



st. matthew's
UNITING CHURCH
BAULKHAM HILLS
growing together

Weekly Newsletter

27 July 2025

Pentecost 7

Bible Readings

Colossians 2: 6-15

Luke 11: 1-13



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

9.30am—Worship
Led by Jon Humphries
Includes the Baptism of Patrick Davies.
We welcome the family and friends of Patrick to worship today.

Followed by morning tea

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

5pm—Shine

6.45pm—Worship
Led by Jon Humphries

Thank you for worshipping with us today.

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

MONDAY 28 JULY

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

7.30pm—Christian Meditation

TUESDAY 29 JULY

9am-2pm—Op Shop open

**9.30am-11am—Christian
Meditation**

community room and church

**7.30pm—Property committee
meeting** upstairs hall

WEDNESDAY 30 JULY

9am-2pm—Op Shop open

**10.30am—Funeral service for
Jeanette Coleman**

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

THURSDAY 31 JULY

9am-2pm—Op Shop open

FRIDAY 1 AUGUST

No Scheduled Activities

SATURDAY 2 AUGUST

9am-12pm—Op Shop

9am-12pm—Garage Sale
lower hall

SUNDAY 3 AUGUST

8am—Worship
Includes Communion

9.30am—Worship
Includes Communion

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

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
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CHURCH COUNCIL CHAIRPERSON

MIKE UNDERWOOD
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LOCATION:

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BAULKHAM HILLS

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Something to think about

27 July

Pentecost 7

Revised Common Lectionary Readings:

Hosea 1:2-10

Psalm 85

Colossians 2:6-15, (16-19)

Luke 11:1-13

Thinking About Death

This week in our service we will be thinking about big questions. It coincides with Vanessa Williams-Henke and I launching a new podcast for people of all ages called, 'On the Way.' Each episode is focused on a big question about God, life, faith and everything in between. In our first episode we explore the question of, "who is God?" This is a small question in terms of the number of words which comprise it but it opens up a huge field of theology which people have been thinking, talking and writing about almost since people started walking this planet.

'On the Way' aims to encourage people of all ages to have conversations which enrich their faith and relationships. Each episode is only about ten minutes long so that people can listen to it on the way to school, to work, to Church, to activities or anywhere. We try to give some answer to the big focus question, but our intention is that we know that we are only providing an answer which is on the way to understanding, and our hope is that people will take up our example and ask questions and have conversations of their

own. Here is a link the YouTube version of the podcast if you want to check it out.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BoDzTv7kxi8)

[v=BoDzTv7kxi8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BoDzTv7kxi8)

This week also seemed to be filled more than usual with death. One of our congregation died and I led a funeral for my wife's uncle. Death is a source of a whole lot of big questions such as, 'Why do we die?'; 'What happens when we die?'; and, 'Is there life after death?' Death isn't something people sometimes want to think about or talk about, even though it is one of the major aspects of life and is, in the end, unavoidable. People sometimes think that talking about death is depressing or morbid, and it can be if we get caught up in negativity and sorrow, but if we never talk about death then we actually add to the problem of making death more shocking than it should be.

Death is a part of life. Why things have to die, other than because that is the way the universe works, is a big theological question. Why did God intend things to die or end? This is ultimately perhaps a mystery that lies with God. However, one answer is that all that which is created is not immortal or eternal like the creator. Everything that has a beginning and exists in time then has an ending. When we see death then as a natural part of life, then it becomes something that we can work to accept, and in faith, come to peace with. Coming to peace with it doesn't mean that we have to like it or find it easy to deal with when it affects those whom we have a connection to. Coming to peace with death is a quiet acceptance of its reality and therefore we lose anxiety about it.

In a converse manner, denial of the reality of death and us worrying about when we or others might die leads to anxiety and tribulation, and ultimately existential suffering. A morbid worrying about death robs us of being able to live well. Similarly, unhealthy grief in the wake of death locks us off from also living well. Being at peace with death allows it to be a part of life. It is not an enjoyable or pleasant part of life. It leads to sadness and sorrow. However, being at peace with death opens us up to being about to grieve well and continue to live, having to adjust to new normals, but finding joy and hope in new ways in the absence of who or what we have lost.

Death is a reality of life. Ecclesiastes 3:2 states it plainly and clearly. "There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens: a time to be born and a time to die." We who are Christian look to eternal life with God through Christ, but as followers of Jesus, the incarnation of God, we are very much aware that death is a part of life – a part of life which even God embraced in its fullness through the cross. We also look to resurrection through faith, which gives us hope and encouragement. Yet, again, there is no resurrection without death. It is in this way of Christ, the way of the cross, that we can discover how God in the person of Jesus came to give us life and life in abundance. Life and death are linked and then reversed in the hope of resurrection and eternal life with God.

