



st. matthew's
UNITING CHURCH
BAULKHAM HILLS
growing together

Weekly Newsletter

19 October 2025

Pentecost 19

Bible Readings

1 Corinthians 13: 1-13
John 2: 1-11



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

19th

Sunday

After

Pentecost



twitch.tv

Livestreaming at

8am and 9.30am only

8am—Worship

Led by Jon Humphries
and Clive Pearson

9.30am—Worship

Led by Sharon Underwood
and Clive Pearson

Followed by morning tea

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

2pm—Welsh Choir & Bones of Contention

6.45pm—Worship

Led by Nicola Lawless
And Alexander Lawless

Thank you for worshipping with us today.

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

MONDAY 20 OCTOBER

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

7.30pm—Christian Meditation

TUESDAY 21 OCTOBER

9am-2pm—Op Shop open

9.30am-11am—Christian
Meditation

community room and church

7.30pm—Property committee
meeting

WEDNESDAY 22 OCTOBER

9am-2pm—Op Shop open

THURSDAY 23 OCTOBER

9am-2pm—Op Shop open

FRIDAY 24 OCTOBER

8.30am-12noon—Church
Working Bee

5-7pm—Fusion Youth group
"Spooky night"

SATURDAY 25 OCTOBER

8.30am-12noon—Church
Working Bee

SUNDAY 26 OCTOBER

8am—Worship

Followed by morning tea

9.30am—Worship

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

5pm—Shine

6.45pm—Worship



20th 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

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PO Box 773 BAULKHAM HILLS 1755

WEB SITE: www.stmatthewsuniting.net.au

Weekly newsletter available on website

FACEBOOK:

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SONALI WANIGESEKERA

PO Box 321 BAULKHAM HILLS 2153

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Something to think about

19 October

Pentecost 19

Revised Common Lectionary Readings:

Jeremiah 31:27-34

Psalms 119:97-104

2 Timothy 3:14-4:5

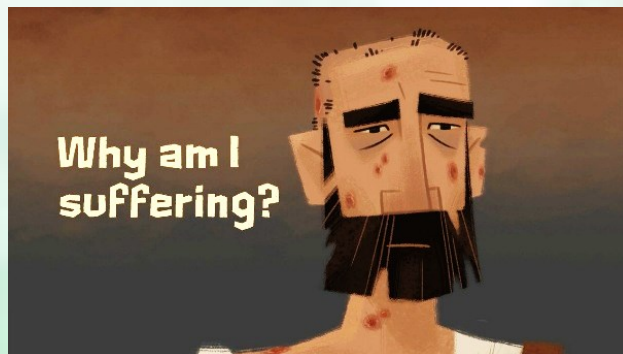
Luke 18:1-8

Lamenting Suffering

Suffering and hardship and the sorrow and grief that it brings is a part of life. It is not a nice part of life. In fact, it is a lamentable part of life, and by this I mean that we can actually lament to God that we suffer and grieve. Hardship and suffering are not only lamentable in themselves but also because of the hurt and pain people, including ourselves, experience. What makes it seem harder is that we know God is good, loving, just, kind, merciful and all-powerful. Given all this about the nature of God, it doesn't seem to make sense that we should suffer.

One of the great books in the Bible which explores this issue is Job. We have looked at it in the past, but it is worth exploring again.

The Bible Project have a great summary about the Book of Job that's worth watching.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GswSg2ohqmA>

It is good to acknowledge that the whole issue of suffering is a great mystery, and I would be stupidly naïve to think that this short piece in the newsletter or a sermon will sort this out in people's heads. There are libraries worth of books and essays on this area of theology called 'theodicy.' Yet, it is worth raising it and exploring it because it is always a part of our lives and if we don't think it through in a helpful way we can get caught in the trap, which many have done, to stop believing in God. I certainly don't argue with people's right to believe whatever they choose or feel right. I am sharing this because it is sad that those who lose belief in God cut themselves off from the greatest source of help and support in the hardest times in life – that is God. So, doing some constructive theology might help us see God in different ways when we encounter and experience hardship and suffering.

