



Come and enjoy the Christmas Season with us @ St. Matthew's

Remembrance and Thanksgiving Service Monday 12 December 7.30pm

A service specifically designed for all those who experience a sense of loss at Christmas, especially those for who, this is the first Christmas without a loved one.

Carols Services

Sunday 18 December 8am and 9:30am

Join our voices together to sing many traditional and contemporary carols.

Children's Christmas Eve Celebration Saturday 24 December 5pm

A chance for young children to be part of the Christmas story. A great family time!

Christmas Eve Service

Saturday 24 December 11.15pm

An excellent way to celebrate Christmas in a relaxed family atmosphere with music, a relevant message and candles representing Christ's light in our world.

Christmas Day Worship Sunday 25 December 9am

Celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ with a Christmas message and carols.



O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Let Advent be Advent!



The Christmas decorations have long been up in the shops. The peculiar mix of Christmas symbols – man-gers, stars, Santas, reindeers, snow, the colours of red and green, decorated trees and lights (and singa-long performances of *Love Actually*)– are all in place. The very act of such symbolism creates expectation and sense of anticipation. But, of course, Christmas does not come into season properly until 25 December. We begin December in Advent and we should let Advent be Advent before we observe a premature Christmas: one might say our cultural practice is often of such a nature that the infant Jesus might well have needed to be placed into neo-natal intensive care unit.

The Advent season is not simply an extension of Christmas. The two are closely related but Advent is a time when we reflect on Christ's first coming (as an infant) and how we prepare for him second coming into our lives now and at the end of time. It is as such a time of hope and all those other great themes of the Advent candles – love, peace, justice. But these themes are not yet fulfilled. The Advent season carries also a tone of lament which expresses what is not yet.

One contemporary Advent song is by **The Brilliance**, 'Hope'. The lyrics express how 'We will find our hope (peace) in You'. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ULyroZQPJuk>

The most well-known and performed Advent carol is 'O come, O come, Emmanuel'. It reaches well back into the Christian past – back to the monastic life in the 8th and 9th centuries. Its lyrics were originally in Latin. It was sung in monasteries 7 days before Christmas Eve in an antiphonal way: one set of views with a response from a second set. It was translated into English in 1851. It is particularly apt for this year in the lectionary cycle: Matthew is the only gospel that refers to Jesus as Emmanuel.

Versions of O Come, O Come Emmanuel

Anna Hawkins (sung in Israel) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MD-jBLZSZNU>

Sister Sinjin <https://open.spotify.com/track/1VMRccepvi6uBaNfeCYimD?autoplay=true>

Cee Cee Williams <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ly3xYL2RbAQ>

Enya <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=01BcaggibDw>

The Piano Guys <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iO7ySn-Swwc>

Chris Tomlin <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UH7asSGxAxA>



Christmas

Our Christmas worship this year features the Matthew account. It is rather different from Luke's version. You might like to do a quick check and see how many of the following are in Matthew's account – shepherds? a census? the journey to Bethlehem? The answer of course is none!

The focus of Matthew's Christmas account is on the dreams of Joseph and the naming of Jesus – and, here is where the link is made back to Advent. In Matthew there are two names – Jesus, (he will save his people from their sins) and Emmanuel, (God with us). In Luke the birth is presented in a way in which the infant Jesus is to be a light to the Gentiles and the saviour (of the world). In Matthew the Christmas story, through this naming, sets the scene for a story which is designed to show how, in Christ, God is with us. And, so at its beginning, we have the name Emmanuel (God is with us) and at its end the risen Christ declares 'I am with you to the close of the age'.

That little word 'with' is so important in Matthew. In this Advent season, as week to make ready for Christmas, why not reflect on how God is with us, in Christ, in all the ups and downs of life. The Advent carol 'O come, O come Emmanuel' is a celebration of the one who comes to be with us.

Christmas in Song:

Ever since that first manger scene created by Francis of Assisi (1223) Christmas has been associated with more joyful music.

