



Bible Readings

8am
 Hebrews 10:11-25
 Mark 13: 1-8



9.30am
 Hebrews 10:11-25

Response after Bible Readings

Leader: *In this we hear the word of God*

Response: *Thanks be to God*



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

8am—Worship
 Led by Jon Humphries
 and Dean Drayton

9.30—Worship
 Led by Jon Humphries
 and Albert Olley
KUCA Preschool, Years K-2 & Years 3-8
Followed by morning tea

6.45pm—Worship
 Led by Alexander Lawless
 and Jon Humphries

Thank you for worshipping with us today.

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

MONDAY 18 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

TUESDAY 19 November

9am-2pm—Op Shop

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

7pm-9pm—Bible Study
 in the church or community room

WEDNESDAY 20 November

9am-2pm—Op Shop

10am-12pm—In Stitches
 upstairs hall

10am-12pm—Men's Morning Tea
 McKels Café Circa Norwest.

7.30pm—Elders Meeting
 in the church

THURSDAY 21 November

9am-2pm—Op Shop

10am-12pm

12.30pm—Preschool
Concert Practice in the church

FRIDAY 22 November

4.30pm-6pm—Preschool
Christmas Concert

In the church & upstairs hall

SATURDAY 23 November
No Scheduled Activities

SUNDAY
24 NOVEMBER

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



MINISTER

REV JON HUMPHRIES

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Thank you to all who have contributed to this publication.

Something to think about

17th November
26th Sunday
after Pentecost

Lectionary Readings:

1 Samuel 1:4-20

1 Samuel 2:1-10

Hebrews 10:11-25

Mark 13:1-8

Being Psalmic

I once was asked to run a session on prayer for youth workers.

I approached the task by asking what the Bible not only says about prayers, by what prayers are in the Bible that we might learn from. There are, unsurprisingly, quite a few prayers in the Bible, but other than what we call the 'Lord's Prayer' and Jesus's long prayer in John 17:1-26, which is the longest prayer in the Bible, the largest collections of prayers in the Scriptures are the Psalms. They have much to teach us about prayer, but the teaching they provide is fairly straight forward. The Bible Project in their video about Psalms describe such writers of the Psalms as being "...like a prayer coach, giving us words for how to pray and how to discover God's presence in good times and bad."

So, what do the Psalms teach us about prayer? Firstly, prayer can be a range of things. There are, as most of us know, different kinds of prayer.

We have at least three each time we gather as the Church for a service: Thanksgiving and praise, confession, and prayers of intercession. Then there are blessings, songs, and prayers such as the 'Lord's Prayer, which seem to combine a range of aspects or types of prayer.

The second thing the Psalms teach us is that prayer is theology and can be theological. Theology literally means words and thoughts about God, being from θεός [theos] meaning god and [logos] meaning word, thought, principle, or speech. The Psalms are prayers, often in the form of poetry or songs, to God and about God. They speak to God, ask questions of God, and describe God as well as putting into words the feelings the writer has towards God or in response to what God has done. They are personal theology, that is the theology of the writer, and we might learn theological things about God from them, but we also need to be careful not to ascribe to them and all that they say as being prescriptive of what should be believed about God, because they are such personal expressions.

The personal nature of the Psalms is the third important thing that we can learn. They are often raw and authentic expressions of feelings. Whilst they are theological in their clearly speaking of God and to God, they are not always good theology, that is well fitted to what we would align with systematic doctrine about God.

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This is their blessing. They give us the example of just being able to be in real and authentic relationship with God, whom we can share our thoughts, questions and feelings. Our prayers don't have to hold the right understandings or concepts about God, other than the understanding that God listens and is present in relationship with us.

There are other psalmic [meaning being like psalms] prayers Mary's prayer after the revelation of the angel (Luke 1:46–55), Hannah's prayer in 1 Samuel 2:1-10 of which Mary's prayer is similar are both examples of encouragement to pray to God our feelings. However, they are likely also included as instructional models of how to pray and about some theology which should shape our prayers. There is praise and gratitude. There is teaching in the recollection about God's goodness and faithfulness, and how we should therefore have faith in God. There are references to God's providence, especially to God's justice and passion for the poor and lowly. So, whilst they seem to be personal expression, they are also likely to be well-crafted instructional examples by the writers of the Scriptures.

