, but to do justly, love with mercy and kindness, and to walk humbly with God. [Micah 6:8] The Uniting Church in Australia in obedience to this entered into covenant with our First Nations People, recognising the injustice of Terra Nullius and the failure of the English explorers to fulfil their mandate from the monarch to establish a treaty with any indigenous people, such as was done in Aotearoa New Zealand.

We acknowledged the part the Church played in the unjust treatment of the indigenous peoples of this country. As part of this commitment to justice and in response to our covenant we took up acknowledgment of Country as part of our order of service, and because it helpful in the spiritual movement and rhythms of the first part of the service which includes passing of peace and moving into praise and thanksgiving

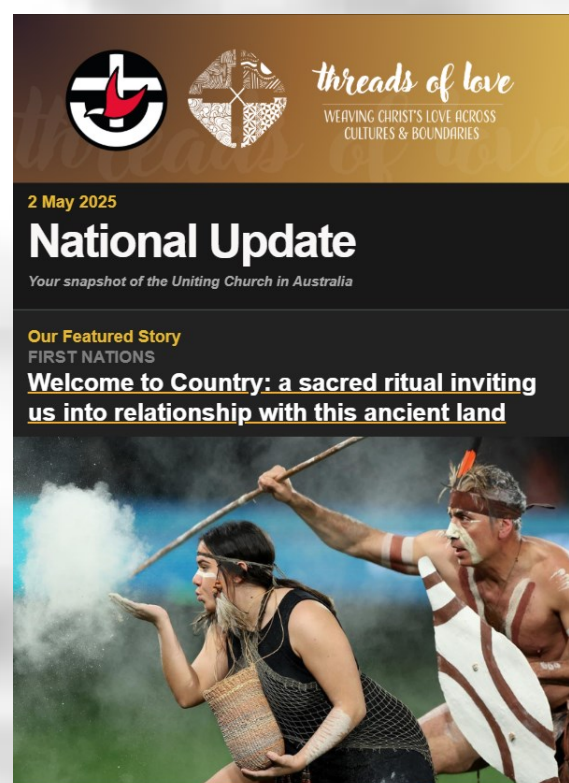
Thirdly, it is a way of walking humbly with mercy and kindness in the way of God. It is one way to love our Aboriginal brothers, sisters and siblings as ourselves. By taking up one important tradition of theirs we show that they are part of us and we are part of them as we honour and respect their culture in a way which is in harmony with our shared Christian tradition and doctrine. In a nation where for much of the time or First Nations Peoples were not welcome or respected it is a way of welcome and a means of making our Church a safe place for them where they know they can join in communion as the Body of Christ as we together join with God in God's mission. In many First Nations cultures Welcome to Country was a cultural and international diplomatic (remember that there were over 250 different First Nations, each with differing languages, cultures and spiritualities) protocol. It was a way of inducting those who came to a particular Country on key ways to live and behave in a way that is respectful and honouring to those whose Country one is being welcomed into. It is both a welcome, but also a helpful scaffold into walking humbly with understanding. A Welcome to Country helps us find a deeper connection with the spirituality and culture of a place. It is a way into learning and relationship.

At St. Matthew's we currently don't have direct connection with any Bidjigal or Dharug/Darug elders who could welcome us to Country. Again, it is not as Australians being welcomed to Australia. In the meantime, we acknowledge Country as a way of being deepened in our own faith and spirituality, whilst living justly as the people of God and as a congregation of the Uniting Church, and walking humbly a way of welcome to our Aboriginal brothers, sisters and siblings whom we are a part of the Body of Christ with. Country is something to think about. It is a way into deeper connection with God in our own way through ancient traditions, and a way into deeper conversation and connection with our First Nations People.

*God bless
Jon*

Here is a link thoughtful piece from our Uniting Church President from earlier this month about a Uniting Church position in regard to Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country

