



Keep On Growing



Here we are in the middle of Spring. Spring has sprung and things are growing their hearts out in the warmer weather after the cool of Winter. There are flowers in bloom. The Magpies are diving to protect their nests. Leaves are well and truly back on deciduous trees. The great irony is that, in the midst of all this newness of life, it is also a time in the year that we often start feeling flat and tired. We are three quarters of the way through the year, and it is still a while until the next big celebration and holiday of Christmas. Also, we are over 18 weeks into the liturgical season of After Pentecost, which is all about growing in faith and discipleship, but many of us are losing steam so many weeks on from the excitement of the story of Pentecost.

In recent weeks we have heard such things as 'Faith without works is dead.' Yet, it is only natural for us to get tired and lose motivation at times. As we tire some of our effort dies off.

Where do we find the energy to keep going? Where do we find the resources to keep on growing? Of course, the answer is God – especially God in the person of Jesus and in the person of the Holy Spirit. Jesus said that he was the vine and we are the branches, and when we abide in him we grow and bear fruit. God as the Holy Spirit who dwells within us is the one who inspires us. God, as Spirit, is literally the wind beneath our wings and the wind in our sails. However, what does that mean in practice and how do we access God in order to be revived in our efforts? I think that there are three main ways of accessing God. They are mind, heart and hands. These are of course metaphors, but they speak to important spiritual disciplines which resource us and energise us in faith.

To access God with our mind means to use things like prayer, reading the Scriptures and other inspiring texts. It is about reflecting on the presence and work of God in our lives. It is about sharing stories with each other as to how we seek God at work in us and each other as a community. It is thinking about God and thinking about God with us. It is about listening for God and God's call to us and doing the work of discernment that comes with that, along with the affirmation of recognising God's blessing and gifts.

However, it is also about making space for contemplative practices which restore our soul. Things such as Christian meditation and being in nature and times of silence lead us to just be in the presence of God. This is not about thinking about God or wondering what God is doing. It is simply being still enough in mind and body to just rest in the ever-presence of God and allow God to be with us, and maybe even speak to us.

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Accessing God with our hands is about doing the will and work of God. As our lectionary Bible readings have led us into understanding, God is love and when we live love then God lives in us and we live in God. Parables such as the Parable of the Sheep and Goats affirm this kind of idea that when we serve others as an expression of us loving God through loving our neighbour then we come to know God who is with us for when we love and serve others we are living and serving God – even if we may not recognise it at the time.



This of course leads us back to the power of reflection and reminding ourselves to practise thanksgiving and gratitude as a spiritual discipline. This leads us into prayerfulness and mindfulness of the presence and work of God. This then hopefully nudges us into contemplation.

Coming out of contemplation we move back into living the love of God and the cycle continues.

Of course, this cycle is a description and is not a prescription for what we have to do or the order in which we should do it. The main thing is that we, as the people of God, centre our lives on God. As disciples we need to be intentional in practising disciplines which lead us into spiritual health and wellbeing.



On top of this is we have the research from such things as the science of wellbeing which affirms that when we do take up such disciplines of mind, heart and hands then we are more likely to experience higher levels of wellbeing. Positive and healthy relationships, not surprisingly, help us in our health and wellbeing. Practices which lead us into positive emotions help us in our wellbeing of mind and spirit. Serving a purpose other than ourselves leads us into meaningful and purposeful living, which also results in greater wellbeing. If you would like to know more then people such as Professor Martin Seligman and Professor Sonja Lyubomirsky have done a lot of work on this and there are books and YouTube videos you can seek out to learn about what they have learnt about wellbeing.

How do we keep on going and keep on growing in the busyness of life?



How do we feed our souls and energise our spirits? The answer is, as Jesus said to people, albeit in different context, “Your faith has made you well.” Our faith makes us well - as long as we understand that faith is not simply belief but a trusting in God to live in God’s way which we learnt through Jesus. Our faith makes us well when we also have the right mindset about it. If we get caught up in all the work and effort and negative aspects of life, then we will lose sight of God and the hope, peace, joy and love which is part of the way of God.

So, let us not give up meeting together, but inspire and encourage each other towards love and good works as we join together with God in living well and helping all to do the same.

God bless

Jon



Floral Workshop August 2024

There are many people to thank for the success of this lovely day.

Firstly, all the Seventeen ladies who booked in and attended the Floral workshop and were excellent students.

A big thank you to -
The Op Shop and Garage Sale volunteers who cleared the hall etc.

Jenny Morgan for her creative touch with advertising ; The office ladies and Jon Humphries for advertising and taking bookings and enquiries.

Victoria for going to the flower markets with me at 6.30am and helping to buy and prepare the flowers.

