

The Gospel of Matthew

Now that Christmas has come and gone Easter looms. This year the journey through Lent towards the cross and beyond is done in the company of Matthew. In the coming weeks why not spend some dedicated time and read through this gospel from beginning to end. You could do that in several ways.

The most obvious is simply to read it as it is in your preferred version from beginning to end. Along the way you might like to make a note of your favourite passages and perhaps reflect on why you selected those ones. Another route is what is called *lectio divina*—the divine reading. What happens here is that

you select a passage and read it slowly through several times: you can insert your own name into the text that you are reading. -for example, blessed are you, N, when or, come to me, all who are heavy laden, N, and I will give you, N, rest.

Or you might like to try and find out more about why Matthew wrote this gospel in the way that he did. That way of coming at the text invites us to become explorers. It helps us become more aware of the kind of church /community for which this gospel was written.

- •The gospel of Matthew appears first in the order of the New Testment books. For many centuries it was regarded as the first gospel to be written down. Through literary and historical inquiry it is now believed that Mark was written first and Matthew second.
- •Of all the gospels Matthew is the most 'Jewish'. That can be seen in a number of different ways.
- ♦ The genealogy goes back to Abraham (rather than Adam);
- the word for genealogy in Matthew 1:1 links us back to the very first verse of Genesis;

- for the birth narrative features Joseph who dreams (compared with the Joseph in Genesis);
- the flight into Egypt and the return to Nazareth mirrors the people of Israel's captivity in Egypt and there escape into the wilderness and coming to the promised land;
- the sermon on the mount mirrors how Moses goes up Mt Sinai to receive the ten commandments;
- the gospel is divided up into 5 separate blocks of teaching that mirrors the way in which the Torah (the Pentateuch) composes 5 books in the Hebrew Scriptures;

- ♦ there are many references which speak of how something that has happened fulfils the scriptures.
- •The gospel emphasizes the importance of wisdom and righteousness;
- •It is the only gospel that refers to 'the church'.
- •The birth narrative emphasizes the names of Jesus (he will save his people from their sins) and Emmanuel (God with us); it closes with the words 'I will be with you to the close of the age'.
- •It is the only gospel with the sermon on the mount (Luke has a sermon on the plain).

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The dates and times are still to be determined. So much depends upon other events in the church calendar being settled first. There will be a 2 week study on:

i) Matthew loses 'priority':

why is it no longer regarded as the first gospel to be written down.

ii) Matthew's account of Jesus teaching. How does it differ from other gospels? What are the main ideas / themes? What are the implications for us today?

Ash Wednesday 22 February 2023 at 7.30pm





The season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday: it follows on from Shrove Tuesday, also known as 'Mardi Gras' (which means 'Fat Tuesday'). It is a time (traditionally) of fasting, penitence and reflection.

One of the customs of Ash Wednesday are church services where those who attend receive a mark of ashes in the form of the cross on their foreheads. The placing of the ashes is accompanied by one of two sentences: 'Repent, and believe in the Gospel' and 'Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return'. The standard practice for the ashes to be prepared by burning the palm leaves from the preceding year's Palm Sunday service.

One of the traditions of King's College, Cambridge is that the Ash Wednesday service always begins with the singing of Alleghri's Miserere mei,

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IX1zicNRLmY&t=28s

One contemporary song for Ash Wednesday is Tom Conry's 'Ashes'. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pJvOejpJltA and,

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mz-odlsetC8



Lent Studies in March

There will be a 4 week Lenten study in March which will explore how Matthew describes the passion of Christ and his

resurrection. This study will also feature works of art that are consistent with this season of the Christian year. The dates and times are still to be determined. So much depends upon other events in the church calendar being settled first.

Music featuring Matthew's gospel

King's College Choir, Cambridge Arvo Pärt 'The Beatitudes', https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rxbArDRcVb4

James Gilchrist's Guide to Bach's St Matthew's Passion, King's College Choir https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=591fCQvRjmo

Hillsong 'The Beatitudes'. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9kkjmXnIWow

Op Shop Update

Dear Friends,

The Op-shop is back in full swing, and our customers seem to be pleased we are open again. In other parts of the globe, Op-shopping is really popular. In the UK there are over 9,000 'charity' shops and in every town or city you will find at least 4 such shops in the main street. In the USA there are more than 25,000 resale, consignment and Not For Profit shops. Although in the USA, what we call 'Op-ting'or Op-shopping is called 'Thrifting', and in the UK it is called 'going to a charity shop' with no inference of shame or guilt.

In Australia, Op-shopping has only become trendy in the last 15 years. This has been driven mainly by consumers wanting to 'do the right thing' for the climate, and to a degree, the rising cost of living. Fast fashion is a major contributor to rising carbon emissions and land fill.

So if the customers are trying to 'do the right thing', then of course Op-shops have to do likewise. How much rubbish is generated, and where the unusable clothing goes is important. The St. Matthew's Op-shop recycles as much as possible into the yellow garbage bin. Soft plastic was going to Woolies until that unfortunately stopped. Our unusable clothing is donated to a local company who pick-up at no cost to us, about 20 bags a week. They send the best overseas, and turn the rest into rags.

