

## St. Matt's Midweek Update – 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2023



How are you? It's lovely to see the very first signs of spring poking up through the soil - snowdrops and daffodil shoots are starting to appear.

This week, as I was planning the talk for this Sunday, I was reminded of the song "Shine!". It really sums up what I'm going to be talking about on Sunday. The chorus goes... 'Shine, from the inside out, that the world will see you live in me.'

And then I started thinking about all the things we do as a church to share God's love to those in our community and to shine His light into our dark world. I thought it would be good to just share with you the amazing things that are going on every week, that you might not be aware of.

The community larder is the obvious place to start. They have been getting about 100 people through the doors each week recently, and giving out huge amounts of food, as well as providing a place that is welcoming and accepting. There is space for people to sit and have drinks and cakes, and people there to chat to, including help from Crosslight and other agencies.

The warm space on Wednesdays has been getting a few people in each week, as well as having Embark21 running an art session in the space and getting a group doing that together. There have been good conversations, lots of lovely homemade soup eaten, and the volunteers are enjoying it and benefiting from being there too.

Deeper and Ignite each get between 10 to 20 young people each week, who can come into a safe warm place, build relationships with each other and the leaders, have fun, share some of God's love for them and eat good food! Most of these children are from families who don't come to church, and there is crossover between these groups and the families using the larder.

Toddler group is a great place for young parents and children to meet and chat, find support, and drink lots of tea and coffee! We get about 20 to 25 families in each week, and it feels like friendships are really building in the group.

All of these groups are amazing ways of us sharing God's love with the people around us. Let's be encouraged by all that God is doing through us as a church, and through all of you incredible volunteers who work tirelessly to make this all happen. I pray that God will keep using us all powerfully and that we would keep sharing stories of how God is working in people's lives.

### Notices

#### Midweek groups

All of our midweek groups for children and youth will be running next week, but then we will be having a two week break as we have half term and then have a week of tidying and sorting out in church!

So Deeper, Ignite and Toddler group will run next week, and will then restart in the week beginning 27th February.

#### This Sunday

It's the first Sunday of the month, so we have 8am communion in church and then 10am family service in church and online. This Sunday, as it's family service where we all worship together, we are going to try having an area at the back of church with toys, rather than having that in the church centre. If you have young children, please make use of this area, and also please don't worry about your children making noise or moving around church! We want to all be able to be together as one family in church.

We will also be having a baptism this Sunday, with Naomi and Matthew's children being baptised during the service.

## **Lent**

Lent is coming soon, so I just wanted to let you know about a couple of things we will be doing during Lent.

The first is our Ash Wednesday service in church on Wednesday 22nd February. This is a quiet, reflective communion service to start the season of Lent.

We will also be having a couple of evening prayer meetings during Lent for anyone who would like to come. Dates to be confirmed.

## **Toys for toddler group**

Does anyone have any of these toys that you could give to us at church for toddler group / creche?

Toy garage for cars

Toy cars

Play mats, especially with road on

Toy kitchen or shop

Lego - not sets, just bricks!

If you have any of these that you are willing to give us, **please let me know what you have before bringing it in to church**, as we need to be a bit picky about what we accept as we are tight on storage space!! Thanks.

## **Youth For Christ quiz**

YFC are running a quiz night on Saturday 18th March 7pm at Christ Church TW to raise money for their work. It's £15 per head with a hot meal. Richard Foot is hoping to get a team from St. Matt's together, so if you would like to join him, please speak to him or let me know and I will pass your details to him.

## **Electoral roll**

It's that time of year when we start thinking about our annual church meeting (APCM) and that means it's a good chance to join the electoral roll if you are not already on it. The electoral roll is like a membership of the church - it's a Church of England thing and it allows you to vote in meetings and to stand for roles like PCC or church warden.

If you would like to be on the electoral roll, please let me know and I can give you a form to fill in.

Please be in touch with Chris and I in the office if you need any help or support during the week.

Have a good weekend.