



Getting to Know More About Jon

Hello. This is my first piece for **In FOCUS**. Can I begin by thanking everyone

for the warm welcome that I and my family have received from all of you in the congregation. It is a big thing to take on someone new, especially, in the ministry leadership role. Thank you for the lovely words of encouragement and for your patience as I get set up and inducted into your culture and routines. Thank you for your patience as I make some subtle changes, and some less subtle. This is something that can be challenging as change, especially to things that have been in place for a while, can mess with our heads and our sense of normal. Some of the change that I bring has to do with me finding a sense of comfort in a new community and comes from what feels normal for me as I find a new normal in our wonderful community.

Some might like to know a bit about me. You may have met my wife, Lynda, and some have met our daughters, Emma, Rachel and Annika. I was originally, going to be an architect, and worked in an architectural firm for my first year out of school. Due to some poor choices on my part, I didn't get into the architectural course at university that I had planned on doing, so I pivoted to study architectural drafting for a year at TAFE and then apply again. However, at the end of that year, despite doing very well at TAFE and still enjoying architecture, I could see myself sustaining the life of studying part-time and working full-time for the six years it would take to complete the course. So, I started looking for an alternate pathway.

As a friend of the family had told my mum that I would make a good primary school teacher, I started to consider that. I ended up studying Primary Teaching at Kuringgai College, which then became UTS - Kuringgai. I completed my Diploma of Teaching and then planned to do the final one year to gain my Bachelor Degree at Macquarie University.

As it happened, whilst I was on annual field exercises for Sydney University Regiment of the Army Reserves, I found out that I had been placed as a teacher at West Pennant Hills Public School. I taught there for seven years, commencing in 1991. In that time I got married, completed my Bachelor of Education and got called into ordained ministry. I then studied for three years at United Theological College, where we had our first and second daughters.

Despite planning to end up in a congregational placement, in 2001 I found myself in school chaplaincy at Pymble Ladies' College, where I worked in ministry for eight years. Annika came along in 2002, I started and failed to complete an Honours Degree, and things went along until 2009 when I swapped schools and took on chaplaincy at Ravenswood School for Girls. During that time, we were first members of Gordon Uniting Church, which was our home church that I candidated from and where Lynda and I met, got engaged and were married. We then moved to Turramurra Uniting and were there for about ten years until coming to St. Matthew's.

Continued next page

Getting to know more about Jon cont.

I have held a few roles in the wider Church such as Chair of the Synod Selection Panel, been on committees, been Zone Coordinator for Upper North Shore Zone of Sydney Central Coast Presbytery. I am currently the Advocate for the National Assembly of the Uniting Church's Transforming Worship Circle of Interest and a panel member of the Growing in Faith circle of interest. These are initiatives of assembly to encourage and resource us as the Church in various aspects of our faith and discipleship and our life together. You can find out more about this at <https://uniting.church/circles/>

Transforming Worship is about exploring how our worship is transformative for us, and how we can enhance our worship experiences so that they are more transformative. It is also about looking at what worship is and how we go about it as the Church, and considering ways that we might transform our understanding of worship and maybe some of the forms that it takes to better connect us with God and God's mission. I thought that it might be helpful to share some of my work and thinking in this area. You don't have to agree with it, but it might help you understand where I am coming from and why I do some of what I do.

Jon's Core Glossary

Worship – The act of giving glory to God. The Bible in many instances points out, though, that this is as much if not more about our actions than our words. The greatest act of worship is to live the way God calls us to and to join God in God's mission.

Liturgy – from the Greek λειτουργία/leitourgia – often translated as 'the work of the people.' comes from a Greek word derived from two words – 'laos,' which means people, and 'ergo' which means work. In modern times this work is often translated as function. So, our liturgy/work/function as the people of God is to both be disciples and disciple others, and to love God with all our being, which is best expressed through loving our neighbour as ourselves.

Glory – In Greek this is doxa. We get the suffix '-doxy' from it. Orthodoxy, is thus, right-glory. Glory is a complex word, but God, as Jesus, talked about being glorified by being lifted on the cross. It is about recognising the greatness of God. For us as the people of God, we best give glory to God, by honouring God's call to us to love, for God is love and those who live in love live in God and God lives in them.

