



EASTER MUSINGS

The Christian faith depends upon Easter. The season of Easter in the church's calendar lasts from Easter Sunday through to Pentecost (which this year is on the 28th May). It lasts for 7 weeks and can become a time for us to reflect further on the significance of the cross—and the resurrection.

WATCH:

Rowan Williams on Easter

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b0AZPQtW2Rw>

N.T. Wright 'Holy Saturday People' (Romans 6:1-4)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2LBEuWLF3-4>

N.T. Wright 'Why the disciples did not invent the resurrection'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ARWGrTd3YwA>

Of course, the resurrection of Jesus is a mystery: the 'mechanics' are beyond us. It is an unprecedented 'event'. In the past the church often had very divisive struggles over whether the resurrected body was physical or spiritual. It is no use trying to play one off against the other because both 'options' appear in the gospels.

You may have noticed that the gospel writers tell very different resurrection narratives. That may seem a bit disconcerting at first glance. What we might need to keep in mind is that they were writing their gospels for specific communities of faith in different places and at different times. They tell an Easter story that fits in with the life of those newly emerging churches. The way in which these narratives unfold, nevertheless, provide us with ample scope to think about our own Easter journeys. Which one would you choose? Why did you choose that one?

WATCH:

N.T. Wright 'Believing Thomas'. (John 20:26-29)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yBbduZfq5HM>

N.T. Wright 'How do we recognize Jesus'.
– road to Emmaus

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kxqjbjbnN-s>

READ:

Pauline Gooder 'The seventh woman'
Mary Magdalene's story

<https://cathedral.southwark.anglican.org/worship-and-music/worship/dr-paula-gooder-addresses-from-holy-week-2021/easter-eve/>

Marilynne Robinson, 'Easter Sunday'

<https://www.christiancentury.org/article/2012-03/easter-sunday-april-8-2012>

EASTER THEMED MUSIC:

(I) MODERN AND MANY CULTURES

Resucitó (Spanish) Kiko Argüello

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XkM7msh6L_Q

James Ward 'Morning Sun'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S3glGEqqKqI>

Karl Digerness 'Love divine, victorious'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5gySIHypjTs>

(II) HYMNS

Christ the Lord is risen today (arr. Rutter)

Kyiv Symphony Orchestra and Chorus

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G_x-HM7IroA

The Gesualdo Six This joyful Eastertide

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

Gloucester Cathedral Choir The Day of Resurrection

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8HwtT14DnQ8>

Awake, arise, lift up your voice

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l1IWWmWicxY>

READINGS IN MAY

The gospel readings through May all focus on John's gospel. The lectionary has selected texts that speak of Jesus being the way, the truth and the life and how he return to the Father and another, the comforter, the Spirit will be sent. In advance of Pentecost Jesus prays for his disciples in his farewell discourse. In the Pentecost reading Jesus appears in the room where the disciples are after they have heard of his resurrection: he stands before them, declares peace and then 'breathes' the spirit on them.

Through to Pentecost Sunday the epistle that keeps us company is 1 Peter. It is unlike most of the other epistles as it was not sent to the community in one city. It is sent to those who are living in a diaspora across a region. It is likely that this epistle is designed to help these small communities think through how they should live alongside neighbours who are sometimes suspicious of them - and maybe now and then persecuting. Of all the epistles it has the most references to suffering as well as to joy. The first Christians believed that they were called to participate in the sufferings of Christ. The idea of a prosperity gospel would have seemed very strange to them.

WORSHIP SERVICES IN MAY AND JUNE

The roster for preaching for morning services has so far been organized through to the 2 July (inclusive). Those delivering the message /sermon include some members of the congregation – like Dean Drayton, Roland Bryant, Sara Wienand, Emma Godfrey and Daniel Gibb.

THE FONT AND THE PULPIT

Following conversations with Beverley and Bruce Chivers the pulpit was removed from the front of the church in the week after Easter. There were a variety of reasons for its removal: to improve the digital on-line sound; it has not being used in recent times; there is need for more space up the front especially when we have baptismal services. The Chivers were very gracious about its removal – and we were mindful of how Beverley's parents had played such an important and very active art in the foundational St. Matthew's.



The removal of the pulpit has allowed for the font to become more prominently placed. That is a good thing: it is a sign and symbol of who we are as a community: we are a baptized Easter people.

