



**Bible Readings**

8am and 9.30am Services



**Acts 3:12-19**  
**1 John 3:1-7**  
**Luke 24:36b-48**

*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 and 9.30am only**

**8am—Worship**  
Led by Jon Humphries  
**9am—Worship @ the Willow's**  
Led by Shamali Perera  
**9.30am—Worship**  
Led by Jon Humphries  
**KUCA** in Recess  
**Followed by Morning Tea**  
**11am-12pm Christian Meditation**  
**Introductory Course Week 2**  
in the church  
**6.45pm—Worship**  
Community Meal

Thank you for worshipping with us today.

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

**MONDAY 15 April**  
**9am—Sorting & Pricing for Op Shop**  
lower hall

**TUESDAY 16 April**  
**9am-2pm—Op Shop**  
**9.30am-11am—Christian Meditation**  
community room **Includes**  
**Introductory Course Week 2**

**WEDNESDAY 17 April**  
**9am-2pm—Op Shop**  
**10am-12pm—In Stitches**  
upstairs hall  
**10am-12pm—Men's Morning Tea**  
Mckel's Café, Shop 14,  
Circa Boulevard Bella Vista

**SUNDAY**  
**21 APRIL**  
**8am—Worship**  
**9.30am—Worship**  
**KUCA** in Recess  
**Followed by morning tea**  
**11-12pm Christian Meditation**  
**Introductory Course Week 3**  
in the church  
**6.45pm—Worship**

**THURSDAY 18 April**  
**9am-2pm—Op Shop**

**FRIDAY 19 April**  
**No Scheduled Events**

**SATURDAY 20 April**  
**No Scheduled Events**



**MINISTER**  
REV JON HUMPHRIES  
Email: jon@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  
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

**FACEBOOK:**  
@stmatthewsunitingchurchbaulkhamhills

**PRE-SCHOOL DIRECTOR** 9639 8570  
SONALI WANIGESEKERA  
PO Box 321 BAULKHAM HILLS 2153  
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Thank you to all who have contributed to this publication.

# Something to think about

14 April

## Third Sunday in Easter

### Lectioary Readings:

**Acts 3:12-18**  
**Psalms 4**  
**1 John 3:1-7**  
**Luke 24:36b-48**

### Both/And - Harsh Accusations and Amazing Grace

We are hard-wired for negativity. This is called our negativity bias. You can learn more about it online and here is a link to get you started <https://www.verywellmind.com/negative-bias-4589618> "Negativity bias refers to our proclivity to 'attend to, learn from, and use negative information far more than positive information' (Vaish, Grossmann, & Woodward, 2008, p. 383)." Basically, we have an imbalance in our perception of what is positive and negative, with more weight being attributed to the negative. Psychologists call this a positive-negative asymmetry. It means that we tend to register negative stimuli more readily and then also tend to dwell on these events. We can see this in faith and religion in a number of ways. It comes across in how we see God at work in our live – or not at work. We can count curses more than blessings. We can also zero in on the more condemnatory aspects of Scripture, especially about sin and falling short of the glory of God.

Ironically, possibly in a form of psychological and theological self-defence, religious people often tend to project their negativity outwards and onto others, often in the form of judgement. Christians are well-known – rightly or wrongly – for being morally judgmental about other people's lives and behaviour. We are also well-known for being segregational, drawing lines of who is in and not in the right way of being with God or in the right group with the right beliefs. Whilst there is a need to know right from wrong, and good ways of being as opposed to unhelpful or hurtful ways of being, the irony is that we miss the teaching of God in the person of Jesus about not judging others. We talk about grace and forgiveness, but seem to fail to be able to apply it to others, and sometimes even ourselves.

The readings this week make things very clear that if one sins then we are not in tune with God, and in fact outside the bounds of God. We could allow our negativity bias to run wild and get a sense of hopelessness in all this. Or, avoiding applying the truth to ourselves in a sense of self-deluded self-righteousness we could defend our faith by attacking the morals, behaviour and faith of others. This, however, just makes it all the more clear that we have missed the point and continue to fall short of the way and being of God.