Chris Tomlin Adore

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=br-Q1zVcUc>

What child is this?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DzDxDv2WLMc>

He shall reign for evermore

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R-P8pUCV5MI>

Flashmob. O come all ye faithful

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XI2c9ypr4U>

The Priests O Holy Night

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OX8NkTERktI>

Australia's First Christmas

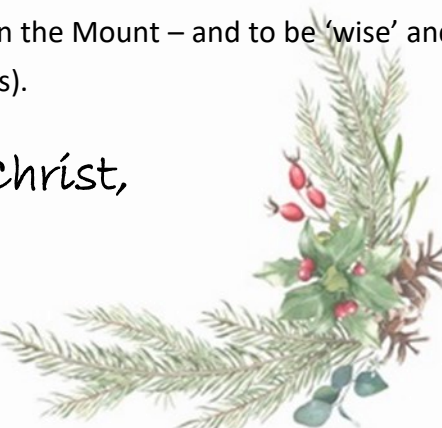
According to historical records the first Christmas in Australia was celebrated in December of 1788, almost one full year after their arrival at Sydney Cove. Reverend Johnson conducted services for Governor Arthur Phillips and his officers before they enjoyed Christmas supper. Unfortunately for the convicts they only had their daily rations of bread and water. But the prison guards did lessen the sentence for one unlucky fellow who had stolen a bag of flour named Michael Dennison. He only got 150 lashings by the whip instead of the usual 200.

And into the new year 'with' Matthew

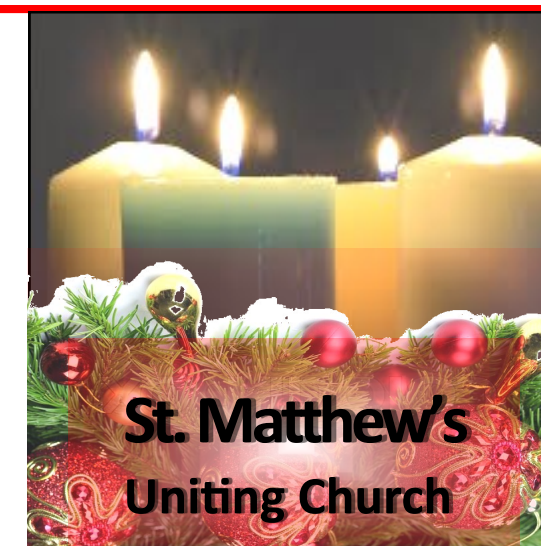
In the new year we will explore what it means for Christ to be 'with' us through the distinctive themes of Matthew. Prepare yourself for Matthew 25:31-46, the Sermon on the Mount – and to be 'wise' and 'just' (or righteous).

Yours in Christ,

Clive



You are invited to a Service of **Remembrance** and **Thanksgiving** Monday 12th December @ 7.30pm



A service specifically designed for all those who experience a sense of loss at Christmas, especially those for whom this is the first Christmas without a loved one.

During the service we intend to read out the names of people we have known and loved but see no longer, and whose absence is particularly felt at Christmas. People will be invited to light a candle in memory of their loved one after the names are read out. Please contact us with any name(s) you would like included.

The names may be phoned or emailed through to the church prior to 12th December.

We also invite you to bring a card, item or memento to place on the Tree of Remembrance. This tree has been supplied by the Baulkham Hills Council and after the service the tree will be planted, together with the messages etc., somewhere in the community.

Please contact us if you would like further information, and know that we are thinking of you at this time of year.

st. matthew's
UNITING CHURCH
BAULKHAM HILLS
growing together



St. Matthew's Baulkham Hills Uniting Church PO Box 773, Baulkham Hills 1755
Cnr Edgar and Charles Streets Phone 9686 3003
and St Matthews Ln office@stmatthewsuniting.net.au



10am until 12 noon

Coffee and Discovery will continue in 2023 on the first Thursday of the Month beginning in March.

All Welcome.

These informal gatherings include devotions, morning tea and guest speakers.



Help required to
teach SRE at
Jasper Road on
Tuesday
Mornings in
2023

Speak to Daniel Gibb for more details

From St Matthew's Finance Committee "Raise the Roof"

As a church family, we need to find \$1670 per month to repay the loan for our much needed new roof. This means that if 42 people give an extra \$10 a week (specifically for the roof), we will meet this expense.

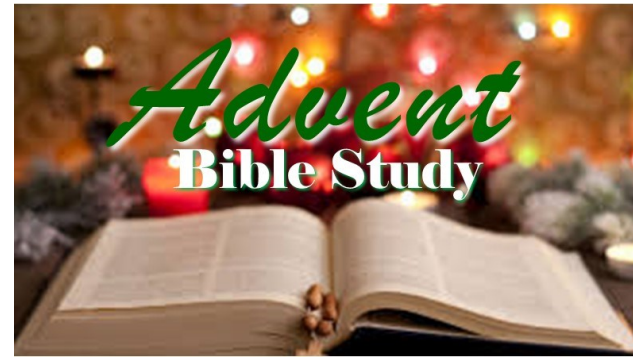
Money can be donated via:

- Push Pay, using the category for the roof
- Direct debit, with the deposit marked as 'roof' or 'for the roof'
- In a separate envelope marked 'roof' with your regular envelope offering

Also, we would like to send our thanks and appreciation to Daniel and his team for all of their hard work with the very successful Trivia Night. They raised over \$2000. It was such a great night and it was so good to see so many happy people in the hall after several years of covid shutdowns.

