



st. matthew's
UNITING CHURCH
BAULKHAM HILLS
growing together



Weekly Newsletter

6 September 2026

Pentecost 15

Bible Readings

Romans 13: 8-14



Response after Bible Readings

Leader: In this we hear the word of God

Response: Thanks be to God who speaks to us as spirit.



twitch.tv

Livestreaming at

8am, 9.30am and
9am in January each
year

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

8am—Worship
Includes communion
Led by Jon Humphries

9.30am—Worship
Includes communion
Led by Jon Humphries

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

Followed by morning tea

6.45pm—Worship
Includes communion
Led by Jon Humphries

Thank you for worshipping with us today.

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

MONDAY 7 SEPTEMBER

9am-garage sale sorting &
pricing
lower hall

7.30pm—Christian Meditation

TUESDAY 8 SEPTEMBER

9am-2pm—Op Shop

9.30am-11am—Christian
Meditation

community room and church

WEDNESDAY 9 SEPTEMBER

9am-2pm—Op Shop

10am-12pm—Women's Fellowship
upstairs hall & Church

THURSDAY 10 SEPTEMBER

9am-2pm—Op Shop

FRIDAY 11 SEPTEMBER

No Scheduled Activities

SATURDAY 12 SEPTEMBER

12pm—Netball Presentation
day Church & hall

SUNDAY 13 SEPTEMBER

8am—Worship

9.30am—Worship
Followed by morning tea

KUCA—Preschool
Years K-2 & Years 3-8

11am—Leading in Services
Seminars

"Thinking about Preaching"

6.45pm—Worship
Community meal



MINISTER

REV JON HUMPHRIES

Email: jon@stmatthewsuniting.net.au
jhumphries@nswact.uca.org.au

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SARA WIENAND
SUNDAY am, MONDAY, TUESDAY
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CHURCH OFFICE HOURS 8AM-2.30PM
TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY

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Something to think about 6 September *Pentecost 15*

Revised Common Lectionary Readings:

Exodus 12:1-14

Psalms 149

Romans 13:8-14

Matthew 18:15-20

Forgiveness and Redemption

Humbly, I have to face the reality that I am someone who has committed a serious traffic offence. I have had the notification and have been to court and faced a magistrate because of the offence. The judge was fair and generous in reducing my licence suspension, but the offence still stands. Luckily the consequences of my offence did not lead to harm of others or myself, otherwise I might have become a criminal offender. However, having completed a Traffic Offender Intervention Program, I now appreciate more than ever the ripple effect of the consequences of what could have been in different circumstances in how much worse they could have been if others were injured. I also have come to fully appreciate the ripple effects that my punishment has on others in that it does not just inconvenience me, but my family, the Church and others. So, having accepted the wrong I did I see my licence suspension as a form of penance.

Penance is an imposed action or self-punishment done to show regret for a mistake or sin. It is done not to make up for it, and not with an aim to undo what has been done, but to show repentance and to facilitate learning and transformation. Penance can be

imposed by others or taken up by oneself. In the movies it can sometimes be trivialised to saying a few hail Mary's and the Our Father. Yet penance has a power to help in redemption and transformation when truly embraced.

For penance to be true penance and truly effective it must be accepted and embraced, not resented or held at arms-length if it is to work for redemption. Punishment can be a form of enforced penance. However, punishment is not penance if the person does not come to a mindset of repentance. If one doesn't see punishment as an opportunity for penance, then it is just punitive consequences with the aim to discourage further bad behaviour. For punishment to be penance, one has to be penitent – that is feeling remorse, shame, or regret for a misdeed and wanting to make amends. Therefore, penance is an accepting by oneself of a consequence of one's sin in order to participate in one's redemption.

The ripple-effect reality of my punishment and penance, though, is that others also have to bear the consequences of having my driving licence suspended. Because I cannot do some of the duties of my role as effectively and as easily as I would if I had the freedom of personal transportation, then people miss out on me being able to come and care for them. Because I'm not able to carry out some of my load in the family, others have to take up the load. Because I can't drive myself, I am having to rely on others and accept their generous help to do some things or to travel home at a reasonable hour at night. This help is offered in love and care but comes at an inconvenience and sacrifice for others. I am very grateful and thankful for the care and assistance. I am also very ashamed and feel a lot of guilt that this help shouldn't be needed if I had been more responsible.

