



st. matthew's
UNITING CHURCH
BAULKHAM HILLS
growing together

Weekly Newsletter

30 November 2025

Advent 1

Bible Readings

Romans 13: 11-14

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
followed by Morning Tea

9.30am—Worship

Led by Jon Humphries
Includes Baptism. We welcome the family and friends to worship today.



KUCA Preschool,
Years K-2 & Years 3-8
followed by Morning Tea

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 DECEMBER

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

7.30pm—Christian Meditation

TUESDAY 2 DECEMBER

9am-2pm—Op Shop open

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

4.30pm—Preschool end of year concert in the church

WEDNESDAY 3 DECEMBER

9am-2pm—Op Shop open

10-12pm—In Stitches
Upstairs hall

11am—Preschool in Church

4.30pm—Preschool end of year concert in the church

THURSDAY 4 DECEMBER

9am-2pm—Op Shop open

10-12pm—Coffee & Discovery
FINAL FOR 2025

4.30pm—Preschool end of year concert in the church

FRIDAY 5 DECEMBER

11am—Preschool in Church

4.30pm—Preschool end of year concert in the church

5-7pm—Fusion Youth Group

SATURDAY 6 DECEMBER

9am-12pm Op Shop

9am-12pm—Garage Sale lower hall

SUNDAY 7 DECEMBER

8am—Worship
Includes communion

9.30am—Worship
Includes communion

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

6.45pm—Worship
Community meal



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

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Something to think about

30 November

Advent 1

Revised Common Lectionary Readings:

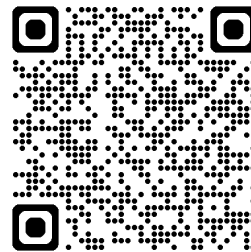
Isaiah 2:1-5
Psalm 122
Romans 13:11-14
Matthew 24:36-44

What is Real Hope?

Last week after some debilitating episodes of attacks of pain I was diagnosed with kidney stones, one of which was in transit from my body and was the source of discomfort. With the special services happening last Sunday, I could have just hoped it would all be well or stressed about if I had an attack in the service. Instead, I chose hope rooted in faith, where I just trusted that God would hold all as it should be. I planned for contingencies, but in my heart of hearts I believed that in the end they would not be needed, and luckily or providentially, they weren't.

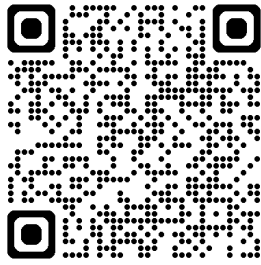
Similarly, as I drove to Church it was grey and raining. Again, I just settled into faithful hope that all would be well, and it was. Of course, I began making contingency plans in my head, but something in my being told me or knew that all would turn out fine, and literally it did.

I have shared this Bible Project video before, but it is worth going back to as we enter into Advent and remember the liturgical call to take up hope once more.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4WYNBjJSYvE>

Hope is a complicated word with there being many forms of hope. As the video suggests, it is not optimism – that is hoping that things might turn out OK. It is deeper and more powerful than that. Ness and I wrestle with this in our recent 'On the Way' episode about hope and what it has to do with Christmas.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DqzsMkT83Ok&t=17s>

Advent is a season of preparation and anticipation, but being a liturgical season, I believe that we have liturgical work to do – that is work as the people of God. It is not simply psyching ourselves up for Christmas or hoping that it is a lovely celebration. Our liturgical work is also not just about lighting candles and holding nice services. The real work that we have is to do with the mission of God and living out our faith. Our hope is that our services will encourage and resource us in this, but our Church services are not our true liturgy. Advent has four key missional tasks in our tradition, at least those of us who use Advent candles, and the work of the services is to remind us of this and encourage us towards attending to the call of God. The first is that of hope.

Hope is an important work. It is not simply an emotion or a nebulous wish for something good, at least not in the context of faith. Our hope as Christians is that the work of God, which we deeply learn through God as Christ, is that the world will be transformed and the ministry of reconciliation and the work of true justice will be accomplished. It is

no accident that the Revised Common Lectionary sets for this first week of Advent a reading about the end all things, which some refer to as 'the Rapture.' This passage has Jesus impressing on people the imperative to be at work for God. This is a repeated theme in his teachings. We can marry this with the work of hope in Advent as in all seasons of the year and of life.

