




Bible Readings
 8am and 9.30am 

Hebrews 9: 24-28
Mark 12: 38-44
Psalm 146

Response after Bible Readings
 Leader: *In this we hear the word of God*
 Response: *Thanks be to God*



Includes Church Council and Elders Elections at all 3 services

- 8am—Worship**
 Led by Roland Bryant and Thomas Smith
- 9am—Worship @ the Willows**
 Led by Mike Strong
- 9.30—Worship**
 Led by Albert Olley and Jon Humphries
- KUCA Preschool, Years K-2 & Years 3-8**
Followed by morning tea
- 6.45pm—Worship**
Community Meal

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

Livestreaming at
8am and 9.30am only

Thank you for worshipping with us today.

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

MONDAY 11 November
9am—Sorting and Pricing for Op Shop and Garage Sale
 lower hall
11.30am—Preschool Concert Practice in the church
7.30pm—Christian Meditation
 community room and church

FRIDAY 15 November
5pm-7pm—Fusion Youth Group "Task Master" upstairs hall

SATURDAY 16 November
No Scheduled Activities

TUESDAY 12 November
9am-2pm—Op Shop
9.30am-11am—Christian Meditation
 community room and church
1pm—Church in use
7pm-9pm—NEW Bible Study
 In church or community room
7.30pm—Thrive Bible Study
 lower hall

SUNDAY
17 NOVEMBER

8am—Worship

9.30am—Worship
KUCA Preschool, Years K-2 & Years 3-8
 Followed by morning tea

WEDNESDAY 13 November
9am-2pm—Op Shop
10am-12pm—Women's Fellowship
 upstairs hall & church
7pm—Church Council Executive Meeting upstairs hall

THURSDAY 14 November
9am-2pm—Op Shop
10am-12pm
12.30pm—Preschool Concert Practice in the church



MINISTER
 REV JON HUMPHRIES
 Email: jon@stmatthewsuniting.net.au

CHURCH OFFICE SECRETARIES:
 ROBYN MORRALL AND LYNN SAMUEL

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS 9AM-3PM MON-FRI

OFFICE : 9686 3003
 Email: office@stmatthewsuniting.net.au

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

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Thank you to all who have contributed to this publication.

Something to think about

10th November

25th Sunday after Pentecost

Lectionary Readings:

Ruth 3:1-5; 4:13-17

Psalm 127

Hebrews 9:24-28

Mark 12:38-44

Ascesis, Exercise, Discipline and Discipleship

In meditation, which I am learning to better practise, I often notice that, as the time goes on in each session, I tend to slump in my seat as my attention and energy wains or my capacity to maintain focus is exhausted. Meditation in the Christian tradition is about attending to being in the presence of God and letting go of all the conscious thinking and feeling about things. It is an intentional spiritual discipline. It therefore requires effort and focus. At the beginning of each session, I try to sit up straight with a more alert posture to help me be alert and attentive to what I am doing. I do this because a key aim of mediation is to build and foster a positive habit through repeated exercise of a particular practice in order to train our brain and spirit in being in an intentional and pervasive connection with God.

The Greek word for "exercise" or "training" is ἀσκησις [ascesis]. It is derived from the verb askéin, which has multiple meanings, including "to practice", "to train", "to cultivate", "to work diligently", "to arrange", and "to form". It is about self-discipline which is an essential part of discipleship. Sadly, we don't always hear this gritty aspect of discipleship being promoted. On the way of the cross there will be, as Christ clearly stated, difficulties and hardship. We will likely face obstacles and opposition, much of which will probably arise from within ourselves as we struggle to remain committed and motivated. We can often find ourselves slumping in our efforts like I tend to do in my seat in meditation.

To be physically fit, it often is not enough to just rely of our activity throughout the day to keep us in good condition. We usually need to engage in some intentional exercise, which usually involves a degree of discomfort through the hard work and effort we have to put in. We end up a little tired and sometimes sore afterwards, but we are stronger and healthier as a result of the physical training. The same is true for spiritual fitness. We can't just rely on our everyday, or every Sunday, activity to lead us to be spiritually fit. We need to build into our lives spiritual habits such as prayer, reading Scripture, meditation and Bible study, to build up our spiritual fitness.

Continued next page

Gathering as the Church is a time of spiritual and discipleship fitness training. We are not there to just receive or get things from God, but come together to work on our spiritual health and be nurtured in this by God. We do receive blessing from God, but there is effort on our part which has to be applied. We call that liturgy which is derived from the Greek word λειτουργία or λατουργία [leitourgia] which translates as "work for the people." Our Church building and our gathering is what I call a faithnasium, or at least I believe that it should be. In our gathering we should connect with God, be stretched and challenged to exercise our faith, trained in mind, soul and spirit as the Body of Christ, so as to go out into the world fitter and healthier in order to better and more effectively join God in God's mission of bringing the Kingdom further into being.