Minister – a person who serves others by using their gifts, strengths, skills, talents etc. Ministry is for all of us for, as the Basis of Union of the Uniting Church points out, we all have gifts from God as Spirit, and there is no gift without its corresponding service/ministry.

Anyway, hopefully, this gives you some insight into my journey and some of what makes me tick. I am happy to talk about it and answer questions about this or anything, as we continue to get to know each other and look to growing together in faith and discipleship as we encourage each other towards love and good works.

Blessings.

Jon



Pastoral Care

Hi everyone,

We had a workshop on Pastoral Caring at St. Matthew's in June this year facilitated by Mary Pearson. She provided us with some handouts and I would like to share some of these over the next few months with you, the wider St. Matthew's community. The first one is called 'Listen', written anonymously by someone. Happy reading and thinking about how important it is to listen.

Mike Strong - Seniors Pastoral Carer.



Listen

Anonymous

When I ask you to listen to me and you start giving advice you have not done what I asked.

When I ask you to listen to me and you begin to tell me why I shouldn't feel that way, you are trampling on my feelings.

When I ask you to listen to me and you feel you have to do something to solve my problem, you have failed me, strange as that may seem.

Listen! All I asked was that you listen, not to talk or do—just hear me.

And I can do for myself; I'm not helpless.

Maybe discouraged and faltering, but not helpless.

When you do something for me that I can and need to do for myself, you contribute to my fear and weakness.

But when you accept as a simple fact that I do feel what I feel, no matter how irrational, then I can quite try to convince you and get about the business of understanding what's behind this irrational feeling. And when that's clear, the answers are obvious and I don't need advice.

Irrational feelings make sense when we understand what's behind them.

Perhaps that's why prayer works, sometimes, for some people because God is mute—

God does not give advice or try to fix things.

God just listens and let's you work it out for yourself.

So please listen and just hear me.

And if you want to talk, wait a minute for your turn; and I'll listen to you.



UNITING YOUTH CAMP 2023 UYC

From 3rd to the 6th October, Melanie, Nicole and I attended the Uniting Youth Camp (UYC) which was run by the Pulse team. This camp was held at Collaroy Centre in the Northern Beaches and had youth from across the Synod in years 7-11 attend. Nicole and I attended the camp as leaders and Melanie came as the first youth from St. Matt's to come to this camp!

UYC was an amazing week filled with worship, activities, games, a beach day and many different conversations.

It was wonderful to see so many youth engage and build connections with one another.

Throughout the camp we had the pleasure to hear from Rev. Fa Matangi from the Moreton Rivers Presbytery in Queensland. The theme of UYC was "That's my Team" and Fa helped us unpack what it means for us to be a part of a team. In particular we looked at how we are all connected as members of God's team.

One of the highlights of UYC came on the final night of camp during a youth lead worship night, called "This is Me". This was a chance for some of the youth to share part of what God was doing in their lives, what they had learned from camp, how they are continuing to grow in their faith, as well as share a part of their cultures/ or things from their teams. For this time of worship, Melanie wrote an amazing



poem which I had the pleasure of reading on her behalf. This poem is included below as well as a reflection from Melanie about her time at camp.

We are hoping next year to bring more of our youth along to this amazing camp and if you have any questions about the camp, let me know.

Daniel Gibb

Childrens, Youth and Young Adults Ministry Worker

THAT'S MY TEAM was the theme of the

UNITING YOUTH CAMP 2023 UYC

this year. During my time at the camp, I made numerous observations and came to certain conclusions concerning the nature of faith and community. Such revelations can be drawn back to observations within interactions between fellow campers as well as the overall conditions of the social environment as well as the words of the guest speaker.

If I were to describe the camp in one way I would call it, accepting. Each time I expected someone to say something nasty and judgmental, nothing would come. It was an environment where the holy spirit could be seen through the encouragement and lack of judgment in the group. Many had the courage to be open in front of a large group, receiving only kindness in return. What is that if not God at work?

