IN Focus

st. matthew's UNITING CHURCH BAULKHAM HILLS growing together

FEBRUARY 2026

St. Matthew's Monthly Newsletter

Epiphanying

We are in the Church/Liturgical Season of After Epiphany. Epiphany from Greek for "manifestation," is a holy day of light, showing Jesus as God's Son revealed to all people, not just Jews. The Day of Epiphany was on Tuesday, January 6th.

An epiphany is a sudden, profound realization or manifestation or a moment of deep insight. May our work / our liturgy in this season be opening ourselves more to the work of God in us as individuals and as a congregation/community. Traditionally, in the Sundays of After Epiphany we focus on some significant narratives from the Gospels.

- In remembering the visit of the Magi, let us follow the signs we see to discover the one who is to be king for us. What gifts will we bear to honour the one we seek?
- In remembering Jesus's baptism by John the Baptist. Let us remember the meaning of our baptism, and in remembering that we have been plunged into the faith and family of Jesus, let us look to giving better and truer expression to this. We can do this by being more intentional about our discipleship. We can seek to step out in faith more as we live out our gifts in service to God by to embody God's love to others.
- In remembering the call of the disciples, let us reflect on what do we seek from Jesus, and what Jesus seeks from us? Let us also think on how following Jesus changes us and changes how others know us.
- As we hear of Jesus and his proclamation of metanoia, that changing of heart, mind and being, because the Kingdom of God has come near, what might we repent of, especially in this time of new resolutions?
- When we hear Jesus teaching on a mountain let us listen to the radical nature of his teaching and seek to be open to coming to understanding of what this means for us in our lives and in our living?
- As we hear Jesus proclaiming that those he was speaking to are salt of the Earth and light for the world, let us look to the incarnation of that light , in Jesus, the anointed one, the Christ, who is the Word of God and who is God and who is the true light who had come into the world, the true light that enlightens everyone. Let us look to That light in us and seek to allow God to incarnate that light in us. For God is present with us and within us as Holy Spirit, and our baptism is a calling into action.

Continued next page

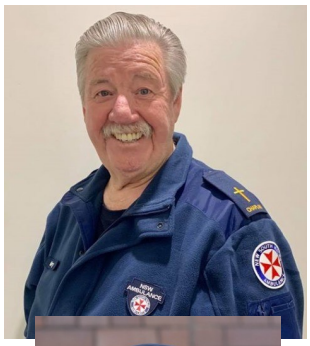
- Let us not just gather to remember by gathering and ritual but let us do the work of inspiring each other towards love and good works as we work to join God in God's mission and work.

After Epiphany gives us a lot to think about and work on

God bless

Jon

Coffee and Discovery



Thursday 5 March 2026

10am—12noon

Guest speaker:

Gary Raymond APM OAM

"Danger is my Business"

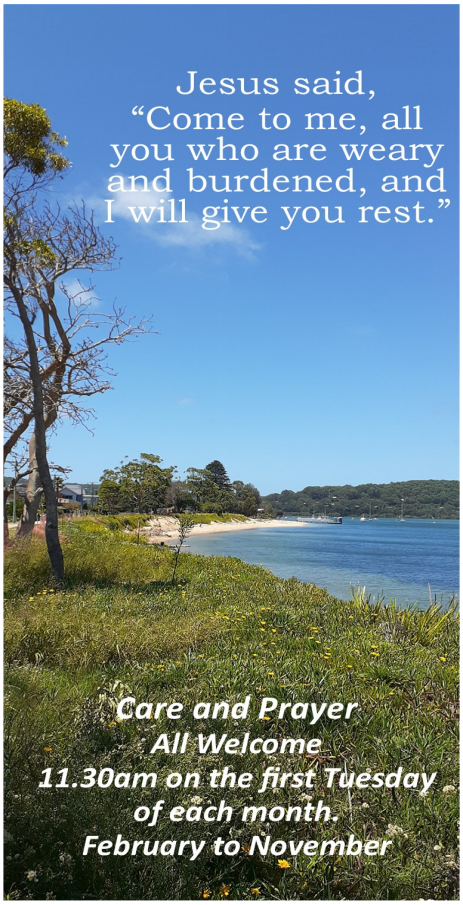
Chief Inspector Gary Raymond performed duties with the NSW Ambulance for 5 years. He then joined the NSW Police Force for 34 years.