We need to be spiritually fit in order to live out our faith and discipleship. We need faith and spiritual exercises to strengthen and grow us in spirit, faith and discipleship. When we are spiritually fit then we are

better able to live well and manifest the Fruit of God who is Spirit within us. We need to be spiritually fit in order to be able to practise and live out the Fruit of the Spirit, for love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, generosity and self-control take strength and work. The fitter we are spiritually then the less likely we are to slump as we seek to live them to others.

So, what spiritual disciplines do we use to keep spiritually?

How effective are they?

How spiritually fit are we?

How healthy is our spirituality and our living out the mission of God?

What might the Church do to help us in this?

These are all something to think about.

God bless

Jon

PEOPLE NEWS

HAPPY BIRTHDAY



Janine Cameron

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

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

10 — 16 November

Aotearoa—New Zealand, Australia

Church Council and Elders Elections

Elections will take place on **Sunday 10 November** at all 3 worship services.

Weekly SYNOD SPOTLIGHT

Uniting Church Synod of NSW and the ACT

Uniting Church Synod Spotlight Newsletter

For (1 November 2024) please see link :

[New Insights \(uca.org.au\)](http://uca.org.au)

ADVENT CHRISTMAS EPIPHANY
WITH LOVE TO THE WORLD



VOL. 17, NO. 9
11 NOVEMBER 2024 – 9 FEBRUARY 2025

ADVENT CHRISTMAS EPIPHANY

WITH LOVE TO THE WORLD

a daily Bible reading guide based on the Revised Common Lectionary

Volume 17, Number 9
11 NOVEMBER 2024 to 9 FEBRUARY 2025

is available in the church foyer.

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

NOVEMBER 2024 SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES at the church

3rd November - 8am, 9.30am, 6.45pm
includes Communion

10th November - 8am, 9.30am, 6.45pm
Community Meal

17th November - 8am, 9.30am, 6.45pm

24th November - 8am, 9.30am, 6.45pm

Live streaming at morning services

Church Working Bee

Saturday 30 November 8am - 3.30pm

Come for an hour or more; *many hands make light work.*

For cleaning and tidying the church, hall and downstairs and gardens.

Morning tea will be provided.

Church Diary for 2025

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. Even if you will be continuing to use the same space as this year, we still need your confirmation.

Please send your 2025 programs to the church office ASAP.

To find out what's happening at St. Matthew's during November click below:



Or go to the St. Matthew's website. www.stmatthewsuniting.net.au

To be included in the combined December/January edition of In FOCUS please send your articles and group activities to the church office by **15 November.**

LECTIONARY READINGS

Everyone is invited to come along.

Bible Study Tuesday Evenings

We Focus on the Lectionary Readings from the previous Sunday.

Where: St. Matthew's UC Church or Community Room

Time: 7pm-9pm
(last half hour will be supper)

Weekly: On a Tuesday night until 17 December 2024 (excluding 10 December)

Will restart weekly from Tuesday 28 January 2025

Led by Jon Humphries and Alastair Burn

St Matthew's

HAPPY HOUR!

At NBC

166 Windsor Rd, Northmead

29 | **5 PM**
NOVEMBER | **FRIDAY**



COME AND SHARE IN SOME HAPPY CONVERSATION, A DRINK AND SOME FOOD WITH FRIENDS FROM ST MATTHEW'S.



RSVP to Belinda or just come along
belinda.schuster0709@gmail.com



To all our beautiful customers. In the lead up to Christmas the Op Shop are requesting



- Ceramic glazed, decorative pots
 - Large good quality black plastic pots
 - Unwanted/unloved pot plants
 - Hanging baskets
 - Bird baths
 - Chimes
 - Statues
 - Hose reels
 - Hose hangers
 - Sprinklers
 - Gardening tools
 - Unwanted plant food, fertilizer
 - Plants stands/patio plant display/
- Pick-up may be available depending upon location, weight etc.

If you require items to be collected, please contact the church office.

THE HILLS MENS SHED inc.

Open Day

**Saturday 16 November 2024
10AM to 1PM**

**Eric Mobbs Reserve
Ferguson Ave,
Castle Hill**

Tools priced from \$5
Craft and Cake Stall
Handmade Gift Ideas
Tea and Coffee
EFTPOS Available
Sausages and Hotdogs

Contact Graham Metcalfe for more information on 0412 669 277

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.