Best wishes

Dom Schuster and Alastair Burn



Advent Studies for this year

The coming Season of Advent in the Christian calendar commences on Sunday 27th November. We traverse from a gospel year in Luke into a year featuring Matthew.

This means that we move from a year featuring gentiles and the needy to a focus on Jewish people, the chosen people of God as viewed by Matthew.

We will be engaged in Three studies this advent, at weekly intervals.

The first will be led by Clive Pearson who will provide us with much food for thought. He will draw comparisons between the Advent story of Christmas as presented by both Matthew and Luke and provide some clues about what will follow in Matthew as we explore this Gospel in 2023.

Drawing on the information provided by Clive, the following two weeks of the study will be led by Michael Strong and will first involve reflections on the events leading up to the birth of Jesus. The second will consider the entry of Herod and horrid actions he inflicted on male children in Bethlehem and the flight of Jesus and his family to Egypt. This exploration will continue through to the exchanges between John the Baptist and Jesus.

The studies advertised above will be held at the following times:

Onsite at the church at 10.30am

Tuesday — 29 November

Tuesday — 6 & 13 December

Or ZOOM online 7.30pm

Wednesday — 30 November

Wednesday — 7 & 14 December

Zoom link:



All are welcome
at
Coffee & Discovery

Guest Musician—David Short

"Relaxing With Music After A Difficult Year"
Presented by David Short

Come along and enjoy - All Welcome!

Our final meeting for the year
will be held on
Thursday 1st December

Following the presentation, there will be a bowl in the foyer for anyone who wishes to make a donation to The Royal Flying Doctor Service.

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

***** ALL WELCOME *****



St. Matthew's O P - S H O P

9am—2pm

Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday
& First Saturday of the month

9am—12pm

Please note that St. Matthew's
Op Shop closes over the Christmas
and New year period.

The *last shopping day* for 2022 is
Thursday 15 December.

Re-opens Tuesday **31 January 2023**
at 9am to 2pm. Please hold on to your
donations until we re open .

CHRISTIAN MEDITATION



You are invited to come along to the church on

Tuesdays at 9.30am—10.30am

All are welcome

Christian meditation continues throughout
the summer school holidays.

It may be a good time to experience what it is
to meditate in the Christian tradition.

www.WCCM.org

www.christianmeditationaustralia.org

Katherine Pedersen. Facilitator of the
Tuesday 9.30am sessions and for
information. kathped56@gmail.com



Thursday 1st December

9am-2pm

and

Saturday 3rd December

9am-12pm

Christmas Items,
Electrical, Toys & Books
(Fiction, Non-fiction & Children's Books)

St. Matthew's Lower Hall

Women's Fellowship
Wednesday 14th December
@ 10am

"Christmas"
Please join us



Enquiries: Barbara McIntosh



1st, 3rd & 5th Wednesdays
of the month in the upstairs church hall.
10am to 12noon
Bring your craft along to do.
Share fun and fellowship with other crafty ladies.
Morning Tea supplied. Enquiries: Jane Cole

The recycled Christmas tree Project



The recycled Christmas tree
@ St. Matthew's
Uniting Church Baulkham Hills

offers us a chance to do our bit as a community
in recycling our 10c cans and bottles and
providing a gift for children who are victims of
domestic violence.
Place your cans in the marked containers which
will be located at both entrances of the Church.
From there they will be collected and recycled
on a weekly basis.

For any enquiries please contact
Marijke Prinsloo: 0423641477

MEN'S MORNING TEA
Wednesday 21st December
10am to 12noon
Mckel's Café, Shop 14, Circa
Boulevard Bella Vista.

Enquiries
Alan
Wright **Every third Wednesday of the month**

A TIME OF GIVING FOOD

Rev Bill Crews Foundation

The Bill Crews Foundation is in need of these items for their food Hampers:

- Rice
- Dry Pasta
- Noodles packets
- Noodle cups
- Pull Ring Tinned soup
- Pull Ring Tinned fish
- Pull Ring Tinned baked beans
- Pull Ring Tinned spaghetti
- Powdered soup
- Muesli bars
- Cereal
- Long life milk
- Tea/coffee
- Up and Go

Please donate to the St. Matthew's collection for the Bill Crews Foundation Christmas Food Appeal.
Please leave items in the containers in the lower foyer.
BY 4th December. Entrance on Edgar St.