In the Police, Gary was stationed in General duties, Police rescue squad, Criminal Investigation Detectives, Royal Commission senior investigator, Asian crime, Olympic games venue co-ordinator, Terrorism risk assessor, crime scene & emergency management duty officer.

Gary is now the Chaplain to the Police Post Trauma support group NSW, chaplain NSW Ambulance & Chaplain RSL veterans sub-branch Blacktown city.

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

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



World day of Prayer Friday 6 March 2026

St. Matthew's is hosting this year's World day of prayer. Volunteers are needed to assist. Please contact Pamela Leslie on 0404 023 588

From the St Matthew's Social Action Missional Ministry Team

'Doing little things can make a big difference'.

Topic: Writing and emailing to your MP' - from Oxfam's guide to writing to your politician

https://www.oxfam.org.au/what-we-do/advocacy-and-campaigns/writing-to-your-mp/

SAMMT often ask church members to write to their local state or federal members of parliament or local councillors about important issues. How do you make your letter or email stand out? Here are a few simple tips for maximising the impact of your correspondence.

Use the correct title – e.g. Mr/Mrs/Ms. For letters to MPs or Senators who are, or have been, government Ministers, they are given the title 'The Honourable'. For ministers in the House, this becomes 'The Hon. First Name Last Name MP' and 'Senator the Hon. First Name Last Name' in the case of Ministers who are Senators. You can also search the correct titles on the internet.

Introduce yourself and your issue - start your letter or email by saying who you are and why you are writing to them. If you are a member of their electorate, make this clear. If your letter is about a particular region or country and you have visited it, outline this connection.

Keep it brief – stick to one issue per letter or email. If the issue is technical or requires further explanation, keep your letter short but include an additional document which sets out the extra information. Alternatively, you can refer the MP to a website, article or book where they can get more information.

Use your own words (very important) - Politicians' offices receive hundreds of letters from constituents. Your objective is to make your letter stand out from the crowd. 'Form' letters that are sent out from community organisations do not have the same impact as a well-crafted, passionate and personal letter. If you are asked to send a form letter in support of a particular campaign, take the time to personalise it by adding your own thoughts, or putting the points in your own words.

It can be useful to:

Include relevant facts and figures
Refer to a recent news item about the issue
Highlight a local connection to the issue
Include a personal experience that made you want to speak up on the issue
Being polite and respectful to achieve positive results.

Action: be explicit about what you want them to do. This could include any number of actions from voting for or against something in Parliament to attending a local event. But the most important thing you should ask for is a reply to your letter, e.g. 'I look forward to your (written) response'.

Provide your contact details - includes your first and last name, your address, telephone number, and email address if you have one.

Be patient – politicians are very busy people, sometimes it could take up to a month to hear back from your MP.

Follow up - If you have not received a response after one month, telephone the MPs office to remind them about your letter.

Blessings, Alexander, SAMMT

1st Saturday of the month
9am-12pm

Upcoming dates

- **7 February**
- **7 March**
- **No Sale in April**

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

St. Matthew's Lower hall

PLAY NETBALL IN THE HILLS!

JOIN ST MATTHEW'S NETBALL CLUB

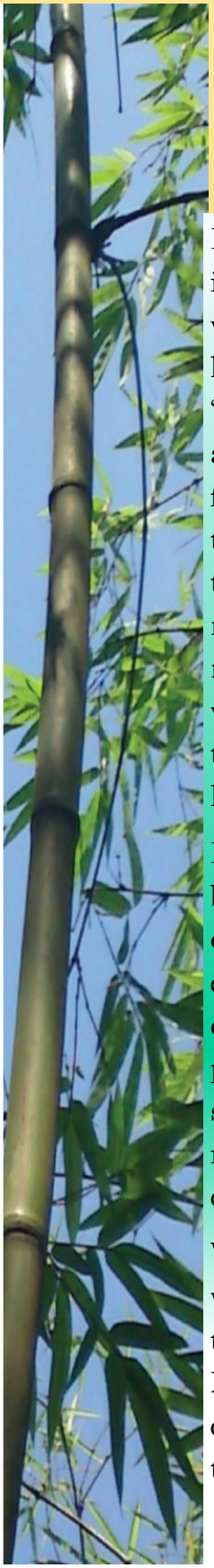
- We prioritise a fun, social game to develop your skills or have a weekend run around!
- Completely ungraded - play with friends!
- All ages from Pre Kindergarten - Opens
- Saturday afternoon competition - no early mornings!

