



st. matthew's
UNITING CHURCH
BAULKHAM HILLS
growing together



Weekly Newsletter

7 September 2025

Pentecost 13

Bible Readings

Luke 14:25-33



Response after Bible Readings

Leader: In this we hear the word of God

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



Happy
Father's
day

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

Includes Communion
Led by Jon Humphries

9.30am—Worship

Includes Communion
Led by Jon Humphries

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

6.45pm—Worship

Includes Communion
Led by Jon Humphries

Thank you for worshipping with us today.

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

MONDAY 8 SEPTEMBER

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

7.30pm—Christian Meditation

TUESDAY 9 SEPTEMBER

9am-2pm—Op Shop open

9.30am-11am—Christian
Meditation
community room and church

WEDNESDAY 10 SEPTEMBER

9am-2pm—Op Shop open

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

THURSDAY 11 SEPTEMBER

9am-2pm—Op Shop open
2.15pm—Op Shop volunteers
meeting upstairs hall

FRIDAY 12 SEPTEMBER

5-7pm—Fusion Youth Group
offsite
@ Holey Moley golf Castle Hill

SATURDAY 13 SEPTEMBER

12pm—Netball Presentation
day

Upstairs hall & Church

SUNDAY 14 SEPTEMBER

8am—Worship
Includes Communion

9am—Worship @ the Willow's

9.30am—Worship
Includes Communion

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

6.45pm—Worship
Community meal



14th
Sunday
After
Pentecost

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
PO Box 773 BAULKHAM HILLS 1755

WEB SITE: www.stmatthewsuniting.net.au
Weekly newsletter available on website

FACEBOOK:

@stmatthewsunitingchurchbaulkhamhills

PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR 9639 8570

SONALI WANIGESEKERA
PO Box 321 BAULKHAM HILLS 2153

EMAIL: director@stmatthewsps.net.au

Something to think about

7 September

Pentecost 13

Revised Common Lectionary Readings:

Jeremiah 18:1-11
Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18
Philemon 1:1-21
Luke 14:25-33

The Power of Sabbathing

Observing the Sabbath is in the Ten Commandments. It is the fourth commandment. Exodus 20: 8-11 states, "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labour and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore, the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy."

In Hebrew, the word for Sabbath is שַׁבָּת [Shabbat] which literally means "rest" or "cessation". It comes from the Hebrew verb שָׁבַת [shavat], meaning "to cease" or "to rest". For Jewish people, Shabbat is a day set aside for rest and worship, commemorating the day God rested after creating the world. It is traditionally what we in our modern calendar and pattern of the week name as Saturday, which is the seventh day of the week.

Whereas, the Sabbath, is traditionally Saturday, according to Google AI, Christians (other than denominations like the Seventh Day Adventists) generally Sabbath on Sunday because it's the day Jesus was resurrected, which the early church began to commemorate as the "Lord's Day". This shift from the biblical Saturday Sabbath to Sunday reflects the new covenant established through Christ's work and offers a foretaste of God's eternal rest. Key events like the pouring out of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost and early Christian gatherings to break bread on the first day of the week further cemented Sunday as the day for Christian worship and celebration.

For many Christians, keeping the Sabbath is no longer really important. Theologically, Christians might not keep the Sabbath because it was part of the Old Testament Mosaic Covenant, which was fulfilled and replaced by the New Covenant in Jesus Christ, and instead Sunday is the Lord's Day and we therefore start our week (Sunday being technically the first day of the week) with dedication to God, especially God whom we know in Christ. Maybe we think that we are keeping it because a weekend is structured into the working week pattern and we go to Church. Yet, for many of us, going to Church is increasingly a flexible feast. We mostly go, but it can give way to other events at times.



Shabbat (שַׁבָּת),
-"rest" or "cessation"

Maybe the Sabbath is seen as less a formal rule or commandment and more of a flexible guideline because Jesus performed at least seven known healings on the Sabbath, which included times like the healing of Peter's mother-in-law's fever, a man with a withered hand, and a man born blind, as well as the woman bent over by Satan which we was our Gospel reading two Sundays ago. Of course, there are still many Christians who religiously go to Church as part of their faith and discipleship.

Whether we keep it or not and whether Sunday is our Sabbath or not, maybe it is good to revisit why Sabbath is important. In Mark 2:27 Jesus states that, "the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." This means that the Sabbath is a gift from God, intended to provide humanity with a day of rest and spiritual rejuvenation, not to become a burdensome obligation. It emphasizes that rules and traditions should serve people's well-being, rather than the other way around, promoting flexibility and compassion over rigid adherence to the law. Yet, Jesus didn't come to undo the Covenant or the Torah/Law. For Jesus, like the prophets, it is the connection to God and the adherence to the way of God, lived in love, compassion and justice, which is important. We should not underestimate the importance of Sabbath, nor water down its meaning to being about rest and religion.

