

St. Matt's Midweek Update – 13th January 2022



Happy New Year! I think that's the last time I'll say that as we're nearly in the middle of January already!

I'm sure we are all hoping that this year is going to be better than the last two have been. That's what we all thought last year as well, didn't we!

We can put our hope in our scientists and NHS, that all their hard work will pull us out of this pandemic.

We might think we can put our hope in our politicians - although I'm not sure any of us think that right now.

We can put our hope in our family and friends to keep us going and pull us through the tough times.

We can put our hope in ourselves, that we will find the strength to keep going, to stay healthy, to push through - but this pandemic has taken a bigger toll than we know, I think.

But ultimately, there is only one thing that we need to hope in, and that is God. And He is the only person who will not let us down or fail us. Our hope in Him is secure, because He doesn't change, and He is always faithful.

So, as we start 2022 and look forward with hope, I pray that we will keep our eyes fixed on the one who is our rock.

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." (Romans 15:13)

Notices



Alpha course - we are planning to start running the Alpha course next Tuesday on Zoom at 7.45pm, so this is your last chance to sign up for yourself or anyone you might want to invite.

It's a really good way of meeting other people, being able to ask questions and discuss God and faith, and find out more about what it means to be a Christian.

Please sign up by tomorrow lunchtime using this

link <https://stmatts.churchsuite.co.uk/events/0y5s3kl0> if you would like to join.



Sundays at St. Matt's - our 10am services are carrying on both in church and online this term, and we will be looking at the book of Ephesians and God's plan for His church.

Children's groups should now be able to run every Sunday apart from family services (illness permitting!), so thank you to everyone who is volunteering to make those groups happen.

The church centre will still be set up with toys and the service on the TV, for any parents with preschool children who would like to use it. Please feel free to stay in the service with your preschool child if they are happy, but also do make use of the church centre as well when needed! We are still sorting out what the youth will be doing on Sundays this term, and I have emailed parents separately about that.

We also hope to start our 5pm and 7pm services again soon, once a month to start with. Omicron and the very high Covid numbers we have at the moment have disrupted those plans a bit, so we will confirm start dates in the next few weeks.

Midweek groups - all our midweek groups are back up and running for children and young people.



Deeper is for school years 3-6 and is on Mondays at 3.30pm - 5pm in church. Ignite is for anyone in secondary school and is on Tuesdays at 6pm - 7.30pm in church.

Matt's Monkeys toddler groups is on Thursdays at 9.30am - 11am in church for parents / carers and their preschool children.



Mission Prayer Meeting - once a month, Mary runs a prayer meeting for anyone who would like to hear updates about our mission partners and pray for them. The meetings are both in person (at Mary's house) and on Zoom, so you can join in the way that suits you. Please do chat to Mary if you would like to know more, or let her know if you would like to come along to the next meeting, which is on **Wednesday 19th January 3.30pm - 4.30pm.**

Our mission partners at the moment are Pat Blanchard (Peru), Ruth Radley (Birmingham Children's Hospital), The Sozo Foundation (South Africa), Life and Soul (Tunbridge Wells) and the Diocese of Geita (Tanzania).



Contacting staff - we just wanted to let you know the best ways and times to contact the staff team as we go into the new year, so that you are not wondering why we aren't answering your message straight away and to protect our own sanity and work / home balance!

Church is a really unique place, where work and friendships blend into each other for staff members, and it is really hard to keep boundaries in place around our work hours.

So, the best way to contact any of us about church matters is by email, as then we can choose to only look at those emails in work hours. Text and WhatsApp messages are also fine, as we can choose to turn work phones off out of hours, and of course you can call the office phone number and leave a message if no-one is there!

We would ask that you don't use Facebook Messenger to message about church things, as each staff member uses their own Facebook account and there are GDPR issues with this. You can use Messenger on the St. Matt's Church Facebook page, and we will reply to those messages. (We will also stop using Messenger to send any messages about church!).

Here are our working hours as staff (Hannah and Lois both work part time) - if you can respect days off and contact whoever is working rather than disturbing someone's day off to ask about church issues, that would be much appreciated!

Chris - day off Thursday, works all other days.

Hannah - works Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday (usually between 9ish and 4ish). Day off Wednesday.

Lois - works all day Monday and Tuesday (until Deeper and Ignite are finished), Thursdays until about 1pm and Sunday mornings. Days off Wednesday and Friday.

Thank you for your understanding in this.

Recovery Course - Online

The Recovery Course will be offering an online course to help adults find freedom from addiction or compulsive behaviour, beginning Tuesday 1st February and finishing on Tuesday 10th May. Each week starts at 19.00 and finishes at 21.30. Details of the course can be found on the website - therecoverycourse.com

Lasting Impressions - Tunbridge Wells Memory Tree

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council with Tunbridge Wells Hospital, are creating a quilted memory tree wall hanging; collecting and sharing the community's reflections, memories and experiences of living through the Covid-19 pandemic. They invite you to create and send them your own memory leaf to be included as part of their tree. The quilted memory tree will be displayed at The Amelia when it opens in Spring 2022, before taking up permanent residence at Tunbridge Wells Hospital. For more information on the project and how to get involved, visit <http://twsocial.co.uk/channels/lasting-impressions>

Looking for a job as a cafe team leader or in administration? A few charities in the area are advertising jobs, so let me know if you would like details of them.

We hope you have a good weekend, and we look forward to seeing you on Sunday.

Love and prayers,