One important thing that I learnt from studying these psalmic prayers is that, particularly for the sad or lamenting, even angry, ones is that they often have a power of conversion. What I mean by that is that the writer usually pours out their heart and soul, expressing their raw emotions, to God. Then, either through catharsis, or the act of venting and exhausting those feelings, through a spiritual transformation of their hearts or as a hopeful self-reminding or self-encouragement, the psalmic prayer usually moves from the questioning and venting to a expression of faith and trust in God's goodness.

Whether it is God working in our hearts, the power of cathartic prayer, or a theological and faithful hopefulness, the Psalms and other psalmic prayers teach us the important power of prayer which allows us to have an open and honest relationship with God. We can vent frustration and anger at God. We can question God. We can remind ourselves of the goodness of God. We can share our joy as well as our sorrows. Whatever our thoughts and feelings, we can share them with God in prayer. This kind of authentic sharing then aids in the deepening of our faith, for such prayer leads us through doubt into a trusting, even though we may not yet believe that things are going to certainly change for us, or what might result in times of uncertainty and change.

If you would like to learn more about the Psalms the Bible Project have a couple of helpful videos about them: 'The Book of Psalms' https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dpny22k_7uk and 'Book of Psalms Summary: A Complete Animated Overview' <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j9phNEaPrv8>. They are both worth a watch if you would like to learn more about this amazing collection of prayers and how they were gathered as a way of teaching us about prayer and it's power to awaken faith and bring hope. So, how do we pray, how might we pray and what can prayer involve and be about? These are some important things to think about.

God bless

Jon

PEOPLE NEWS



Janice Caldwell
Allan Garbutt
Ruth Garbutt

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

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

17 — 23 November

East Timor, (Timor-Leste), Indonesia,
Philippines



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.

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

Weekly SYNOD SPOTLIGHT

Uniting Church Synod of NSW and the ACT

Uniting Church Synod Spotlight Newsletter

For (8 November 2024) please see link :

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

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.**

ADVENT CHRISTMAS EPIPHANY

WITH LOVE TO THE WORLD

THE HOLY FAMILY



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.**

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.**



Thursday 5 December

10am-12pm Final for 2024

“Music to Relax With”

Guest Musician: **David Short**

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



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

ROSTERS

Worship Rosters for 8am and 9.30am, for December 2024 January and February 2025 have been emailed.

If you do not have email or would like an A3 copy please collect a copy from the table in the church foyer.

If you are able to help with any of the gaps please contact the church office.

Thank you to everyone who has helped on the last 3 month roster and to those who have been able to help on this roster.



Op Shop

st. matthew's
UNITING CHURCH
BAULKHAM HILLS
growing together



CLOSES for 2024
Thursday
18th December
Last Day of Trading



9am—2pm

Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday
& first Saturday of the month 9am-12noon

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

Edgar Street Baulkham Hills



REOPENS for 2025
Tuesday
28th January

Congratulations to the following Congregation members who have been elected to Church Council and Elders Council

Church Council

Hugh Darling, Greg Gibb, Sandra Gordon, Doug Mathewson, Sandra Morell, Terry Oliver, David Porter, Michael Strong, Mike Underwood, Karen Vandenberg, Sara Wienand

Elders Council

Erin Mathewson, Katherine Pedersen

St Matthew's

HAPPY HOUR!

At NBC

166 Windsor Rd, Northmead

29 NOVEMBER | 5 PM 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



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



FAIR TRADE MARKET



SATURDAY 30 NOVEMBER

Centenary Uniting Church, Cnr Sorrell & Fennell St, North Parramatta

10:00 am - 3:00 pm

A GREAT CHANCE TO GET A VARIETY OF GIFTS AND MORE THAT MAKE AN IMPACT

Multiple stalls featuring:

- Jewellery
- Clothing
- Homewares
- Ornaments
- Sausage sizzle
- Devonshire teas, coffees & cold drinks
- And loads MORE

This is an activity of the Uniting Church in Australia

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.