MONTHLY ACTIVITIES and REGULAR GROUPS

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP.....

Second Wednesday of the month
Next event: 14th December at 10am

Enquiries: Dulcie Duncum
Meet in the upstairs hall and church

MEN'S MORNING TEA.....

Meet 3rd Wednesday of each month.
Next Event: 21st December at 10am

Contact: Alan Wright
Mckel's Café, Shop 14, Circa Boulevard Bella Vista. We are allocated external seating to ensure compliance with current Covid restrictions.

CARE & PRAYER.....

Will meet again in 2023. Please standby for further details.
in church and Community room @ 10am
All welcome
In Recess for December & January

Contact: Rosemary Sexton

CHRISTIAN MEDITATION

Tuesdays in the Church
9.30am-10.30am

All welcome.

For more information or to express your interest in attending please contact
Katherine Pedersen 043 777 2011.

OP-SHOP.....

Open Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday 9am-2pm and
1st Saturday of the month 9-12pm
Pre-loved clothes & accessories, Books, Haberdashery, Bric-a-brac.

In Stitches.....Craft group

1st, 3rd & 5th Wednesdays of the month in the upstairs hall @10am.

YOUNG FAMILIES

KUCA.....

@ 9.30am service during term for Preschool, Years K-2, and Years 3-8

YOUTH and YOUNG ADULTS

Fusion Youth Group.....

Years 3 to 8. Meet Friday evenings at the church during term time. 5pm-7pm
Contact Daniel Gibb
daniel@stmatthewsuniting.net.au

THRIVE BIBLE STUDY.....

year 11 up to the age of 25.
Fortnightly
Contact Daniel Gibb
daniel@stmatthewsuniting.net.au

SHINE.....

is a special needs social group for all ages from high school up.
Meets Sundays fortnightly for dinner & fun.
We are still collecting in 2022 for their shoebox appeal supporting a school in the Philippines.
Donations of small educational items, soaps & combs are greatly appreciated.
Please place donations in the box provided at the top of the stairs in the church foyer.

If you are interested in any of the above groups or activities please contact the church office.

The Ministry team and office staff

wish you and your family a safe and Holy Christmas and a Happy New Year.



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

PRE-SCHOOL DIRECTOR 9639 8570
SONALI WANIGESEKERA
PO BOX 321 BAULKHAM HILLS 2153
EMAIL: director@stmatthewsps.net.au



Christmas Bowl envelopes are available as you enter and leave the services from Sunday 27 November.

There are three simple ways to give;

1. Go to the website and donate directly.
2. If you want to give by cheque or credit card, please fill in the details in the envelope and **PUT IT IN THE POST**.
3. Cash to Christmas Bowl person at the back of the church. (if you want a receipt – put the cash in the envelope, fill out the form inside and hand it to the Christmas Bowl person so that a receipt can be mailed to you).

Christmas Bowl Coordinator: Dean Drayton

VISIT: actforpeace.org.au/christmasbowl

International humanitarian agency of the National Council of Churches in Australia. ABN 86 619 970 188

Giving From time to time, we receive questions on how someone can make donations to St. Matthew's Uniting Church Baulkham Hills, to further support God's work through the Ministry team and congregation, in the wider Community.
To assist with this, we have set up the following account with Uniting Financial Services:
Account Name: Baulkham Hills Uniting Church
– Giving Direct
634634
BSB: Account Number: 100025924
If required a Direct Debit Request Form is available in the foyer or speak with Barry Gregory.
For your support of God's work here at St. Matthew's, a big thank you!

To include your activity in the combined
February
In Focus
St. Matthew's
Monthly Newsletter
please send details to Robyn and Lynn in the Church Office by **15 January**.
Thank you

Maintaining contact with you and your family is very important to us.
We would be grateful if you change your address, phone/mobile or email details that you let us know by phoning and leaving a message on 9686 3003