REGISTRATIONS OPEN NOW UNTIL

FEB 7 2026

GOODEN RESERCE BAULKHAM HILLS

Go to www.stmatthewsnetballclub.com to complete your registration.



Silence and stillness in every season

Daily readings with John Main

For many people the first glance at meditation makes it seem to them that it, too, will soon become another exercise in dull repetition. This summer I was giving a retreat in a convent in Ireland and one of the nuns there, having heard a talk on meditation and the mantra, came to me and said, "Oh Father, I could never do that. No, no, I could never do it. It would be awful'. Her understanding of the mantra was that it would be totally trivial for her because of its dull repetitiveness. I hope she did begin to meditate, though, despite her fear, because only a little experience of really learning to say the mantra (and this is the art of meditation) would have changed her mind—to understand that the art of meditation is simply setting the mantra free within your heart. The difficulty of this for us is that we always want to be in control. It is very difficult for us as Westerners to learn to set the mantra free, to let it sound, to let it sing in our heart in a sort of glorious liberty.

For that half an hour every morning and every evening we are focused beyond ourselves. Through the working of the Holy Spirit our spirit is expanding, our heart is enlarging, we are becoming more generous. The change in us comes about because, in meditation, we encounter and embrace the power that makes this change possible. All of us would presumably like to be more kind, more understanding, more selfless, more sympathetic, more compassionate and so on. But, at the same time, we recognize ourselves as weak. mortal, fallible human beings. This recognition often induces us to protect our vulnerability.

What we discover in meditation is the power-source that enables us to live without the anxiety of having to protect ourselves; it is established right at the centre of our own being, in our own hearts. 'God is the centre of my soul.' Now meditation is eminently practical because it requires each one of us to come to know 'from our own experience' what the statement means: 'God is the centre of my soul.'

The Heart of Creation

Calendar of Events for February 2026

st. matthew's UNITING CHURCH BAULKHAM HILLS growing together

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
						1 ***8am— Worship*** Includes Communion ***9.30am—Worship*** Includes Communion ***KUCA resumes for 2026*** Preschool, Years K-2 & Years 3-8 **followed by Morning Tea** ***6.45pm Worship*** Includes Communion
2 ***9am Sorting & Pricing for Op Shop & Garage Sale*** lower hall ***7.30pm Christian Meditation*** Community Room	**3** ***Church Office closed*** ***9am-2pm Op Shop*** ***9.30–11am Christian Meditation*** Community Room ***11.30am Care & Prayer*** *Community room & church*	**4** ***Church Office closed*** ***9am-2pm Op Shop*** ***10am-12noon In Stitches*** Upstairs hall ***7pm—Finance Committee meeting***	**5** ***Church Office closed*** ***9am-2pm Op Shop***	**6** ***5pm-7pm Fusion Youth Group***	**7** ***9am-12pm Op Shop*** ***9am-12pm Garage Sale*** lower hall	**8** ***8am— Worship*** ***9am—Worship @ the Willow's*** ***9.30am—Worship*** ***KUCA*** Preschool, Years K-2 & Years 3-8 **followed by Morning Tea** ***6.45pm Worship*** ***Community meal***
9 ***9am Sorting & Pricing for Op Shop & Garage Sale*** lower hall ***7.30pm Christian Meditation*** Community Room and Church	**10** ***Church Office re opens*** ***9am-2pm Op Shop*** ***9.30–11am Christian Meditation*** Community Room	**11** ***9am-2pm Op Shop*** ***10am-12noon In Stitches*** Upstairs hall ***7.30pm—Church Council Exec meeting***	**12** ***9am-2pm Op Shop***	**13** ***No scheduled events***	**14** ***No scheduled events***	**15** ***8am— Worship*** ***9.30am—Worship*** ***Followed by morning tea*** ***KUCA*** Preschool, Years K-2 & Years 3-8 ***6.45pm—Worship***
16 ***9am Sorting & Pricing for Op Shop & Garage Sale*** lower ***7.30pm Christian Meditation*** Community Room and Church	**17** ***9am-2pm Op Shop*** ***9.30–11am Christian Meditation*** Community Room	**18** ***9am-2pm Op Shop*** ***10am-12noon Women's Fellowship Planning meeting*** Upstairs hall ***Men's Morning Tea*** McKels Café Bella Vista ***7.30pm—Ash Wednesday service & after Elders meeting***	**19** ***9am-2pm Op Shop***	**20** ***5pm-7pm Fusion Youth Group***	**21** ***No scheduled events***	**22** ***8am— Worship*** ***Followed by morning tea*** ***9.30am—Worship*** ***Followed by morning tea*** ***KUCA*** Preschool, Years K-2 & Years 3-8 ***5pm—Shine setup from 4pm*** ***6.45pm—Worship***
23 ***9am Sorting & Pricing for Op Shop & Garage Sale*** lower hall ***7.30pm Christian Meditation*** Community Room	**24** ***9am-2pm Op Shop*** ***9.30–11am Christian Meditation*** community room	**25** ***9am-2pm Op Shop*** ***7.30pm—Church Council***	**26** ***9am-2pm Op Shop***	**27** ***No scheduled events***	**28** ***No scheduled events***	

