



st. matthew's  
**UNITING CHURCH**  
**BAULKHAM HILLS**  
growing together

## Weekly Newsletter

14 September 2025

Pentecost 14

### Bible Readings

1 Corinthians 1: 18-24

John 3: 13-17

Jeremiah 4: 22-26

Luke 15: 1-10

#### 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 Michael Strong

### 9am—Worship @ the Willow's

### 9.30am—Worship

Led by Hugh Darling  
and Clive Pearson

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

### 6.45pm—Worship

Community meal

Thank you for worshipping with us today.

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

#### MONDAY 15 SEPTEMBER

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

7.30pm—Christian Meditation

#### TUESDAY 16 SEPTEMBER

9am-2pm—Op Shop open

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

#### WEDNESDAY 17 SEPTEMBER

9am-2pm—Op Shop open

10am-12pm—In Stitches  
upstairs hall

10.30am-12pm—Community  
Cuppa lower hall

7.30pm—Elders meeting upstairs  
hall

#### THURSDAY 18 SEPTEMBER

9am-2pm—Op Shop open

#### FRIDAY 19 SEPTEMBER

No Scheduled Activities

#### SATURDAY 20 SEPTEMBER

No Scheduled Activities

### SUNDAY 21 SEPTEMBER

8am—Worship

9am—Combined morning tea

9.30am—Worship

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

2-4pm—Upstairs hall in use

5pm—Shine— setup from 4pm

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

#### 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

## 14 September

### Pentecost 14

#### Revised Common Lectionary Readings:

Numbers 21:4b-9  
Psalm 98:1-5  
1 Corinthians 1:18-24  
John 3:13-17

### We Proclaim Christ Crucified

We proclaim Christ crucified. [1 Corinthians 1: 23] Yet, what does that mean? Why did Jesus, who was Christ/Messiah and God incarnate have to die? What does his death mean? There is a danger that we get caught up in thinking that the Cross is the means of our salvation. There is a danger that we believe in an understanding of what the Cross means, more than we believe in Jesus. The Cross and its meaning are important, and God in the person of Jesus, works for our salvation through his death, but as that well-known verse, John 3:16, clearly states, it is believing in Christ, the Son of God, Word of God, Light of the World, who was and is God, and in whom the fullness of God can be found, that we are saved and have eternal life. It is believing in Him that we are saved, and this involves his work on the Cross, but the Cross is not what we believe in.

How we understand and speak about salvation is part of our theology – our thinking and speaking about God. Theology comes from Θεός [theos] = God and λόγος [logos] = word/thought/reason/understanding. The aspect of theology about salvation is called soteriology. This is from the Greek word, σώζω [sozo], which means to save, rescue, deliver; to heal; by extension: to be in right relationship with God, with the implication that the condition before salvation was one of grave danger or distress. The idea of being in right relationship with God is called atonement. We can break atonement into at-one-ment. Soteriology, that is our understanding of salvation, involves a range of theological understandings or theories which are referred to as atonement theories.

Before I studied theology, I wasn't aware that there were more than one understanding of the Cross and our salvation. I had been taught to believe that Jesus was our personal saviour and that he died on the cross to save me from my sin that I would have eternal life. Now, this is not wrong, and the good thing is that it first suggests that I believe in Jesus, but often alongside of this was the understanding that Jesus died in my place as a payment for mine and everyone's sin, death being a punishment that I/we deserved, but Jesus received in my/our place. This is referred to in soteriology as substitutionary atonement or penal substitution [penal referring to penalty and punishment]. This is a very popular theology, especially in evangelical circles, but it is probably the atonement theory that I am least comfortable with, although it was the one I grew up being taught. I almost did an Honours thesis about this, and the title I was considering was 'Substituting Atonement.' My thesis was going to be about substituting better atonement theories in the Church rather than penal substitution.



Early this year I caught a great summary of some of the atonement theories by Rev Joseph Yoo on Facebook. Jo is an episcopal priest from Houston USA. Here is a link to his Facebook page 'Joseph Yoo+' <https://www.facebook.com/share/r/19jpiSobEn/> where he often shares short videos on a range of topics. I find them helpful and interesting. Here is a link to his great summary of some of the main atonement theories.



<https://www.facebook.com/share/r/19jpiSobEn/>

Here is my summary of his summary.

**Ransom theory** says humanity was captive to sin death and devil. Jesus's death was the payment to set us free. Think: Ancient prison exchange.

**Christus Victor** says instead of paying anyone off Jesus goes to battle with the powers of sin, death and evil and wins.

**Satisfaction theory** shows up in the 11th century. Here sin wasn't just breaking a rule, it was breaking honour and dishonouring the King or a Lord or a knight. To make this right someone had to restore that honour, usually through combat and Jesus satisfies the honour debt by winning against the devil.

**Penal Substitution** Here it's not about breaking the feudal honour system. It's about breaking the law, which requires punishment for justice to be done. Jesus takes the punishment in our place. In this case the punishment for sin is death and he substitutes himself for us.