We will also welcome a variety of others: Revd. Ben Gilmour works for Uniting Mission and Education in the Centre for Ministry; Ini Foiakau is a member of the Fijian congregation in Parramatta: she is beginning a PhD in biblical studies and is in the process of applying for ministry; Revd. Dr. Rosalie Clarke has recently been appointed Chaplain at Knox Grammar.

The following prayer was prayed at all three services on 16th April.

*We give thanks, God of the preached word,
For the faithfulness of those whose labours and gifts
Gave us this pulpit from which many sermons were preached.
And many lives touched often in unknown ways.
We give thanks especially for the kindness and generosity
Of Bev's parents - and for Bruce and Bev as well.
We recognize that there is a sadness attached to change:
Yet we are also glad that the testimony to their faith
Remains at the heart of our life of worship together.
Through window and flower stands
And now the font stands
where it is only right that it should.
Amen.*

RECONCILIATION WEEK

The beginning of the long season of Pentecost coincides with the week of prayer for reconciliation. The Assembly website situates the call to reconciliation inside the ministry of Jesus. It reads:

ABOUT RECONCILIATION

Jesus is the love of God breaking into the world, reaching out beyond the barriers that separate people from each other and offering reconciliation and peace. Those who were marginalised by others around him were accepted and loved by Jesus. Those who had suffered persecution and isolation from the world around them, found in Jesus freedom and hope and the courage and strength to transform their lives.

Reconciliation is based on Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians coming to an honest understanding of our shared history, a commitment to building cooperative partnerships based on trust and respect and a recognition of the distinctive rights of Indigenous peoples. Reconciliation requires commitments and action from governments and the community.

The theme for National Reconciliation Week in 2023 is 'Be a voice for generations'.

See:

<https://assembly.uca.org.au/>

[images/stories/covenanting/2012ReconciliationWk_whatisreconciliation.pdf](https://assembly.uca.org.au/images/stories/covenanting/2012ReconciliationWk_whatisreconciliation.pdf)



Uniting Church in Australia
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

Week for Prayer for Reconciliation
27 May - 3 June

What is

Reconciliation?

Thank you

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of St. Matthew's for the kindness and the good will that they have shown to Mary and myself over the last 17 months. I have enjoyed my time with you and it is with a certain sadness that we now take our leave. Thank you to all the people who helped with particular tasks along the way. We wish you well for the future.

Yours in Christ,

Clive

Have you ever been to an iftar?



Iftar is the fast-breaking evening meal of Muslims in Ramadan. The iftar is the second meal of the day. The daily fast during Ramadan begins immediately after the pre-dawn meal and continues during the daylight hours,

ending at sunset with the evening meal of iftar.

As many of you would know Clive is very interested in all sorts of religions and cultural differences. That's what I love about the Uniting Church too - our tolerance. So, on Wednesday evening Clive and Mary were invited through his association with Affinity Intercultural Foundation to attend the iftar of a family in Prestons.

This was a private family home made lovingly open to strangers in the name of cultural and religious diversity, harmony and acceptance. I was a late invitee - as others were unable to attend - and I was delighted to be invited. And I love food!

We were greeted at the door by the family, the mother, her children and friends and work colleagues. The husbands interestingly were attending a men's Ramadan retreat. We think the eldest son a Year 11 high school student at Amity College was filling the role of 'host'.

Here, the women capably held forth on all sorts of interesting and far-reaching topics from Dr Who, Islamic schooling, education, jujitsu, opting out of religious education classes in schools, Theology and critical thinking, Cambridge graduation traditions, teaching, reading the Koran in English verses Arabic and Turkish, a Muslim holy prayer poem that takes four hours to recite and follow, the Turkish Harp - canoon; to the entrepreneurial traits of the youngest son.

We were the invited guests and we felt very honoured.



A table beautifully set with prepared dishes was ready for us. Commencing with lentil soup, followed by hot dishes and then a wide variety of different vegetables, dips, salads and some meat balls.

The conversation flowed easily; people listened to one another. There were opportunities to share all our common and different cultural practices and view-points. Mary has had a long association with the women's interfaith movement and was involved with Affinity first. Clive was very knowledgeable about his understanding of Islam.

Following the main meal at the formal dining table we then moved to the lounge room for - more food. This time over sweets, deserts, cakes and delicious Turkish tea, we made even more connections.

The three of us said our farewells having had a marvelous evening.

If you ever get an opportunity to attend a family's iftar, please go.

Judy Mann



**We're hosting a
Biggest Morning Tea**

Please help us
support people
impacted by cancer!