MONTHLY ACTIVITIES and REGULAR GROUPS

Women's Fellowship

Wednesday 18th February @ 10am

Planning meeting
(change of week just for February)
Enquiries: Dulcie Duncum & Margaret Gray

MEN'S MORNING TEA

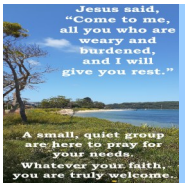
3rd Wednesday of the month 10am to 12noon

Mckel's Café, Shop 14, Circa Boulevarde Bella Vista

Every third Wednesday of the month *Enquiries Alan Wright*

In Stitches
St Matthew's Craft Group

1st,3rd & 5th Wednesdays of the month
in the upstairs church hall. **10.00am to 12.00pm**
Bring your craft along to do.
Share fun and fellowship with other crafty ladies.
Morning Tea supplied. Enquiries: Jane Cole



Care and Prayer

All Welcome
11.30am on the ***first TUESDAY of each month*** at St. Matthew's
February to November

Next meeting 3rd February

CHRISTIAN MEDITATION

MONDAY *Evenings*
7.30pm—8.30pm

Tuesdays at the Church 9.30am-10.30am
For more information or to express your interest in attending please contact
Katherine Pedersen
Facilitator kathped56@gmail.com

ALL WELCOME

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, Pot Plants.

Garage SALE

Saturday 7th February 9am-12pm

Pre-loved Household Items, Electrical, Toys & Books
(Fiction, Non-fiction & Childrens Books)

St. Matthew's lower hall Edgar St

Shine

SHINE is a special needs social group for all ages after High school.
Meets Sundays Monthly for dinner & fun. Cost $5
Still collecting 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.

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 **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!
If you wish to find out more, please contact the Church Office.

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 9. **Meet Friday evenings at the church during term time. 5pm—7pm**
Contact Jon Humphries
jon@stmatthewsuniting.net.au

THRIVE BIBLE STUDY.....

For young adults
Fortnightly on Tuesday evenings
Contact Jon Humphries
jon@stmatthewsuniting.net.au

To include your activity in the
MARCH
In Focus
St. Matthew's Monthly Newsletter
please send details to 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 address, phone/mobile or email details that you let us know by phoning and leaving a message on 9686 3003 or by email: office@stmatthewsuniting.net.au

Thank you to all who have contributed to this publication.

MINISTER
REV JON HUMPHRIES

PASTORAL CARE WORKER
SARA WIENAND

CHURCH OFFICE SECRETARY:
LYNN SAMUEL

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS 8AM-2.30PM
TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY

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