Continued next page

**continued**

The passage from one 1 John 3 set in the Revised Common Lectionary for this week makes an extraordinary assertion of truth. The writer continues in the letter to lay down some essential theology which should help form the core of our faith. It is written: "See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him." This is the undoing of any theological negativity bias. This is the truth that allows us to face the hard truth which follows with theological optimism. We can face the harsh accusations which are true that we fail to live well much of the time and that we place ourselves outside the love of God because we know that this is secondary, to our core identity. This passage in 1 John 3 and what continues into the next chapter establish our identity in Christ, who is God with us.

*Who are we?*

*1. We are much loved.*

*2. We are called the children of God – that is like Jesus who is called the Son of God.*

The world, which we are not just part of, but are the makers of, would try to tell us otherwise. It tries to tell us there is no God, and even if there is God doesn't love us, or if 'he' does he doesn't do this very well because he lets us and everyone else suffer. The writer of 1 John utterly reject this and names it as false and the reason the world doesn't know our true nature, because it neither knows God or knows God's true nature.

We are the children of God. We are the people of God – and that 'we' is not just us as Christians, but all people. We are much loved, for we know that God so loved the world that he sent Godself in the person of

the Son so that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16). This is the core of who we are. We are not our looks, successes, failures, abilities, disabilities, who we think we are, or who others might think that we are. We are created in the image of God [Genesis 1: 27]. We have the blessing of God who named us, and all creation to be good. This is who we are in essence. This is our true potential and proper being as human. To be the loved people of God and to live in love so that we live in God and God in us is true human being. With this reversal of the positive-negative asymmetry towards an optimistic bias we can face the reality and truth of our brokenness and sinfulness.

Faith leads us to an optimistic bias, not a negativity bias. Note, this is an optimistic bias, not positivity bias. We don't neglect the negative or try to cover it with a false positivity. However, we face the reality that we fall short of the glory of God with faith, not hopelessness. In faith we find peace in the love of God even though we know it is undeserved. We look to change and work to be better, not out of guilt or fear, but in the optimism of God's faith in us and God's vision of our true self and true potential.

If we, in faith read the Scriptures well, we will encounter the truth of harsh accusations. However, in faith we know who we are and can be, even if we are not fulfilling that potential in the present moment. We care not for negativity. We care about others as we love them as we love ourselves, and seek for all to be in good relationship with God, who we know in the person of Jesus and experience in the person of the Spirit. This is God who is light, love and life, and in whose image and name we live. This is something to optimistically think about.

God bless

*Jon*



**PEOPLE NEWS**

**Barbara Fiedler**

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

**Ecumenical Prayer Cycle**

**14—20 April**

**Belarus, Moldova, Russia, Ukraine**

*Weekly*  
**SYNOD SPOTLIGHT**  
Uniting Church Synod of NSW and the ACT

**For Uniting Church Synod Spotlight Newsletter for 5 April 2024 please see link :**

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

**APRIL 2024 SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES**  
at the church

7th April - 8am, 9.30am, 6.45pm  
includes Communion

14th April - 8am, 9.30am, 6.45pm  
Community Meal

21st April - 8am, 9.30am, 6.45pm

28th April - 8am, 9.30am, 6.45pm

*Live streaming at morning services*

**MAY 2024 SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES**  
at the church

5th May - 9am Combined includes  
Mission Planning &  
Closure of Ministry for **Mike Strong**

12th May - 8am, 9.30am, 6.45pm  
includes Communion

19th May - 8am, 9.30am, 6.45pm

26th May - 8am, 9.30am, 6.45pm

*Live streaming at morning services*



**Thursday 2 May - 10am to 12pm**

**Guest Speaker**

**Rev Jon Humphries**

**The Science of Flourishing**

**Thursday 2 May  
10 am - 12noon**

(Rev) Jon Humphries  
Talks about his journey over 10 years into understanding the science of flourishing and wellbeing, and its connection with faith.

