

Book of the Month

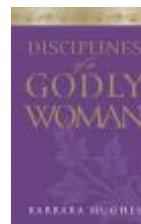
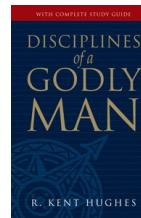
The November book is being repeated this month, due to the book shop closing for the holidays.

Disciplines of a Godly Man by R Kent Hughes

This book is an easy read and will challenge the reader in a number of areas of our lives. Hughes covers 17 different disciplines and challenges us to a call for holy sweat based on 1 Timothy 4:7 where Paul tells Timothy he should train himself for Godliness. The book is like a training manual, as Hughes takes us through the different disciplines a Christian man must strive to adhere to. These include the disciplines of purity, marriage, mind, devotion, worship, integrity, tongue, work, church, giving, witness to name a few. At the back of the book there are a number of excellent resources to help us all sweat effectively. Highly recommended for group use or an individual read. Cost: \$ 20.00 each

Disciplines of a Godly Woman also on sale

Review written by Paul Selig



Your monthly update on what Matters at St Matt's. Reflecting the generosity of Christ in and to our community.

"The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel"—which means, "God with us." Matthew 1:23



St Matt's Services

Sunday 8am	Morning Prayer / Holy Communion
Sunday 9am	St Matts @ School; WPH Public School
Sunday 10am	Multi Generational Family Service
Sunday 9.45am	Chinese Service; Cherrybrook PS
Sunday 11.15am	Asian Congregation; Cherrybrook PS
Sunday 5pm	Contemporary Service
Sunday 7pm	Contemporary Service
Wednesday 10.30am	Traditional Anglican Service

Ministers - All members of the Congregation

Minister	Steve Abbott	Mobile 0417 410 596	9479 3700
Assistants	Adam Taylor	St Matts @ School / Young Families	9479 3702
	Andrew Lewis	Young Adults	9479 3703
	Rob Conway	Youth Minister	9479 3704
	Wendy Estall	Pastoral Care / Seniors Minister Mon - Thurs	9479 3707
	Karen Braga	Pastoral Care / Young Women	0401 933 264
	Kenneth Leung	Chinese Minister	0433 766 211
	Kenny Liew	Minister of Asian Congregation	0448 515 408
	Jacki Hellstrom	Children's Ministry Coordinator Tues & Wed	9479 3700
Administrator	Tina Piccione	Monday-Friday, 9am - 2.30pm	9479 3700
Finance	Heather Foorde	Friday, 9am - 3pm	9479 3710
Organist	David Parsons		9871 8007

St Matthews Anglican Church

T: 9479 3700 F: 9479 3777

E: office@stmatts.org.au www.stmatts.org.au



If you are feeling new to St Matthew's, please fill out a Communication Card found in the church or hall. One of our ministry team will be in contact with you soon.

Stay for morning tea/supper after the service to meet others who have made St Matt's their spiritual home.

Minister's Pastoral Message – Matts Matters December/January

Dear sisters and brothers,

Well, it's hard to imagine but by the time you're reading this letter it will be just over two weeks to Christmas. Where did the year go? I do know it appeared to race by. Its been a year filled with exciting and effective changes (the Chinese and Asian congregations moved to Cherrybrook Public School, we launched a new congregation St Matts @ School at West Pennant Hills Public), there were two special outreach campaigns (Connect09 and 'Jesus All About Life') and of course the inevitable challenges – what might be termed the speed humps of Christian ministry. Its been a year when our attendance has grown across nearly all our congregations, through people coming to Christ, babies being born and Christians choosing to make St Matts their spiritual home. In a year of global financial crisis, while not yet quite making our 'stretch' budget we've managed to maintain a reasonably healthy balance sheet and we may yet reach our target. Of course we have the Lord God to thank for all these blessings and it's to him we must continue to look as we move into the second decade of the 21st Century and continue our mission to be a church which '*reflects the generosity of Christ in and to our community*'.

Of course we all know Christmas is upon us. Its obvious from the tree in our foyer and annoyingly, at least for me, as our letter boxes get filled everyday with an amazing array of advertising catalogues. It's amazing there are any trees left to hang lights on!! At times it doesn't feel like CHRISTmas but Santamas, as the commercialisation of the season seems to escalate year by year.

The cartoon below captures something of the paradox that is Christmas in the Western world. The carols we sing of the holy birth of the most significant person in human history can be so easily drowned out by the hustle and bustle of present shopping. May we ensure Jesus is neither obscured nor replaced as the centrepiece of both our Christmas and the rest of our lives. May we, like the Apostle Paul, recall the wonder

and mystery of Christmas recorded for us in 2 Corinthians 8:9:

'For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake became poor, so that you, through his poverty might become rich.'



