

## St. Matt's Midweek Update – 10<sup>th</sup> November 2023

How has your week been?

This weekend is Remembrance Sunday, and I have been thinking again about why the poppy is the symbol of Remembrance.



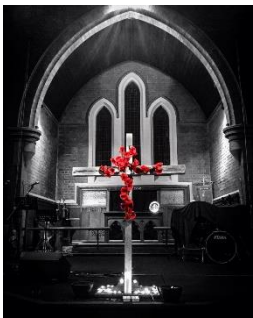
I'm sure you know that it comes from the First World War, when Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae wrote his famous poem 'In Flanders Fields', after seeing poppies growing up in fields that had been ravaged by war. The places where the poppies grew had seen war and death, and were just wastelands of mud, and yet from beneath the ground, beautiful flowers appeared to give hope and life again.

We see similar in nature every year - plants die, gardens look like nothing can grow or be alive, and then in spring new life appears from beneath the ground.

What an amazing picture of our lives with Jesus! It doesn't matter how dead or dry or barren we feel, or how far away from God we feel, there is still hope. God is still working in our lives, beneath the surface, planting seeds or even just letting things lie dormant for a while. But all is not dead. When the time is right and with a bit of watering and nurturing, new life will come. That might be in this life, but it will definitely be in the next, so don't despair. Have hope.

And this weekend, as we remember all those who have gone before us and who have sacrificed their lives for us, let's be thankful for the life God has given us and put our trust in the eternal hope we have in Him.

### Notices



We have two services in church this **Remembrance Sunday**:  
Our **10am** service is a normal service with children and youth groups, and it will end with an act of Remembrance at 11am.  
The Bible reading for this service is John 15:9-17.

Our **5pm** service is a **memorial service**, for anyone who has been bereaved. It is a quiet reflective service, with time to light a candle for your loved ones who have died. There will be drinks served beforehand from 4.30pm.

**Ladies film night** - Gill will be organising a ladies film night with a Christmassy feel on Friday 24th November 7.30pm in the church centre. More details to follow, but if you would like to come and have a suggestion for a film, please let myself or Gill know!

This event is for women aged 15+.



**St Matt's Community Larder**  
**Christmas Fair**

The **community larder** team are having a **Christmas Fair** on Saturday 2nd December, 10am - 12.30pm in the Bethel Hall. There will be a raffle, tombola, gifts, cakes, refreshments, live music and more!

If anyone can donate bottles for the tombola, that would be much appreciated. You can bring them into church or drop them off to the larder.

And do go along and support the team on the day.



Our **Christmas Carol Service** is on Sunday 17th December this year, and as usual there will be lots of music involved and we would love you to be part of it.

There are two ways you can be involved in the carol service - you can be part of the choir, and/or you can be part of the hand bell ringing team.

**Choir** - Suzy will be getting together a choir for the carol service and rehearsing them over the coming weeks. If you would like to be involved in the choir, please let Suzy or myself know, and we will get rehearsal dates to you soon. They are likely to be Monday or Tuesday evenings.

**Handbells at Christmas!** We are also aiming to put together a team to ring Christmas carols on handbells at the carol service as we did last year.

If you are interested in being part of this team – or just having a go at handbell ringing – we'd love to have you join us!

Our first practice is going to be in church immediately after the morning service **next Sunday, 19 November**. This is a refresher for people who rang last year, as well as for brand new recruits. We plan to hold a second practice on **Sunday 3 December**.

It's open to anyone from the age of about 8 upwards. You don't need to be able to read music – but a good sense of rhythm definitely helps!

If you are interested, please let Chris Horseman know or contact me in the office (if you haven't already done so), or just show up next Sunday!

#### **A few dates for this week:**

**Knitting Hub** is on Monday 13th November 7.30pm in the church centre.

**Mission prayer meeting** is on Wednesday 15th November 3.30pm at Mary's house or on Zoom.



#### **Unite town-wide youth event**

The next Unite youth event run by YFC is on Friday 17th November 6pm - 8pm at TW Christian Fellowship. Book at [uniteyouth.eventbrite.co.uk](https://uniteyouth.eventbrite.co.uk)

If you need any help or support, do be in touch with Chris or I through the church office. Have a lovely weekend.