



st. matthew's
UNITING CHURCH
BAULKHAM HILLS
growing together

Weekly Newsletter

26 March 2023

5th Sunday in Lent

Bible Readings

John 11: 1-45



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

Livestreaming

at

8am & 9.30am only

8am—Worship

Led by Judy Mann
and Clive Pearson

9.30am—Worship

Led by Clive Pearson

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

6.45pm—Worship

Led by Nicola Lawless
includes

Lenten Study Week 3

Thank you for worshipping with us today.

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

MONDAY 27 MARCH

9am—Sorting and Pricing
for Op Shop lower hall

TUESDAY 28 MARCH

9am-2pm—Op Shop
9.30-11am—Christian Meditation

in the Church

11am—Lenten Bible Study Week 4
Final at the church

WEDNESDAY 29 MARCH

9am-2pm—Op Shop
10am-12pm—In Stitches upper hall

THURSDAY 30 MARCH

9am-2pm—Op Shop
7.30pm—Lenten Bible Study Week 4
on ZOOM Final

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3602745736>

FRIDAY 31 MARCH

5pm-7pm—Fusion

SATURDAY 1 APRIL

9am-12pm—Op Shop
9am-12pm—Mini Mart lower hall

SUNDAY 2 APRIL



8am—Worship
includes Communion

9.30am—Worship
includes Communion

KUCA Preschool, Years K-2 & Years

6.45pm—Worship
includes Communion
and
Lenten Bible Study Final



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

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

PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR 9639 8570

SONALI WANIGESEKERA

PO Box 321 BAULKHAM HILLS 2153

EMAIL: director@stmatthewsps.net.au

5th Sunday in Lent

Power Plays

26 March

Ezekiel 37: 1-14 John 11: 1-45

The death and restoration to life of Lazarus is a key moment in the unfolding of John's gospel. So much so that it has been described as 'the climax of Jesus' public ministry'. With reference to the characters where signs happen only Lazarus is named. It is an episode in the ministry that has profound consequences for it will lead, in due course, to Caiaphas declaring that one man must die for the sake of the nation.

There is a Lazarus in Luke's gospel but that is not the same character: there he lies at the gate of the rich man in a parable. This Lazarus is brother to Mary and Martha; he lives in Bethany and he is loved by Jesus. He is ill; Lazarus is the first time Jesus is said to love any particular people. On hearing the news that his friend is unwell Jesus remains where he is for two further days: Lazarus died. On arrival in Bethany, Jesus is told by Martha had Jesus come, then her brother would not have died. In the interval between Jesus heading the news of Lazarus' illness and his arriving in Bethany 'many Jews' had come from Jerusalem to console the sisters. Lazarus has been in the tomb for four days: the stage is set.

The raising of Lazarus is one of the seven 'signs' to be found in John's gospel. A sign is not simply a miracle: it is designed to bear witness to who Christ is and how 'the Son of God may be glorified through it'. This sign is the last one to be performed in Jesus' public ministry in John. Jesus had told his disciples that Lazarus had 'fallen asleep'. The book of signs begins with a wedding and ends in a funeral.

On arrival in Bethany Jesus weeps and engages in an exchange with Martha about the resurrection. As is often the case in John the one with whom Jesus speaks frequently misunderstands the tenor and implications of his words. Martha assumes that Jesus is speaking about being raised at the end of time. Jesus responds with one of his 'I am' sayings that resonate with the name Moses received from the burning bush: 'I am' or 'I will be who I will be'. Jesus declares himself to the 'resurrection and the life'. Jesus proceeds to raise Lazarus from the dead: he tells the bystanders to remove the stone and summons Lazarus to 'come out'.