The message of Christmas isn't about the generosity of stores providing specials BUT the generosity of God in sending his special one-of-a-kind divine Son to Earth. Why? Well, as the text declares, humanity was dwelling in spiritual poverty. Even a cursory glance across our society and globe testifies to our ongoing spiritual bankruptcy before a holy and righteous Creator God. We all like sheep have gone astray and everyone needs to have the generous and compassionate Shepherd, Jesus Christ find us and bring us home into the presence of the holy God. This of course was achieved by the heavenly Son of the cradle becoming the Christ of the Cross, and the Crowned King of the empty tomb. By Jesus poverty we can receive the riches of forgiveness, friendship with God and a future in glory. What a breathtaking gift God has provided in the Christ child.

Therefore, let's ensure that during this Christmas holiday season we don't allow our Lord to be marginalised, placed as it were on the shelf until life returns to some normality in February. Rather, let's give substance to the words a little girl uttered as her parents were setting up their nativity scene. She said, '*Make sure Jesus shows!*'

A timely reminder as we wind up an old year and begin a new!

Over the next two months we'll say farewell to Andrew and Jo Lewis (Dec 25) and welcome to Nerida Peart (Jan 18). We say thanks a heap to the Lewis's for all that they have contributed to our life at St Matt's, it's been a joy and privilege to have you with us over the past two years. And to Nerida we say "welcome". We're excited about all that you will bring to us by way of grace gifts, vision, energy and enthusiasm. Please be praying for Andrew & Jo and Nerida as they make their respective transitions into new ministries.

Finally, on behalf of myself, all the staff and our spouses I would wish all our regular parishioners, newcomers and guests a very Holy Christmas and a New Year rich in the spiritual blessings of our great God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. If you are travelling on holidays over the summer please drive safely and return to us or your own home, refreshed and ready for another year of worshipping our generous Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Steve Prayer Points:

- Thanks for the great holiday and 20th anniversary of Leighton Ford point Group spiritual retreat in November in USA.
- That Sue and I would be faithful in our prayers, Bible Reading and witnessing
- Pray we would achieve and maintain a better balance in our lives with regard to ministry, relationships, exercise, diet and sleep so that we will function effectively for the long haul and not burn out
- Ask that our Christmas Services (Eve: 5, 7, 9 and 11pm and Day: 8 & 10am) will be well attended by unbelievers, seekers, fringe contacts and regulars and that the messages will challenge everyone to trust in and to follow Jesus as Lord.
- Planning and preparation for the year ahead for both St Matt's (Steve) and Kidzlink (Sue). Preparation for the schedule and courses for our annual focused month of Monday nights February Training.
- For Nerida Peart who will arrive settle into her new home and commence ministry of Sunday 18 January.

With warmest Christian greetings,

Steve Abbott

St Matt's Diary and Notes



FAREWELL FOR ANDREW LEWIS:

Please diarise the following dates as we farewell Andrew who heads back to the Navy next year.

13 Dec: BBQ PLUS Lunch after the 10am service

20 Dec: Supper after the 7pm service

If you could make a salad to share please put your name on the clipboard at the back of the church. Gold Coin Donation

DECEMBER POTLUCK LUNCH:

The next Potluck Lunch will be held on Sunday 10 January.

CHRISTIAN STUDIES SYLLABUS:

If anyone is interested in reading the Christian Studies Syllabus for Pennant Hills and Cherrybrook Technology High Schools they can obtain one from the office. The document has been developed over a period of time. If anyone wishes to suggest modifications, advice should be sent to Rod Yager (Honorary Secretary) at rod@yager.net.au in writing by 15 January, to allow time for such suggestions to be collated and circulated so that everyone can be appropriately informed at the February meeting.

NSW MINISTRY DIRECTOR FOR SIM AUSTRALIA

A strategic position exists with SIM Australia to strengthen and expand their global ministry. The NSW Ministry Director will recruit and mentor people for world mission, have pastoral oversight over NSW missionaries and develop partnerships with churches. Experience in cross-cultural and pastoral ministry desirable. For more details and application form please contact Nicky on 8568 8812 or email pa.executive@sim.org.au Applications close Friday, 11 December 2009.

CROSSROADS CHRISTMAS HAMPERS

Be quick, there are only 4 baskets left in the church foyer for your HOME group or family. Once you have filled it, please return it to the church by 13 December. Any questions, call Lon & Mike 0412 526 418 or BJ & Tim 0414 558 736

PART TIME EARLY LEARNING TEACHER:

Christ Church St Ives Preschool is looking for part time early childhood teachers - one of which is a maternity position from 9 months up to a year with the possibility of it being permanent part time.

We are looking for a person with experience and a degree in early childhood, to start in Jan 2010. If interested please send resume with minister's reference asap to: The Director, Christ Church St Ives Preschool. 75 Ayres Road, St Ives NSW 2075 For further enquiries please ring Kim Ng at 9144 3067.