Continued next page

This whole situation has led me to thinking about the issue of forgiveness for sin and the place of guilt and shame in it. I know that I have confessed my sin to God, to my family and to the Church. This sin was both my offence and the attitudes and behaviours which comprised it. Many people have been gracious in their response to what I have done the consequences imposed. I know that I have forgiveness from God, the Church and maybe even my family. I have even forgiven myself. Yet, the guilt and shame remain and certainly, in my case as an offender, I don't think that is a bad thing.

I want to make it clear and certain that no victim should feel blame, guilt or shame. That some victims do is a sad reality for many. They either feel it themselves as a sad result of the abuse or circumstances of what happened to them, or worse are made to feel that way due to the actions and attitudes of others. Here, self-forgiveness, even though it shouldn't be needed, can be a help. I am not a victim, though. Guilt and shame are justified in my case.

Every inconvenience that I experience as part of my penalty or punishment is warranted. The judge, in reducing my suspension, took into account my need for having a licence for work, but also upheld the three-week suspension as a deterrent both to myself and others, and that deterrent is the inconvenience of not being able to drive. This is on top of the fine already imposed. It is good then to lean into, not resent, the inconvenience and remember and learn from why it is there. It is good to be penitent in my repentance.

What is harder for me than inconvenience I am experiencing is when people are kind and help me and then have to bear the inconvenience themselves in trying to lessen it for me. The kindness of others awakens guilt and shame in me anew each time. These are also good things to lean into but are for me much harder to bear than me facing the inconvenience myself. I see part of my call in life and my being in ministry about being called to serve. Being served, and being served not out of my genuine need but out of the result of the consequences of punishment, is humbling. It is also hard when the kindness is offered but there is also a sense that the person partially resents helping, knowing that I'm to blame for the inconvenience to them. Again, this triggers a load of guilt and shame in me. I must accept people's resentment, even though they care, because it is truly fair and understandable that they feel that way.

Accepting and embracing guilt and shame as being justified and being part of the learning is part of penance for me.

So, forgiveness is powerful for offenders when it is appreciated and when it comes with a sense of repentance for the offence. Forgiveness is not forgetting. Forgiveness does not undo to the guilt and shame. It might help make it manageable and bearable in time. However, the guilt and shame I feel is part of remembering, and the remembering is part of learning, and the learning comes from remorse and repentance. Penance can be a tool of repentance. Repentance is also always ongoing. It is never a once-off action, because to stop repenting is to turn back to what led to, and what was, the sin or offence. Have come to believe that guilt and shame should always remain to some degree.

My hope in this time of punishment and penance is that once my suspension has been served the guilt and shame might never go away but might come to sit in the back of my awareness rather than the forefront of my consciousness. This is what self-forgiveness means for me. I will let go of having to hold onto the guilt and shame in the forefront of my thinking as part of my penance. Having done my penance, I hope to let the guilt and shame move to the back of my mind. In the meantime, I continue to learn to appreciate the bitter taste of humble pie and discomfort that comes with penance leading to redemption.

Having been part of the Church for decades and praying for forgiveness and teaching and talking about sin, repentance and forgiveness, I am continuing to learn what faith and grace are about. At the moment it is a hard but important lesson. Yet, it makes me think that I perhaps could have learnt it better before now. It's good that I am learning not only about grace, but about the power of penance in redemption. I'm sorry it took what it did to bring me to it. My hope is that in sharing this, you might be able to think about your faith and God's grace and do the little stepping stones of repentance which come with walking with Jesus and growing in faith, rather than falling deeply like I did and having to learn to crawl out of the pit using the ladder of penance.

God bless.