In all of this it is good to remember that our hope is not in a something or a somewhen it is in someone. Our hope is in God. It is God who is faithful and who is at work for good in all things, all times and all people. It is God who is at work for good, even though our circumstances might not change. It is God who redeems us as God redeems all things. It is God who ultimately help us to change and change our perspective and mindset, even though life and our circumstances in it may not.

Hope is ultimately a nebulous thing. It is hard to pin down exactly what it is. It is sometimes hard to find and hold onto. It can seem fragile or ephemeral. It can seem that there is nothing to it. Yet, it is centred in God who is all in all and is the ground of our being. Our hope is in God and God's faithfulness. It may not change much externally, but it can change everything internally. It may not seem to make much or any difference on the outside but can make all the difference on the inside.

This can seem like religious empty promises or spiritual propaganda, and sometimes it can be. Yet, those of us who have found hope in God when things were hopeless, know that hope is real and powerful. We have God. We have hope. We have work to do. Yes, this is something to think about, but it is also something to seek out and find.

God bless

Jon

Election of Elders and Church Council

The election of members to Church Council and Elders will take place on ***Sunday 7 December*** in each of the three services . *8am, 9.30am and 6.45pm.*

Voting for an indication of preference for allowing or not allowing same-gender/sex weddings in our buildings at St. Matthew's will also happen at the same time



**Four ways to give to those in need
beyond Australia**

***Cash in the Christmas Bowl
envelope given to the person in
the WHITE HAT at the back of
the Church each Sunday
Service.***

***Give credit details in the form
in the Christmas Bowl envelope
and tie it to the person in the
WHITE HAT and receive a
receipt later.***

***Give directly to a letter sent to
you from Christmas Bowl to
your address. Put that you are
at St Matthews on the form***

**A St. Matthew's page
Just for us at**

[Mycb.link/45881](https://mycb.link/45881)

Check it out!

**Envelopes will be
available as usual at
each service.**

PEOPLE NEWS

**HAPPY
BIRTHDAY**



Greg Gibb

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

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

30 November—6 December

Brunei, Malaysia, Singapore

Thank you

A big thank you to everyone who attended our Anniversary celebrations this month. From our special services, picnics, trivia night and dinners.

A special mention to Greg and Barbara Gibb and their team for all their hard work.

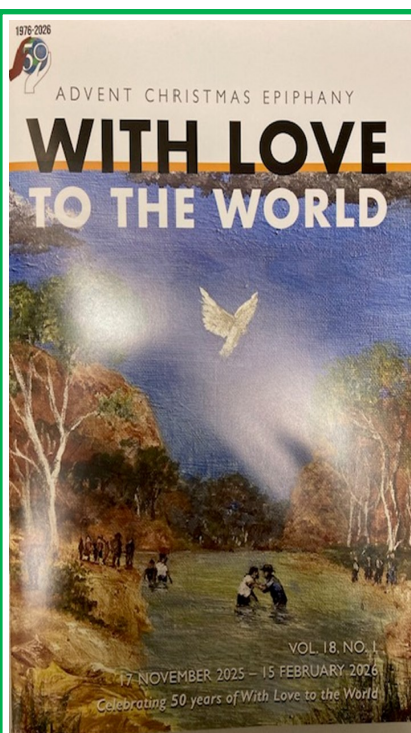
Mike Underwood
Chair person for Church Council

**Can you
help us?**



**St Matthew's
Netball Club**

St Matthew's Netball Club would like someone to voluntarily review this year's accounts. This is not a huge job. Please see Belinda Schuster if you can help.



**Advent Christmas
Epiphany**

**WITH LOVE
TO THE
WORLD**

a daily Bible reading
guide based on the
Revised Common
Lectionary

**Volume 18,
Number 1**

**17 November 2025
To
15 February 2026**

is available
in the church foyer.

**Please place \$7
in offering bag
to cover costs.**



You are invited to a Service of Remembrance and



Thanksgiving

Tuesday 9th December @ 7.30pm

A Service specifically designed for all those who experience a sense of loss at Christmas, especially those for whom this is the first Christmas without a loved one. During the service the names of our loved ones will be read out. You will also have the opportunity to light a candle in their memory. The names may be phoned or emailed through to the church prior to the 9th December. We also invite you to bring a card or memento to place on the Tree of Remembrance.