TEAR Australia Gift Cards!

Goats, toilets, school supplies, women's self-help groups...You'll find them all in TEAR Australia's Inspired by Jesus' example, TEAR Australia works with poor and marginalised communities around the world. Each year St Matt's offers TEAR Australia gift cards. You give the card as a Christmas gift and an international community also receives the gift of support for resources that help them to break free from poverty. Available in the foyer after each church service on **6, 13 and 20 December**.

Contact David 0410 685 626 or James 9875 2137.

PRAYER DIARY:

The Dec 09—Feb 2010 Parish Prayer Diary is available in the foyer. Please take a copy as you leave today.

ENGAGEMENT: Congratulations to Matt and Elise on their engagement.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO DONATE YOUR WORKING SEWING MACHINE?

A Christian College in Blacktown is helping a group of Sudanese girls to learn to sew for their HSC. However they do not have machines, so if you would like to donate a machine you may have, contact Win 9875 2015

Encouraging

Andrew Fisher visited West Pennant Hills Public School on Friday November 13. It was a tremendous morning. The children were engaged as Andrew spoke and it seemed most of the school lined up for an autographed Jesus Racing Team poster. If nothing else, the children left that morning knowing you can be a Christian and be cool.

On the Sunday, Andrew came and spoke at St Matts @ School. We had nearly 170 people on site that morning including over 120 adults. Andrew spoke clearly and passionately about the moment as a Christian man, business leader and father he sat broken before God. It was the time he describes as the most courageous moment of his life. He turned to God, confessing "You God, are in control not me!" It was in the midst of massive personal trauma and it spoke to the hearts of all present, challenging the control we attempt to practice in our lives.

For me it was exciting to see the many members of the congregation who made the most of Andrew's visit by inviting friends to church. Well done!!! Many of the invitations weren't taken up, but that is not our responsibility, any more than making people turn to Christ. The congregation were, in faith, giving invitations and God will use our faithful steps to bring about his good purposes in us and our community.

Adam's Prayer Requests

- Give thanks for the visit from Andrew Fisher in November and the enthusiasm of the children at school and the eagerness of people to invite friends.
- Please pray for wisdom over the January period with many people away on holidays
- Please pray 2010 will see the congregation really grow in their fellowship with one another.



St Matthews Asian Congregation—SMAC

The Asian Congregation recently had their End of Year BBQ at Edward Bennett Park. It was a lovely day and almost all of the congregation turned up after church. It was a good time to run around together, share food and reflect on the terrific year we've had. There is much to thank God for - especially for the many newcomers who've stayed and become members of our group. Some of them are still searching for the truth, others have been growing in maturity, and still others are in their first year of being Christians! We are very thankful for all of them and glad for their presence and encouragement. We are also very thankful for our faithful members who work night and day to help with this ministry.

We pray that our summer training will help us be a welcoming and encouraging people. We also thank all the people in the Parish who've helped us this year - in particular, the guest speakers who faithfully bring God's word to us.



Kenny's Prayer Points:

- For the Asian Congregation's summer program. That it will be a good time in training and that the less hectic schedule will be a good time to catch up relationally.
- For "The Connect" - an ex-year-12's ISCF fellowship that's meeting over Dec/Jan that Kenny is helping to run.
- For the Liews as we try to have a bit of a break and spend some family time together.



- For our safety and preservation of our congregational members who are away overseas - Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, Cambodia, Indonesia and Spain.

**For more information, click on:
asian.stmatts.org.au or contact Kenny Liew
kliew@stmatts.org.au**

St Matt's YA Community

Summer started well, with over 50 of our Young Adults attending our end of year bash at WPH Sports Club on Tuesday 1 Dec for an energetic evening of barefoot bowls and dinner. There are photos floating about of some very keen bowlers! A great night was had by all – thanks Chook for organising the event.

Next year is looking good. Nerida Peart will take over from Andrew; she begins serving our community on 18 Jan – so keep a look out for her and make her feel welcome.

We will finish off Summer with Summer Exodus down at Koloona 5-7 Mar 2010. Nerida will be speaking at the weekend. It will be a great weekend of teaching, relaxation and relationship building. Put it in your diaries now.

Homegroups will continue over the summer break in various forms, with 2010 groups starting up in March. Can I encourage you to continue to meet over the long break and it would be awesome if you can carve out the time for the February Focus month – where we are running courses on a Monday night on Pastoral Care, Door Knocking and Perspectives (Mission).

Thanks for your support and encouragement over the last 2 years. The time has gone way too quickly. It has been a real joy to have served you, may you continue to rejoice in knowing who's child you are and may you continue to grow in the likeness of our Lord Jesus Christ. Thanks guys!