It is not something that I normally do, but I thought that having gone to the effort to get a ChatGPT summary of my sermon about “Lamenting Suffering” which I preached in all three services on 5 October and again on 12 October at Uniting Heart and Soul in Woollahra for Rev Ness to post in their newsletter, I thought it worth sharing. The sermon explored the enduring question of suffering—why it exists if God is loving and powerful—and reflects on it through the lens of faith and lament. Here is a link to my YouTube Channel which has a video of the sermon. <https://youtu.be/YwSTxDVw3T8>

In summary, for me there are three sources of suffering:

Natural suffering, which arises from the very fabric of creation and life itself—disease, death, disasters, and evolution’s harsh realities. Suffering is inherent in the natural order, where all living things experience decay and death.

The consequences of human choices, such as where we live, how we treat our bodies, and how humanity consumes the earth’s resources—leading to issues like climate change and illness.

The choices of others, including systems of exploitation, greed, and injustice that perpetuate harm and suffering across the world.

The sermon then asks: Why doesn’t God stop suffering? The answer which I offered is not that God causes suffering, but that God enters into it. In Jesus, God embraced human pain—born into poverty, persecuted, and crucified—showing divine solidarity with human suffering rather than detachment from it.

Lament, therefore, is something that I presented as an act of faith, not doubt. Crying out to God in pain—like the psalmists—acknowledges both the reality of suffering and trust in God’s enduring presence. Christians are reminded that God may not always remove suffering, but walks with us through it, offering comfort, strength, and redemption. In the end, lament becomes a sacred means of connection, healing, and hope amid the world’s pain. How we think about God in the midst of hardship and suffering is something really important to think about when we are in times that life is less hard and we are not suffering too much because we are better armed for when the bad times come.

Lamenting to God in times of hardship and suffering then becomes more helpful than theology, but theology can lead us to lament. These are hard things to think about, but even harder to live through. May God be with us and all who suffer and go through hardship.

God bless

Jon

**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.



Please come
along for a little
while or the
whole time. Many
hands make light
work and would
be most
appreciated.

The property committee will be holding
the next working bee over 2 days to
make it easier for volunteers to attend.

**Friday 24th October
and
Saturday 25th October**

**8.30am to 12noon
Both days**



Your Help is needed

50th Anniversary
celebrations



Your help is needed to sort and create power point presentations from the many photos that have now been received.

Please contact Greg if you can spare some time to help.



Please complete the form in the foyer if you know of any past St. Matthew's members that we could invite to our celebrations.

Can you
help us?



St Matthew's
Netball Club

St Matthew's Netball Club would like someone to voluntarily review this year's accounts. Please see Belinda Schuster if you are willing.

Please
return
completed
forms by
26

Volunteer Form

Assisting with
Morning Services



December 2025, January, February 2026

Have been emailed or
collect a copy from the foyer.

NEW HELPERS
WELCOME



Please return forms to the blue
mail tray or church office.

UNITING CHURCH
BAULKHAM HILLS
BRIDGE STREET

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

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

PEOPLE NEWS



Ruth Duignan
Melanie MacWilliam
Terry Oliver

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

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

19-25 October



Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico

SYNOD SPOTLIGHT

Uniting Church Synod of NSW and the ACT

Uniting Church Synod Spotlight Newsletter

For (10 October 2025) please see link to Synod weekly:

[Synod Weekly Spotlight 2025 -](#)

Choir Practice

There will be a Choir practice at the church on

**Saturday 22 November
From 10.30am to 11.30am**

This practice is to prepare for the Anniversary service on Sunday 23 November



Thank you so much for your kind donation of food items. Gifts such as yours help keep our operational

costs down and enables my team to put resources into our Frontline services such as Loaves & Fishes Restaurant, primary health care and crisis support for our guests.

My foundation is a place that brings people together and strengthens the community.

Rev. Bill Crews

Church Diary for 2026

A note to all group leaders — If your group is planning to use a part of the church property please ensure the area is available before finalizing your program.

Please send your 2026 programs to the church office ASAP.