Sabbath, as mentioned, does have a component of rest, but its core aim is a circuit breaker in the busyness of life to make space to reconnect with God. It is a spiritual discipline which sets time apart for being in connection with God. Our connection with God, who is always present as Spirit, but the mindfulness of which is sometimes pushed aside in our thinking, is of key importance. Rest is helpful, but it is really only helpful in the context of the mission of God. Sabbath is about resourcing us for ministry as part of the mission of God. However, lest we just think about it functionally, we need to value it relationally. Sabbath as a spiritual discipline is about reconnecting with God when we have disconnected.

Sabbath is about connecting with God. For God in the Creation narrative it makes space for God to walk with us as humans after the work of creation. For us as humans, it is about us walking with God. Sabbath is a spiritual discipline to remind us to remain connected with God. The weekly pattern of this discipline is not itself the focus or purpose, but the focus and purpose is connection with God. Thus, we should never only seek to connect with God once a week. We should always be in connection with God. All we do should and every interaction with others should be filled with a mindfulness of the presence of God. God is the ground of our being. Our human being is centred in God in whom we live and move and seek to emulate, because Christ is God in human being, and we are disciples of Christ.

In last week's epistle reading, Hebrews 13: 15 reminds us, "Through him [Christ], then, let us **continually** offer a sacrifice of praise to God." Our lives should be continually dedicated to God, and our worship is our living the love of God to all at all times. Weekly Sabbath can help us build the discipline of reconnection with God, but so can daily Sabbath through prayer and meditation and reading of Scripture. Yet, let us not think about these things functionally as things to do, but relationally as mindfulness practices which remind us of what is supposed to be continually important. Sabbath is not important in itself, but its importance lies in remembering that we are loved by God, that we love God, and that we love God by embodying God's love to others. How we each go about better honouring the intent and power of Sabbath in our lives without getting legalistic about it, nor reducing it to self-centred relaxation is something to truly think about

God bless

Jon

PEOPLE NEWS

**HAPPY
BIRTHDAY**



Belinda Schuster

Vivienne Strong

Graeme Gordon

Blake Wood

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

Thank you

I would like to thank the St. Matthew's community for their card and well wishes after my recent illness, it was very much appreciated.

Jean Wright

SYNOD SPOTLIGHT

Uniting Church Synod of NSW and the ACT

Uniting Church Synod Spotlight Newsletter

For (29 August 2025) please see link to Synod weekly:

[Synod Weekly Spotlight 2025 - 29 August |](#)

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

7 —13 September

Benin, Ivory Coast, Togo

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

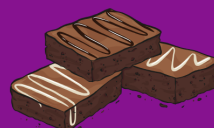
Lego Masters



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

Combined MORNING TEA 9AM

**21
SEPTEMBER
2025**



**BETWEEN THE MORNING
SERVICES**



THE PAST FOR TODAY

HOW CHRISTIAN HISTORY CAN
INFORM FAITH AND DISCIPLESHIP TODAY

الله

“ALLAH”

The Arabic Word for
God

Encounters with Islam: From
the Crusades to Cronulla



Rev Dr Clive Pearson

27 September 10am

at St Matthew's Uniting Church Baulkham Hills



Catch it or rewatch on the
St Matthew's Twitch Channel
<https://www.twitch.tv/stmattsuniting>



st. matthew's
UNITING CHURCH
BAULKHAM HILLS
growing together



Watch



Listen





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**



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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

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

St Matthew's Social Action Missional Ministry Team

How doing little things makes a big difference.

Topics: Modern Slavery & Protecting the Environment

The real cost of flowers

Did you know that cut flowers are currently the only perishable product sold in Australia that does not require 'Country of Origin' labelling. Flower Industry Australia claims imported blooms now make up about half of Australia's flower market, and nearly all of the cut flowers sold in supermarkets.

Many of the cheaper blooms are from countries with poor human rights records and are treated with toxic chemicals for biosecurity reasons, but neither of these things are mandatory to declare to the customer. Imports are mainly grown in Kenya, Ecuador, China, Malaysia and Colombia, where labour costs are low, and supply chains less than transparent. In Kenya the minimum wage in the sector is around AU\$177 a month, says Mary Kambo, a labour rights specialist at Kenya's Human Rights Commission. "But we have many farms that are paying way below," Ms Kambo says. "I've seen pay slips where women are taking home less than \$US5 (\$8) in a month." This is where many of the world's supermarket roses come from.