You are invited to join with us for
'Australia's Biggest Morning Tea'
being held at the home of
Dulcie & Peter Duncum
at 53 Sarah Crescent Baulkham Hills
Friday 26th May.

Everyone is welcome,
so please come and join with us
from 10.00 am

in support of the work and fundraising of
The Cancer Council and of our many friends who
have journeyed with cancer.

Bring your friends also.
We look forward to your company.

Barry Gregory
9639 4700 - Mob 0425 815 34
Dulcie Duncum
9639 6014 - Mob 017 070 848



You can also make a donation by clicking on the link below
<https://www.biggestmorningtea.com.au/fundraisers/DulcieDuncum/biggest-morning-tea-nsw>



CHRISTIAN MEDITATION

You are invited to come along to the
church on

Tuesdays at 9.30am—11am
All are welcome

“ The important aim in Christian meditation is
to allow God's mysterious and silent
presence within us to become more and more
not only a reality but the reality which gives
meaning, shape and purpose to everything
we do, everything we are”

John Main.

www.WCCM.org

www.christianmeditationaustralia.org

The World Community for Christian
Meditation (WCCM)

Advance Notice

Practising Pastoral Care 23/24 June

Mary Pearson will lead a workshop on
pastoral care on the evening of Friday 23rd
and morning of Saturday 24th June.
The time together will encourage us to
think through how good practices are
observed in a number of case studies.

All are welcome; all are encouraged to attend.

Open Garden at the Pedersen's

Here is another fundraising project that is open to the whole community at various times throughout the year.

This is an amazing private garden on the edge of the bush between Baulkham Hills and North Rocks being opened to our community for inspection on the dates listed.

Those that have seen this garden are lost for words as to the detail and



quality of the garden.

Don't miss this opportunity while the weather is warm, light refreshments are provided.

Dates for May

Wednesday mornings 9.30am - 12noon

3, 10 & 31 May

Saturday afternoon 6 May at 1.30pm-3.30pm

Friday afternoon 12 May at 1.30pm-3.30pm

Dates for June

Thursday mornings: 9.30am -12 noon

8, 15, 22 & 29 June

Sunday mornings 9.30am-12noon

4, 11, 18 & 25 June

During June most of the camellia japonicas will be flowering and the maples will be changing colour and losing their leaves.

Autumn happens a bit later down here.

Closed during July and August.

Reopening September and October for Spring. Where there will be pots of tulips, ranunculus, daffodils, blossoms and wisteria in flower.

\$10 adults 18 years and over includes drink and sweet or savoury offering of the day.

\$5 school children to 18 years includes drink and sweet or savoury offering of the day.

For bookings and enquiries, please contact the owners, Gary and Katherine Pedersen, kathped56@gmail.com



Welcome to
Coffee & Discovery

Japan's Everyday Gems

Step out! Look up! Look down!

Look Around! What on earth is that?

Join in the festival. See the art - Smile!

John Nichol took a walk around

a neighbourhood in Japan every day.

What he saw delighted him.

Maybe you'll like it too.



Guest Speaker
John Nichol

Thursday
4 May

10am until 12noon

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

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



We are Hiring!

The St. Matthew's Op Shop is looking for anybody who is prepared to give up five and a half hours a week working with our friendly team. Whether you like engaging with new people and having a chat, or prefer to work 'behind the scenes', we have a job for you. Training and mentoring is provided.



Volunteers required on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, 9am to 2.30pm.



For more information, please contact Pamela Leslie, M: 0404023588.

Recycling Appeal



St. Matthew's Community Engagement Focus Group will be collecting **glass and plastic bottles** as well as **cans** for this year again.



We have raised \$83.60 so far! Thank you to everyone who has participated in this initiative.

The money raised will be donated to various organisations who support women and children who have been affected by domestic violence. Plastic and glass bottles need to have their barcode and plastic wrapper still attached. Cans should be left uncrushed as the machine needs to read the barcode. We appreciated all the donations and look forward to a successful year.

Thank you

Jesus said,
"Come to me,
all you who are
weary and
burdened,
and I will
give you rest."

Care and Prayer

All Welcome
3pm
on the first Monday
of each month
at St. Matthew's

February to November

Next Date: May 1st

A small, quiet group
are here to pray for
your needs.

Whatever your faith,
you are truly welcome.



MEN'S MORNING TEA Wednesday 17th May

10am to 12noon

Mckel's Café, Shop 14, Circa
Boulevard Bella Vista.

