



st. matthew's
UNITING CHURCH
BAULKHAM HILLS
growing together

Weekly Newsletter

13 July 2025

Pentecost 5

Bible Readings

Colossians 1: 1-14
Luke 10: 25-37

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 Roland Bryant

9am—Worship @ the Willow's

9.30am—Worship
Led by Hugh Darling
and Jon Humphries
Followed by morning tea

KUCA in Recess

6.45pm—Worship
Community meal

Thank you for worshipping with us today.

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

MONDAY 14 JULY

9am-10.30am—Coffee & Play
NEW group for Grown ups and their little ones
upstairs hall

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

7.30pm—Christian Meditation

TUESDAY 15 JULY

9am-2pm—Op Shop open
9.30am-11am—Christian Meditation
community room and church

WEDNESDAY 16 JULY

9am-2pm—Op Shop open
10am—In Stitches
upstairs hall

7.30pm—Elders meeting

THURSDAY 17 JULY

9am-2pm—Op Shop open

FRIDAY 18 JULY

No Scheduled Activities

SATURDAY 19 JULY

No Scheduled Activities

SUNDAY 20 JULY

8am—Worship

9.30am—Worship
Followed by morning tea

KUCA in Recess for school holidays

6.45pm—Worship



MINISTER

REV JON HUMPHRIES

Email: jon@stmatthewsuniting.net.au

jhumphries@nswact.uca.org.au

PASTORAL CARE WORKER

SARA WIENAND

SUNDAY am, MONDAY, TUESDAY

Email: saraw@nswact.uca.org.au

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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Weekly newsletter available on website

FACEBOOK:

[@stmatthewsunitingchurchbaulkhamhills](https://www.facebook.com/stmatthewsunitingchurchbaulkhamhills)

PRE-SCHOOL DIRECTOR 9639 8570

SONALI WANIGESEKERA

PO Box 321 BAULKHAM HILLS 2153

Email: director@stmatthewsps.net.au

Something to think about

13 July

Pentecost 5

Revised Common Lectionary Readings:

Amos 7:7-17

Psalm 82

Colossians 1:1-14

Luke 10:25-37

Love is Not an Option

Love is not an option for us as Christian people. This means that it is not a choice among other options. Love is not optional for the people of God, because God is love. We are created in the image of God and should be and bear love as part of bearing that image. Love is not optional for followers of Jesus, because Jesus was God incarnate and the expression of the embodiment of God's love. As the Church, the Body of Christ, love is therefore not an optional extra. It is something that we are commanded to do and be, to share and to embody. Of course, God does not force us, and we always have a choice to love or not as part of the gift of free will. However, if we choose not to love then we place ourselves outside of the way of God.

Love is unconditional. Love does not set conditions on who can be loved. Love is not conditional on race, religion, sect, denomination, gender, sexual orientation, sense of

identity, culture, group that one belongs to or any other condition of the person's being. Love is not conditional on our relationship or closeness to the person to be loved or who is needing love. Love is not conditional on time or place. It is not limited to a set time, to certain periods, moments, minutes, hours, days, weeks, months seasons in any year. Love is not conditional on place in that it is not limited to certain places or spaces.

Barbara Fredrickson, renowned psychologist and author of 'Love 2.0,' suggests that there is one exception, identifying that love can be conditional in one aspect. Love is conditional in the sense that how we offer or receive love is shaped by the condition of needs of those needing love and the abilities and gifts of those offering love. I don't think that changes the unconditional nature of love as it does not change the essence of love, just the expression of it.

[The Parable of the 'Loving Neighbour' or the 'Good Neighbour' as laid out in the Gospel of Luke lays out the unconditional nature of love.](#) Many know the parable as the 'Good Samaritan' or the 'Merciful Samaritan' but this a misdirection of the intention of Jesus. The parable is a response to the question by the expert in the Law/Torah, "Who is my neighbour?" Jesus then at the end of the parable asks, "Who was a was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?" Both of these aspects relate to Jesus' affirming (in Luke) of the suggestion of the expert of the Law that the way to eternal life as recorded in the Law being to love our neighbour as ourselves. \

Continued next page

The use of a Samaritan highlight's his difference to make clear the unconditional nature of love, not to focus on his being a Samaritan. He is not a good Samaritan, which implies other Samaritans are not. He is a loving neighbour, even though in the context of the story he, more than any, has reason to choose not to be.