The Human Cost: Modern Slavery in the Flower Trade

- Flowers from Kenya, Ecuador, and India are often produced under exploitative conditions.
- Child labour is common—some children work 12-hour days caring for roses.
- Migrant workers in these countries face wage theft, passport confiscation, and forced labour.
- Australia's Modern Slavery Act requires big companies to report risks, but enforcement is weak.

The Environmental Cost: A Hidden Carbon Footprint

- A single imported rose emits 3.5 kg of CO₂ due to being transported the long distance to get to Australian markets - that's 35x more than a locally grown one.
- Floriculture drains water resources, e.g., Kenya's Lake Naivasha has lost 30% of its volume due to irrigation.
- Pesticide pollution from flower farms contaminates rivers and harms biodiversity in these countries.
- Australians discard 12,000 tonnes of flower waste annually, much of it plastic-wrapped.

What Can Consumers Do?

Choose locally grown flowers to cut emissions and support Aussie farmers.

Look for Fair Trade or ethical certifications when buying imported blooms.

Demand better transparency from retailers about their supply chains.

For more information:

ABC Foreign Correspondent: The Real Cost of a Rose (22nd August 2024)

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2024-08-22/the-true-cost-of-rose-foreign-correspondent/104236124>

Blessings,

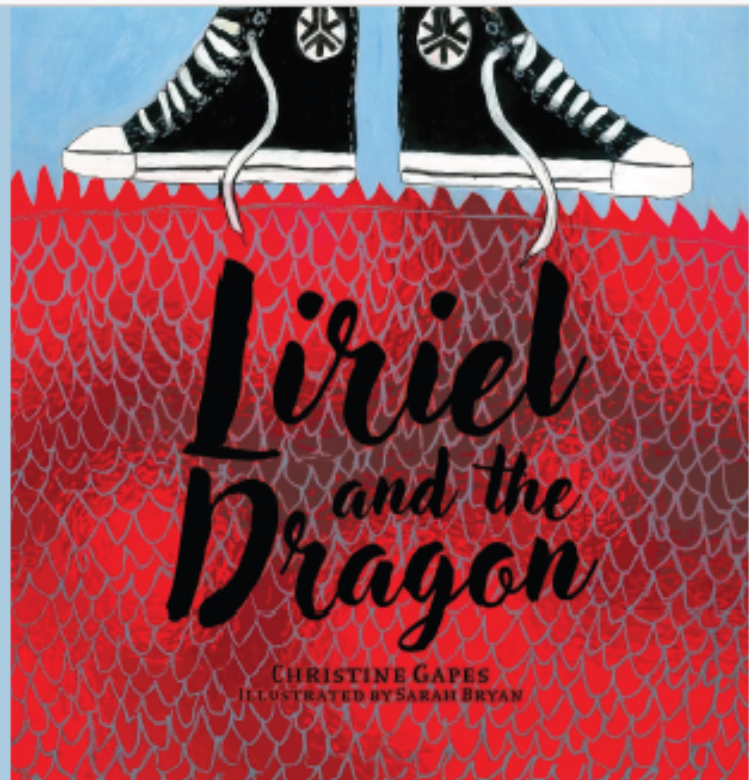
Alexander

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 21st October 2025 at 7pm in the Lower Church Hall

Attend the launch of
Liriel and the Dragon,
a book written by
Christine Gapes
and illustrated by
Sarah Bryan



10TH
SEPT
2025
@1PM

PARRAMATTA
SOUTH
CAMPUS
WESTERN
SYDNEY
UNIVERSITY

ARRIVE AFTER 12.30PM

Launch by Peter Hawker

Peter is a non-fiction television writer/producer.

Recent screen credits include the Discovery Channel's Mythbusters, Animal Planet's Buggin with Ruud, and National Geographic's Green Car.

About the author

Christine is the Uniting Church Chaplain at Western Sydney University. Come and see where vibrant ministry is happening.



**ALL WELCOME TO ATTEND
LIGHT REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED**

Park in the streets for free,
pay \$12 for all day parking on campus,
or take the new Light Rail to Rydalmere.

FIND MORE INFORMATION AT OUR WEBSITE
LIRIELANDTHEDRAGON.COM
OR EMAIL LIRIELANDTHEDRAGON@GMAIL.COM



**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.





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