**SCIENCE OF FLOURISHING**



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

\*\*\*\*\* ALL WELCOME \*\*\*\*\*



# INTRODUCTION TO CHRISTIAN MEDITATION

## YOU ARE INVITED TO A SIX WEEK COURSE

ST MATTHEW'S UNITING CHURCH BAULKHAM HILLS  
Corner of Charles St & Edgar St, Baulkham Hills

**CONTACT:**  
Katherine Pedersen  
0437 772 011  
kathped56@gmail.com

This course provides an opportunity for those interested in finding out about Christian Meditation to experience the practice in a small group, to learn about its origins and to discover its relevance as a form of prayer for the contemporary world.

**SUNDAY MORNINGS**  
11.00am-12 noon  
(Weekly for 6 weeks)  
From 7 April – 12 May

**TUESDAY MORNINGS**  
9.30am-10.30am  
(Weekly for 6 weeks)  
From 9 April – 14 may

## New AED (Automated External Defibrillator) at St. Matthew's Preschool



Last year, St. Matthew's Preschool received a grant from Heart of the Nation and Castle Hill RSL for an AED to be available 24 hours a day, attached to the preschool. The device was installed on Tuesday. This allows the preschool and church to access an AED, as well as the general public at any time. There is an attached photo to help you locate it. The church AED has been moved downstairs, to be more accessible during the week for the hours the church is open.

The new AED is fitted with an alarm to notify if someone is opening the box, and the AED is fitted with a tracker so it can be traced if used.

AEDs are designed to be very simple to use. There are a number of videos on this site with information about this life saving device and the Heart of the Nation program. <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLrbTNDyBOXk2dkUv3rEIPPGrEY5Wa8DLA>

Thank you to David Porter and St. Matthew's Preschool for allowing this initiative and to Roderick Schuster for installing it. I am very happy to answer any questions you may have.

Belinda Schuster

[bdschuster@optusnet.com.au](mailto:bdschuster@optusnet.com.au)



# The Galston Concerts

## Sunday 28 April 2024



a pre-concert chat c. 1.40, the concert at 2  
(with players' relaxed comments) till 3.15ish,  
then a 'meet the musos' afternoon tea,  
all in **Galston Uniting Church**, 11 School Road, Galston

### Gold & Silver ~ Cello & Piano

Popular music by Classical greats: Bach, Beethoven, Brahms;  
toe-tapper 'encores' from Budapest, Barcelona & Buenos Aires  
(plus Chopin, Handel & Schubert - a Top Ten lineup) with ABC FM  
Classic 100's favourite instruments in 2023 ... Cello & Piano!



with **Zoltan Szabo** (cello) and  
**Erzsi Marosszeky** (piano),  
Australian-Hungarian  
husband-and-wife duo,  
Sydney-resident after Europe,  
UK & USA triumphs.

Bookings advised on [trybooking.com](https://trybooking.com)  
(search *Galston 28 April*)

**Cash-only** sales at the door on the day - \$40/30/10/12&u FREE  
Enquiries phone 9653-2039

Will you join with the Hills  
Community and March for Change?

# TOGETHER WE STAND AGAINST DOMESTIC AND GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

The Community March for Change will take place on 3 May 2024 at 7am, commencing at Castle Place (outside Castle Towers carpark).

The march will conclude at Castle Hill RSL with breakfast and speakers bringing us up-to-date on the incidence of DV and strategies developed to reduce its occurrence.

So gather up your family, your friends and your work mates and be part of the march for change in the Hills.

FOR CATERING PURPOSES PLEASE REGISTER FOR THIS FREE EVENT AT  
[HTTPS://EVENTS.HUMANITIX.COM/THE-HILLS-COMMUNITY-MARCH-FOR-CHANGE](https://events.humanitix.com/the-hills-community-march-for-change) OR SCAN THE QR CODE

Enquiries to [hillsagainstdv@gmail.com](mailto:hillsagainstdv@gmail.com) or call Bryan Mullan (0468 359 536) or Dr Michelle Byrne (0448 268 140)

Thanks to Castle Hill RSL, Castle Hills Police, Castle Towers, the Hills Soroptimists, Baulkham Hills Lions and the Hills Domestic Violence Prevention Network for being part of this important march for change.



**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](http://www.stmatthewsuniting.net.au) Click on the metal dove image / publications or find in recent posts.**