



st. matthew's
UNITING CHURCH
BAULKHAM HILLS
growing together

Weekly Newsletter

31 August 2025

Pentecost 12

Bible Readings

Hebrews 13: 1-8, 15-16

Luke 14: 1, 7-14

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

twitch.tv

Livestreaming at
8am and 9.30am only

8am—Worship

Led by Jon Humphries
and Nathan Tyson
Followed by morning tea

9.30am—Worship

Led by Jon Humphries
and Nathan Tyson

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

5pm—Shine offsite

6.45pm—Worship

Led by Jon Humphries

Thank you for worshipping with us today.

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

MONDAY 1 SEPTEMBER

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

7.30pm—Christian Meditation

TUESDAY 2 SEPTEMBER

9am-2pm—Op Shop open

9.30am-11am—Christian
Meditation

community room and church

11.30am—Care & Prayer
community room and church

WEDNESDAY 3 SEPTEMBER

9am-2pm—Op Shop open

10am—Thanksgiving service for
the life of Ida Batten

THURSDAY 4 SEPTEMBER

9am-2pm—Op Shop open

10am—Coffee & Discovery

Church & hall-Speaker: Jon Humphries

FRIDAY 5 SEPTEMBER

No Scheduled Activities

SATURDAY 6 SEPTEMBER

9am-12pm—Op Shop

9am-12pm—Garage Sale
lower hall

SUNDAY 7 SEPTEMBER

8am—Worship

Includes Communion

9.30am—Worship

Includes Communion

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

6.45pm—Worship

Includes Communion



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

LOCATION:

CNR CHARLES & EDGAR STREETS

BAULKHAM HILLS

POSTAL ADDRESS:

BAULKHAM HILLS UNITING CHURCH

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Weekly newsletter available on website

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PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR 9639 8570

SONALI WANIGESEKERA

PO Box 321 BAULKHAM HILLS 2153

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Something to think about

31 August

Pentecost 12

Revised Common Lectionary Readings:

Jeremiah 2:4-13
Psalm 81:1, 10-16
Hebrews 13:1-8, 15-16
Luke 14:1, 7-14

The Power of Intimacy as Part of Peace and Welcome

As the Church we are a community and, more than that, we name ourselves with names such as 'The Body of Christ' and 'the Family of Faith.' These terms speak of intimacy. After all, there is nothing more intimate than our bodies and our families. Of course, intimacy is not just about physical intimacy but is about being known and knowing others in a deep way. This is made clear in the way that sexual intercourse is sometimes referred to as 'knowing' someone in the Bible. (See Genesis 4:1 where Adam knew Eve) However, intimacy is the deep emotional connection, closeness, and bond between people, characterized by mutual trust, vulnerability, and open communication of feelings, thoughts, and experiences. While it can involve physical closeness and is often

associated with romantic relationships, true intimacy is fundamentally about emotional closeness, self-disclosure, and feeling truly known, loved, and accepted by another person.

It develops over time through consistent effort and is a significant predictor of a relationship's health and stability. As a community of faith, intimacy is part of being a welcoming Church. People don't truly feel welcomed until they are known and know others. Therefore, thinking about intimacy is important as we think about being more missional and being an even more truly welcoming Church.

Our brain is wired for closeness and without it, it struggles. It tricks us into expecting rejection. Lack of intimacy doesn't just make us feel lonely. It rewires our brain to believe we deserve to be alone. Studies show that when people lack social bonding, their Anterior Cingulate Cortex (ACC), the part of the brain that processes pain, lights up, reacting to social rejection the same way it would to a physical injury. This makes people withdraw even more, reinforcing a cycle of isolation. In other words, the less connection we have, the harder it becomes to seek it out. It warps our self-perception. This information comes from the video: **What Lack of Intimacy Does to Your Brain**

It is really worth watching to understand some of the neuroscience and psychology.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8L6b1WtCpKI&t=151s>

Given this kind of information and understanding, how we create safe intimacy in our Church is really important. It is linked to welcoming, because without it people not only feel rejected, but believe that they deserve to be so. This is completely at odds with the way God welcomed people as Christ and taught us to do the same. Think of as many stories that you can where Jesus connected with and welcomed people. This deeper sense of intimacy, the deep emotional connection, closeness, and bond between people, characterized by mutual trust, vulnerability, and open communication of feelings, thoughts, and experiences, is why we put starting points for this in our services.