Some suggest that death and allowing the reality of death, be it our own or that of others, to sit at the back of our minds as a peaceful inevitability leads to a perspective on life which enhances the vitality and importance of the time which we might have. When we accept that death and when it might come is normally unknown, and have a peaceful acceptance that it will come when it comes, then we can be encouraged to live

life not taking that life for granted. Living well does not mean that we have to fill every moment to fullest with achieving goals, dreams and endeavours, nor does it mean that we can't enjoy frivolous moments or lazy days. Living well with a peaceful acceptance of death, allows us to be motivated to live well, to not take our time or living for granted, but neither to stress and worry over what we have little or no control.

In all this is the certainty of love. Love exists before life, because God is love. It is the love of God which creates life. It is the love of God which sustains life. It is the love of God and the living of love which gives the fullness of meaning and purpose to life. Living love leads to abundance in life. Living love will lead us to the reality of death and the loss that it brings, but love is not killed by death. Love is eternal and never dies. We might feel the hurt and pain of loss and separation, but the love we share is eternal. "There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear" (1 John 4:18) Loving in God and knowing that we and all we love exist in God and God's eternal love, opens us to a generous abundance. It also motivates us to love those we can and as we are able for love is the most meaningful, best purpose and most fulfilling thing that we can do with our life. Living and loving well, means that we live and love in God and God lives and loves in us. The presence and love of God then lead us into peace, even in the loss of love, for the fruit of God's presence as the Holy Spirit is peace, and love which comes from God seeks not to hold for ourselves, but share good with others.

Death is a reality that we might not like to think about, but which is something really good to think about, at least in the love of God.

God bless
Jon

Newsletter from the Synod Meeting Just Held

Many of us know that there is this state-level part of the Church called the Synod. We might know a bit about what it does or have dealt with one or more of the Synod-level agencies. Many may not know much more about it, though.

The Synod technically one of the four councils of the Church. We have a Church Council. Members of our congregation are part of a regional council called the Presbytery which meets quarterly. Several members of Presbytery and all ordained ministry agents make up the Synod which annually. The Synod is led or chaired by the Moderator. Several elected members from each Presbytery make up the Assembly which meets every three years. The Assembly is chaired and led by the President. Each council has committees or agencies, as well as appointed roles which help them discharge their role and duties.

This year a significant decision was made to move from 12 regional Presbyteries to having three presbyteries that radiate out from Sydney to borders of the state.

You can read some summaries of the decisions made on the Synod website

<https://www.nswact.uca.org.au/>



The Past Today Episode 2 “Herstory”

Time: 10am-11.15am Saturday 26 July 2025

Where : **St. Matthew's
Uniting Church**

Led by Clive Pearson

Explore the often-hidden
history of women (herstory)
in the life of the church.

The Third in this series will be
on

faith, pandemics and plagues:
on **Saturday 23 August 2025.**

What did it mean to be

- A mother who was martyred?
- A widow in the early church?
- The mother who prayed for her son to be converted (and become one of the greatest of all Christian thinkers)?
- A pilgrim who oversees the building of churches in Jerusalem and Bethlehem?
- The sister behind the final form of the Nicene Creed?
- A midwife (authorized by the bishop)?
- A 'runaway nun' who marries Martin Luther?
- A reformer whose pamphlets run through 16 editions?

PEOPLE NEWS

**HAPPY
BIRTHDAY**



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

Sympathy to the Family and Friends
of Jeanette Coleman who passed
away on Tuesday 22 July 2025. A
funeral service for Jeanette will be
held at St. Matthew's on Wednesday
30th July at 10.30am.



SYNOD SPOTLIGHT

Uniting Church Synod of NSW and the ACT

Uniting Church Synod Spotlight Newsletter

**For (18 July 2025) please see link to Synod
weekly:**

[Synod Weekly Spotlight 2025 -](#)

**IN
Focus**

st. matthew's
UNITING CHURCH
BAULKHAM HILLS
growing together

**AUGUST
2025**



St. Matthew's Monthly Newsletter

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

or you can go to the
St. Matthew's website.

www.stmatthewsuniting.net.au

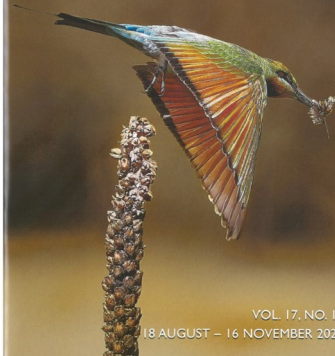
Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

27 July—2 August



*Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo,
Rwanda*

CREATION
**WITH LOVE
TO THE WORLD**



VOL. 17, NO. 12
18 AUGUST – 16 NOVEMBER 2025

Creation WITH LOVE TO THE WORLD

a daily Bible reading
guide based on the
Revised Common Lectionary

Volume 17, Number 12
18 August 2025 to 16 November
is available in the church foyer.

