

2024-2025 Annual Ministry Report



Jonathan [Jon] Humphries

Minister of the Word

Placement: **St. Matthew's Uniting Church**
Baulkham Hills

Submitted as part of healthy reflection on ministry practice and as per Regulation 2.2.1.c

In the past year the following is reflection of a significant representation of my ministry

Preaching of the Word

- Preaching in each of the three services at St. Matthews Uniting Church as per the preaching roster. This usually takes the form of me being the predominant whilst making space for others to use their gifts and exercise a ministry of preaching the Word.
- Leading special services for Easter and Christmas as part of the Special Religious Education (SRE) program at the local school
- Newsletter contributions each week which have a sermonic element which complement or augment the Sunday sermon.

Presiding at the Celebration of the Sacraments

- Monthly presiding over the Eucharist as per the tradition of the congregation
- Presiding over 3 baptisms as per the request of families who have approached the Church

Providing for Other People to Preside in Worship and Preach and Participate in the Leadership of Sunday Services

- Helping organise a roster for liturgists who lead the service up until the Bible Reading and sermon/message
- Supporting the tradition of the St. Matthew's Congregation for leading in the service through Bible readings and prayers

DUTIES OF A MINISTER

2.2.1.a Within the ministry of the whole Church, Jesus Christ calls men and women to proclamation of the gospel in word and deed through the ministry of the Word and the ministry of Deacon. This calling is exercised by:

- (i) preaching of the Word;
 - (ii) presiding at the celebration of the sacraments;
 - (iii) providing for other persons to preside at worship and/or preach within the pastoral charge in which the Minister is in placement;
 - (iv) witnessing in the community to the gospel of Jesus Christ;
 - (v) guiding and instructing the members of the Church and equipping them for their ministry in the community;
 - (vi) nurturing candidates for baptism and confirmation;
 - (vii) pastoral oversight and counsel wherever needed;
 - (viii) serving in the community, especially among those who are hurt, disadvantaged, oppressed or marginalized;
 - (ix) careful attention to administrative responsibilities;
 - (x) due observance of the discipline of the Church;
 - (xi) the enhancement of the Minister's own gifts for the work of ministry;
 - (xii) pioneering new expressions of the gospel and encouraging effective ways of fulfilling the mission of the Church.
- b.** Every Minister shall participate fully and regularly in the public worship of God and the mission and fellowship of the Congregation with which the Minister is enrolled (See Reg. 2.9.3).
- c.** Every Minister shall report annually to the Presbytery with which the Minister is enrolled on the ways in which the duties of a Minister as prescribed in Regulations 2.2.1.a and 2.2.1.b are being exercised.



- Encouraging other members of the congregation to preach and ensuring that there is space in the preaching plan for this.
- Inviting people to share in the leadership of Communion, on top of the participation of Elders in serving the element.
- Inviting guests to come and lead services and preach, including a pulpit with Uniting Heart and Soul in Woollahra

Witnessing in the Community to the Gospel of Jesus Christ

This is area for further intentional growth.

- Preaching as part of weekly services
- Publishing an article each week in the Church's newsletter
- The sharing of services and sermons on YouTube
- Teaching Special Religious Education in local public school to Kindergarten and Year 3
- Maintain a public Facebook page which shares prayers and things to think about related to the Gospel
- Leading of funerals and weddings for members of the wider local community
- Being involved in collaborative project with Uniting Heart and Soul to create a podcast resource to encourage conversation about faith and life. In this Rev. Vanessa William-Henke and I present of core Christian doctrine in answer to questions that many have.
- Helping with Project Reconnect by hosting the videoing of sermons and all-age talks for the month of August, coordinating preachers and presenters and being a preacher and presenter myself.

Guiding and Instructing the Members of the Church and Equipping them for their ministry in the community

- Intentional teaching element in services and sermons
- Publication of supplemental discipleship material in weekly newsletters which augment the theme and message of the weekly service/sermon.
- Development and Leading of an Advent Bible Study series of Bible Study and leading a series of studies for Lent
- Production of weekly living liturgy which present activities for applied learning / active discipleship in the form of worksheets to encourage people to take what they have heard and learnt about faith and discipleship and apply it in their living
- Encouraging the use of 'With Love to the World' and other such resources.
- Development of a missional ministry resource to help us become a more missional Church
- Helping lead our youth group, including presentation of devotional / teaching aspects about faith and discipleship.
- Being part of some episodes of Uniting Heart and Soul's Filthy Hope Studios 'Into the Word'
- Facilitating the Christian Meditation Group meeting on occasion as needed.