The passing of the peace is about a starting point for intimacy. We make connections with those around us and even make physical contact. This, given the psychological and neuropsychological aspects of intimacy does literally help us as people into a deeper sense of peace. Of course, this one aspect of our services is not in itself enough. It is starting point and a reminder that we are connected with each other. We might have come into the Church space for a service and not connected with anyone but the person or people sitting next to us. Passing the peace



invites us into greater intimacy. It recalls our connection with each other and is a starting point which we should remember to grow on. We should remember to continue this work of peacemaking and welcome.

Intimacy is important in our Church life. Moments like passing the peace and times such as morning tea help us in this, but they are not enough in themselves. That is why being part of home groups and Bible studies, having social events and welcoming each other into each other's homes to share a meal are equally, if not more important to build a healthy and truly welcoming community where there are spaces and times for newcomers to be invited into and become known as they get to know others.

So, given this, how welcoming are we as a Church at St. Matthew's Uniting Baulkham Hills? How much do we value intimacy? How well do we build it in our community and how willing are we to share it with others? This gives us something to think about.

God bless

Jon

PEOPLE NEWS

**HAPPY
BIRTHDAY**



Dean Drayton
Ellen Keegan
Peter Duncum

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

A funeral service for Ida Batten will Be held at St. Matthew's on Wednesday 3 September at 10am.

Light refreshments will be served in the hall following the service.

weekly
SYNOD SPOTLIGHT

Uniting Church Synod of NSW and the ACT

Uniting Church Synod Spotlight Newsletter

For (22 August 2025) please see link to Synod weekly:

[Synod Weekly Spotlight 2025](#)

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

31 August — 6 September

*Cape Verde, Gambia, Guinea,
Guinea-Bissau, Senegal*

FUSION

Youth @ St Matts
Term 3, 2025

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

WEEK 2

1 August

Picture This



WEEK 4

15 August

Pirate Night



WEEK 6

29 August

Record Breakers



WEEK 8

12 September

Mini GOLF

@ Holey Moley
Castle Hill



WEEK 9

26 September

Lego Masters

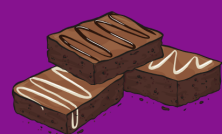


For more information contact Jon Humphries
jonestmathewsuniting.net.au 9686 3003

Combined
MORNING TEA
9AM



**21
SEPTEMBER
2025**



**BETWEEN THE MORNING
SERVICES**



Vintage Sale

st. matthew's
UNITING CHURCH
BAULKHAM HILLS
OP SHOP

St. Matthews Op Shop
Cnr Edgar & Charles Streets
Baulkham Hills 2153

- Clothes • Shoes
- Fabrics • Linen • Books
- Accessories • Bric a Brac

Sale Starts:
 Thursday 21st August 9am-2pm
 Saturday 23rd 9am-12noon
 Tuesday 26th 9am-2pm
 Wednesday 27th 9am-2pm
 Thursday 28th 9am-2pm
 Saturday 30th 9am-12noon

st. matthew's
UNITING CHURCH
BAULKHAM HILLS
OP SHOP

St Matthew's HAPPY HOUR!

At The Winston
170 Caroline Chisholm Drive, Winston Hills

29
AUGUST | **5 PM**
FRIDAY

COME AND SHARE IN SOME HAPPY
CONVERSATION, A DRINK AND SOME FOOD
WITH FRIENDS FROM ST MATTHEW'S.

RSVP to Belinda or just come along
belinda.schuster0709@gmail.com






Thursday 4 September

10am—12noon

*Guest Speaker:
Jon Humphries*



Thursday 4 September
10am - 12noon

St. Matthew's
Uniting Church
Baulkham Hills

Paddling into Peace and Wellbeing
Jon Humphries, his paddling adventures and
how it is good for his soul



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

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



Please join us for
A Banner 'brainstorming' discussion
10.00am on *Saturday 30 August* at the church.