Jon

PEOPLE NEWS



Peter Duncum
Belinda Schuster
Vivienne Strong
Graeme Gordon
Blake Wood

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

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

6 — 12 September

Benin, Ivory Coast, Togo

weekly SYNOD SPOTLIGHT

Uniting Church Synod of NSW and the ACT

Uniting Church Synod Spotlight Newsletter

For (28 August 2026) please see link to Synod weekly:

[What is that in your hand?](#)

ROSTERS

Worship Rosters for 8am and 9.30am,
for **September, October, November 2026**
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 Lynn in 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.*



Garage



**1st Saturday of the month
9am-12pm**

Upcoming dates

- **5 September**
- **3 October**
- **7 November**

Pre-loved
Household items,
Electrical, Toys & Books
(Fiction, Non-fiction & children's books)

St. Matthew's Lower hall

Combined Morning tea @9am

Sunday 27 September

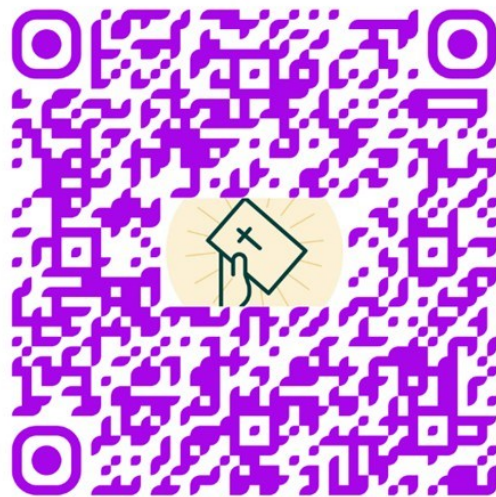
Please let Sara know if you can
bring something to share



We Would
Love You
to



To Preach or
Lead the liturgy



Please let Jon know that you have
signed up if you have not led
before
jon@stmatthewsuniting.net.au

**The St. Matthew's Uniting Church weekly Newsletter is available to view every
Thursday 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.**

Leading in Services Seminars

11am after morning services

13 September – Thinking About Preaching

20 September – Praying With the People – Leading Intercessory Prayer

27 September – Leading Liturgy

NEW TIME



THE HILLS

FAIR TRADE

market

10am–2pm

ST PAUL'S CASTLE HILL – 421 OLD NORTHERN RD

gifts - clothing - food - toys - homewares - jewellery

Sat 5th
Sep

*Together we walk.
Together we change lives.*

WALK TO BREAK THE SILENCE. WALK FOR CHANGE.

COMMUNITY WALK TO SUPPORT

RUN AGAINST VIOLENCE

In 2026, the Hills Domestic Violence Prevention Network is walking alongside hundreds of teams across Australia in the **Run Against Violence challenge** – inspired by Kirrily Dear's 1,300km run from Broken Hill to Sydney. Every step helps raise awareness, support **NAPCAN** and stand united against **domestic and family violence**.



IN SUPPORT OF



WALK
TOGETHER



STAND AGAINST
DOMESTIC &
FAMILY VIOLENCE



MAKE A
DIFFERENCE

COMMUNITY WALKS – EVERYONE WELCOME!



SATURDAY
5 SEPTEMBER 2026



SUNDAY
13 SEPTEMBER 2026



4:00PM START
Walk takes less
than 1 hour



PEEL ROAD, CRESTWOOD
Adjacent to the
Guides Hall



APPROX. 3KM
Flat, off road
& family friendly



**YOUNG & OLD
ALL WELCOME**
Bring your family,
friends, school,
workplace or group.



**NO REGISTRATION
NO COST
JUST TURN UP**
No obligations – just
your support.



**TOGETHER,
WE CAN MAKE
A DIFFERENCE**
Let's take a stand
for a safer, kinder
community.



**WEAR PURPLE
OR YOUR
RAV MERCHANDISE**
Show your support
and stand together.

**BE PART
OF THE
CHANGE.
SEE YOU
THERE!**

Want to join our team for
the full 19-day challenge?
Or have questions?

✉ hillsagainstdv@gmail.com
✉ admin@fortitudeminds.com.au

Want to start your own team or
learn more about Run Against Violence?

Visit the Broken Hill to Sydney
Team Challenge website:
🌐 www.runagainstvviolence.com



Parramatta Nepean Presbytery
The Uniting Church in Australia NSW & ACT Synod

Closure Service & Celebration

Join us as we celebrate nearly 50 years of Parramatta Nepean Presbytery, give thanks for our shared story, and look ahead together with hope.