The dying and raising of Lazarus anticipates the death and resurrection of Jesus. We can see that he is walking into danger. It will lead to the leaders of the Jews to initiate the plot to have Jesus put to death: Caiaphas declares that 'one man must die for the sake of the nation'. They become fearful that this sign will lead to the crowds (in Jerusalem) into following Jesus and the Romans will see this as a threat and put the nation down. They will seek to have Lazarus also put to death. In order to bring about life Jesus thus makes his way into the place of maximum danger.

The raising of Lazarus should then be seen not in a way that is detached from the passion of Christ. In John's gospel it is the very act that sets into motion the specific intention to kill Jesus. It is a sign which bears witness to Jesus as being 'I am' and 'the resurrection and the life'. It takes place against the pressures brought to bear upon a small nation by an occupying imperial power.

The restoration to life is likewise modelled in Ezekiel's vision of the dry bones. It is through the agency of the Lord that breath enters the bones and they live. The four winds blow and the slain are knit together and form a 'vast multitude'. The bones represent the 'whole house of Israel': it becomes a vision of how those who have been 'cut off completely; will live, on their own soil and they will know that the Lord has spoken and will act. Israel is to be restored after its defeat by the Babylonian empire and its people having been carried into exile.

Music:

The Collection (Little Fella Session)

Lazarus

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z45nXdLs2o8>

Lazarus (rap) Trip Lee and Thi'sl

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t5XlhEpd1C8>

Delta Rhythm Boys

Dry bones

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mVoPG9HtYF8>

The Fisk Jubilee Singers

Oh, Mary don't you weep

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RZVDXpaCF04>

(earliest recorded version, 1915)

Georgia Field Hands

Oh, Mary don't you weep

(earliest video version, 1929)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MDh2zRm1dwQ>

Bruce Springsteen

Oh, Mary, don't you weep

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tebjshm7f_I

Reflection:

Lazarus

Yale Divinity School

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4h8LvptsVZo>

The Lazarus Metaphor:

The Lazarus Project

Back from the dead; de-extinction

https://www.earthisland.org/journal/index.php/magazine/entry/back_from_the_dead/

How close are we to resurrecting extinct species?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qA1_mdiDgyk

Yours in Christ,

Clive

Report on Congregation Meeting of 19th March 2023

Welcome

Barbara Gibb opened the meeting and explained the purpose of the meeting was to inform the Congregation about progress in obtaining both a new minister and a supply minister and to explain the next steps as Rev Dr Clive Pearson's time with us draws to a close.

Thank you Clive

Barb welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave some details of Clive's ministry to us all since his arrival and acknowledged that this ministry will close at the end of April, this year. Barb thanked Clive and Mary for their ministry and the knowledge shared in their time with us. Luke and Matthew now have a new life with us all plus a bit of Mark and John thrown in for good measure. Barb also thanked Clive for the wonderful support and encouragement for all those in our Church family who have received care, visits and conversations. Barb then wished Clive and Mary safe travels in the period ahead.

JNC

Karen Vandenberg then explained the progress of the Joint Nominating Committee (JNC). Karen is the spokesperson for the JNC Team for our Church and she gave details of the progress or lack of progress and the reasons behind it. Lack of ministerial candidates is the main reason. Karen asked for prayers going forward for the work of the JNC.

Preaching Roster

Barbara Gibb then mentioned the plan for a six-month preaching roster with visiting lay preachers and ministers, without putting extra stress on our Lay Preachers.

Worship Committee

We are planning to start a Worship Committee to provide consistency to our worship services during this time without a Minister. Normal rosters will continue as the worship committee will have extra responsibilities. Ideally this Committee should have one to two representatives from each worship congregation. Please contact Barbara Gibb for more details or if you are interested in being apart of this committee. We are currently looking for representatives from the 8.00am service and 6.45pm service.