We will be discussing ideas for the creation of a banner for the 50th Anniversary for the church during November.

Celebrating 50 Years

For more details contact Barbara Gibb



st. matthew's
UNITING CHURCH
BAULKHAM HILLS
growing together

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS

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

Celebrate with us In October/November 2025!!!

PHOTOGRAPHS REQUIRED

IF YOU HAVE PHOTOGRAPHS OR STORIES FROM ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS FROM THE LAST TEN (10) IN PARTICULAR WE WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING COPIES THAT WE CAN INCLUDE IN OUR PHOTOGRAPHIC SHOWCASE TO BE PRESENTED DURING NOVEMBER'S CELEBRATIONS. IN PARTICULAR WE ARE LOOKING FOR THE FOLLOWING PHOTOGRAPHS AND STORIES:

- DIRK VAN DOORENE CLOSURE OF MINISTRY SERVICE & MORNING TEA
- JON HUMPHRIES INDUCTION SERVICE
- ACTIVITIES & EVENTS DURING COVID
- VARIOUS CHURCH GROUPS ACTIVITIES AND PEOPLE
- SPECIAL CHURCH SERVICES AND MORNING TEAS
- ANY OTHER PHOTOGRAPHS OF ST MATTHEWS (LAST 50 YRS)
- SHORT STORIES IN THE LIFE OF ST MATTHEWS (LAST 10 YRS)

**IF YOU HAVE ANY PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORABILIA TO CONTRIBUTE,
PLEASE SEE GREG GIBB OR CALL HIM ON HIS MOBILE 0414 764 437**



**Wednesday 3rd, 10th, 17th and 24th September
2pm-4pm & 7pm-9pm
Wesley Castle Hill Uniting Church
32 Showground Road, Castle Hill**

***People of all faiths, explorers and doubters welcome to
a space of creativity and community inspired by the
beauty of the natural world***

Come along to yarn over yarn, colour-in and chat about creation and join a safe space to share spirituality, creativity and the beauty of nature with others.

You can bring along a creative project or discover something new in community. There will be opportunities for conversation guided by the Bible, science, music, poetry and personal stories, centring around the environment, spirituality, creativity and hope.

Our gathering time will also include space for silence, prayer, meditation and stillness, however you wish to participate. We hope to see you there.



THE PAST FOR TODAY

HOW CHRISTIAN HISTORY CAN
INFORM FAITH AND DISCIPLESHIP TODAY



Catch it or rewatch on the
St Matthew's Twitch Channel

<https://www.twitch.tv/videos/2547208780>



Rev Dr Clive Pearson

st. matthew's
UNITING CHURCH
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On the Way with Ness and Jon
What is the Church? | On the Way 1x05

<https://youtu.be/E1yVcx-wyY8?si=MbbPglu6FC2JuUz1>



On the Way with Ness and Jon
Is God Real? | On the Way 1x06

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s150-Ww3apw>

St Matthew's Social Action Missional Ministry Team

How doing little things makes a big difference.

Early Drug Diversion Update from Uniting Fair Treatment:

The Early Drug Diversion Initiative (EDDI), introduced in NSW in early 2024, allows Police officers to issue a \$400 on-the-spot fine for first or second low-level drug possession offences, which is waived if offenders attend an hour-long health counselling phone session.

The EDDI scheme was created as a way to divert people away from the justice system and instead provide them with a health intervention around their drug and alcohol use.

The rules around the February 2024 Early Drug Diversion Initiative (EDDI) are considered too narrow by professionals working with drug users, when compared with the parameters of similar schemes in the UK. In NSW the EDDI includes the following limitations:

- Referral is at the discretion of the Police

- A person can only have a maximum number of two instances of being caught with illicit drugs.

- Only people found with one single type of illicit drug are eligible

On average only 7.1% of people caught with personal quantities of illicit drugs have been offered diversion across the state of NSW. However, the picture in Western Sydney is much worse. The referral rate is less than 1% from areas including Campbelltown, Ryde, Camden, Blacktown, Fairfield, Nepean, Campsie and Riverstone.