Andrew Lewis



Andrew's Prayer points

- Give thanks for 2 wonderful years at St Matt's and the amazing opportunity it has been to serve this community.
- Give thanks for the YA community and 7pm congregations, for their faithfulness, commitment, fun and their desire to know the Lord and grow in his likeness.
- Pray for 6@6, that it will be a real opportunity for cross-congregational support, encouragement and relationship.
- Pray for Scott & Keely and Leigh & Briony (SMBC) and Mark and Katherine (SMBC) as they prepare for Bible College in February.
- Pray for Jo's and my holiday, that it will be a time of reflection, encouragement and strengthening of our relationship as we prepare for Naval chaplaincy in February.

Women @ St Matt's

Our Gingerbread House Making events were held over two consecutive evenings in November and brought many women and children from our church and local community together. We had lots of fun building and decorating the houses and, of course, sampling the lollies too!

The gospel was clearly presented by our speaker Thora Marsh and we have had a very positive response to this. A big thank you to all those who so willingly assisted in so many different ways to making this event possible.



Karen's Prayer Requests:

- Praise God for his faithfulness and blessings on our women's outreach events this year.
- Please pray that I have the opportunity to connect well with women who attended the gingerbread evenings and especially those who would like to know more about the Christian faith.
- Please pray that women will continue to have further opportunities to share the message of Jesus with their family and friends during the Christmas and holiday season.

6@6

The 5pm and 7pm congregations will combine
and meet at 6pm from 27 Dec to 24 Jan.



MARY ANDREWS COLLEGE

Bible Courses for Women ~ Semester 1 2010

Unique, flexible lay training.

Semester 1 2010 starts Feb 1 ~ enrol now!

St Andrew's House, Sydney Square
Mon/Wed/Thu/Fri

Overview of the Gospels
World Religions
God and the Person & Work of Christ
Psalms & Ezra
OT Foundations
Pastoral Care

Dapto Ribbonwood Centre
Tuesdays

Early Church History
Overview: The Gospels

St Paul's Emu Plains
Mondays

Jesus: Lord & Saviour
Spiritual Formation

Hoxton Park Anglican Church
Fridays

Understanding Grief

St Luke's Miranda
Mondays

OT Prophets & Writings

St Anne's Ryde
Tuesdays

Pastoral Care

All classes 10am – 1pm

\$980 per subject assessment students

FEE-HELP available

\$290 audit students

For more on subject outlines and full timetable
and to enrol visit our website www.mac.edu.au
or phone Sarah on 9569 2418.

Mary Andrews College ~ equipping women to serve Christ

OPEN HOUSE

There will be an OPEN
HOUSE for Morgan, Anna
& Anika Powell:

When: Sunday 13

December, 1—4pm

Where: McGilvray 's,

2011 St Matt's Group

Some members of the 10am service have
the vision to grow the 10am service by 20
children 11 years or younger - that's
2011.

So the 2011 group was born.
Together we are welcoming new families
and connecting with families at
10am. Already we have hosted two lunches
for 120 people, helped at women's events
and had a men's night out. With the support
of the ministry team we are assisting and
encouraging positive changes to the 10am
service to appeal to families and to provide
pathways for families into 10am. Together
we are working to increase opportunities for
children and families to come to know
Christ. If you would like to know more
please speak to Jane Mahler or Malcolm
North.

Latest Newsletters in the foyer to

collect:

- Langham Partnership
- Powell's Newsletter
- Jenny Fallon's Newsletter
- Rob & Leanna Haynes' Newsletter
- Chris Ekins' Update

St Matt's Children's Ministry

December is a particularly busy month in all areas of ministry. Our church members are involved in all sorts of outreach to children in the local schools. Our end of year SRE assemblies have turned from Christmas assemblies to ecumenical end of year celebrations – we have all been keen to have a Christian input into these assemblies and are involved in skits, prayers and teaching songs about that very first Christmas. It is sad to say goodbye to some of our devoted scripture teachers who have been volunteering their time for many years. Thank you, you are an inspiration of Christ-focussed lives. Our Cubby Club is winding down for the year with final Christmas stories and craft over the first 2 weeks of December. Camp Out Of Here is an opportunity for the years 5 and 6 children to spend some time with their leaders and for the year 6's to find out what goes on at Youth Group for them next year as well as learn some great stories from the Bible about Moses.

The McGilvrays are our speakers this year. (A huge praise point) Abbey is speaking at Christmas Eve at the two Children's services and Jane is co-ordinating a children's orchestra – it will be fantastic as usual.

January is much quieter, however, and we can have a more relaxed time. It will be a time of considering where your talents can be used and if you can contribute to children's ministry. Our needs are for new scripture teachers and helpers and a leader for Tuesday Cubby Club in particular. If any of these roles sound like you please speak to me.