Our volunteers are always very grateful to receive donations of clean, good condition clothing, brick -a-brack and books. When donating clothing to any Op-shop the best 'rule of thumb' is to ask yourself if you would give the clothing item to a family member or a friend? If the answer is no, then the item is most likely unsaleable. To keep clothing out of landfill, the St. Matthew's Op-shop teams will be happy to accept these items in a separate bag clearly labelled, so they can be included with our re-donated consignment.

We thank the St. Matthew's Uniting Church family for your ongoing support of the Op-shop and *hope to see you shopping soon.*

With love Pamela



Calendar of Events for February 2023

ay Sunday	-Op Shop Bam- Vetball Vetball includes Communion 9.30 am-Worship includes Communion KUCA Preschool Years K2 & Years 3-8 645pm-Worship includes Communion	events KUCA Preschool, Yeans K-2 & Yeans 38 6.45pm—Worship	events events Bam- Worship 9.30am-Worship KUCA Preschool, Years K2 & Years 38 6.45pm-Worship	26 26 9.30am—Worship KUCA Preschod, Years K2 & Years 38 5pm—Shine 6.45pm—Worship	URCH
Saturday	4 9am-12pm-Op Shop 9.30am-1.30pm-Netball registration day upper hall	s No scheduled events	18 No scheduled events	25 No scheduled events	Matthew's IITING CHUR ULKHAM HIL
Friday	5pm-7pm FUSION Youth Group Upstairs hall	10 No scheduled events	17 5pm-7pm FUSION Youth Group upstairs hall	24 No scheduled events	St. M UNI BAU
Thursday	2 👷	9 9am-2pm—Op Shop open	16 Seamed and Shop open	23 9am-2pm—Op Shop open W 7pm—Children, Families, Youth & Young Adults (CFYYA) Focus Group Meeting lower hall	
Wednesday	1 9am-2pm—Op Shop open 10am-12pm—In Stitches htte upstashal htte upstashal Meet at the church	8 9am-2pm—Op Shop open we 10am-12noon—Women's Fellowship in the upstairs hall and church of the adverse	15 Bam-2pm—Op Shop open 10am-12ncom—Men's Moming Tea at McKeis Catifs Bella Visia. See back page for details See back page for details 10am-12pm—In Stitches upskins hall	22 22 23 24 22 20 20 20 20 20 20 20 20 20 20 20 20	
Tuesday		6 9am—Sorting & 9am-2pm—Op Shop open Pricing for Op Shop Neetin fle Church Meet in the Church	14 24 9:30-11am-Christian Meditation	21 9am-2pm—Op Shop open	28 9am-2pm—Op Shop open 9.30-11am—Christian Meditation in the Church in the Church 1.30pm—Community Engagement Factus Groun Meeting unstatis hall
Monday		6 9am—Sorting & 9am—Sorting & 0werhal lowerhal Dowerhal Dowerhal	13 9am—Sorting & Marian 9.30-11am- Iowerhall 9.30-11am- inthe Church	20 am-2pm- 9am-Sorting & 9am-2pm- 9.30-11am- lower hall in the Church	27 9am—Sorting & Pricing for Op Shop lowerhall

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Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday			
		1 9am-2pm—Op Shop open 10am-12pm—In Stitches hthe upstarshal 7pm—Finance Committee Meeting Meet at the church	2 9am-2pm—Op Shop open	3 5pm-7pm FUSION Youth Group upstairs hail	4 9am-12pm—Op Shop 9.30am-1.30pm—Netball registration day upper hall	5 8am-ip includes Communion 9.30am-Worship includes Communion KUCA Preschod, Years K-2 & Years 3-8 6.45pm-Worship includes Communion			
6 9am—Sorting & Pricing for Op Shop lower hall 3pm— Care and Prayer Meet in the Church	9.30–11am—Christian Meditation	8 Sam-2pm—Op Shop open 10am-12noon—Women's Fellowship in the upstars hall and church 7.30pm—Church Council Exec meeting	9 9am-2pm—Op Shop open	10 No scheduled events	11 No scheduled events	12 8am—Worship 9.30am—Worship KUCA Preschod, Years K-2 & Years 3-8 6.45pm—Worship			
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VOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP.

Second Wednesday of the month Next event: 8th February at 10am

> Enquiries: Dulcie Duncum Fellowship Meet in the upstairs hall and church

MEN'S MORNING TEA

Meet 3rd Wednesday of each month. Next Event: 15th February at 10am



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

CARE & PRAYER.

Meet on the 1st Monday of each month in church and Community room @ 3pm All welcome This Month: 6th February

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.

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: Church Baulkham Hills Uniting

- Giving Direct BSB: 634634 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!

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 Monthly for dinner & fun.

We are still collecting in 2023 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.

UPCOMING EVENTS & DATES

MARK YOUR DIARIES

Ash Wednesday Service 22 February @ 7.30pm

Palm Sunday Services 2 April @ 8am, 9.30am & 6.45pm

Maundy Thursday Service 6 April @ 7.30pm

Good Friday Service 7 April @ 9am

Easter Sunday Gervices 8 April @ 8am, 9.30am & 6.45pm

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 9686 3003

OFFICE :

LOCATION: **CNR CHARLES & EDGAR STREETS** ΒΑΠΙΚΗΑΜ ΗΠΙS

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

To include your activity in the combined MARCH

In Focus

St. Matthew's Monthly Newsletter please send details to Robyn and Lynn in the Church Office by 15 February Thank you

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

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

church office.