Sandra D for cooking morning tea, Gary P for setting up the class room then putting it all away again and cleaning up etc.



Shamali for preparing morning tea, conditioning flowers and setting up the tables with Everything necessary for the class then assisting the students with their creations.



These are some of the comments received about the first floral workshop open to everyone.

"A fun and educational day."

"A successful and enjoyable lesson and morning. I really enjoyed the end result which we got to take home."

"Much appreciated. It was very enjoyable."

Perhaps we could have another workshop next year and learn some different skills. Please let the Op Shop or Office know if you would like to have more workshops and what you would like to learn.... Peace and best to everyone.

Katherine P

THE OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD PROJECT

St Matthews Preschool is inviting our church congregation to support Operation Christmas Child (OCC), a global project to fill up shoeboxes with gifts that will be distributed to disadvantaged children at Christmas time. For children living in poverty, the shoebox is usually the first gift they have ever received. After collecting 10.5 million shoeboxes globally in 2021, Operation Christmas Child hopes to collect more shoeboxes each year to follow.

St Matthews Preschool aims to collect 100 shoeboxes this year.

Please pick up an empty shoebox along with a brochure which provides more information, from the table in the church foyer. Please write your name, contact number and number of boxes taken on the form provided.

The shoeboxes will be available to collect from **Sunday 15th September**.



Please note that we will need all the **boxes returned by latest Sunday 13th October**. Please return boxes to area marked **SHOEBOXES RETURNED HERE** in the church foyer.

A Donation of \$12.50 per box is essential to cover shipping costs. You can pay the \$12.50 through the website or by filling out the form on the brochure and enclosing the money it in your shoebox.

Here is a video link for more information about Operation Christmas Child.

<https://vimeo.com/user148429611/review/742905291/9ab41f44a5>

Thank you for your generosity, care, and participation!
Warmest Regards
St Matthews Preschool



Thursday 3 October

10am-12pm

Bass & Flinders

Guest Speaker: **Ron Ray OAM**

Ron Ray OAM has been a volunteer guide and member of the Australian National Maritime Museum for 15 years. Ron will talk about the backgrounds of these two famous Australian maritime explorers, their fates and their voyages of exploration around coasts of NSW, Tasmania and Terra Australis.



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

OVARIAN
CANCER
RESEARCH
FOUNDATION

FROCKTOBER

OCTOBER
2024

FROCK UP



OVARIAN
CANCER
RESEARCH
FOUNDATION



st. matthew's
UNITING CHURCH
BAULKHAM HILLS
OP SHOP

Vintage Clothing Sale

from the 1950's, 1960's, 1970's, and 1980's

in the lower hall
Edgar St
Baulkham Hills

Starts

Saturday 19 October 9am to 12pm

Then

Tuesday 22 October 9am to 2pm

Wednesday 23 October 9am to 2pm

Thursday 24 October 9am to 2pm

Matters of **LIFE** & **DEATH**

THURSDAY, 10TH OCTOBER

7PM - 9PM *Supper provided*



NORTHMEAD UNITING CHURCH, 5-7 HAMMERS RD

We all experience it, but it can be hard to talk about dying. This seminar will help us think about our own and our family member's end of life, navigating decisions that may face us, and the importance of conversations now about life and death.

Panel

Elspeth Correy

A palliative medicine physician for over 30 years in hospitals, aged care and the community, helping people plan ahead for the end of their life.

Sharon van Doorene

A psychologist who helps people think about difficult topics and find words to express themselves.

Doug Purnell

A pastoral theologian and artist who has written books dealing with pastoral conversations.

We will consider:

- Life and death in the past century and how things have changed
- The value of these conversations, even though they may be difficult
- A spiritual perspective on dying
- Tools to help, like Advanced Care Directives

A faith and life seminar by Parramatta Community Uniting Church
More information: merynobrien@gmail.com