As a result of new children's ministry personnel, we will be running the Safe Ministry course on 13 February 2010, for anyone who will be involved in children's or youth ministry in 2010. It is a 4-hour course for both juniors and adults and it is vital that all of us who are responsible for teaching children complete this course before teaching next year.

Merry Christmas and have a safe break.

Jacki's Prayer Points:

- Pray for enthusiasm and dedication during a very busy time leading up to Christmas within the schools and within Church.
- Pray for the Camp Out of Here leaders and their time interacting with the children. Pray that the kids will come home with a sense of God's awesome nature and that He always has a plan.
- Pray that the leaders of all the Sunday children's programs have a relaxing break over the holidays and return next year revitalised.
- Pray for some new FISH (Girls club) leaders for 2010, as well as scripture teachers in the schools.

**JACKI HELLSTROM,
Children's Ministry Co ordinator**



Men @ StMatts

It's been a busy year for our Men@StMatts, with dinners, breakfasts, bush walks, outdoor activities, conferences, and men meeting in small groups to read the Bible, pray and encourage each other.

Our last formal event for the year was an excellent breakfast with our guest speaker being Adrian Nolan, the Recruitment Manager for Anglican Retirement Villages. Adrian gave a really good talk on Men@Work. 50 men were challenged to look at what we see is important vs what God values in a man through the context of the Kings of the Bible. He drew on his wealth of experience in ministry, Human Resources and also having experienced the difficulties of unemployment.

I heard one of our men describing it as the best men's breakfast speaker they had heard in years. It really was an encouraging morning, with an important message and great fellowship. You don't want to miss the next one.

Talking of the next one. 2010 is shaping up to be a great year. Our men are starting off the year with:

- Mens Katoomba Convention 19-20 Feb 2010.
- Men and Meat 27 March 2010
- Mens breakfast 29 May 2010.

There will be more events during the year, including Len leading some outdoor activities – so watch this space and the men's emails.

May I also encourage our men to be meeting up with other men to read the Bible, pray and encourage each other. Please contact Andrew Lewis or Ian Wall if you would like to know more.

Speaking of Ian, I want to personally thank him for his leadership, his passion and his enthusiasm for Men@St Matts. It is a great encouragement and a real joy to meet up with a man who has such a love for the Lord and desire to serve our men, both at

St Matt's and in our wider community. Can I encourage you to commit to prayer the possibility of partnering with Ian in leading and coordinating our men's ministry in 2010.

Finally, thank you men for allowing me to serve with you in St Matt's over the last couple of years.
Your brother in Christ
Andrew Lewis



prayer@stmatts.org.au

Intercessory Prayer Network

Are you in need of prayer help?

Send your prayer request to prayer@stmatts.org.au. If you do not have an email address, you may phone Wendy Estall on 9479 3707.

The Intercessory Prayer Network is a group of intercessors, approved by the Senior Minister, who will intercede with our Father on your behalf. ABSOLUTE PRIVACY will be respected at all times.

THANK YOU



A Thank You message from Daniel Willis CEO of Bible Society on behalf of the Jesus All About Life team....

It has been wonderful to see the way various churches, denominations and regions have pulled together to make JAAL a reality. I want to personally and on behalf of the Bible Society express my thanks for all the hard work you have done within your communities to help people understand the opportunity that exists for us to speak about our Lord.

We need to continue praying for God to do His work in opening hearts and minds to receive the Gospel message and we need to be encouraging people to simply start talking about Jesus when a friend asks the question.

Let's continue to work together under our Lord for the good of our country.

Grace & Peace

Daniel Willis CEO Bible Society

MISSION AID GROUP MAG

Thank you to everyone who has donated so many goods of all descriptions over this past year. You have all been so very generous. It is all very much appreciated by us, the people at the Kingsgrove depot, and of course the eventual recipients in Tanzania. At our annual meeting in February 2010 there will be a list of all the donations presented. It is quite amazing when put altogether.

We have had communication from the Depot of items needed over the next couple of months. They are: any kind of nuts, bolts, screws, nails, pop rivets, hacksaw blades etc. They are welcome even if a little rusty! Exercise books are also in very short supply. These are generally available in supermarkets, etc, in January at very cheap prices. Books with under 100 pages are preferred. Any item of stationery is also welcome. Thank you so much, Roslyn Dearden.

Pastoral Care and Seniors' Ministry

Whilst most of the caring ministries will not be meeting until February, we would like our members to please be assured that pastoral care ministry will continue. If you have a need over the Christmas period please feel free to contact Wendy Estall.

Orana

The next Orana meeting will be held on 3 February with guest speaker Nerida Peart, who will be joining the staff team in the new year. Nerida will be re-locating from Vancouver after enjoying a holiday and visiting family in Europe.

Please note that there will not be an Orana meeting during January.

