

## St. Matt's Midweek Update – 19<sup>th</sup> January 2024



How has your week been? I have had enough of being cold now, but seeing the wind and rain that is coming, I'm not sure I want that either!!

I don't know if you have watched the BBC drama "Mr Bates vs The Post Office"? If you haven't, I'm sure you will have seen the repercussions of it in the news. It will hopefully lead to those post office workers who were convicted getting their convictions overturned, and all those affected getting the compensation they deserve.

The BBC drama was really well done and gave so much insight into the years of distress and pain that was caused to so many. One of the things that really stood out in it to me, was that each post office worker who phoned the helpline to report discrepancies in the computer system, was told that they were the only one having problems. They were facing losses of thousands of pounds which they were being told they had to cover from their own money and were being told that they were all alone. The helpline wasn't helping them, the post office wasn't helping them, and they were being told they were the only one it was happening to.

And then Mr Bates started realising he couldn't be the only one, and worked tirelessly to get those affected together, and they worked collectively to try and bring justice and truth. But more than all of that, they gave each other the support they needed to get through it all. They were no longer alone - they were part of something bigger.

As human beings, we were not made to be alone. Even when we are not going through crises, we still need the support of others, and to feel like we belong to a community of people who are there to support us.

It reminded me of how unique and valuable our church family is in that way. In a world where we are increasingly told to be strong and to cope on our own, the church is an extended family who are all there to offer support and love when it is needed.

So this January, when it can feel really hard to venture out or to reach out, remember that your church family is there for you, and there are so many ways you can be part of that family. Sunday services, the community hub, the larder, toddler group, hubs, volunteering on a team. You belong to this family, and you are not alone.

### Notices



**This Sunday**, we have our 10am service, continuing our series through John1 "A new beginning". The Bible reading will be John 1:6-9 and Suzanne will be speaking to us.

We will have groups for our children and youth during the service.

**Next Sunday**, we have our 10am service, and also our monthly 7pm service, which is cafe style with more worship.

**Volunteers needed** - are you free on a Wednesday and could help in the hub, serving drinks, making lunch and chatting to people? You don't have to help every week, once a month or every other week is fine. If you are interested in being part of the hub team, please contact Chris ([chris@stmattschurch.org.uk](mailto:chris@stmattschurch.org.uk)) or Lynn Goreham.





**Alpha cakes and puddings** - could you make a cake or a pudding for a week of Alpha? We would really like to offer a home-made cake or pudding each week, so do let me know if you would be able to make something. Thank you!



**The community larder** is open every week on Fridays 9.30am - 10.45am.

The main aim of it now is to offer cheap food to those who need it, however part of the way the larder works means that there is also a huge impact in terms of saving food from going to waste. Fareshare have sent the larder their impact from 2023 - **the St. Matt's**

**Community Larder redistributed 13.28 tonnes of food and drink in 2023**, which is the equivalent of 31,630 meals for people who really need it. And that is just from Fareshare. The amount of food given from supermarkets will add to that as well. That is amazing!

Also, just a note to say that each Friday, the larder puts any **bread that is left outside the Bethel Hall** for people to take through the afternoon. Please feel free to pop by and take bread, or let people know who would find it useful.



**Unite town-wide youth event tonight!** 5.30pm - 8pm at TW Christian Fellowship. There is a guest speaker from Ambassadors Football who will be sharing a faith talk and there will also be a talent showcase where any young person that would like to can come and perform. The rest can just enjoy watching. Berti hopes to see your young people there!

**YFC inter-church quiz** - Youth For Christ are running an inter-church quiz on Saturday 24th February to raise money for the work they do in Tunbridge Wells. It is £15 per person including hot food. Teams need to be 8 people.

It would be great to have a St. Matt's team (or 2!) if we can, as our youth group wouldn't run without Berti. If you would like to be part of a team, let me know and we can see how many people we have.

<b>SAVE</b>	INTER-CHURCH QUIZ
24 FEBRUARY 2024 <small>Christ Church, Tunbridge Wells</small>	<b>THE</b>
<b>DATE</b>	Teams of 8 £15 a ticket hot food provided

### Jobs at Carroty Wood

There are currently two full-time job opportunities at Carroty Wood Christian residential activity centre in Tonbridge – a Centre Assistant and a Maintenance Technician. If you would like the details of these, please let me know.

If you need any help or support this week, please do reach out to Chris or I in the office. We are here to support you.