Enquiries
Alan
Wright

We are allocated external seating to
ensure compliance with the recommended
Covid situation.

Women's Fellowship Wednesday 10th May @ 10am

Bridal Shower.

*Bring a Wedding photo and a small gift
for the Philippine ladies.*

All ladies are welcome to join with us in a
relaxed and friendly time together.

Enquires: Dulcie Duncum
& Margaret Gray



Saturday 6th May

9am-12pm

Pre-loved
Household Items,
Electrical, Toys & Books
(Fiction, Non-fiction & Children's Books)

St. Matthew's Lower Hall

Calendar of Events for May 2023

Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday Sunday

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<p>9am Sorting & Pricing for Op Shop lower hall</p> <p>3pm Care and Prayer Meet in the Church</p>	<p>9am-2pm Op Shop</p> <p>9.30-11am Christian Meditation in the Church</p> <p>7.30pm—Digital Focus Group Meeting at the church</p> <p>7.30pm—Thrive Bible study</p>	<p>9am-2pm Op Shop</p> <p>10am-12pm In Stitches upstairs hall</p> <p>7pm—Finance Committee Meeting at the church</p>	<p>9am-2pm Op Shop</p> <p>10am-12pm Coffee & Discovery</p> <p>Speaker John Nichol "Japan's Everyone Day Gems"</p>	<p>No scheduled events</p>	<p>9am-12pm Op Shop</p> <p>9am-12pm Mini Mart lower hall</p>	<p><i>Easter Five</i></p> <p>8am Worship includes Communion</p> <p>9.30am—Worship includes Communion KUCA Preschool, Years K-2 & Years 3-8</p> <p>6.45pm—Worship includes Communion</p>
<p>9am Sorting & Pricing for Op Shop lower hall</p>	<p>9am-2pm Op Shop</p> <p>9.30-11am Christian Meditation in the Church</p>	<p>9am-2pm Op Shop</p> <p>10am-12noon Women's Fellowship in the upstairs hall & church</p> <p>7.30pm—Church Council Executive</p>	<p>9am-2pm Op Shop</p>	<p>5pm-7pm Fusion Youth Group upstairs hall</p> <p>SCIENCE Night</p>	<p>No Scheduled Events</p>	<p><i>Easter Six</i></p> <p>8am Worship</p> <p>9am—Worship @ the Willow's</p> <p>9.30am—Worship KUCA Preschool, Years K-2 & Years 3-8</p> <p>6.45pm—Worship</p>
<p>9am Sorting & Pricing for Op Shop lower hall</p>	<p>9am-2pm Op Shop</p> <p>9.30-11am Christian Meditation in the Church</p> <p>7.30pm Thrive bible Study lower hall</p>	<p>9am-2pm Op Shop</p> <p>10am-12pm In Stitches upstairs hall</p> <p>10am-12noon Men's Morning Tea McKels Café Bella Vista.</p>	<p>9am-2pm Op Shop</p>	<p>No scheduled events</p>	<p>No scheduled events</p>	<p><i>Easter Seven</i></p> <p>8am Worship</p> <p>9.30am—Worship KUCA Preschool, Years K-2 & Years 3-8</p> <p>5pm—Shine</p> <p>6.45pm—Worship</p>
<p>9am Sorting & Pricing for Op Shop lower hall</p>	<p>9am-2pm Op Shop</p> <p>9.30-11am Christian Meditation in the Church</p> <p>7.30pm—Church Council Meeting at the church</p>	<p>9am-2pm Op Shop</p>	<p>9am-2pm Op Shop</p>	<p>10am Biggest Morning Tea 53 Sarah Cres Baulkham Hills</p> <p>5pm-7pm Fusion Youth group upstairs hall</p> <p>Movie Making</p>	<p>No scheduled events</p>	<p>8am Worship</p> <p>9.30am—Worship KUCA Preschool, Years K-2 & Years 3-8</p> <p>5pm—Shine</p> <p>6.45pm—Worship</p>
<p>9am Sorting & Pricing for Op Shop lower hall</p>	<p>9am-2pm Op Shop</p> <p>9.30-11am Christian Meditation in the Church</p> <p>7.30pm Thrive bible Study lower hall</p>	<p>9am-2pm Op Shop</p> <p>10am-12pm In Stitches upstairs hall</p>	<p>st. matthew's UNITING CHURCH BAULKHAM HILLS growing together</p>		<p>Pentecost</p>	

