

St. Matt's Midweek Update – 16th December 2021

How are you this week? Counting down the days until the end of term?
Wondering how many plans you might have to change over the coming weeks?!

Yesterday, as I was watching the news and thinking about the number of people we know of at the moment with Covid, I felt like God was saying that everything around us feels uncertain and changeable, but He is the one that is always the same. His love for us is constant, His faithfulness endures, He will always be Lord in our lives and in our world. Sometimes we just need to focus our attention back on Him, or we become overwhelmed.

"I will say of the Lord, 'He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust.'" (Psalm 91:2)

Notices

Important Covid information

Since the end of last week, we have heard of about 10 church members who have now got Covid. There has been 1 positive case (on a PCR test) of someone who was in church on Sunday and 2 more suspected cases (positive LFTs) of people who were in church on Sunday. If you were also in church on Sunday, you don't need to do anything, but just be aware in case you get any symptoms of Covid. You may want to do lateral flow tests more regularly for a while. Anyone who was a close contact of the confirmed case has already been contacted.

While this feels a bit worrying, we are reassured that wearing masks and being fairly spaced out in church will have reduced the risk of any spread. Thank you all for helping us by wearing your masks. We will be keeping all our measures under review as we move forward. And let's keep all those who have Covid and their families in our prayers this week.

If you are coming to church over the next few weeks for any services, please can you do a lateral flow test on the day before you come to church, and of course only attend if it is negative. This will help to keep everyone safe.

We would also ask that you stay at home if anyone else in your household has Covid or suspected Covid. Thank you.

Christmas services



This Sunday we have our **nativity service** in the morning (10am) and our **carol service** in the evening (7pm).

Both services will be live streamed as well as being in the building. You don't need to book for the nativity in the morning, but please book for the carol service if you would like to come, using this link <https://stmatts.churchsuite.co.uk/events/d1kfygnc>

Please be assured that we will be keeping the chairs fairly spaced out for both services, and we will open more doors for ventilation if needed. You might want to wear a few layers if you are coming to church!

Christingle - at the moment we are still planning to have 2 Christingle services on Christmas Eve, at 3.30pm and 5pm. Please book in for these services if you would like to come. These services won't be live-streamed.

Booking link for 3.30pm service <https://stmatts.churchsuite.co.uk/events/nyc52cq8>

Booking link for 5pm service <https://stmatts.churchsuite.co.uk/events/2omvjkl>

Midnight Communion is on Christmas Eve at 11.15pm in church and online.

Christmas Family Celebration will be in church and online on Christmas Day at 10am.

Boxing Day - this year Boxing Day is a Sunday, so we will have a short reflective service in church for those who would like it. Thank you to Richard, David and Jean for making this happen. You don't need to book for these services.

While this is the plan currently for Christmas services, we will obviously keep you updated if anything changes due to Covid in the meantime. It's not just any new restrictions from the government that is uncertain, but also people dropping out of things if they get Covid!

Christmas Offering

This year, all our offerings over Christmas will go to Ruth Radley and the work of the chaplaincy team at Birmingham Children's Hospital. They do amazing work supporting the children, their families, and the staff at the hospital, and they need our support more than ever at the moment. So please do give if you can.

We have a big Christmas card at church which you can sign, and then donate what you would have spent on cards for other church members.

There is a change jar at the back of church.

There are gift aid envelopes you can put cash or cheques in.

You can donate online using a debit or credit card - just follow this link <https://stmatts.churchsuite.co.uk/donate/fund/vtuivcez>

Please do be in touch if you need any help or support at the moment. And let's all try and look out for a few people around us to make sure everyone is managing as we head into Christmas.

Have a good weekend, and we hope to see you in church or online for one of our services this Sunday!