Afternoon tea help required

The Women's Fellowship ladies will be catering for afternoon tea on Sunday 19th October following the performances of the Welsh Choir and Wesley Trombone Choir which commences at 2PM.

It would be very much appreciated if there are any ladies attending the event who would like to bring a small plate of food to assist with the catering.

With Thanks from the Women's Fellowship Catering Ministry

St Matthew's Social Action Missional Ministry Team

How doing little things makes a big difference.

Topic: Gambling Awareness Week 20th to 26th October 2025

From an article by ABC NSW journalist Hannah Ross 'Pokies taking more than \$1 million from NSW gamblers every hour' 2nd September 2025

Wesley Mission is calling for the NSW government to respond to gambling reform recommendations. From April to June 2025, \$2.3 billion was lost on the 88,000 poker machines in NSW. The figure is up by 8.8 per cent compared to the same period last year and means that the state's poker-machine players are losing **more than \$1 million every hour**. Wesley Mission's analysis showed 141 new poker machines were switched on across NSW since March this year, despite the Minns government saying it was reducing the overall numbers by reducing the gaming machine entitlement cap.

Wesley Mission CEO Stu Cameron said the figures were a "public health catastrophe". "This is an industry that is cynically able to hone its craft to draw out the maximum amount of money from people," Reverend Cameron said. "These are machines designed to addict." The Liquor and Gaming Authority data showed the heaviest losses occurred at venues in Sydney's west.

Poker machine losses April-June 2025, the top three clubs by poker machine losses:

- Mounties Mount Pritchard \$22.2 million
- Bankstown Sports Club \$20 million
- Wentworthville Leagues Club \$17.8 million

Heaviest losses by LGA - metropolitan area

- Canterbury-Bankstown \$193 million, 4,925 machines
- Fairfield \$176 million, 3,814 machines
- Cumberland \$123.3 million, 2,719 machines

Heaviest losses by LGA: regional

- Central Coast \$86 million, 4,450 machines
- Wollongong \$50.8 million, 2,682 machines
- Newcastle \$50.3 million, 2,739 machines

To read the whole article: <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2025-09-02/pokie-losses-1-million-from-nsw-gamblers-every-hour/105723938>

To register to receive the Wesley 'Put the Pokies in their Place' campaign emails: <https://www.wesleymission.org.au/get-involved/advocate-with-us/poker-machine-reform/>

*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



Celebrating 50 Years

St. Matthew's Uniting Church & Preschool's 50th Anniversary

Celebrate with us in November 2025!!

THANKSGIVING SERVICE

9 NOVEMBER 2025

9:00 AM

FOLLOWED BY

MORNING TEA

BRING A PLATE OF FOOD TO SHARE

GUEST PREACHER

REV NICHOLAS FRIED

PICNIC LUNCH

9 NOVEMBER 2025

FROM 11:00 AM

JOHN CURTIN RESERVE

HUXLEY DR WINSTON HILLS

BBQ AND KITCHEN FACILITIES AVAILABLE

BRING YOUR OWN LUNCH

FOLLOWED BY GAMES AND

T10 CRICKET MATCH

GAMES NIGHT

PLUS TRIVIA AND OPEN MIC

INCLUDES DINNER

15 NOVEMBER 2025

FROM 4:30 PM

TICKETS

\$ 20 ADULTS

\$40 FAMILIES

TICKETS CAN BE PURCHASED ONLINE

OR AFTER CHURCH SERVICES

COME JOIN US FOR A NIGHT OF FUN

SHARE FOOD STORIES AND GAMES

50TH ANNIVERSARY SERVICE

(CHURCH AND PRESCHOOL)

23 NOVEMBER 2025

9:00 AM

FOLLOWED BY MORNING TEA

BRING A PLATE OF FOOD TO SHARE

AND BBQ LUNCH - DONATION

SHARE WORSHIP FOOD AND STORIES

A SHOWCASE OF CHURCH AND

PRESCHOOL HISTORY ON DISPLAY

CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE IF PLANNING TO

ATTEND FOR CATERING (02) 9686 3003



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](tel:0414764437)**



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