

St. Matt's Midweek Update – 4th March 2022



How has your week been?

It's been another emotional week in terms of news and world events. I can't watch the news without crying for the pain and the destruction that is happening in Ukraine. And yet yesterday I found myself crying as I was watching and reading about countless acts of kindness and love for those fleeing Ukraine and for those left behind. It definitely feels like for every act of terror and war there is another act of compassion and love happening somewhere. The best of people often shows up in the worst of situations.

The Jimi Hendrix quote keeps popping up on my Facebook feed this week...
"When the power of love overcomes the love of power, the world will know peace."
Peace feels a long way off at the moment, and yet watching the news of countless families at train stations across Europe offering their homes to refugees, and even here in Southborough, lorry loads of donations being driven to Poland as I type, we have to hope and pray that these acts of love will help to restore and heal those who are watching their country being torn apart.

Tristan sent me an email this week, which his brother received from a church in Kyiv. It gives an idea of what it is like for our brothers and sisters in Ukraine, and also how we can pray for them. You can read it at the bottom of this page...

Tearfund have also just updated their page about Ukraine, with ways to pray and respond <https://www.tearfund.org/campaigns/ukraine-crisis>

We have also been asked about the best way to give financially to help - the DEC (Disasters Emergency Committee) includes most of the charities we as a church would normally give through (Tearfund, World Vision, Christian Aid) and these charities already have people and infrastructure set up in the right places, so they can deal with the need quickly and effectively. You can give to DEC here <https://donation.dec.org.uk/ukraine-humanitarian-appeal>

Notices

This Sunday we have our 8am communion service - this shorter traditional service is open to everyone.
Our 10am service this Sunday is a family service with a baptism, and Carole will be speaking to us about Lent.

Worship and Prayer Evening - this is on tonight at 8pm at the Powney's house, for anyone who would like to spend some time worshipping and seeking God.

Sewing Bee Hub is also happening this evening, 7.30pm at Ruth's house.

Can you help the larder on a Thursday for a few weeks? The community larder could do with some help to pick up food from Waitrose in Sevenoaks for the next few weeks. Do you have a car and some time on Thursday mornings to help with this (between 9.30am and 10.30am)? Or if you don't drive but could help with unloading deliveries at the Bethel Hall on a Thursday morning for a few weeks, that would also help.

Please let me know on this email address, or contact Jan and Liz directly on larder@stmattschurch.org.uk

Revive walks - our next event for women is on Saturday 26th March. We are getting together to have a walk and time to chat and get to know each other better. We will be meeting in the Penshurst Place car park at 9.30am, and we will come back to the cafe after our walk for a drink. If you would like to join us, please can you sign up here <https://stmatts.churchsuite.com/events/8cifk1db>

We hope you have a good weekend.

An update from our church in Ukraine:

Київська Біблійна Церква Вертикаль / Vertical Bible Church Kyiv

Dear brothers and sisters! May God continue to protect you, give you strength and wisdom, inspire you to show love and mercy, support each other in these difficult times of war.

Almost all members of the Bible Vertical Church Kyiv remain in Ukraine. Only 3 families left to go abroad.

Some of our church members remain in Kyiv or it's suburbs. Like many other citizens, our sister Natalia and her two children spent several nights in bomb shelters, hiding from the shelling with ballistic missiles.

In such circumstances, we thank God that we still have houses where we can return for at least few hours a day. That they don't look like our sister Olena's colleague's house just two blocks from her apartment.

Other members of the church, at the God's guidance, left Kyiv for other regions of Ukraine. For example, several families from Vynogradar district woke up at 6 am with an unexpected intention to leave right now. And just in a few hours there were direct fighting between the Russian and Ukrainian armies on their streets.

We thank God for our lives and for the fact that some members of the church still have the money to help others: pay for their transfer from Kyiv to safer regions or give money for food.

We are grateful that the churches from Western Ukraine allow some of our families to sleep not in the basements under fire. Although sirens warning of a possible air raid are heard in dozens of cities across Ukraine.

We pray and cry for our relatives in different cities of Ukraine. Russian "Grads" are aimed at Kherson, the Russian military is taking hostages from civilians. In this city parents of our sister Olga live.

It is difficult for us to describe all the pain we experience. But we know that God's heart aches much more. We pray for peace. And for the opportunity to serve even during the war.

We are preparing to serve those who have lost their jobs and will be soon left without funds for basic necessities. We are preparing to serve more actively to the refugees.

We try to testify more actively to unbelievers. Many of our unbelieving colleagues and friends began to pray God every night asking to wake up in the morning. Pray that they will know God and get not just a peaceful life, but the eternal life with God.

Pray with us for Ukraine. We believe in God's miracles. We believe that God's glory and His mercy are already being manifested in Ukraine and will be manifested in a way clear to the whole world!