Worship Volunteers

There will be an increased need for volunteers (particularly the 8am and 9:30am) in the following areas:-

Worship Committee	Prayers for the people
Preaching	Morning tea
Liturgy	Leading Singing
Welcoming / Door Stewards	Multimedia operation

Fundraising

David Neideck then spoke about Fundraising which is always important. There has been a great response to the 40/40 campaign started last year and the Church is grateful for some large donations, which have been applied to reduce the principal of the roof loan. Additional initiatives include an Open Garden by Katherine Pedersen at her beautiful garden, Trivia night (enjoyed by all). Please send any ideas to the Secretary, Terry Oliver at terry.oliver@bigpond.com.

Acknowledgement of a bequest – Terry Oliver acknowledged that St Matthew's has been the beneficiary of a bequest of \$20,863 from the Estate of the late Elaine Dunning. This bequest has made a significant contribution to the Church by reducing the term of the Roof Loan by up to seven years. The letter of thanks has been sent to the Dunning family.

Barbara Gibb closed the meeting with prayer for future.

Please continue to pray for –

JNC

Organisation of the Preaching Roster

Worship Committee

Volunteers for each Worship service

Following the meeting a light lunch was enjoyed by all who stayed.

Attendance – Sixty-one with seven apologies.



PEOPLE NEWS

Carl Denison
Doreen Chapple
Ray Philip

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

All St. Matthew's Groups Leaders

We are currently updating our 2023 details for all St. Matthew's groups.

Group leaders please send your group information to the church office by 15 April.

This includes

- name of group
- description of group
- meeting days, times & place
- position holders and titles
- current members

Many thanks

Coordinating our 'Welcome to Newcomers' approach across St. Matthew's.

Newcomers like to be made feel welcome, accepted and appreciated as they settle into any new church community.

Can we make sure we are doing this well here at St. Matthew's.

Clive has asked Judy Mann (a recent newcomer) and a small group to take a look at how we welcome all newcomers here at St. Matthew's. We are interested to know two things:

- What was your own experience like when you first came to St. Matthew's?
- Would you like to help us welcome newcomers in future?

Please – reply to Judy Mann at
judyruithmann@gmail.com or ring,
text or voice message mobile: 0414 591 548

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

26 March — 1 April

Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia

EASTER WORSHIP SERVICES

at the church

Maundy Thursday — 6 April @ 7.30pm

Good Friday — 7 April @ 9am

Easter Sunday — 9 April
@ 8am, 9.30am, 6.45pm

Live streaming at 7.30pm, 9am, 8am, 9.30am services only

APRIL SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES

at the church

2 April – 8am, 9.30am & 6.45pm
includes Communion

9 April – 8am, 9.30am & 6.45pm

16 April – 8am, 9.30am & 6.45pm

23 April – 8am, 9.30am & 6.45pm

30 April – 8am, 9.30am & 6.45pm

Live streaming continues for 8am & 9.30am services only

Rev
Bill Crews
Foundation

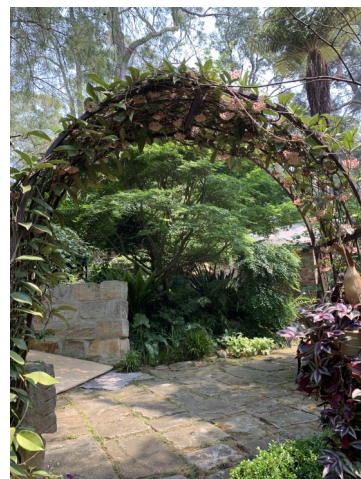


Thank you so much for your
kind donation of food.

Gifts such as yours help to keep our operational costs down. This enables me and my team to put more resources into our frontline services such as the Loaves & Fishes free Restaurant, primary health care, and crisis support for our guests. Your contribution is a vital part of the foundation that brings people together and restores hope and dignity to our forgotten friends.

Rev Bill Crews

Katherine Pedersen Open Garden



Dates for March

Thursdays from 10am-12noon. 16th, 23rd, & 30th

Saturdays from 2pm - 5pm. 18th, 25th.