Sat 19 Sept 2026 | 10am

**Centre for Ministry
16 Masons Drive, North Parramatta**

4:23 pm Tue 25 Aug

67%

Meditatio Talks Series

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Meditatio Talks Series 2009 C - Release date 1 September 2009

In Times of Anxiety by John Main OSB

06 The Path to Truth

meditation as practised by the early Desert monks and
from all walks
of economic crisis. In Fr John's words:
of many men and women are discovering that their spirit
is stifled. Meditation is the way of making contact with our
own spirit, and in that contact finding everything in our
experience coming into harmony, judged and aligned on
God. The stresses, the challenges, all remain, but they are
powerless to defeat us. We learn in our stillness in God that
in him we have all things that are necessary."

0:00

In Times of Anxiety
JOHN MAIN OSB
John Main OSB (1926-1982) a Benedictine monk of Ealing Abbey, London, rediscovered the Christian tradition of meditation as practised by the early Desert monks and taught it as a spiritual discipline for people from all walks of life. This selection of talks addresses the human predicament in a time of economic crisis. In Fr John's words: "So many men and women are discovering that their spirit is stifled. Meditation is the way of making contact with our own spirit, and in that contact finding everything in our experience coming into harmony, judged and aligned on God. The stresses, the challenges, all remain, but they are powerless to defeat us. We learn in our stillness in God that in him we have all things that are necessary."

In Times of Anxiety by John Main OSB
Meditatio Talks Series 2009 C Jul-Sep

i The tracks on this playlist are intended solely for personal non-commercial use. By downloading tracks from this playlist you agree to use the downloaded files only for personal, non-commercial use. This resource is provided free. If you would like to support our mission to communicate and nurture meditation in the Christian tradition as passed on through the teaching of John Main OSB, please [contribute here](#).

01 Spiritual Growth

02 Making Contact with our ow...

03 In Reverence in our Hearts

04 Commitment to Reality

05 Peace

06 The Path to Truth

2026 SEASON OF CREATION

Today, 1 September, marks the beginning of [the 2026 Season of Creation](#), as Christians around the world gather in prayer, reflection and action to celebrate God's gift of creation and renew their commitment to care for our common home.

To mark the beginning of the season, Uniting Church President Rev Charissa Suli has released a video message inviting the Church to respond with faith, justice and hope.

[President's Season of Creation message – Uniting Church Australia](#)

This year's Season of Creation is centred on the theme 'Living Water', inspired by Ezekiel 47:9 and 12. In the prophet's vision, a river flows from God's sanctuary, bringing healing, restoration and new life wherever it goes.

For Rev Suli, this vision speaks powerfully into a world experiencing environmental degradation, climate change and displacement.

"Amid devastation and displacement, Ezekiel sees a river flowing from the presence of God, bringing healing, renewal, and life," Rev Suli says.

She also invited the Church to hold in prayer communities affected by environmental disasters, including the people of Nepal and Tibet following devastating floods, as well as communities across Asia, the Pacific and around the world living with the realities of a changing climate.

The season's symbol, 'Immersion in Living Water', encourages Christians to step into God's life-giving river and depend fully on God's grace. As recipients of this living water, Christians are called to become channels of hope and renewal, allowing God's love to flow through them into the world.

Rev Suli highlighted the particular responsibility of the Uniting Church in Australia, where care for creation is closely connected with the Church's commitment to First Nations justice.

"Here in Australia, our response begins on country," she says. "Our covenant with Congress reminds us that justice for creation and justice for First Nations people are inseparable."

With Australia holding the COP31 presidency, Rev Suli also reflected on the importance of listening to Pacific neighbours and advocating for climate justice. She will journey with Pacific churches in Tuvalu and Fiji in the lead-up to COP31, listening to their leadership and calls for climate justice.

Across the Uniting Church, work is already underway through the Assembly, synods, agencies, congregations and communities to strengthen commitments to care for creation, including action towards net zero emissions and solidarity with vulnerable communities.

Season of Creation runs from 1 September to 4 October, incorporating the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, the Feast of Creation and the Feast of St Francis of Assisi.

Rev Suli invites the Church to use this season to "pray, learn, act, and advocate", trusting that the living water of Christ will renew us and flow through us, bringing healing and hope to all creation.

Season of Creation 2026 Prayer



LIVING WATER

Holy God, whose Spirit hovered over the waters at the beginning, we gather as part of your community of all creation, thirsty for your grace. We give thanks for the gift of water, the veins of our common home, that sustains the cedar and the whale, the pasture and the city. We are grateful for the local waters that nourish our homelands and our fellow creatures. We give thanks that in your well-watered garden, every drop is a sacred testament to your love.