- The Willows- I continue to assist in coordination of a roster for St Matthew's volunteers to lead a service at the Willows Retirement. We currently provide leadership once a month.
- I have undertaken to be a mentor for a colleague in their period of discernment process and am meeting with them regularly to assist them in the learning journey and to develop a plan to aid them in their discernment.
- Participation in a seminar which prepares candidate for ordained ministry in leading funerals.

Pastoral Oversight and Counsel Wherever Needed

- Visiting members of the congregation *I have been able to better engage in this in the past year, making more intentional effort, but there is always competition with other.*
- Meeting people in groups
- Intentional connecting with people in the community
- Participation in the Elders Council
- Being a part of the pastoral care focus group
- Being a Disaster Recovery Chaplaincy Network Chaplain with one deployment to Tweed Heads for flood recovery
- I continue to attend the Prayer and Care Group Meeting and have some pastoral conversations with people in need as a result of this.

Nurturing Candidates for Baptism and Confirmation

This is an area for further intentional growth.

No confirmation process was held in 2024-2025 period.

- Meeting with and talking with baptismal families as they prepare for their children's baptism.
- Working with a team to develop a resource to help people understand what baptism is and what it involves.

Serving in the Community, Especially Among Those Who are Hurt, Disadvantaged, Oppressed or Marginalized

This is an area for further intentional growth.

- Disaster Recovery Chaplaincy Network – Chaplain
- Assisting with the St. Matthew's Op. Shop
- Providing funeral services for the community on request
- Visiting people in the wider community on request.
- Participation in the Castle Hill March Against Domestic Violence
- St. Matthew's Social Action Missional Ministry Team



Careful Attention to Administrative Responsibilities

- Monitoring and maintenance of practical things such as email and calendar
- Promptly and properly responding to communications
- Developing rosters in a timely manner
- Completion and submission of this report
- Setting and keeping to budgets and the required record keeping

Due Observance of the Discipline of the Church

- Attendance at Ethical Ministry Refresher seminars
- Being in regular supervision
- Maintaining Current Safe Church Accreditation – Currently in the process of both doing the training and becoming a facilitator for the training
- Maintaining Special Religious Education (SRE) Training and accreditation
- Maintaining Working with Children Check
- Completion of this report as per Reg. 2.4.4

The Enhancement of the Minister's Own Gifts for the Work of Ministry

I have attended or participated in the following training or education experiences:

- Ethical Ministry Refreshers:
 - 2024b 28 Aug 2024
 - 2025a 27 Mar 2025
- Ethical Ministry Facilitator Training – 20 Feb 2025 Online
- Missional Leadership Hub – Feb-Nov 2024 Monthly online and scheduled in-person
- Presbytery Ministry Retreat – 16-18 Sep 2024
- Presbytery Ministers Day
 - 2 Nov 2024
 - 25 Mar 2025
- Presbytery Communications Training – 14 September 2024
- Mid to Large-Size Church Ministers' Network – 8 May 2025 Centre for Ministry
- UME Ministry Masterclasses
 - Technology and Worship 24 May 2024 Online
 - Contemporary Music & Worship – 24 Jul 2024 Online
 - Youth Ministry 18 Feb 2025 Online
 - Worship as 'Divine Drama' - 18 Mar 2025 online
 - Preaching Paul: Why It's Time to Embrace the Epistles in Our Pulpits - 17 Jun 2025 online



- Care and Prayer Training – 4 Feb 2025 St. Matthew's
- DRCN Chaplaincy Training – 22 & 23 May 2024
- DRCN Duty Officer Training
 - 11 & 27 Jun 2025
 - 16 & 23 Oct 2025
 - 11 Apr 2025
 - 11 & 27 Jun 2025

Pioneering New Expressions of the Gospel and Encouraging Effective Ways of Fulfilling the Mission of the Church.