The Parable of the 'Loving Neighbour' or the 'Good Neighbour' lays out the unconditional nature of love. First it sets that there is no condition about time. The need to love is simply when you come across a person with need where we can offer love to our neighbour. The parable makes unconditional the circumstances or situation. It sets an understanding that other circumstances such as roles of duties do not excuse us from the call to love or make love conditional upon our situation. With the inclusion of a person from outside the cultural group of the main characters and location of the story, that being in this case a Samaritan who is identified as having a cultural or religious reason not to choose to help, makes it clear that love is not conditional on our culture or religion or social connection. Finally, the generosity of the person who was a good neighbour to the one who was a victim to the robbers shows that there are no conditions to what God requires of us in the generosity of love.

The only conditional nature of love in the parable of the loving neighbour is that the condition of the person who had been attacked shaped their need and how the one who loved well by stopping to care and help shaped their care in response to the need of the one who was wounded and vulnerable.

Love God with our whole being – our heart, soul, strength and mind, and love our neighbour as ourselves are easy words to say, but this is hard teaching. If love is patient, kind,

not jealous, envious or rude. If it does not boast, keep a record of wrongs, doesn't delight in evil, but rejoices in the truth. If it always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. [1 Corinthians 13: 4-8] Then this is not easy. If we are called to love our neighbour, regardless of who they are, even if they are our enemy, then that is not easy. If love is laying down our lives as God did for us in the person of Christ, then that is not easy. [1 John 3:16] If love means that we who have material wealth should use it to help others, otherwise if we don't then how can the love of God be in us? [1 John 3:17] Then that is not easy.


Love is not meant to be easy, because it is not easy because it is embodying the way of God who is love. However, love is the way to meaning and purpose. It is love which brings us joy, hope and peace in life. It is love which leads to fulfilment in life. This is the power and truth of God. We love because God is love and we are created in the image of God. If that teaching from Scripture is not convincing enough, we also have such evidence such as the science of psychology which has shown this to be so. To live well is to love well, and that love is unconditional. It is not optional if we want to flourish in life. The only condition is that the degree to which we love determines the degree to which we flourish in life. So, love is not an option, not if we want to be truly faithful and experience life in abundance as Jesus, who was God incarnate come to us, proclaimed he had come to bring. [John 10:10] This is truly much to think about and a challenge which opens us to blessing.

God bless

Jon

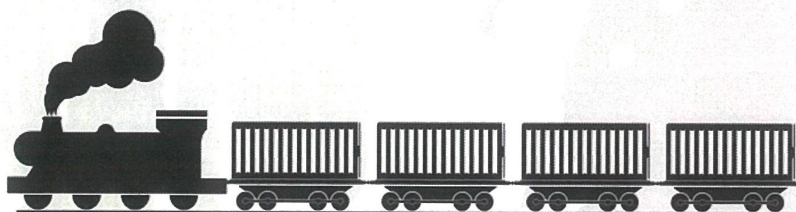
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Coffee and Play



Kids! Bring your adults for a
morning of conversation and
play time!

Cnr of Edgar & Charles Sts
Mondays 9-10:30am





St Matthew's 50th Anniversary Celebrations Special Planning Meeting

There will be a special one-off planning meeting to talk about the various activities and tasks needed to prepare for the Anniversary Celebrations during November.

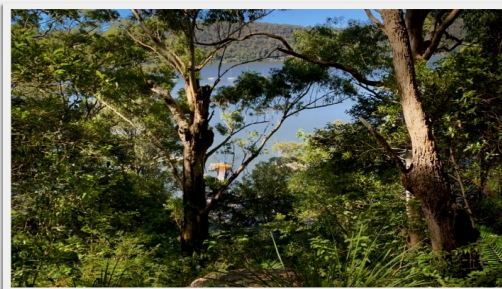
**Time : Sunday 20 July 2025 at 11:00 am
in the Community Room**

We encourage as many people as possible to attend this special meeting.

Come along to share your ideas and if possible, offer a little of your time to help with the various tasks.

We look forward to seeing you

Greg Gibb



Meditation Retreat Dangar Island 19 July

It's 4 years since our last retreat and Paul and Judi Taylor have graciously offered to host and lead our groups at their home on this picturesque and peaceful island as the photo shows.

PROGRAMME for Saturday, 19th of July.

11am Morning tea provided in their home- please bring something to eat to share.

11.30 reflection and meditation

12.30- 1.30 Lunch, please bring something to share with everyone.