Calendar of Events for December 2022

School Holidays

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Sunday

			<p>1</p> <p>9am-2pm—Op Shop open & Mini Mart</p>  <p>10am-12pm—Coffee & Discovery Guest Musician: David Short upstairs hall & Church</p>	<p>2</p> <p>12pm—upstairs hall in use by Preschool</p> <p>11.30—Preschool in Church for Nativity story with Daniel</p>  <p>7pm-9pm ALIVE Youth Group Meeting Offsite</p>	<p>3</p> <p>9am-12pm—Op Shop & Mini Mart in lower hall</p> 	<p>4</p>  <p>Election of Elders at all services 8am—Worship includes Communion 9.30am—Worship includes Communion KUCA Preschool, Years K-2 & Years 3-8 6.45pm—Worship includes Communion</p>
<p>5</p> <p>9am—Sorting & Pricing for Op Shop lower hall</p>	<p>6</p> <p>9am-2pm—Op Shop open</p> <p>9.30-11am—Christian Meditation in the Church</p>  <p>10.30am—Advent Studies with Mike Week 2 in the church</p>	<p>7</p> <p>9am-2pm—Op Shop open</p> <p>10am-12pm—In Stitches upstairs hall FINAL for 2022</p>  <p>7.30pm—Advent Studies with Mike Week 2 on ZOOM</p> 	<p>8</p> <p>9am-2pm—Op Shop open</p> 	<p>9</p> <p>5pm-7pm FUSION Youth Group Meeting Offsite</p>	<p>10</p> <p>No Scheduled Activities</p>	<p>11</p>  <p>8am—Worship</p> <p>9.30am—Worship KUCA Preschool, Years K-2 & Years 3-8 5pm—Shine 6.45pm—Worship</p>
<p>12</p> <p>9am—Sorting & Pricing for Op Shop lower hall</p>	<p>13</p> <p>9am-2pm—Op Shop open</p> <p>9.30-11am—Christian Meditation in the Church</p>  <p>10.30am—Advent Studies with Mike FINAL in the church</p> <p>7.30pm—Thrive in lower hall</p>	<p>14</p> <p>9am-2pm—Op Shop open</p> <p>10am-12noon—Women's Fellowship in the upstairs hall and church</p>  <p>7.30pm—Advent Studies with Mike FINAL on ZOOM</p> 	<p>15</p> <p>9am-2pm—Op Shop open FINAL for the year</p> 	<p>16</p> <p>No Scheduled Activities</p>	<p>17</p> <p>2pm-4pm—Church and Community Room in use</p>	<p>18</p>  <p>8am—Worship</p> <p>9am—Worship @ the Willow's</p> <p>9.30am—Worship KUCA Preschool, Years K-2 & Years 3-8 6.45pm—Worship</p>
<p>19</p> <p>9am—Sorting & Pricing for Op Shop lower hall</p>	<p>20</p> <p>9.30-11am—Christian Meditation in the Church</p> 	<p>21</p> <p>10am-12noon—Men's Morning Tea at McKels Café Bella Vista. See back page for details</p> 	<p>22</p> <p>12pm—upstairs hall in use by Preschool</p>	<p>23</p> <p>No Scheduled Activities</p> 	<p>24</p> <p>Christmas Eve</p> <p>5pm Children's Service 11.15pm Service</p> 	<p>25</p> <p>Christmas Day</p> <p>9am Service</p> 
<p>26</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p>	
<p>Public Holiday</p>	<p>Public Holiday</p>	<p>Church Office Closed</p> <p>No scheduled events</p>	<p>Church Office Closed</p> <p>No scheduled events</p>	<p>Church Office Closed</p> <p>No scheduled events</p>	<p>Church Office Closed</p> <p>No scheduled events</p>	

Calendar of Events for January 2023

School Holidays

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Sunday

30	31 9am-2pm—Op Shop REOPENS FIRST DAY FOR 2023 10.30am—Christian Meditation in the Church	st. matthew's UNITING CHURCH BAULKHAM HILLS growing together	 God's Natural			1 9am—Summer Worship includes Holy Communion KUCA in recess 6.45pm—Worship includes Holy Communion
2 Public Holiday New Years Day	3 Church Office Closed 10.30am—Christian Meditation in the Church	4 Church Office Closed	5 Church Office Closed	6 Church Office Closed	7 No Scheduled Activities	8 9am— Summer Worship KUCA in recess 9am—Worship @ the Willow's 6.45pm—Worship
9 9am—Church Office Reopens	10 10.30am—Christian Meditation in the Church	11 Women's Fellowship upstairs hall and church	12 No Scheduled Activities	13 No Scheduled Activities	14 No Scheduled Activities	15 9am— Summer Worship KUCA in recess 6.45pm—Worship
16 No Scheduled Activities	17 9.30am—Christian Meditation in the Church	18 10am-12noon—Men's Morning Tea at McKels Café Bella Vista. See back page for details	19 	20 No Scheduled Activities	21 No Scheduled Activities	22 9am—Summer Worship KUCA in recess 6.45pm—Worship
23 No Scheduled Activities	24 10.30am—Christian Meditation in the Church	25 No Scheduled Activities	26 Australia Day Public Holiday	27 No Scheduled Activities	28 No Scheduled Activities	29 9am—Summer Worship KUCA in recess 6.45pm—Worship