The 2024 Drug Summit Report has already recommended improvements to the EDDI scheme, including limiting police discretion and removing the two strike policy, so that the people who need it most can actually access it. Uniting Fair Treatment are encouraging us to write to our local state MPs to let them know we want to see a better EDDI scheme. A person's postcode shouldn't dictate their access to drug diversion.

Further reading:

The Sydney Morning Herald article: 'Eastern suburbs lotto: Drug diversion scheme differs wildly across postcodes' https://www.smh.com.au/politics/nsw/eastern-suburbs-lotto-drug-diversion-scheme-differs-wildly-across-postcodes-20250801-p5mjib.html?mc_cid=2c8d1eb82e&mc_eid=e16f3efd98

Blessings,

Alexander

Social Action Missional Ministry Team (SAMMT)

To ask about joining the Social Action Group at St Matthew's
email Alexander on alexander.lawless7@gmail.com

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday 28th October 2025
at 7pm in the Lower Church Hall.



st. matthew's
UNITING CHURCH
BAULKHAM HILLS
growing together

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

SYDNEY WELSH CHOIR PERFORMANCE 2:00 PM

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

- DINNER, OPEN MIC & 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 & 6:45 PM

SUNDAY 23 NOVEMBER 2025

50TH ANNIVERSARY - CHURCH & PRESCHOOL WORSHIP SERVICE 9:00 AM

- CHURCH & PRESCHOOL SHOWCASE (AFTER WORSHIP)
- MUNCH (SHARE FOOD & STORIES) (AFTER WORSHIP)
- YOUTH SERVICE (INCL SHINE CELEBRATIONS) 6:45 PM



Galston Concerts



Sunday 31st August @ 2pm

Galston Uniting Church, 11 School Road, Galston

Kooskõlas (Sydney Estonian Choir)

Following their success at Laulupidu (Estonian National Song Festival) - this is a unique chance to experience Kooskõlas Choir, under the direction of conductor Dr Naomi Cooper, in one of the Hills Shire's beautiful bushland settings, Galston Uniting Church.

The choir will delight you with choral works from Estonia and other parts of Eastern Europe.



Associate Artist – Sydney Organist Fiona Loader



Fiona has presented organ recital programs at St Andrews Cathedral, Christ Church St Laurence, St Mary's Cathedral and The Great Hall of Sydney University. In 2019, she was guest organist in the prestigious Gustaf Vasa Cathedral Stockholm.

Fiona performed at the International Ukrainian Organ Festivals in 2024 and again earlier this year – resulting in recordings released on YouTube. She has recorded for The Sydney Organs Facebook Group at several churches including All Saints Woollahra, Epping Presbyterian, Hunter Baille Memorial Presbyterian Annandale, Leigh Memorial, Parramatta. Fiona is also a vocalist (soprano) at Christ Church St. Laurence and the Mater Chorale. In addition, she is an accomplished composer; her compositions being recorded by ABC Classics and published by the Australian Music Centre and Orpheus Music.

**\$40 adults; \$30 concession & children free
(Cash only at the door)**

Bookings: [Trybooking.com](https://trybooking.com)



Noël! Noël!

A Brandenburg Christmas in the heart of your community

The magic of *Noël! Noël!* returns this December with our beloved series of intimate performances in Sydney's most beautiful churches – and tickets are on sale today!

This year, to add to our four performances at City Recital Hall, we're delighted to return to three church favourites:

- St Francis of Assisi, Paddington
- Holy Name Church, Wahroonga
- St Patrick's Cathedral, Parramatta

And for the very first time, we bring *Noël! Noël!* to **St Brigid's Catholic Church in Marrickville**, offering a brand-new opportunity to experience the joy and spirit of the season in Sydney's inner west.

Celebrate the festive season with the Brandenburg in a stunning historic setting near you. Limited tickets available, so book now and we'll see you in the festive season.

St Francis of Assisi, Paddington
Tuesday 9 December @ 7pm

St Patrick's Cathedral, Parramatta
Tuesday 16 December, 7.30pm

Holy Name Church, Wahroonga
Monday 15 December @ 7pm

St Brigid's Marrickville
Thursday 18 December @ 7pm

FIND TICKETS

Or head to the website
www.brandenburg.com.au