**Moral influence theory** says Jesus's love changes us. Jesus' death moves our hearts to live differently. it's not about wrath. It's about transformation.

**Scapegoat theory** says we as people must have someone to blame and Jesus becomes that scapegoat, not because God demands blood, but because we humans do, and someone has to take away that blame by being the sacrifice.

How do you understand the cross? What theory or theories of atonement do you subscribe to? Why are they the ones that you believe and are part of your theology? This is something to think about. However, in all this it is really important to remember that it is God, whom we know as Christ and experience as the Holy Spirit that we should believe in, rather than a theory of how God works our salvation.

Let me finish with the words Rev Joseph Yoo finishes with. "These theories aren't gospel itself. They are ways to understand it, and how you interpret the cross shapes how you see God, so let me just say this plainly, Jesus didn't come to change God's mind about us. He came to show us what God's mind has always been. And what has been God's mind from the start? Love. Hope that helps."

God bless

Jon

PEOPLE NEWS

**HAPPY  
BIRTHDAY**



Noni Medcalf  
Janet Goodman

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

### ***Thank you and appreciation to***

Vivienne strong for planting and caring for  
the new garden next to the pathway  
outside the Preschool's upper playground.  
Many have commented on the lovely  
flowers and it brings joy to many who walk  
past.

## **SYNOD SPOTLIGHT**

Uniting Church Synod of NSW and the ACT

Uniting Church Synod Spotlight Newsletter

**For ( 5 September 2025) please see link to  
Synod weekly:**

[Synod Weekly Spotlight 2025 -](#)

### **Ecumenical Prayer Cycle**

**14 —20 September**



*Ghana, Nigeria*

**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](mailto: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



“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>



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On the Way with Ness and Jon  
**Where is Heaven? | On the Way 1x08**



[https://youtu.be/vwYoZFg7pDg?si=I-iV0\\_loVxDXZAIU](https://youtu.be/vwYoZFg7pDg?si=I-iV0_loVxDXZAIU)



**BAULKHAM HILLS & WESLEY UNITING  
CHURCHES**

Present the  
**SYDNEY WELSH CHOIR & THE BONES OF  
CONTENTION [TROMBONE CHOIR]**

Sunday 19 October 2025 @ 2.00pm  
**at St Matthews Uniting Church**

**Baulkham Hills**

Adults \$15, Concession \$10

Afternoon tea will be provided after the concert.



**Community Cuppa**

Community Cuppa will be happening again on the third Wednesday of each month for the rest of the year, including December.

We are having our next Community Cuppa on **Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> September** starting at 10.30am & finishing at 12noon in the lower hall.

Everyone welcome!



**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](http://www.stmatthewsuniting.net.au)**

**Click on the metal  
dove image /  
publications or find  
in recent posts.**



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# CELEBRATING 50 YEARS

ST MATTHEW'S UNITING CHURCH  
AND PRESCHOOL'S 50<sup>TH</sup> 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

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**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

50<sup>TH</sup> 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.

## **Topic: The Crisis in Palestine – a Christian Perspective**

The Palestine Israel Ecumenical Network Inc (PIEN) is a network of Australian Christians and supporters, seeking lasting peace and justice for the people of Palestine and Israel. Their goal is to:  
Encourage and equip Australian churches to promote peace and reconciliation in Palestine and Israel, inspired by Christ's vision for universal reconciliation.

Educate Australian churches and the wider public on human rights issues in Palestine and Israel.

Seek public policy change in Australia.

Influence public opinion and advance public debate.

Encourage theological discussion and practical action.

Express solidarity with Palestinian Christians and with others who genuinely seek peace and justice for all Palestinians and Israelis.

Work alongside like-minded organisations in Australia and overseas.

Participate in the Australia Palestine Advocacy Network (APAN)'s advocacy work with parliamentarians and the Australian community.

The network includes around 800 people, from over eleven different denominations, across all parts of Australia as well as Australian Christian aid and development agencies working in Palestine and Israel. PIEN was established in 2006 by church leaders who saw a particular role for Christians to advocate from a faith perspective about Palestinian human rights. PIEN are an independent working group that has a formal relationship with the ACT Council of Churches.

### **Further Reading:**

PIEN recently published the *'Joint Statement by the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem and the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem - Jerusalem August 26th, 2025'* that states: 'with equal urgency, we appeal to the international community to act for an end of this senseless and destructive war, and for the return of the missing people and the Israeli hostages.' It is a very interesting statement that includes the current Christian churches' action in Palestine. For the full statement go to: <https://lpi.org/en/news/statement-by-the-latin-patriarchate-of-jerusalem>

To find out more about the work of PIEN go to their website: [www.pien.org.au](http://www.pien.org.au)

You can also subscribe for their free monthly emails.

*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](mailto:alexander.lawless7@gmail.com)

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



**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.