Lay Pastors

The Christmas Party celebration, coffee and dessert night will be held on 11 December, in NewLine Cottage at 8.00pm. Please note that there will not be a Lay Pastor's meeting until February. Please contact Marilyn on 9876 3476 for any enquiries.

Meals Ministry

The meals ministry has been a wonderful ministry of practical care. Thank you to those who have worked tirelessly in preparing meals and/or delivering them to our members throughout the year. During November the team delivered 54 meals. This ministry will continue over the Christmas holiday period as we will be able to draw upon frozen meals in the freezer. If you feel that you would like to cook a meal for a family during the holiday break, your contribution will be gratefully received.

Wendy Estall's Prayer Requests:

- Please pray for our seniors over the Christmas period, particularly those frail and isolated, that God will be very close to them, will comfort and bless them.
- Please pray that God will bless the pastoral care ministries throughout the new year, including Orana, Lay Pastors, Meals Ministry, Hesed, intercessory Prayer Network, the Church Missionary Society's Mission Aid Group (MAG).



Orana Luncheon at Pie in the Sky earlier this year

WARDENS' UPDATE



New Staff Member for St Matts

Nicola has been appointed as our new bookkeeper to take over from Heather later this month.

Nicola is married to Iain and has two children at Cherrybrook PS and attends church at Castle Hill. Nicola has Accounting, Science and Commerce qualifications and currently volunteers as the bookkeeper/accountant for a professional society.

Nicola will work at St Matts on Fridays during the handover period and probably changing to days earlier in the week when things settle down. Could you please make her welcome when you see her around.

New Web Site

Our new web site is functioning and can be visited at www.stmatts.org.au .

At present we are loading recent sermons and compiling a full list of events for the next few months, as well as correcting a few links, adding additional pages and photos of events and activities. If you have any comments or suggestions of material that you would like to be able to access through our website, could you email the office (*you can do this through the web*) or use a communication card.

Thank You.

Over the last 3 months, St Matt's has received thank you letters and emails for our recent donations from SIM, CMS, the Whybrows, TEAR Fund (*on behalf of William and Grace Eyika*), PHCCEA, African Enterprise (*offertory from Evensong*), Bible Society (*special offertory for JAAL program*), Matthew Talbot Hostel & Christian Blind Mission (*personal giving*) and Nick Morrison (*Yr13*) as well as an acknowledgement from the Zimbabwe pastor for St Matthews support for the food program.

Each quarter St Matt's distributes over \$25,000 amongst 15 - 20 mission organisations and supported individuals, it is nice when this support is acknowledged as it provides some confidence that these gifts are contributing to God's work in the community both here and overseas.

Finance: *We are now just \$14,370 behind budget for the year. Giving during October was a little down possibly as people were away on holiday.*

October 2009	This Year	Last Year	2009 Budget
Offerings + Rectory	\$53,830	\$49,724	\$55,492
Weeks	4	4	4
AWG – Current Month	\$13,458	\$12,431	\$13,873
AWG - YTD	\$13,545	\$13,026	\$13,873

St Matt's Chinese Congregation Update

Yun Ling Senior Group

恩齡團

Praise the Lord for our senior group. We meet every 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month at St. Matthew's Church from 10am to 12 noon. There are also extra activities (picnics, visiting etc.) every 5th Tuesday.

What do we do during our gathering? We sing hymns, pray, share, Bible study (the book of Matthew at the moment). Usually our gathering closes with Yum Cha or lunch outside.

We might be a little senior but 'young' in the Lord. We strongly support our Chinese outreach program. Some of us participate in giving out church brochures at Carlingford Village every second Sunday of the month.

Recently we performed (dancing and singing) at the Mid-autumn festival celebration on 3/10 (see photo). Meanwhile, we meet every Tuesday to have more practice for the 12/12 Christmas Carols outreach at Carlingford Village.



感謝主賜給我們這個長者團契『恩齡團』，每月第一和第三的週二上午十時至中午，便可以在教會的副堂見到我們聚會，見到我們唱詩歌、祈禱、人生經歷分享、聖經真理學習；聚會結束後多數一同到附近食肆飲茶午膳，如遇第五個星期二我們也會安排特別節目，例如旅行、探訪等等。自從舊團長梁方幘雄姊妹轉了別間教會之後，這個團長重任便落在葉碧霏姊妹身上。團契成員共十人，都熱衷傳福音事工，部份團友常參予每月Carlingford Village派單張及街頭傳福音的工作，並曾參予月前的塔省短宣活動；在教會主辦的各樣聚會當中，均可以顯出團契參予的熱誠；去年的聖誕晚會、商場聖誕同樂、上個月的中秋晚會(見圖)等等，都可以見到一斑。在將要來到的12/12 Carlingford Village聖誕頌歌報佳音行動，一班團友已開始了每星期一次新一輪緊密歌舞練習，預備自己，再一次出外為主作見証！

The 10 am Service Resource Group

This group has been meeting regularly for the past two years with the aim to support and develop the 10 am Service. A key focus has been seeking to ensure that our service is *“reflecting the generosity of Christ in and to our community”*.

