

St. Matt's Midweek Update – 13th May 2021



How is your week going? There is another ray of hope this week as we have heard that from next week, we can meet 6 people or 2 households indoors, and have up to 30 people outside. It does feel like we are slowly moving out of this pandemic, but as Mike talked about a few weeks ago, we will all be feeling differently about it.

This week is Mental Health Awareness Week, and it feels to me like we are all getting much better at talking about mental health generally. But are we getting better at sharing our own experiences of mental health with each other? Are we letting down any barriers with those close to us and sharing how we are actually feeling? I'm not saying we should be telling our deepest feelings to everyone we meet, but we all need at least one person we can share properly with, who knows how we really are.

These last few weeks I have been feeling quite unsettled, a bit stressed and a bit more anxious than usual. I am very aware that we all have a much higher level of anxiety than we used to, due to living through the last year that we have. But I am very good at getting on with things and saying I'm okay. And mostly I am okay. But often when we share a bit more than we normally would, when we let people into our vulnerabilities, it starts conversations and gives others permission to share as well. So let's check in on each other, let's ask twice how people are and be willing to give the time to hear the real answer, let's listen and empathise and not need to fix people, and let's be aware of how we are and how we need to look after ourselves.

A verse that has spoken to me this week is John 15:5...

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."

However we are feeling, however busy or tired or anxious we are, let's remember that Jesus wants us to look to Him, and He is there for us. He may not be able to fix it all, but life will feel a little bit better if we can make time to spend with Him.

Notices



The annual global prayer initiative, **Thy Kingdom Come**, starts today and runs through to Pentecost, which is on 23rd May. Sorry not to have been more organised in getting links and resources out to you. There are a few different ways you can get involved...

1. There is a prayer journal for this year, which has daily reflections and prayers. You can download and print it by clicking [here](#). We also have lots of paper copies, so do let me know if you would like one, and we will also have them available to take in church on Sunday.
2. There is an app for this year, which you can download from your app store. Just search Thy Kingdom Come.
3. The children's prayer map and interactive app are back and have been updated for this year. You can find the app by searching TKC MAP AR in your app store. The map can be printed by clicking [here](#), and we also have some paper copies, so let me know if you would like one.
4. There are also some town-wide prayer events on Zoom, to cover Tunbridge Wells in prayer. These are from 8pm-9pm on Monday to Friday next week. Please let me know if you would like the Zoom links for any of these. You can also join in prayer walking your local area on Wed 19th May or Sat 22nd May, and you can register the area you will be praying for by emailing prayerforourstreets@twcf.org

A message from Chris about study leave - I have been scheduled by the diocese for study leave this year for quite some time. Normally this would be for three months. For some time now this has felt like very bad timing with all the challenges we will face coming out of the pandemic and seeking to re-establish church life. Unfortunately, there is minimal flexibility at the diocesan end and so a compromise has been agreed that I will take 6 weeks this year and 6 weeks next year to minimise the disturbance. This means that with holiday I will be out of the church for most of September and October this year.

APCM - our annual church meeting went well on Monday and thank-you to those who attended. A big thank-you was extended to Bee, who has stepped down from being church warden. Congratulations to Brian, who has taken her place, and to Graham and Julia Church who were elected to the PCC. Minutes will be emailed round once I have finished typing them up and will be on the website for a few weeks.

Job opportunity - a local retail business run by a church member is looking for someone to help with admin and some customer interaction by phone and in the shop. It would be 4-5 hours per day (there can be some flexibility over the hours and these can be discussed before applying) Monday to Friday with some Saturday cover. Please contact me if you are interested and I will give you the contact details for more information.

Please get in touch with us if you need any help or support at the moment.

Have a good weekend!