Dates for APRIL

Wednesday mornings of 19, 26, at 9.30am- 12noon

Saturday afternoons of 1st, 22, 29 at 1.30pm-3.30pm

Up to 8 people can visit on any open day.

\$10 adults 18 years and over includes drink and sweet or savoury offering of the day.

\$5 school children to 18 years includes drink and sweet or savoury offering of the day.

(Children must be constantly supervised by their parents or carers and follow the Instructions for their safety.)

Cash is required for payment and some extra as there are plants for sale

Visitors must be physically able to walk down 100metres including a couple of hills. There is Water, steps, trip hazards, wildlife in the garden .

The garden will be open at various times each month of this year, sometimes on other days of the week.

For bookings and enquiries, please contact the owners, Gary and Katherine Pedersen, kathped56@gmail.com

This initiative is a fundraiser to assist with the cost of replacing the St. Matthew's roofing.



Common Grace (the interdenominational Christian social justice advocacy organisation I work for) is running a training event on **Saturday, April 29 from 10am to 12:30pm at Northside Baptist Church in Crows Nest**, around the Voice to Parliament.

The training will be conducted by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Christian leaders. Common Grace is advocating for a Yes vote in the anticipated referendum and for implementing the Uluru Statement from the Heart in full.

The event is free and registrations are through https://www.listentotheheart.org.au/sydney_training_event.

Abbey Sim

Opportunity to attend ABC's TV Show Q+A

Christa Hill a producer from ABC's TV show Q+A has contacted St. Matthew's by phone and email to offer congregation members the opportunity to attend and take part in ABC's TV show, Q+A.

If you are interested in attending please see the details below:

BAULKHAM HILLS UNITING CHURCH

ABC TV's Q+A INVITES YOU TO JOIN THE AUDIENCE! On **Monday, April 10th, LIVE from 9.30pm!** Host Stan Grant is joined by a panel of decision-makers and commentators, discussing, and debating the issues that are important to YOU! Participate in the national discussion and watch live TV being put to air!

We will be running a free return bus service from BELLA VISTA/BAULKHAM HILLS to our studios in ULTIMO. for community members to join the live audience.

Do you want to Join us on the bus and in the audience? Here's what you need to do:

Q+A is free to attend, we just want to offer a space for diverse communities to participate in important discussions.

Please register your interest at the link below and in the last question, Q.15 "How did you hear about us" please write:

BAULKHAM HILLS UNITING CHURCH

<https://www.abc.net.au/qanda/studio-audience/>

We will be in touch with more details if you are successful in securing a seat on the bus and in the audience - Hurry limited seats!

We hope to see you at Q+A!

Christa Hill – Q+A

0430023148

Audience Producer (Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri)



The days, location and times are:

Tuesday in the church at 11:00am

Thursday on line (ZOOM) at 7:30pm

Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3602745736>

Please contact church office for study notes

Sunday in church during the 6:45pm service

The dates in March are:

Tuesdays 7th, 14th, 21st and 28th

Thursdays 9th, 16th, 23rd and 30th

Sundays 12th, 19th, 26th and 2nd April

The Passion of St Matthew

Our Lenten study this year will take place throughout March. This is an important season in the church's life as we make ready for Easter. There will be three different times in which you can participate.

The studies will be led by Clive Pearson and Mike Strong; they will include works of art as well as musical references.

We will be following through on Matthew's account of the passion and resurrection.

1. Setting the Stage (Matthew 26:1-46)
2. Trials and denials (Matthew 26:47-27:31)
3. Crucified (Matthew 27:32-66)
4. Risen (Matthew 28:1-20)

A Guide to St Matthew's Passion (Bach)

James Gilchrist

King's College Choir

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=591fCQvRjmo&t=112s>



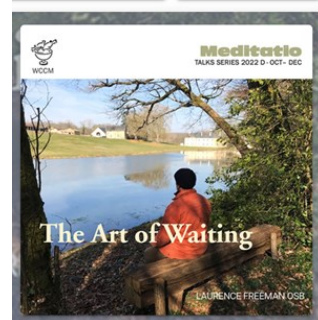
Meditation Talks Series beginning on the first Tuesday in April

