

## St. Matt's Midweek Update – 1<sup>st</sup> March 2024



It's March! I'm trying to convince myself that spring is on the way, but the weather doesn't seem to be getting the message! I have got a few daffodils in my garden though!

This week, the Lectio 365 app has been focusing on the Israelites journey out of Egypt and through the wilderness in the Old Testament. In this season of Lent, we remember Jesus' time in the wilderness, but it is also good to learn from the Israelites as well.

Moses had led the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt, but even before they crossed the Red Sea, the Israelites were doubting Moses and God (despite all the miracles He had done in their sight) and were afraid of the Egyptians catching them.

God then parted the Red Sea and led them through it, drowning all the Egyptians behind them. Exodus 14:31 says, "When the Israelites saw the great power the Lord had used against the Egyptians, they feared the Lord and believed in him and in his servant Moses."

How could you not trust in God and His power if you had just seen all that?

And yet just days later, the Israelites were again complaining to Moses that they didn't have water to drink or food to eat, and suggesting that it would have been better to die in Egypt than in the desert. The general narrative of the Israelites during their time in the wilderness is that they are lacking what they need, they are afraid of the tribes and nations around them, and they wish they had been left to die in Egypt. They complain a lot and they struggle to trust God, even after everything they see Him do for them. God provides them with water and manna (bread) and keeps them safe, and yet they still complain.

It is easy to look at the Israelites and see their faults, but too often we are just like them, and we wonder why we feel stuck in our relationship with God. We can be just like the Israelites, focusing on the problems in front of us and complaining about them, rather than looking to God and trusting Him for the bigger picture. God brought the Israelites out of Egypt for a reason, and He had a lot to teach them in the wilderness. Maybe the same is true for us.

And it's also good to look back and remember how far God has brought us as well. He's been there for us in the past, so why will He not be there for us in our current situation?

We need to remember what God has done for us in the past, and trust in His promises for our future.

Here is one of the prayers from Lectio 365 for today...

Jesus, this morning I draw close to You. I remember how You called me.

I remember how You have led me. I remember how much You have forgiven me.

I remember the tone of Your voice and how often You have spoken to me.

I remember Your kindness and Your wildness.

And I want to tell You this morning, Lord, that I am ready.

I am ready to take possession of the land and life that You have laid out before me.

Amen.

## Notices



**This Sunday** we have our monthly **8am communion service** from the Book of Common Prayer. We also have our usual **10am service** with groups for our children and young people. The Bible passage for this service is Psalm 40.

**The following Sunday is Mothering Sunday**, so our 10am service will be a **family service**, with everyone in church together. We also have our **5pm service**, which is more traditional.



Join our team

There are lots of teams of volunteers running all the groups and activities in church, and we are so grateful to all of you! We probably have close to 100 people volunteering across all our services, ministries and groups that we run as a church. That's amazing!

As you will know if you were in church last Sunday, some of those teams would really love some more volunteers so that the groups can grow and expand safely.

Volunteering in a team is a great way to feel part of something, to get to know people better, and to give to the church.

**The teams which really need to grow at the moment are:**

**Deeper** - for children in school years 3-6 - Mondays 3.30pm to 5pm. New children are coming but we need to have 4 volunteers each week for our ratios. You can make toast and serve tuck or play games with the children.

**Sunday children's group** - again, we are seeing new families in church which is amazing, but it means an extra volunteer in the primary school aged group each week would be great. This is during the service on a Sunday morning.

**Community Hub** - Wednesdays 11am - 3pm - the hub team would love to have a few more volunteers to help serve drinks and lunch. They do two shifts on a Wednesday, so you could either help from 11am - 1pm or 1pm - 3pm.

**Tech operators on Sunday mornings** - for the sound desk and for the computer system which runs the live stream and song words / PowerPoints. Both roles would have training and are not as complicated as they seem!

There are other teams which could also benefit from extra members going forward:

**Ignite** - for secondary school aged young people - Tuesdays 6pm - 7.30pm.

**Welcoming on the door** on Sunday mornings

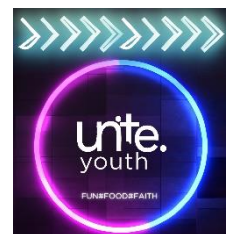
We are so grateful to anyone who has had to step down recently and recognise that serving is often for a season. We are also very excited about the growth that is happening, and would love to keep up with that, so if you would like to join any of these teams, please speak to myself or Chris. Thank you!



Another way you can support all the ministries that happen at church is to pray for them.

Our next **monthly prayer meeting** is this Monday (4th March) at 8pm in the church centre. We would love to see more people there to pray for our world, our community and our church.

The next **town-wide Unite youth event** is on Friday 15th March 5.30pm - 8pm at TW Christian Fellowship. There will be workshops, food, football, faith, console games, surprises and tuck shop! This is for anyone in school years 6-13.



That's all for now. If you need any help or support, please contact us in the church office. Have a lovely weekend.