



st. matthew's
UNITING CHURCH
BAULKHAM HILLS
growing together

Weekly Newsletter

26 June 2022
Pentecost 3

Bible Reading



8am & 9.30am:
Galatians 5:13-25
Luke 9:51-62

Response after Bible Readings

Leader: *Hear the word of the Lord*

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 9.30AM



8am—Worship
Includes Choir Reunion item
Led by Roland Bryant
and Clive Pearson

9.30am—Worship
Led by Albert Olley
and Clive Pearson

KUCA Preschool, Years K-2 & Years 3-8



Livestreaming

at all	. 8am
three	. 9.30am
worship	. 6.45pm
services	

6.45pm—Worship
Led by Daniel Gibb
Abby Sim

Thank you for worshipping with us today.

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

MONDAY 27 JUNE

10am—Upstairs Hall in use

TUESDAY 28 JUNE

9am-2pm—Op Shop

9.30am—Christian Meditation
in the church

WEDNESDAY 29 JUNE

9am-2pm—Op Shop

THURSDAY 30 JUNE

9am-2pm—Op Shop

FRIDAY 1 JULY

7pm-9pm—ALIVE Youth
Group upstairs hall

SATURDAY 2 JULY

2pm-4pm—Church and
Community Room in use

SUNDAY 3 JULY

8am—Worship

9.30am—Worship
KUCA Preschool, Years K-2 & Years 3-8

5pm—Shine

6.45pm—Worship



SUPPLY MINISTER

REV. CLIVE PEARSON 0409 523 024
Email: minister@stmatthewsuniting.net.au

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

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The Anniversary of the Uniting Church

It is now 45 years ago since the Uniting Church came into existence. Within the grand sweep of Christian history that is not long. The particular denominations that went into its making – the Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational go back several centuries further but that it still a relatively short period of time in the 2000 years of the Christian tradition. It means that we come at today's texts from within a reformed and evangelical heritage and do so in the contemporary context of Australia.

In the gospel passage for today Jesus sets out on the journey towards Jerusalem; that journey will take place over ten chapters which is a sizeable chunk of Luke's gospel. Up until now Jesus spent most of his time in Galilee. Now he travels south: 'he sets his face to go to Jerusalem'. The time is drawing near for him to be 'taken up' – on the cross? His ascension?; there is a sense of imminent completion pending. He makes his way to Jerusalem through the territory of the Samaritans. They are not received well, though elsewhere in Luke, the Samaritans provide the one who helps the man in distress (the good Samaritan)—hence the example of what it means to be a neighbour—and the only leper who is healed and comes back to thank Jesus. The cost of discipleship is then made known through three sayings to do with the Son of man having nowhere to lay his head, let the dead bury the dead and the one who takes his hand from the plough is not for the kingdom.

That last reference is rather timely. We may not live in first century Palestine; so far as I am aware there is no place name in New South Wales that resembles the postcode 'Samaria'. And very few of us will have had much experience of the plough. But maybe this saying has an ongoing currency that endures well beyond its original context.

The cultural hold or grasp that faith has exercised over generations of Christians is not what it once was. We live in a time of an increasing number of 'nones' – that is, people who say that they have no faith of any kind. At the last census Crows Nest had one of the highest proportions of such people in the country. On my way to the office this morning I found myself listening to 95.3 FM Smooth: the first song up was Michael Stipe and R.E.M. singing 'Losing my religion'. It really is a song of unrequited love, a love song, but the title echoes through so much current experience. We might say it 'speaks'.

For us in the Uniting Church this now not uncommon practice of taking one's hand off the plough is very challenging. There are many reasons why this happens – and COVID hasn't helped. Over a long period of time now we have become much more used to what 'the self' likes / does not like – and sometimes the life of faith, the practice of being the church reflects that. One philosopher has even written a book on this theme taking advantage of that

Australian invention 'the selfie': that is the title.

The gospel of Luke bears witness to something a bit different. It describes the kingdom of God through lenses of love of neighbour, healing, reconciliation and a Christ who forgives those who do not know what they do. It is a rather an appealing account of life together, but it comes with a cost. The apostle Paul discovered that the Galatians were only too keen to return to old ways and forget their freedom in Christ: they were in the throes of taking their hand off the plough. He reminds them of their baptism into Christ and proceeds to write to them about the fruits of the Spirit. Those fruits amount to a list of virtues that the Christian is called to let grow and upon which a civil society depends.

The foundational document of the Uniting Church, *The Basis of Union*, makes no reference to Samaria, ploughs or R.E.M. It does speak about the risk of 'losing the way' and reminds us that the Uniting Church is 'renewed' in and through Christ's 'own strange way'. Perhaps that passage from Galatians is worth pondering upon: the times may be tough. Some may have let go of their faith (and, in some cases, perhaps with good reason) – and yet, in spite of, nevertheless, these fruits of the spirit remain worthy of cultivating. In tough and difficult times it is good to encounter kindness, gentleness, patience and the like.