A tree will be supplied by the Hills Shire council and after the service the tree will be planted together with your message somewhere in the community.

Please contact us if you would like further information, and know that we are thinking of you at this time of year.



The Bill Crews Foundation is need of these items for their food Hampers:

- **Tinned Foods (ring pulls)**
- **Spaghetti**
- **Baked beans**
- **Tuna/Salmon**
- **Meats/chicken**
- **Soup**
- **Fruit & Vegetables**
- **Rice**
- **Dry Pasta**
- **Pasta Sauces**
- **Supermarket & store gift cards**
- **Noodles cups/packets**
- **Chips**
- **Crackers**
- **Biscuits**
- **Cereals**
- **Muesli Bars**
- **Up & Go breakfast drinks**
- **Fruit juices/poppers**
- **Tea/coffee**
- **Long life milk**
- **Bottled water (600ml)**

Please donate to the St. Matthew's collection for the Bill Crews Foundation Christmas Food appeal.

Please leave items in the containers in the upstairs foyer by 15 December.



Thursday 4th December

10am—12noon *Final for 2025*

Guest Musician: **DAVID SHORT**



David will delight and entertain with his amazing music performed on both the piano and organ.

Come along and enjoy.



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

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Thank you

**A HUGE THANK YOU TO ALL WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE
REMARKABLE 50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS**

**YOUR PRESENCE, VOLUNTERING SUPPORT AND PRAYERS
CONTRIBUTED TO THE SUCCESS OF THE EVENTS.**

**IN PARTICULAR TO THE TEAM OF VOLUNTEERS YOUR COMBINED
EFFORTS MANY OF WHICH WERE “BEHIND THE SCENES” ENSURED
EVERYTHING RAN SMOOTHLY AND MADE EACH EVENT SO SPECIAL.**

**WE WOULD ALSO LIKE TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE GENEROUS
SUPPORT OF THOSE WHO PROVIDED FOOD FOR THE MORNING
TEAS, AND HELPED IN THE SETTING AND PACKING UP, SERVING AND
COOKING THE BBQ**

**ON BEHALF OF THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY PLANNING
TEAM – WELL DONE!!!!**

St Matthew's Social Action Missional Ministry Team

How doing little things makes a big difference.

Topic: COP31 and our South Pacific Neighbours - a disappointing outcome

Last week we heard the disappointing news that Australia has ceded its bid to co-host the COP31 climate conference with Pacific Nations. The Rev. Faaimata (Mata) Havea Hiliau (the Moderator of the Uniting Church Synod of NSW and ACT) said, "The importance of these meetings cannot be overstated, and many had hoped that we could shine a light on Australia and the Pacific by hosting this meeting."

From the Uniting Climate Action Network (UCAN) media release:

In this announcement, we grieve the lost opportunity for Australia's First Nations communities and Pasifika diaspora, along with our Pacific Island neighbours, to be centred on the world stage and have direct access to people in power.

As Christians who care for climate justice, we must continue to amplify the voices of those most vulnerable to climate change. Jesus stood with those on the margins and told us that how we respond to those most in need is also our response to Him. Christ calls us to stand for justice, even if no one else is speaking and acting. Just as the prophet Isaiah describes, we must reflect the justice and compassion of God in the face of this challenge of climate change.

As part of Australia's agreement with Türkiye over hosting COP31, Chris Bowen the Minister for Climate Change and Energy, will take on the role of President for COP31 negotiations.

What can I do?

Email Chris Bowen to express your concerns that the nations of the South Pacific need to be heard at COP31. His email address is: Chris.Bowen.MP@aph.gov.au

To read the full UCAN media release go to:

<https://www.unitingclimate.org/2025/11/20/cop31-announcement-disappointment/>

To find out more about the work of UCAN: <https://www.unitingclimate.org/>

To find out what Uniting World is doing to help the nations of the South Pacific prepare for the increase in climate change related natural disasters <https://www.unitingworld.org.au/projects/disaster-preparation-climate-change/>

*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 17th February 2026
7pm in the Lower Church Hall