The general mood of peace and open mindedness was truly a space where one could be free to explore their identity as a Christian within an environment offering only support. By being surrounded by other young people of faith, I myself have become further sure of my previous beliefs as well as coming to new conclusions. The previous beliefs being that because God is a force of love and acceptance, by extension his kingdom (or team) is the same. A place where mutual trust exists, an unspoken kind where one knows that they are in a place where God is present.

In a short time, I observed many fast connections as well as rekindled past friendships. Even those who had very little in common and in most other environments would often clash, were able to treat each other with basic respect and human decency. Friendships were formed because people were aware that they perhaps do not know very much about those around them, but they do know that they have a love of God in common creating foundation for fellowship and lasting friendships. Friendships that might continue digitally following the end of the camp and friendships that will stay on hold until the next camp rolls around. Even if those who meet at camp never meet again, they will always carry a small part of another person around them. A shared joke, a moment of connection or a fond memory. Through the activities and time spent in worship there was a team built. Whether that be mutual enjoyment of activities, making a friend by playing a sport or sitting with someone during meals.

Through those who came to speak at the camp I learnt many lessons that I would not previously realize could even be learnt. People from across the country brought their lives with them, the faith that has come from lived experiences. their faith and passion were contagious, in worship and in practice. When seeing how God has worked in the lives of so many there is a sense of comfort in knowing that God does not abandon his people, that he provides resource for change, comfort in struggle and triumph over hatred.

I admit I was initially doubting how much I would enjoy the camp, with a bad feeling that I would be judged or alone for its entirety. Instead, I found myself immersed in the team, the community that is faith in Christ.

Melanie MacWilliam, Year 8



My poem:

**The confusion illusion
Slightly protrusion
Friction benediction
Always listen**

**Doubled and troubled
Raining pouring
hope roaring
For the sake of hope soaring**

**Home is not alone
It is prone
To magnetic attraction
Just a fraction
Of shame in holy game**

**Blood is red
For the dead
Tried then died
Because they spied
Better choice
for human voice
Resurrected
Now reflected**

**In thousand generation
Christ nation?
Heist station
Holy text
Day of rest
Tell the rest
the message**

By *Melanie MacWilliam*

News from the Finance Committee

'Raise the Roof' Fundraising

The Finance Committee are most grateful to the generous parishioner who has loaned \$100,000 to be put in the offset account for the roof loan. This thoughtful action will mean that St. Matthews will pay a lot less in interest and will therefore be able to pay the loan off sooner.

Donations for the roof repayments are also being accepted through PushPay and by envelope (marked 'roof donation') via the offertory during services.

'Bundaleer' Open Garden

We again most sincerely thank Katherine and Gary Pedersen for their generosity in opening their beautiful garden 'Bundaleer' to church members for fundraising for the church roof. See the 'In Focus' magazine for more details. Bookings are essential.

Trivia Night

The Finance Committee would also like to thank Daniel Gibb and his team for all their work in organising the Trivia Night. As always it was a great night and so good to see everyone enjoying themselves. Thank you also to all who contributed prizes and food for the evening.

Best wishes

Dom Schuster and Alastair Burn



Guest Speaker

**Chris and Margo
Hebbard**

Thursday

2 November

10am—12noon

FRANK HEBBARD and the LOST PHOTOS OF WW2

Margo is the narrator and Chris will speak his fathers actual words which were written down in the last months of Franks life. They tell of how Frank came to make a photographic record of his WW2 Australian Army Hospital unit, 2/5 Aus General Hospital, and how he and another 168 members of his unit volunteered to stay with critically wounded soldiers as the Germans overran Greece.

He continued to take photos behind enemy lines while helping to attend over 2,800 wounded allied POWs for the next 8 months. Some 600 of these photos were eventually printed for the first time in 2011, a full 70 years after they were taken.

After the history, (about 20 minutes) photos will be shown on the screen and then members are invited to inspect a range of Frank's memorabilia.