Together we have taken up the challenge of promoting a service that is outward looking, culturally relevant, creative, engaging and faithful to the gospel. We have affirmed the intergenerational and diverse nature and needs of our mid-morning congregation but also the necessity to be inclusive of families and children in our district. The ‘family spot’, music, morning tea, announcements, effective use of the building and corporate prayer are just some of the aspects of the service that have been examined and discussed.

Several initiatives from the resource group have included the development of the side Chapel area into a glassed area - Cry Room - for young parents (this will be installed in January), service leader training, an increase in the number of Family Services and strategies to welcome newcomers. We have also produced a ‘Guidance for Service Leaders’ document, which has been distributed to service leaders. In the future we plan to spend more time on reviewing and creative planning for the services so they become increasingly family friendly, this will include the length of Services, which we know continues to be a challenge.

Since we represent the 10am congregation your input and feedback is welcomed and the group would value your prayer for discernment and wisdom in fulfilling our role.

The current group includes David (Chair), Lyndell , James and Dian , Ken , Jane and David , supported by Steve and Sue . In the past Jenny and Wendy have also made significant contributions.

David of behalf of the Group



February Focus: Care, Community and Mission

Over the past few years we have used the four Monday evenings of February to provide a variety of input to our whole parish on such issues as Everyday Evangelism, New Testament Background, One to One Discipling etc etc. Once again in 2010 we plan to encourage all our congregations including our HOME Groups to combine at St Matt's and to choose one of three options:



- Pastoral **Care** Course – ‘*God’s Love in Action*’ which will run for four weeks and cost \$20.00 presented by Wendy Estall and others.
- Exploring Door Knocking our Local **Community** – this will not be as frightening as it seems and no one will be forced to go door knocking. Training will be provided and a strategy for connecting with our community in this way will be explored. The course will also run for four weeks and cost \$5 to cover materials. Steve Abbott and others will present the course.
- Perspectives a course on a biblical theology of **Mission**. This is an extensive overview course of the Bible and church history on the theme of mission and will run for 12 weeks, commencing with the first four weeks in February. It will cost around \$150, which includes a brilliant book (reader), which will be a resource that will last a lifetime. Maurice will present the course – Maurice and Helen have been long term missionaries in PNG and Russia. They have a passion for mission and were instrumental in bringing this course to Australia.



I hope that you will be willing to sign up for one or other of these February Focus intensives and that HOME Groups will come along as a group and participate in what promises to be significant opportunities to grow in our knowledge of the Scriptures and effectiveness in ministry. As usual we'll gather at 7.30pm for 15 minutes of informal fellowship and light refreshments and commence the classes at 7.45pm planning to finish at 9.30pm.

Steve Abbott

St Matt's youth update

Rob's Prayer Points for St Matt's Youth:

- ⇒ Pray for the Tuesday lunch time group at Pennant Hills High. There is a committed crew of 30 – 40 kids who attend each week. Give thanks for the large group of Year 9 kids who are coming to the group. Pray that Year 8 kids transition into the group well in 2010 and that the Christian kids at Penno High will continue to shine for Jesus.
- ⇒ Please pray for Chris , Claire , Mark , Natalie , Mitch , and Jess , who are involved in overseeing youth groups at St Matt's, and will be continuing in these roles in 2010.
- ⇒ Give thanks for the large number of kids and leaders who are involved in youth groups at St Matt's. Each week we have at least 150 kids attending St Matt's youth groups.
- ⇒ Pray for our end of year Christmas party on 4 December. Pray that we will have a good time celebrating the youth year at St Matt's and for Ross Ciano who is speaking on the night from Hebrews 12.
- ⇒ Pray for the Youth Leaders' Retreat on the 11–13 December. Pray that it will be a great time of fellowship, evaluation and planning for 2010.
- ⇒ Pray for the many leaders and me, who will be attending the Leadership





December Kids' Page

Answer all these clues and the final answer will be in the shaded squares.