Tuesdays at 9.30am—11am at the church

All are welcome

"The Art of Waiting"

By Laurence Freeman OSB



These talks invite us to understand patience as an essential condition for spiritual growth. The ability to be fully present to the moment that we are in, without the need for answers or control, is the poverty of spirit that allows God's power to manifest in our lives. In a culture accustomed to speed and instant outcomes, this insight presents a challenge. Laurence Freeman says we need to relearn the art of waiting through the practice of meditation. The twice-daily discipline of reciting the mantra without expectations teaches us gradually to just be in the present moment, giving God the space to do his transforming work in us.

- Week 1—Conditions for Breakthrough
- Week 2—The Art of Waiting
- Week 3—God is waiting for us
- Week 4—Conversion
- Week 5—Fruits of the Spirit & Divinisation
- Week 6—Unified Consciousness
- Week 7—State of Assurance
- Week 8—The last stage of saying the Mantra
- Week 9—Beatitudes; The new way of Being

Enq: Katherine Pedersen 0437 772 011, Rosemary Sexton

Blankets for Refugees

We are collecting blankets for Ukrainian refugees, some who have arrived in Australia and some who are in Poland. A lady whose family in Poland is supporting the refugees is organising a shipment of clothes and would like to include blankets. Her group is also supporting refugees who have arrived in Australia.



If you have any spare woolen blankets that you would like to donate please drop them in to the Op Shop. They can be in any condition as they can be washed and mended if needed.

Contact Pamela Leslie 0404 023 588 or Amanda Manson 0407 221 374

*Being prepared
for next week's
worship:*

2 April

**Theme:
Lent 6**

**'Who do
we sing
for?'**

Sunday

2 April:

8am

9.30am

6.45pm

Bible Readings:

**Psalm 118: 1-2,19-29
Matthew 21: 1-11**



The psalms are songs. The word itself comes from a Greek word that means 'a song sung to a harp'. There are many different types of song or psalm. On this Palm Sunday Psalm 118 is a song of victory, praise and thankfulness. It presumes the steadfast love of the Lord and entry through the 'gates of righteousness' and 'the gate of the Lord'. The Psalms are often psalms of waiting and lament, sometimes of abandonment as is the case of Psalm 22—'my God, my God why have you forsaken me'. But this Psalm set down for Palm Sunday is one of celebration: 'this is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it'. It captures the mood of a procession...and it seems so appropriate for the day in which we recall Jesus riding humbly into Jerusalem.

But some care may need to be exercised: 'who do we sing for?' Crowds can be very fickle. One crowd is not the same as another crowd. In John's gospel the crowd who accompanies Jesus from Bethany to Jerusalem have seen him raise Lazarus. They have borne witness to a 'sign'. The crowd who will then cry out within a short span of time is not the same crowd. They have been subject to other pressures.

In the gospel of Matthew the entry into Jerusalem by way of donkey and a colt. The community for which Matthew is writing is primarily a Jewish church. In keeping with one of his habits he sees Jesus request for the donkey and colt as a fulfilment of a prophecy from the Hebrew Scriptures—in this instance, taken from Zephaniah. The symbolism is of a king, a messiah riding in peace into the city: it is a very different image from the ones of military might and commanders that Jerusalem had known.

That Jesus should come in this manner is highly provocative: those familiar with the Hebrew Scriptures would recognize that this was acting out a prophecy. The cry of the crowd, 'hosanna', 'blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord' intensifies that expectation. It presents a challenge to the religious establishment; in the background lies the power and menace of Rome. The city is uncertain who this Jesus is. Those with him describe him as a 'prophet from Galilee'—which is only partially true. The city is in 'turmoil', though the Greek actually says 'shaken', as in an earthquake.