Yet, we confess that we have treated this gift as a mere commodity. We have choked the seas with our waste and watched the warming tides rise in judgment.

We lament the cracked earth of the drought-stricken and the salty tears of the climate refugee. Melt our frozen hearts, O God, and let the waters of repentance flow.

Lord of all Life, you promised that wherever the river flows, everything shall live.

Stir in us a calling to care for the waters — to protect the watershed, defend the rights of water, and honor the dignity of the thirsty. May your Word be a spring within us, gushing forth for the healing of the nations.

May God our Father who brought water from the rock sustain us in the desert. May Christ our Lord who is Living Water refresh us for the work of restoration. And may the Holy Spirit carry us on currents of grace until justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

Amen.

DISCLAIMER: This version of the Season of Creation Prayer Card is a non-official translation by Uniting Church in Australia. For any further questions or concerns regarding translations, please contact [Insert contact information of the organization or person that translated]. The Season of Creation Steering Committee is not responsible for issues with translation.

St Matthew's Social Action Missional Ministry Team

How doing little things makes a big difference.

Human Rights Watch – New Immersive Documentary Centres Human Rights in the Climate Crisis

A new immersive documentary (using virtual reality headsets), spotlighting the climate crisis in the Pacific nation of Solomon Islands, will premiere at the Venice International Film Festival from 2nd to 12th September 2026. Academy Award-nominated actor and human rights advocate Mark Ruffalo has joined forces with Human Rights Watch to narrate the extended reality experience, “Solwata.” Solwata means ‘Salt Water’.

The documentary tells the story of the island communities of Walande, Ngongosila, and Kwai in the southwestern Pacific Ocean, as they confront the difficult questions of whether and how to relocate their homes and lives to the mainland due to devastating tides and rising sea levels.

“The first time I put on the headset, I felt like I was spending time with this community, not just learning about it,” said Ruffalo. “These families are deeply connected to their land and seeing them forced to leave it because of climate change is heartbreaking. This is a global issue, and many of us don’t know how it’s impacting the communities living on the front lines. They are usually remote and outside our media and storytelling. ‘Solwata’ brings audiences closer to people whose lives have already been transformed by climate change.”

This is the first such project for Human Rights Watch. It builds on the 2025 report, “There’s Just No More Land: Community-Led Planned Relocation as Last Resort Adaptation in Solomon Islands,” which documents how rising seas, coastal erosion, flooding, and increasingly severe storms forced the Walande community to relocate from its ancestral island home after decades of attempting to adapt in place.

Following its Venice premiere, ‘Solwata’ will travel to advocacy spaces and public forums, including the annual United Nations climate conference (COP31) in Türkiye, to engage policymakers, funders, journalists, and advocates in conversations about climate adaptation, planned relocation, displacement, and human rights.

Link to the full Human Rights Watch article: https://www.hrw.org/news/2026/07/15/immersive-documentary-centers-human-rights-in-climate-crisis?utm_medium=email

Link to the Human Rights Watch report: <https://www.hrw.org/report/2025/03/17/theres-just-no-more-land/community-led-planned-relocation-last-resort-adaptation>

Blessings,

Amanda

Social Action Ministry Team (SAMT)

To ask about joining the Social Action Ministry Team at St. Matthew's, email Alexander on alexander.lawless7@gmail.com Our next meeting will be on Tuesday 27th October 2026 at 7pm in the Lower Church Hall. To receive a copy of the weekly SAMT News email Amanda at agcm1960@gmail.com

Ness Williams-Henke and Jon are back with their all-age / intergen podcast, 'On the Way with Ness and Jon.' It has a new look to make it more appealing to all ages. This has taken some time to get set up. The latest season is ready for Pentecost and After Pentecost, looking at the Fruit of the Spirit.

Watch on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/@OnTheWaywithNessandJon>

or listen wherever you listen to podcasts

LET'S CHAT ABOUT LIFE AND FAITH



On The Way with Ness and Jon

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On The Way is all about having great conversations about life and faith. Jon and ...more

 Subscribed 



Why Is Love A Fruit Of The Spirit?



What Is The Fruit Of The Spirit?

Please see QR Codes for links for YouTube,
Facebook & Twitch