Calendar of Events for October 2024

School Holidays

Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday Sunday

	1	2	3	4	5	6
	<p>9am-2pm Op Shop </p> <p>9.30-11am Christian Meditation Community Room </p> <p>11.30am Care & Prayer Community Room & 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>9am-2pm Op Shop </p> <p>10am-12pm Coffee and Discovery Guest Speaker Ron Ray OAM "Bass & Flinders" </p>	<p>No scheduled events</p>	<p>9am-12pm Op Shop </p> <p>9am-12pm Garage Sale lower hall </p>	<p>20th Sunday After Pentecost </p> <p>DAYLIGHT Saving Starts </p> <p>8am Worship Includes Communion 9.30am Worship Includes Communion Followed by Morning Tea KUCA in Recess 6.45pm Worship Includes Communion</p>
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
<p>Public Holiday</p> <p>7.30pm Christian Meditation Community Room </p>	<p>9am-2pm Op Shop </p> <p>9.30-11am Christian Meditation Community Room </p> <p>7pm Netball AGM upstairs hall</p>	<p>9am-2pm Op Shop </p> <p>9am—Cleanup lower hall after garage sale</p> <p>10am-12noon Women's Fellowship in the upstairs hall & church </p>	<p>9am-2pm Op Shop </p>	<p>No scheduled events</p>	<p>No scheduled events</p>	<p>21st Sunday After Pentecost </p> <p>8am—Worship 9am—Worship @ the Willows</p> <p>9.30am—Worship Followed by Morning Tea KUCA in Recess</p> <p>6.45pm—Worship Community Meal</p>
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
<p>9am Sorting & Pricing for Op Shop & Garage Sale lower hall </p> <p>7.30pm Christian Meditation Community Room and Church </p>	<p>9am-2pm Op Shop </p> <p>9.30-11am Christian Meditation Community Room </p> <p>7pm—Netball AGM upstairs hall</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>5pm-7pm Fusion Youth Group</p>	<p>9am-12pm Op Shop OPEN </p> <p>We will be having a Vintage Fashion Sale TODAY in the lower hall </p>	<p>22nd Sunday After Pentecost </p> <p>8am—Worship 9.30am—Worship KUCA Preschool, Years K-2 & Years 3-8 Followed by Morning Tea 6.45pm—Worship</p>
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
<p>9am Sorting & Pricing for Op Shop & Garage Sale lower hall </p> <p>7.30pm Christian Meditation Community Room and Church </p>	<p>9am-2pm Op Shop Includes Vintage Fashion Sale lower hall </p> <p>9.30-11am Christian Meditation Community Room </p>	<p>9am-2pm Op Shop Includes Vintage Fashion Sale lower hall </p>	<p>9am-2pm Op Shop Includes Vintage Fashion Sale lower hall </p>	<p>No scheduled events</p>	<p>No scheduled events</p>	<p>23rd Sunday After Pentecost </p> <p>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</p>
28	29	30	<p>st. matthew's UNITING CHURCH BAULKHAM HILLS growing together </p>			
<p>9am Sorting & Pricing for Op Shop & Garage Sale lower hall </p> <p>7.30pm Christian Meditation Community Room and Church </p>	<p>9am-2pm Op Shop </p> <p>9.30-11am Christian Meditation Community Room </p> <p>7.30pm Thrive Bible Study lower hall</p> <p>7.30pm-Property committee meeting</p>	<p>9am-2pm Op Shop </p> <p>10am-12pm In Stitches upstairs hall </p>				

**MONTHLY ACTIVITIES and
REGULAR GROUPS**

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 9. Meet Friday evenings at the church during term time. 5pm—7pm

Contact Jon Humphries
jon@stmatthewsuniting.net.au


THRIVE BIBLE STUDY.....

For young adults
Fortnightly on Tuesday evenings

Contact Jon Humphries
jon@stmatthewsuniting.net.au



Wednesday 9th October @ 10am
Book Review— bring a special/favourite book to speak about
Dulcie Duncum & Margaret Gray



MEN'S MORNING TEA
3rd Wednesday of the month 10am to 12noon
Mckel's Café, Shop 14, Circa Boulevard Bella Vista
Every third Wednesday of the month Enquiries Alan Wright



Meeting Dates October 2, 16, 30
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
All Welcome
11.30am on the first TUESDAY of each month at St. Matthew's February to November
Next Date: 1st October




CHRISTIAN MEDITATION
NEW GROUP MONDAY Evenings 7.30pm—8.30pm
Tuesdays at the Church 9.30am-10.30am
For more information or to express your interest in attending please contact Katherine Pedersen Facilitator kathped56@gmail.com
ALL WELCOME



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, Pot Plants.



Garage SALE
Saturday 5th October 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 after High school. Meets Sundays Monthly for dinner & fun. Cost \$5
Still collecting 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 – Giving Direct
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 **NOVEMBER In Focus** St. Matthew's Monthly Newsletter please send details to Robyn and Lynn in the Church Office by **15 October** 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



OCTOBER 2024 SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES
at the church
6th October - 8am, 9.30am, 6.45pm includes Communion
13th October - 8am, 9.30am, 6.45pm Community Meal
20th October - 8am, 9.30am, 6.45pm
27th October - 8am, 9.30am, 6.45pm
Live streaming at morning services

Thank you to all who have contributed to this publication.

MINISTER
REV JON HUMPHRIES

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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