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

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

You are invited to a Service of Remembrance and Thanksgiving Monday 11th 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 we intend to read out the names of people we have known and loved but see no longer, and whose absence is particularly felt at Christmas. People will be invited to light a candle in memory of their loved one after the names are read out. Please contact us with any name (s) you would like included. The names may be phoned or emailed through to the church prior to 11th December.

We also invite you to bring a card, item or memento to place on the Tree of Remembrance.



This tree has been supplied by the Baulkham Hills Council and after the service the tree will be planted, together with the messages etc., 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.

st. matthew's
UNITING CHURCH
BAULKHAM HILLS
growing together



St. Matthew's Baulkham Hills Uniting Church
Cnr Edgar and Charles Streets
and St Matthews Ln
Baulkham Hills NSW 2153

PO Box 773, Baulkham Hills 1755
Phone 9686 3003
office@stmatthewsuniting.net.au
Website www.stmatthewsuniting.net.au



**A TIME
OF
GIVING
FOOD
NEEDED**

Rev
Bill Crews
Foundation

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

- Rice
- Dry Pasta
- Noodles packets
- Noodle cups
- Pull Ring Tinned soup
- Pull Ring Tinned fish
- Pull Ring Tinned baked beans
- Pull Ring Tinned spaghetti
- Powdered soup
- Muesli bars
- Cereal
- Long life milk
- Tea/coffee
- Up and Go

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

Please leave items in the containers in the lower foyer.
BY 13th December. Entrance on Edgar St .

Calendar of Events for November 2023

Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday Sunday

		<p>1</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>2</p> <p>9am-2pm Op Shop </p> <p>10am-12pm Coffee & Discovery  Speakers: Chris and Margo Hebbard upstairs hall and church</p>	<p>3</p> <p>No scheduled events</p>	<p>4</p> <p>9am-12pm Op Shop </p> <p>9am-12pm Mini Mart lower hall</p> 	<p>5</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</p>
<p>6</p> <p>9am Sorting & Pricing for Op Shop lower hall</p> <p>3pm Care and Prayer in the church </p>	<p>7</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>8</p> <p>9am-2pm Op Shop </p> <p>10am-12noon Women's Fellowship  in the upstairs hall & church</p> <p>7.30pm—Church Council Exec meeting</p>	<p>9</p> <p>9am-2pm Op Shop </p> <p>5pm-7pm Fusion Youth Group</p> <p>Water Games </p>	<p>10</p> <p>No scheduled events</p>	<p>11</p> <p>No scheduled events</p>	<p>12</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 Community Meal</p>
<p>13</p> <p>9am Sorting & Pricing for Op Shop lower hall</p> 	<p>14</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>15</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>16</p> <p>9am-2pm Op Shop </p>	<p>17</p> <p>No scheduled events</p>	<p>18</p> <p>No scheduled events</p>	<p>19</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>20</p> <p>9am Sorting & Pricing for Op Shop lower hall</p> 	<p>21</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>22</p> <p>9am-2pm Op Shop </p> <p>7.30pm—Church Council meeting at the church</p>	<p>23</p> <p>9am-2pm Op Shop </p>	<p>24</p> <p>5pm-7pm Fusion Youth Group</p> <p>Video Games </p>	<p>25</p> <p>No scheduled events</p>	<p>26</p>  <p>8am Worship</p> <p>9.30am—Worship KUCA Preschool, Years K-2 & Years 3-8</p> <p>6.45pm—Worship</p>
<p>27</p> <p>9am Sorting & Pricing for Op Shop lower hall</p> 	<p>28</p> <p>9am-2pm Op Shop </p> <p>9.30–11am Christian Meditation in the Church </p>	<p>29</p> <p>9am-2pm Op Shop </p> <p>10am-12pm In Stitches upstairs hall </p>	<p>30</p> <p>9am-2pm Op Shop </p>	<p>st. matthew's UNITING CHURCH BAULKHAM HILLS growing together </p>		

MONTHLY ACTIVITIES and REGULAR GROUPS



Wednesday 8th November @ 10am

- Election of Officers and Devotions—Rev Jon Humphries
 - Mary Ross—Speaker—"Early St. Mathew's"
- Enquires: Dulcie Duncum & Margaret Gray