<https://uniting.church/welcome-to-country-an-ancient-sacred-ritual/>



PEOPLE NEWS

**HAPPY
BIRTHDAY**

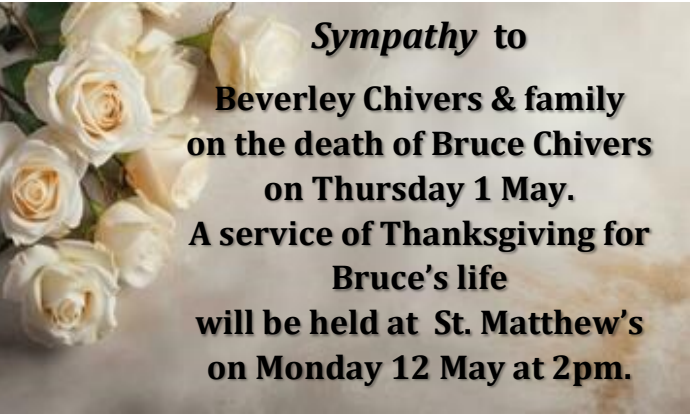


Sue Campbell
Lachlan Wood
Barbara Brenden-Cook
Albert Olley

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

Sympathy to

**Beverley Chivers & family
on the death of Bruce Chivers
on Thursday 1 May.
A service of Thanksgiving for
Bruce's life
will be held at St. Matthew's
on Monday 12 May at 2pm.**



The Women's fellowship have asked for anyone who will be attending the funeral to please help and bring a plate to share for afternoon tea.

Thank you

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

11 —17 May



India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka

Weekly
SYNOD SPOTLIGHT

Uniting Church Synod of NSW and the ACT

Uniting Church Synod Spotlight Newsletter

For (2 May 2025) please see link to Synod weekly:

[Synod Weekly](#)

LECTIONARY
READINGS

**Tuesday Evenings
Bible Study
Will be recess for the month
of May.**

We have several 9:30am morning tea helpers away in the winter months and we would love to have some new volunteers to come along and join the team.

If you can help, please contact Amanda Manson

or

let Lynn in the office know and she can put you on the roster.



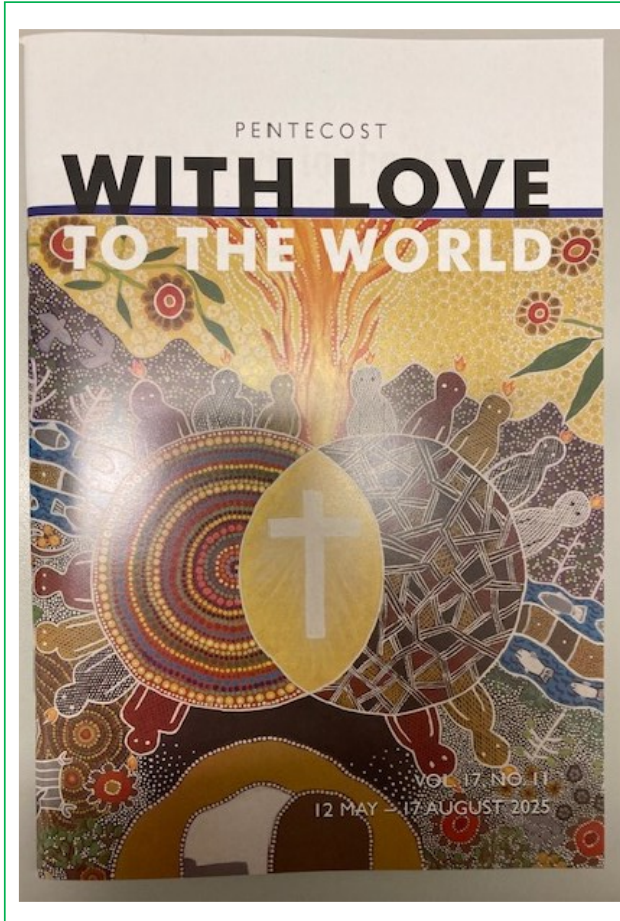
Volunteer Form

If you haven't already sent in your Volunteer form for Assisting with morning services for June July, August 2025.

Please return your form to the church office by Tuesday 13 May at the latest.

New helpers are most welcome.

Thank you

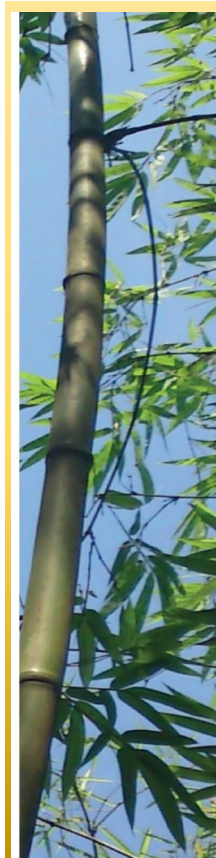


PENTECOST WITH LOVE TO THE WORLD

a daily Bible reading
guide based on the
Revised Common Lectionary

Volume 17, Number 11
12 May 2025 to 17 August 2025
is available in the church foyer.