Yours in Christ,

Clive

The following piece of music was created for the 40th anniversary of the Uniting Church:

'Come together': by David Busch

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KM22GQFsGRc>

Phil Newton formerly worked with Christine Palmer in South West Sydney. Phil was a student at UTC in the early 2000s. He composed this song in response to the Luke passage. There are no ploughs here either, but note that line 'The Kingdom will not wait for you and your right time'.

https://www.dropbox.com/s/ed1e3b5y1crr5wj/01%20The%20Cost%20of%20Living.m4a?dl=0&fbclid=IwAR03CpA5Clo48-EumCyZ7qIN7Dalf3_XuThqSuDozro1r01w3Kv6dTL6buU

Good teacher how do I gain eternal life?

"Give all you own to the poor" was his reply

...Is he asking me to sell all my possessions first?

What's this I'm shown? ...Cuts to the bone...

It's supposed to be easy and carefree!

Too large a cost, my life be lost?

Is that your call to me?

Is that when I'll be in the Kingdom?

I will follow you but first let me go and say goodbye

"The Kingdom will not wait for you and your right time"

..You need to understand I'm not sure I'm ready just no

(Chorus)

I will follow you wherever will may go

"There's no place to escape what I'm called to!"

...What is it you're saying no worldly comfort, no security?

(Chorus)



PEOPLE NEWS BIRTHDAYS

Brayden Bell
Jane Cole

Annette Watson

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

Thank you. Rev Bill Crews Exodus Foundation would like to very much thank all at St. Matthew's for the large donation of food supplies they recently received. It will be used to feed the many disadvantage people of the community. ***Along with the usually food donations they would now especially like to receive donations of UHT milk.***

Save the Date

Coffee and Discovery 10am Thursday 7 July

Guests Musicians

Noeleen & David Neideck

Please come along and enjoy a concert filled with the music of Noeleen and David.

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

26 June—2 July

Kenya, Tanzania

All Group Leaders and Others

Please remember to **ALWAYS** lock and activate the security alarm at the conclusion of your gatherings at the church.

Please also **ALWAYS** turn off all lights, close windows, **turn off air-conditioners and fans.**

And leave the space neat and tidy ready for the next group. *Thank you.*



Donations of fresh flowers

Katherine Pedersen is asking the church for donations of fresh flowers and foliage from members of the congregation who have excess to their needs. Katherine uses the flowers and foliage to make up arrangements to sell at the Op shop, and also to give to people we know who would benefit from receiving a gift from the church community. Please contact Katherine Pedersen on 0437 772 011

Preschool - Raising money for Kids Cancer and supporting one of our own community

We would like to bring to the Church Communities attention the case of Demi, one of the Preschool students (and also daughter of Marly, a member of teaching staff)

Demi was recently diagnosed with a rare & incurable, inoperable brain tumor.

This has obviously been a very difficult time for her and her family. They are fortunate though to have amazing support within family and friends and have requested that instead of support for themselves that support be focused towards fundraising.

Last week the Preschool organised a fundraiser. The children dressed up as pirates to raise donations, this money will go to The Kids Cancer Project.

So far \$2053.25 has been raised. A great effort!

For anyone who'd like to donate, please donate via the below link.

<https://www.pirateday.com.au/unitingcarestmatthewspreschool>

Another fundraiser is also being planned for Term 3 – Beanie's for brain cancer. This one could give an opportunity to support in a more practical sense potentially. Once plans are finalised the Preschool will advise details which will be shared.

Anyone who would also like to support the family can contact the Preschool office.

Please hold Demi and her family in your prayers.



***Being prepared for
next week's worship:***

3 July 2022

Pentecost 4

26 June 2022 Sunday:

8am, 9:30am &

6:45pm

Bible Readings:

Galatians 5: 13-25

Luke 9: 51-62

The Uniting Church came into being in 1977. Its existence is a fruit of the ecumenical spirit. Its formation was reckoned to be a sign of hope and joy. It was imagined at the time that the Uniting Church would become a 'movement' rather than just another denomination. Its very name 'uniting' rather than 'united' captured that hope. It was recognized in its *Basis of Union* that, through time, the church must respond to fresh challenges; the Uniting Church professed its belief that 'in his own strange way Christ constitutes, rules and renews [the disciples] as his Church'.

Sometimes the church – the whole church – goes through a season of setback. The *Basis* actually refers to how we can run the risk of 'losing the way'. Our reading from the gospel of Luke reminds us that the journey of faith is an adventure that can cut across our default modes of

security and certainty: the we are called to follow did not have an election manifesto of promises and tax cuts. He reminds those who seek to follow that 'foxes have holes, the birds of the air have nests but the son of man has nowhere to lay his head'. There is an open-endedness about a future that is breaking in upon those who set out.

In the midst of the current difficulties facing the Uniting Church we can recall that Christ has set us free; that we are called to love our neighbour as oneself. In demanding times the fruits of the Spirit that Paul speaks of in his epistle to the Galatians are priceless. What might it mean for a church to embody and witness to its neighbours a life in the Spirit that is marked by 'love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control'.

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 bird image / publications.