Wednesday 15th November 10am to 12noon

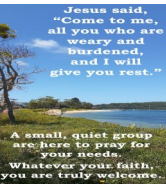
Mckel's Café, Shop 14, Circa Boulevard Bella Vista

Every third Wednesday of the month Enquiries Alan Wright



Meeting Dates November 1, 15, 29

1st, 3rd & 5th Wednesdays of the month in the upstairs church hall. 10.00am to 12.00pm
Bring your craft along to do. Share fun and fellowship with other crafty ladies. Morning Tea supplied. Enquiries: Jane Cole



Care and Prayer

Next Date:

All Welcome

3pm on the first Monday of each month at St. Matthew's February to November

6th November

CHRISTIAN MEDITATION



Tuesdays at the Church 9.30am-10.30am

All welcome

For more information or to express your interest in attending please contact

Katherine Pedersen. Facilitator of the Tuesday 9.30am sessions and for information. kathped56@gmail.com



OP SHOP

Open Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday 9am-2pm and 1st Saturday of the month 9-12pm

Pre-loved clothes & accessories, Books, Haberdashery, Bric-a-brac.



Saturday 4th November 9am-12pm

Pre-loved Household Items, Electrical, Toys & Books (Fiction, Non-fiction & Childrens Books)

St. Matthew's lower hall Edgar St



SHINE is a special needs social group for all ages from high school up. Meets Sundays Monthly for dinner & fun.

We are still collecting in 2023 for their shoebox appeal supporting a school in the Philippines. Donations of small educational items, soaps & combs are greatly appreciated. Please place donations in the box provided at the top of the stairs in the church foyer.

Giving From time to time, we receive questions on how someone can make donations to St. Matthew's Uniting Church Baulkham Hills, to further support God's work through the Ministry team and congregation, in the wider Community. To assist with this, we have set up the following account with Uniting Financial Services:

Account Name: Baulkham Hills Uniting Church

BSB: 634634

Account Number: 100025924

If required a Direct Debit Request Form is available in the foyer or speak with Barry Gregory.

For your support of God's work here at St. Matthew's, a big thank you!

To include your activity in the **DECEMBER / JANUARY**

In Focus

St. Matthew's Monthly Newsletter

please send details to Robyn and Lynn in the Church Office by **15 November**

Thank you

Maintaining contact with you and your family is very important to us.

We would be grateful if you change your address, phone/mobile or email details that you let us know by phoning and leaving a message on 9686 3003

YOUNG FAMILIES

KUCA.....

@ 9.30am service during term

for Preschool, Years K-2, and Years 3-8

YOUTH and YOUNG ADULTS

Fusion Youth Group.....

Years 3 to 8. Meet Friday evenings at the church during term time. 5pm—7pm

Contact Daniel Gibb

daniel@stmatthewsuniting.net.au

THRIVE BIBLE STUDY.....

For young adults

Fortnightly

Contact Daniel Gibb

daniel@stmatthewsuniting.net.au

Christmas Services

Remembrance & Thanksgiving Service

* Monday 11 December 7.30pm

Christmas Eve worship

* Sunday 24 December Combined service @ 9am

Children's Christmas Eve Celebration

* Sunday 24 December 5pm

Christmas Eve Late Service

* Sunday 24 December 11.15pm

Christmas Day Worship

* Monday 25 December 9am

MINISTER

REV JON HUMPHRIES

CHILDREN, YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS

MINISTRY WORKER

DANIEL GIBB

Part Time

Email: daniel@stmatthewsuniting.net.au

SENIORS PASTORAL CARER

MICHAEL STRONG

Part Time

Email: mike@stmatthewsuniting.net.au

CHURCH OFFICE SECRETARIES:

ROBYN MORRALL AND LYNN SAMUEL

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS 9AM-3PM MON-FRI

OFFICE :

9686 3003

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

EMAIL: office@stmatthewsuniting.net.au

FACEBOOK:

[@stmatthewsunitingchurchbaulkhamhills](https://www.facebook.com/stmatthewsunitingchurchbaulkhamhills)

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