This is always an area for further intentional growth.

- Seeking to present the message in the Gospel in creative and interactive or at least ways which practically illustrate themes or ideas in learning together segments and sermons. This year has seen the use of variations on TV game shows, use of white board, interactive questions, and a sermon time which approximately every six months the congregation can ask anything to do with life, faith and discipleship either from the floor or via written questions on specially developed question cards.
- Participation as a guest presenter in the 'Filthy Hope' Podcast which is a ministry of Uniting Heart and Soul in Woollahra
- Development and implementation of a new resource for the Church in the form of a podcast called 'On the Way.' In this podcast which is a collaboration between Uniting Heart and Soul in Woollahra and St. Matthew's Uniting Church, Rev Vanessa Williams-Henke and I both answer key questions to do with Christian doctrine and the Gospel whilst also seeking to encourage others to quality conversations about life, faith and discipleship.
- Exploring the potential of creating own YouTube Channel and Podcast.
 - Met with Jonty Cornford and Rev. Vanessa Williams-Henke to discuss how to set up podcast and what is needed how they might share wisdom and resources.

Participate Fully and Regularly in the Public Worship of God and the Mission and Fellowship of the Congregation with which the Minister is Enrolled (Regulations 2.4.12-14).

- Each week, except on occasional exceptions, I attend and assist in the leading of the three services at St. Matthew's – 8.00am, 9.30am & 6.45pm. As per the rosters I share in various roles. I lead, preach and preside over sacraments in monthly Communion services, and do so with a shared leadership roster with a 'liturgist' who leads the first half of the service, my role in each service varies. I am a person on-call for the roster and will lead when no-one else is available.
- Presentation of 'Learning Together' segment in each service, which is an all-age message. Again, there are times when other take on sharing in this aspect of ministry.
- As a guitarist and singer, I assist in the leading of music in both 9.30am and 6.45am services.



- I participate in the Christian Meditation Group meeting each week. This is a group which sees members from other churches and the wider community come into our church space for weekly meditation and fellowship.
- Attending and participation in meetings of different teams, committees and activities of the congregation. These include Elders, Church Council, Church Council Executive, Care and Prayer, Digital Ministry, Finance, Property, Social Action Missional Ministry Team, Op Shop, Women's Fellowship, Coffee and Discovery, Men's Morning Tea, and Missional Planning Team.

Contributing to the work of the wider Church

- Panel Member for the National Assembly Transforming Worship Circle of Interest
 - Assisting in the preparation of worship resources for such things as Uniting in Prayer, Intercultural Neighbouring Sunday and the 2024 liturgical resource for Frontier Services
 - Facilitating a Facebook group for this circle and contributing content
 - Participation in meetings and the work of the panel
- Panel Member of the National Assembly Growing in Faith Circle of Interest
 - contributing content to a Facebook group for this circle
 - Participation in meetings and the work of the panel
- Accredited chaplain as part of the Disaster Recovery Chaplaincy Network
- Duty Officer for DRCN, but have discerned that I cannot commit to regularly taking on this role and will now just be a reserve for if needed in time of extreme emergency
- Member of the St. Matthew's Uniting Church Preschool Management Committee

Affirmation of Call

Facilitated by the Rev Grant Atkins from Quakers Hills Uniting Church and Rev Carmel Ieraci from Wesley Uniting Church Castle Hills as presbytery representative, along with the Joint Nominating Committee members from our congregation, we had an affirmation of call conversation. Whilst a little late, normally being in the 6th month of a new placement and this was in the 9th month, there was a strong consensus that I am in the right place. The recommendations from the process were as follows:

1. That PRC receive the report and thank the team;
2. That the call of God to the Rev. Jon Humphries to ministry in St Matthew's Uniting Church congregation be warmly affirmed and upheld.
3. To encourage Jon:
 - a. To continue to work on a balanced timetable for ministry including confirming a more consistent day off.
 - b. To be in conversation with the Pastoral Care team about how best to participate in the visitation program.
 - c. To pray and explore, along with the Elders an appropriate personal support structure that would possibly include church members.





(The Rev) Jonathan [Jon] Humphries

Tuesday, 12 August 2025