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



From the book **Silence & Stillness in Every Season** Daily readings with **John Main**



The experience of prayer, the entry into the silence of Jesus, is first presented to us as an invitation that it takes nerve to accept. There will always be many reasons at hand for declining or postponing the invitation. But once it has been decided to accept it, the first moment of prayer and the first self-abandoning step requires every ounce of faith we have been given. The eternal silence of God that is so attractive in poetry or theology breaks upon us in such unfamiliar otherness that it takes much love, much being loved, to continue into the silence. Our encouragement, however, is this: whatever degree of faith we have been given is sufficient to begin, and once we have begun, the love we need floods our inmost heart.

Letters from the Heart



Youth @ St Matts Term 2, 2025

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

WEEK 1
2 May
Movie Night

WEEK 7
13 June
Spy Night

WEEK 3
16 May
Dude Perfect Night

WEEK 9
27 June
ADVENTURE NIGHT

WEEK 5
30 May
Music Night

Rockclimbing @ The Edge

St. Matthew's
UNITING CHURCH
BAULKHAM HILLS
growing together

For more information contact Jon Humphries
jon@stmatthewsuniting.net.au 9686 3003



Join us at our next Presbytery Meeting

Online via Zoom

Wednesday 21st, May 2025 | 7:30pm
Parramatta Centenary Uniting Church
46 Sorrell St, North Parramatta

For further information, please contact
the Presbytery office: (02) 9683 5023

Generous | Vibrant | Diverse



 **Cancer Council**
Australia's Biggest
Morning Tea



You are invited to join with us for 'Australia's Biggest Morning Tea'

being held at the home of
Dulcie & Peter Duncum
at 53 Sarah Crescent Baulkham Hills

Friday 30th May.

Everyone is welcome,
so please come and join with us

from 10.00 am

in support of the work and fundraising of
The Cancer Council and of our many friends
who have journeyed with cancer.

Bring your friends also.

We look forward to your company.

You can also
make a
donation by
clicking on the
link below or



**We're hosting a
Biggest Morning Tea**

Please help us
support people
impacted by cancer!

Barry Gregory
0425 815 340

Dulcie Duncum
0417 070 848

<https://www.biggestmorningtea.com.au/fundraisers/DulcieDuncum/biggest-morning-tea-nsw>

Hills Annual March against domestic violence

Last Friday, 2 May, it was good that some of our social action team were able to participate in the Hills annual march against domestic violence this morning.



The Hills is not immune against domestic violence. 379 reported incidents came to the police in this area in the past year. That equates to more than one per day. There is on average in Australia at least one death per week which is attributed to domestic violence.

However, we were presented with a roadmap for hope. There are great supports for those who are surviving domestic violence, and if we as a community become more aware of the issue, are better able to help earlier, educate all generations about respectful relationships and clearly make a communal stand against this in real and lived out ways, maybe we can reduce the incidence to zero in the next ten years.



It was good to see support from all levels of government, with local members from both federal and state present along with the mayor and some councilors.

If you or someone you know are experiencing physical, emotional, elder abuse, or coercive controlling behaviour inflicted upon you please Call 1800 737 732 that is 1800 RESPECT or reach out to someone you trust.



Wednesday afternoon ONLINE Meditation Group

An Online meditation group catering for teachers, parents, carers.

Others are welcome to join.

Time: 4.25pm to 5pm

If you require a chat or introductory session. This is available from 4pm. Please contact Penny on 0409 309 344

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85087024028?pwd=SUNFTjk5QlRlS21sQ3l5cGw4VXd1dz09>

Meeting ID: 850 8702 4028

Passcode: 042924

Christian Meditation

Monday night @ 7.30pm and Tuesday morning @ 9am

During May at all Christian Meditation sessions at St. Matthew's there will be a 15 minute session of teachings preceding the time of Meditation named;

Christian Life in the Light of Christian Meditation

1: Discipleship By Laurence Freeman OSB

Fr Laurence defines discipleship as being on the way to becoming one with Christ, and presents meditation as a way to discipleship. In the practice of Christian meditation we take our attention off ourselves and turn wholeheartedly to Christ dwelling in our hearts—we leave self behind. This shift from habitual self-fixation allows us to experience Jesus' gaze turned towards us. In the mutual recognition, a personal relationship develops that transforms us gradually to be more Christ-like.

Thank you to all who have contributed to this publication.

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.