1.30-3.00pm Reflection/~~lectio divina~~ and meditation

3.00pm finish.

DONATION \$20 goes to Friends WCCM.

GETTING THERE

Drive to Brooklyn ferry takes 40 mins via North ~~Connex~~ and 50 mins Pennants Hills road. Car pool or take train to ferry stop.

Brooklyn Ferry Service offer two beautifully restored historic vessels that go between Brooklyn and Dangar Island.

All tickets purchased on board the ferry and they ONLY TAKE CASH. NO CARDS

CARDS.....

TIMETABLE on SATURDAYS

.....
Departs Brooklyn...9.15am.....Dangar 9.45am

10.00am.....Dangar 10.30am.....

11am.....Dangar 11.30am

DEPARTS DANGAR 2.45 and 3.45pm

If you arrive earlier at Brooklyn and or Dangar Island, both have cafes where you can have breakfast or a cuppa. Not everyone may fit onto the one ferry so consider catching the earlier ferry and take a walk or wait on Dangar at the cafe.

PLEASE RSVP ASAP AS THERE IS A LIMIT OF 20 AND 6 PLACES ARE TAKEN SO FAR.

PEOPLE NEWS

**HAPPY
BIRTHDAY**



Susan MacWilliam
Daniel van Kruyssen
Ida Batten
Frances Courts

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

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

13—19 July



Eritrea, Ethiopia

weekly SYNOD SPOTLIGHT

Uniting Church Synod of NSW and the ACT

Uniting Church Synod Spotlight Newsletter

For (4 July 2025) please see link to Synod weekly:

[Synod Weekly Spotlight 2025 - 4 July | Synod in](#)

**IN
Focus**

st. matthew's
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JULY
2025



St. Matthew's Monthly Newsletter

In Focus for July 2025 is out.
copies are available in the Church
foyer.

or you can go to the

St. Matthew's website.

www.stmatthewsuniting.net.au

HELP WANTED



CAN YOU DRIVE SOMEONE
TO CHURCH - WEEKLY,
FORTNIGHTLY, MONTHLY?

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR
8 AND 9:30 SERVICES

PLEASE CONTACT SARA

Winter Blanket Drive for Parramatta Mission

Help Us Share the Warmth

Drop off time & location:

From Fri 1 May to 31 Jul, 9.00am – 4.30pm

Address: Allan Drew Funerals

221 Old Northern Rd, Castle Hill

(please don't bring blankets to St Matthews)

Let's wrap our community in kindness this
winter. For More information, please visit

<https://brnw.ch/2lwT6Op>



Parramatta
Mission



Christmas IN JULY



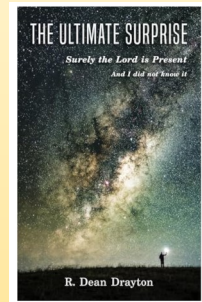
THURSDAY · 24TH JULY · 6PM
LOAVES & FISHES RESTAURANT
180 LIVERPOOL RD, ASHFIELD

See you there!

RSVP to fundraising@billcrews.org by 17th July

"The Ultimate Surprise"

We are very blessed to have an amazing and inspiring member of our Congregation in the person of Dean Drayton. Professor R. Dean Drayton introduces his new book, "The Ultimate Surprise"



"The Ultimate Surprise" can be purchased from
amazon.com.au
Cost: \$19.80 paperback.

Men's Kitchen on THE MENU

By Bev Jordan

Plans are underway to set up a Men's Kitchen in Castle Hill to teach older men basic cooking skills. The new venture in the Hills will be the latest set up by the Men's Kitchen charity to meet a growing need.

President of the Men's Kitchen Association Peter Watson said good nutrition and strong social connections are critical to promote longevity and good health.

"It has been proven that people live longer when they feel more connected. We are what we eat, so learning to cook and making new mates along the way is a win-win."

He said after retirement some men lose their sense of purpose, in some cases they lose their partners or for health reasons of their partner taking on the cooking for the household.

"In the Hills District, there are over 15,000 men aged 60 or more, many of whom have never ventured into the kitchen."

He helped start the first Men's kitchen in 2016 in Forestville to help his father who had never stepped into a kitchen before.

"My mother died when I was in my 20s and my father married again but his second wife died when he was in his 80s."

Peter started learning to cook at a carers class run by NSW Health but when that closed down five of the men and their instructor moved to Forestville.

