

## St. Matt's Midweek Update – 8<sup>th</sup> December 2023



I hope you have had a good week.

Today I thought I would use one of the reflections from the advent booklet we made in church several years back. The winter can feel like a really dark time, but the world also feels very dark at the moment, so I thought this reflection was quite apt this week...

Isaiah 9:2 says "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in the land of deep darkness, on them has light shined."

"As a child I was scared of the dark, and so my parents would leave on a small light on the landing that I could see if I woke up in the night. Even though it was small, it dispelled a large amount of darkness and, consequently, my fear.

There are different forms of darkness in our world: the natural darkness of night as well as the darkness of sin and evil. However, darkness must yield to light; they cannot co-exist.

Jesus is only one man but He brings His great light to bear on all the 'darknesses' of our world., As we move towards the darkest part of the year, praise God that Jesus' light will never be dimmed or go out - it is everlasting."

### Notices



**This Sunday** is our last 'normal' Sunday at St. Matt's this year! We have two services this Sunday...

**10am** with groups for children and youth. Chris will be speaking on 'Looking forward' with the **Bible reading being Isaiah 40:1-11.**

**5pm** service is more traditional with tea and cake served from 4.30pm.



**The following Sunday is the start of our Christmas services!**

Sunday 17th December 10am - Nativity family service

Sunday 17th December 7pm - Christmas Carols

Christmas Eve 10am - A Reflective Christmas

Christmas Eve 4pm - Christingle

Christmas Eve 11.15pm - Midnight Communion

Christmas Day 10am - Family Christmas Celebration

Our advert for these is now on our Facebook page, so do share the post from there if you can as then it reaches so many more people <https://www.facebook.com/stmatthewshighbrooms>

We also have plenty of flyers, so feel free to take these from church and hand them out to friends, family and neighbours!

There is more information about each of our services on our

website <https://www.stmattschurch.org.uk/2023/11/christmas-at-st-matts-2023/>

**Nativity** - our nativity service will be on 17th December at 10am. We will have narrators but most of it won't be rehearsed. So if you have children who would like to be involved, they can either come in a costume of their own from home, or we will have costumes available at church for them to put on before the service. We are going to have a Mary and Joseph lined up in advance, but all other parts are ready to be stepped into on the day! It's going to be the usual cute chaos!

**Carol service** - if you are involved in the choir or playing the hand bells for the carol service, the next rehearsals are:

Choir - Tuesday 12th December 6pm in church

Hand bells - Sunday 17th December after the morning service



We could really use some help with **welcome and refreshments for our Christmas services.**

Here are the services we will need some help at, and what is needed...

Carol service 7pm 17th December - people to serve drinks and mince pies after the service and we could also do with a couple of people to be on the doors

Reflective service 10am on Christmas Eve (Sunday) - we now have someone to do coffee but it would be good to have 2 people on the doors.

Christingle 4pm Christmas Eve - we just need a couple of people on doors and then people to sit by fire buckets and have a hi-vis jacket on when we light the candles.

Christmas Day 10am - we will just serve coffee before the service so we need one or two people to do this, so it can be cleared away before the end. A couple of people to welcome on the doors would be good.

If you could help with any of this, please do let me know asap so I can get a rota out. Thank you!

### **A few things to be aware of next week:**

We have the school in for their KS2 Christmas concert on Monday at 2pm and 7pm, so there won't be Deeper on Monday.

Knitting Hub is at Jane's house on Monday evening.

Rosemary is having a Christmas afternoon tea on Tuesday at 2pm in church.

The last community hub is on Wednesday next week (13th December).

The last toddler group of term is on Thursday next week (14th December) and will be their Christmas party.

### **Family in church needing help...**

A large family in church are putting a call out to see if anyone would be able to help with some practical tasks (decorating, moving furniture, possibly assembling furniture, some cleaning up) following some building work that is nearly completed. They are keen to get straight to have a more restful Christmas and also have some long-term health conditions making it challenging. If you can help in any way or think you might be able to, please contact me in the office in the first instance.

**Hearing children read** - St. Matthew's school are looking for people who might be willing to visit the school on a regular basis to hear children read. No teaching skills are needed, you just need to be a good listener and willing to encourage young people with their reading. This would be a great way both to help children in our community and also to further cement relations between the church and our church school.

Please speak to Chris if you think you might be able to help.

### **Lost or uncollected property!**

There is a lot of stuff on the back shelf at church which needs to be collected please! Cake containers and plates from the larder fair, a dish from giving a meal to someone, some lost property and also Christmas cards. Please do have a look on Sunday and take what is yours! And please don't leave Christmas cards on the back shelf if you can deliver them or give them straight to people yourself. They tend to not get picked up and then put in the recycling after Christmas, so it is not an effective way of giving out cards!

That's all for now. If you need any help and support during the week, please do be in touch with Chris or myself.