1 Mother of Jesus

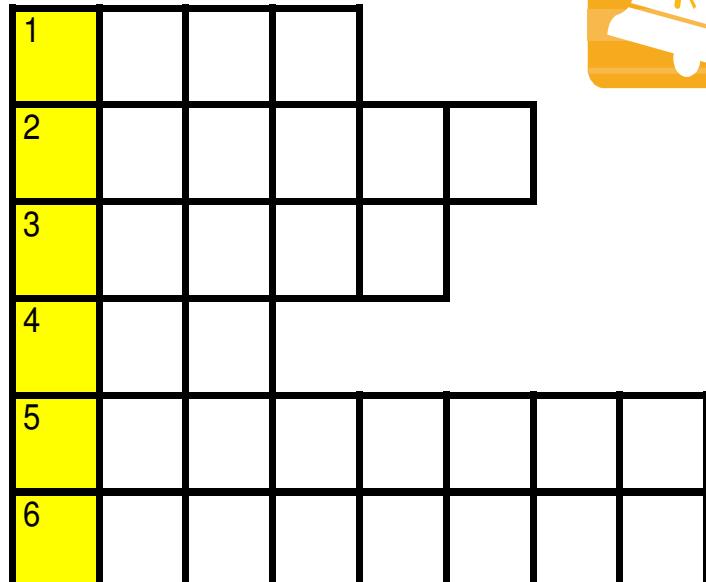
2 Bright figures that brought the good news

3 Time when the stars appear

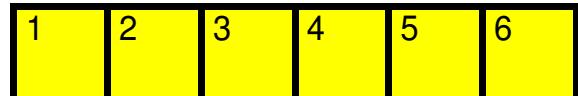
4 Jesus is the Son of _____

5 For whom did Jesus come?

6 Rudolph is a red-nosed _____



Shaded word will say that Jesus was born in a:



How many gifts are here?

What are you wishing for this Christmas?



Dec 09 Missionary Prayers

6 December Jenny Fallon – SIM

Give thanks...

- for the very international church she's becoming a part of at Campsie Anglican and the opportunity to join in some of their house party weekend in November.

Please pray...

- Jenny will soon find somewhere suitable to live in the area, not too far from church or the SIM office (Penshurst)
- she will find time to complete the online English course (TEFL) she's started and that the Lord will direct as she prepares to get involved in the English teaching ministry at Campsie in the new year
- for a few people from supporting churches of some of the SIM missionaries in South America to be willing to join Jenny on a pastoral visit there in the latter half of 2010. Pray for all the details that will need to be worked out in the planning of this trip
- for the urgent need of a new State Ministry Director for SIM NSW to start early in 2010 – preferably someone with some mission experience and a heart to connect with churches and encourage their mission involvement.



13 December Rob and Leanna Haynes CMS

We ask you in the name of our Lord and Saviour to keep the following points in your prayers:

- Pray for the Principal of the College, Rev Dr Lee Levett-Olson, and the rest of the staff as we work through a number of critical financial and educational challenges. Plans for 2010 for teaching in Theology are yet again up in the air.
- A good news story is that a program nicknamed IVEC, which comes from TAFEs in South Australia, is wonderfully suitable for delivering some good English language literacy training to lots of students, together with the content of our own choosing (Bible!!!).
- Morale is low, not only in the Theology Dept, but also in the Family and Community Studies Dept, and in the Creating Indigenous Futures Dept. I remember when, in the 90's, we had seven full time teachers working in Theology, but the year ahead offers at the moment only one (myself, Rob Haynes) full time, and one 0.6, one 0.5, one 0.1, and another 0.1.
- We have at least around 300 potential students out in remote communities who would love to get training here, because they trust Nungalinya College like no other place. However have a huge job to revive our credibility with those students after a year of providing so little for them.

20 December Steve and Melinda McKerney, AFES

- Praise God for a terrific year at Murdoch! A year in total contrast to 2008. God has answered your prayers for us!
- Praise God for the largest number of both Murdoch and Perth-wide students travelling on our Bus Trip to our National Training Event in Canberra (80 people in total).
- Pray for safety for the 'Bus Trip' as Steve and several others drive 2 (yes, 2!) buses to and from Canberra (Dep. 29/11, arr. Perth 19/12)
- Pray for our National Training Event in Canberra (5/12-13/12) [see www.afes.org.au/nte].
- Pray students will learn lots in the 'training' part of the conference and the 'mission' part will enable them to be stretched and encouraged in confidence in the gospel and their skills – a life-changing time, for students and those they share the gospel with.
- Pray for Steve as he speaks evangelistically on mission. He leads a team of over 20 at North Ryde Anglican with Nick and Penelope – former St. Matt's Youth leaders.
- Pray for Steve as he continues to shape the ministry at Murdoch to be most effective.

27 December Carolyn & Lindsay Whybrow, BCA Hillston

Please pray for Christmas events:

- Community carols at sunset (Hillston) with guest
- Salvation Army band. 6 Dec.
- Carols and lessons on Christmas Eve at church. 9pm.
- Pray for travel over the Christmas period. For catchup with family
- Back on deck with Combined service on 3 January

For forward planning of the year:

- Considering priorities for both of us
- Provision of someone suitable to provide Holy
- Communion each month
- Planning preaching programme for the year
- Outreach activities over the year
- Regular commitments in the community
- The Bible Teach-in on 6 March
- Deputations for BCA (eg 28 February)
- Advertising for interest in Confirmation Class