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

HELP WANTED



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

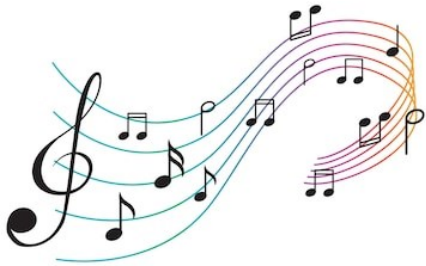
**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR
8 AND 9:30 SERVICES**

PLEASE CONTACT SARA



Happy
25th
Anniversary!

25th Anniversary Of Coffee & Discovery



Thursday 7 August
10am-12pm

"A Warm Welcome is extended to a celebration of the 25th Anniversary of Coffee & Discovery with a great morning tea and a musical treat with *David Short's* amazing music .



ALL are welcome!

Please contact Sara via the office if you would like to attend and need a lift.

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

*****ALL WELCOME*****

St Matthew's Social Action Missional Ministry Team

How doing little things makes a big difference.

The Uniting Church Assembly has recently released **uHub** which is the refreshed and renamed digital home for Uniting Church online resources. Previously known as 'Illuminate', this central platform brings together Assembly resolutions, justice and theology statements, worship and liturgical resources, governance documents, historical materials, social justice resources and much more, all in one accessible location. It launches with a new name, a cleaner design and improved navigation, making it easier than ever to explore the depth and breadth of our shared life and witness.

Link: <https://uniting.church/uhub-a-new-digital-home-for-uca-resources/>

uHub will be more than just a library, but rather a living collection that tells the story of who we are as the Uniting Church. Whether you're preparing worship, exploring our theological and justice commitments, researching Assembly decisions, or seeking inspiration for local ministry, **uHub** is there to support and equip us. We are invited to dive in, explore, engage and share with our community as we continue to live out God's call in the world.

If you would like to offer feedback on **uHub**, contact comms@nat.uca.org.au

To ask about joining the Social Action Missional Ministry Group at St Matthew's
email Alexander on alexander.lawless7@gmail.com
Our next meeting will be on Tuesday at 19th August 2025 at 7pm.

*Blessings,
Alexander
SAMMT*

Matthew 22:37-39 (NIV):

- 37. Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind."
38. This is the first and greatest commandment.
39. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.'*



St. Matt's is part of something new. Jon and Vanessa Williams-Henke are trialing a new podcast called, "On the Way." 'On the Way' is a podcast about life, faith and everything in between and is for people of all ages. The first episode was released last Monday and new episodes will come out weekly.

Episode 1 - 'On the Way' : Who is God? '

Here is the YouTube link

<https://youtu.be/BoDzTv7kxi8?si=sFGGEf0F-aljajKT>

On the Way is a resource to encourage people of all ages on the way towards continued learning about faith and discipleship and on the way towards richer and deeper conversations and higher quality connections with others.

Each episode is around 10 minutes. Ness and Jon have a conversation to help answer a big question about life, faith and religion that many people wonder about. The hope is that it is something people can listen to and bounce off for their own conversations on the way to school, to work or Church or activities, whether you are in the car, the train, a ferry or walking or whatever.

This resource might also be helpful for conversations in youth groups, all-age parts of church services, home groups, Bible study groups or to help families have conversations which help form members in faith and discipleship at home.

Each Episode begins with them checking in with each other about their wellbeing. This is a great habit for all of us to do, and to take it beyond just a quick "How are you?"

They then ask a small question which leads to bigger conversations. These are aimed at growing higher quality connections in our relationships. In our first season they are working through the 10 big positive emotions as developed by Barbara Fredrickson.

The main part of each episode then deals with the big question which is the focus of the episode. Jon and Ness know that they aren't going to answer any one fully. They can't provide a complete or comprehensive answer in the six or so minutes they talk about it. Yet, they do hope to provide a good start to answering the question, and the hope is that they spur people on to keep taking about it or asking others about it.

The aim is for 10 episodes for each season.

Ness and Jon are having fun and learning themselves as they chat and share their insights about faith and theology and get to know each other better through doing it. They hope that it might be a blessing to others in some way.

You can find audio versions wherever you get your podcasts - currently it is sitting under the Uniting Heart and Soul banner.

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-11.15am

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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BAULKHAM HILLS
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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.