The Men's Kitchen Peter realised the need for such classes when demand grew. And they were able to fill classes in just a couple of hours.

Each session runs from 11am to 2pm. Classes are up to 10 men who work together in pairs to prepare a two course meal under the guidance of three experienced volunteer instructors. Everyone chooses the recipe they would like to prepare and once cooking is completed, everyone sits down together to chat and enjoy the meal.

There are now 22 Men's Kitchen groups (including Canberra and the Gold Coast)

operating with 200 men learning to cook and 100 instructors. Everyone involved is a volunteer.

Annual membership is \$40 which includes a personal apron and a cook book.

Peter has been recruiting locally to find volunteers to help run the Castle Hill Men's Kitchen at Wesley Uniting Church in Showground Rd Castle Hill with the aim of starting classes in September. The leadership team needs to be in place soon. It needs a district manager, a treasurer and an admin person to start with, then it needs six instructors. All will receive training and be mentored through the process.

Alison Johnson from Castle Hill is keen to volunteer. "I was looking for a voluntary role and something to do. I wanted to be part of something that was meaningful."

To find out more and join the leadership team for Castle Hill call Peter Watson on 0411 476 532 or email info@menskitchen.org.au or there is the website menskitchen.org.au.



Peter and Alison setting up a local Men's Kitchen

Thank you to all who have
contributed to this publication.

From the St Matthew's Social Issues Focus Group

How doing little things makes a big difference.

Reaching Out

When we watch the news on television or listen to the news on the radio, we constantly hear about the terrible bombing in the Middle East, whether it be Palestine, Israel or Iran or elsewhere. The media coverage of the bombing and the results of it can be very triggering for people who have escaped wars, both in the Middle East and other parts of the world. Refugees from the Ukrainian, Iraq and Afghanistan wars and other wars around the world will also be feeling it. What can we do? If you know anyone for whom this has been part of their life story, phone them or visit them to ask if they are okay. Sometimes just having someone listen and know that you care can be a big help to them.

For refugees experiencing distress related to overseas conflicts or needing support, several help lines and services are available. STARTTS offers a multilingual hotline called "Witness to War" (1800 845 198) for individuals, families, and communities affected by overseas conflicts. The NSW Transcultural Mental Health Line (1800 648 911) offers support for mental health concerns. The line operates for people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities in NSW from Monday to Friday between 9:00 am and 4:30 pm. At other times please call the NSW Mental Health Line on 1800 011 511.

Blessings from

Alexander Lawless

St Matthews Social Issues Missional Ministry Team

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.

The Past Today

The Christian faith has a very rich history that is largely unknown to members of congregations today. There is a benefit in looking at the past.

- It can give us a sense of perspective on the present.
- It can show us where we have come from.
- It can also show us the times when the church got things 'right' and when it did not.

The following 4 part series is part of a plan to offer enquiries into slices into our past on an annual basis.

This series will consist of a presentation with questions and discussions. Led by Clive Pearson

When: last Saturday of the month for 4 months:

June 28- 'We believe'

July 26- 'Herstory'

August 23- 'Plagues and Pandemics'.

September 27 . 'Allah'.

Time: 10am-11am approx.

The themes for this first series are:

1. 'We believe'.

2025 marks the 1700th anniversary of the first great ecumenical council of the church, the Council of Nicaea. It was called into being by Constantine, the first emperor of the Roman Empire. Its principal focus was on dealing with contested understandings of how Jesus Christ, the Son, relates to God, as the Father. Was Christ divine or was a 'creature', the first-born of creation? The theological stakes were high: our faith and worship depends on how this 'problem' was resolved.

Constantine's conversion to the Christian faith had gone hand in hand with tolerance and legal status being given to Christians following a period of great persecution. No longer was the Christian faith a persecuted minority on the edges of empire. Was something lost in this change of status? That is an ongoing concern over the centuries. The Council also set the date for Easter.

2. 'Herstory'.

So often the history of the church has been exactly that – 'his' story. This way of viewing the past has tended to reinforce patriarchy but is it as true as we might be led to believe. In this presentation we consider the role played by women in the early church, including the 'order of widows', medieval women mystics and the life and witness of Argula von Grumbach during the Reformation.

3. 'Plagues and Pandemics'.

