

# St. Matt's Midweek Update – 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2024



How are you? I hope you have had a good week.

This Sunday is Palm Sunday, the start of Holy Week which leads up to Easter.

I've just been reading some of the passages around Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, and there are a few things I have noticed.

Firstly, it is very easy to take each of these passages on their own, and not realise the full extent of what Jesus was going through at that time, and the situation surrounding the disciples and the people around them. If you get time to read through one of the gospels this week, it really helps to put all the events of Easter in context.

All the different gospels have a different take on things and share different aspects of Jesus' ministry to get their point across. In John 11, we see that before Jesus went to Jerusalem, he healed Lazarus. That event meant a lot more people realised who Jesus really was and believed in Him. And that meant that life became very dangerous for Jesus and the disciples, as the Pharisees were determined to arrest him and kill him. So Jesus had to withdraw from the crowds until the time was right.

When we then read the passages about Jesus riding into Jerusalem on a donkey, we understand more about what is happening. Maybe Jesus had to send the disciples to get the donkey for him because it was too dangerous for him to be seen. The crowds who gathered when they heard Jesus was coming were there for the Jewish festival of Passover, but many more of them would have realised who Jesus was, or that he was someone special, because of all the miracles and teaching he had been doing beforehand. There would have been safety in the crowds for Jesus - surely the Pharisees wouldn't arrest him in front of crowds of people who believed him and were celebrating him?

But then there is also the sign that Jesus gives by riding into Jerusalem on a donkey. Not on a horse, as a conquering King would have done, but a humble donkey. Even in his last days, Jesus was trying to show everyone the kind of King that he is, and to help them to realise the journey he had to take to be the King who saves his people.

So as we celebrate Palm Sunday this weekend, let's remember the journey that Jesus was on. In the midst of honouring him as king, let's not forget everything he went through to fulfil his reason for being on earth.

## Notices



**Easter** is next weekend, and we hope you will join us at our Easter services...

**Maundy Thursday** (28th March) 8pm Tenebrae service - this is a reflective communion service focusing on Jesus' last hours before the cross.

**Good Friday** (29th March) 10am family service.

**Easter Sunday** (31st March) 10am Easter family celebration with communion and baptisms.

We are having several full immersion baptisms on Easter Sunday, which is very exciting!

Please do invite family, friends and neighbours to come and celebrate Easter with us as well. You can share our posts from Facebook and Instagram, and we also have our Easter flyers in church, so do take some on Sunday to give out.



**This Sunday**, we have 10am and 7pm services.

Liz will be speaking to us in the morning on Psalm 46, and we will have groups for children and young people

Chris is speaking at 7pm on Psalm 24. Communion will be shared in the service.



Rosemary and her team are holding an **Easter tea** on Tuesday 26th March in the church centre, 2pm - 3.30pm. Please let Rosemary know if you would like to come along.

Chris and Carole are also having **tea and hot cross buns** at their house for anyone who is retired on Friday 5th April 2pm - 3.30pm. There are invitations at the back of church if you haven't had yours yet.

### **Midweek groups and activities...**

Here's what is happening with our midweek groups and activities over Easter:

Deeper - last session on Monday 25th March - restarting on Monday 15th April

Ignite - last session on Tuesday 26th March - restarting on Tuesday 16th April

Community Hub - not open again before Easter - hopefully restarting on Wednesday 10th April

Toddler group - not open again before Easter - restarting on Thursday 18th April

Community Larder - next week it will be open on Saturday 30th March (instead of Friday), but then back to Fridays from 6th April



### **Walking Hub is back on Saturday 6th April!**

They will be meeting at 10am for a walk in Hargate Forest (Broadwater Down, TN2 5PE).

Directions: Take the A26 Eridge Road out of Tunbridge Wells heading towards Crowborough. Broadwater Down is approximately 1/2 mile after the Sainsburys roundabout on the left just after some railings. The

entrance to the Forest is immediately on the right and you can park easily on the road.

The walk is a mixture of gravel path and grass tracks, flat in places but with some medium slopes. In view of the recent wet weather advise wearing wellies!

After the walk those that would like to can meet at the Blue Diamond Garden Centre cafe by the railway bridge (TN4 8HR). Dogs welcome on the walk and in the cafe!

**Knitting Hub** - Saturday 23rd March 10.30am in the church centre and Monday 8th April 7.30pm in the church centre

**Sewing Bee Hub** - Friday 5th April 7.30pm at Ruth's house



Our next **monthly prayer meeting** will be on Monday 8th April, 8pm in the youth room (knitting hub are in the church centre!). Everyone is welcome.

There won't be a newsletter for the next couple of weeks, as next week is going to be very busy with Easter, and then I am on leave the week straight after Easter.

Chris and I will both be working next week, and then you can contact Chris in the week after Easter if you need anything ([chris@stmattschurch.org.uk](mailto:chris@stmattschurch.org.uk)).

See you on Sunday!