'Doing' church during COVID-19 gave us an experience of what it means to be a community of Christ during a time of pandemic. What was it like to worship, extend pastoral care, maintain youth groups? It is likely that there will be future pandemics. – which will most likely be a complication bound up with a changing climate. We were fortunate: we had the advantages of technology and vaccines. In the past that was not so.

In the course of its history the church has often had to negotiate its way through a plague / pandemic. In this presentation we will look at 3 of those and see how our forebears dealt with them. We will look at plagues in the early church (the Antonine, Cyprian and Justinian), the Black Death of the 14th century and Luther's response and advice during the Reformation.

The conduct of Christians during the early church struck pagan observers who were struck by the care extended to unknown 'neighbours'. The Black Death did much damage to the church's witness and ministry; Luther instructed the people of his day on how to exercise care for one self while calling upon those who exercised authority and oversight of society to work for the common good.

4. 'Allah'.

The Christian faith and Islam are the world's two leading religions. They can both look back to Abraham / Ibrahim. Jesus (as Isa) is the most mentioned prophet in the *Qur'an*, while Mary is mentioned more times there than in the New Testament. Their history has often been one of conflict – and caricature. This presentation fastens upon the expansion of Islam into what were Christian territories in the Middle East and North Africa, the Crusades, the Fall of Constantinople and Luther's determination to have the *Qur'an* translated into his German language and know what Muslims actually believe.

Luther was wanting to get beyond received stereotypes inherited from the Crusades. He was writing at a time when the Ottoman Turks had advanced through formerly Christian territories in Eastern Europe and were at the gates of Vienna.



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CELEBRATING 50 YEARS

ST MATTHEW'S UNITING CHURCH
AND PRESCHOOL'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Celebrate with us In October/November 2025!!!

SAVE THE DATES

SUNDAY 19 OCTOBER 2025 -

WELSH CHOIR PERFORMANCE @ 2pm

SUNDAY 2 NOVEMBER 2025

WORSHIP SERVICES WITH GUEST PREACHERS 8:00 AM, 9:30 AM & 6:45 PM

SUNDAY 9 NOVEMBER 2025

THANKSGIVING WORSHIP SERVICE – FOLLOWED BY MORNING TEA 9:00 AM

PICNIC LUNCH AT JOHN CURTIN RESERVE WINSTON HILLS FROM 11:00 AM

SATURDAY 15 NOVEMBER 2025

SOCIAL EVENTS AT CHURCH

– TALENT SHOW FROM 3:00 PM (DEPENDING ON ENOUGH PARTICIPANTS)

– DINNER & GAMES NIGHT FROM 5:30 PM (SHARE FOOD, STORIES & GAMES)

SUNDAY 16 NOVEMBER 2025

WORSHIP SERVICES WITH GUEST PREACHERS 8:00 AM, 9:30 AM

YOUTH SERVICE - GUEST PREACHERS (INCL SHINE CELEBRATIONS) 6:45 AM

SUNDAY 23 NOVEMBER 2025

50TH ANNIVERSARY - CHURCH & PRESCHOOL WORSHIP SERVICE 9:00 AM
- CHURCH & PRESCHOOL SHOWCASE (AFTER WORSHIP)
- BANQUET LUNCH (SHARE FOOD & STORIES) 12 NOON



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CELEBRATING 50 YEARS

ST MATTHEW'S UNITING CHURCH
AND PRESCHOOL'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY

JOIN THE CELEBRATIONS & GET CREATIVE

AS PART OF THE PREPARATIONS FOR THE 50TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS WE WILL RUN A COMPETITION INVITING HELP TO CREATE AN ANNIVERSARY THEME AND LOGO THAT REFLECTS THE CHURCH'S JOURNEY AND THAT INSPIRES HOPE FOR THE FUTURE.

SHARE YOUR VISION AND CREATIVITY
TO CHOOSE A THEME AND DESIGN A LOGO.

ALSO, WE ARE LOOKING TO PREPARE A BANNER TO ADVERTISE OUR
CELEBRATIONS – IF THIS IS SOMETHING YOU COULD HELP WITH LET
US KNOW.

IF YOU FEEL YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE CREATIVE, PLEASE SEE GREG GIBB,
CALL HIM ON HIS MOBILE [0414 764 437](tel:0414764437)
OR SEND AN EMAIL TO greg.gibb1955@bigpond.com

SUBMISSION DEADLINE FOR THE COMPETITION IS 15 AUGUST 2025.
A SMALL PRIZE WILL BE OFFERED FOR THE WINNING THEME AND LOGO.