

St. Matt's Midweek Update – 8th March 2024



How has your week been? I hope it has been good and you have found some rest and encouragement in it.

This weekend is all about women! Today is International Women's Day, which celebrates all women - their strength, achievements and uniqueness in everything they do. It's about seeking diversity, equality and inclusion, and working towards a world where our differences can be valued and celebrated.

Next week (12th March) also marks 30 years since women were first ordained to the priesthood in the Church of England. Like many things for women in this world, that was the culmination of many years of pushing and fighting and working for equality. Let's remember all those women who have worked to bring change and equality and justice for women, and not take for granted the journey that it took to bring those changes to fruition.

And then this Sunday is Mothering Sunday, which historically was about honouring and visiting your 'mother church', but these days is about celebrating and thanking our mothers and the mother-figures in our lives.

I'm sure you can all think of some amazing women in your life - women who have achieved against the odds, who display strength in the face of adversity, who care for others even when no-one is caring for them, who show humility and grace and kindness every day. More often than not, women are carrying a huge amount on their shoulders and juggling the needs of others. The mental load that women carry is huge and is not talked about enough. If you are a woman reading this, then some of that is probably true for you and you need to know that you are amazing and incredible, and the women around you are here to support and encourage you!

So this weekend, let's celebrate the women in our lives and tell them and show them how amazing they are. Let's build up the young women we know and remind them that they can do anything they dream of.

If you are a man, then make sure you go the extra mile this weekend to show your love and gratitude for the women in your life!

And if you are a woman, then remember how unique and special we all are, and take encouragement from this quote from Serena Williams,

"Every woman's success should be an inspiration to another. We're strongest when we cheer each other on."

Notices



This Sunday we will be celebrating **Mothering Sunday at our 10am service**. This will be a family service, with everyone in church together. We will have something to give to all the women in church and Carole will be speaking to us about Psalm 139.

We also have our **5pm service this Sunday**, with tea and cake from 4.30pm.

Next Sunday we just have our 10am service, with groups for our children and young people.



There are a few hubs coming up...

Gardening Hub is meeting tomorrow (Saturday 9th March) 10.30am - 12.30pm at Cari's house. If you need the address, please let me know.

Knitting Hub is on Monday (11th March) 7.30pm - 9pm in the church centre.

Walking Hub is starting up again on Saturday 6th April in the morning. More details will follow.



Now that Mothering Sunday is here, Easter is not far behind!

We'll get all our Easter publicity out next week, but here are the services we will be having over the Easter weekend...

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.

Christmas offering for Life & Soul...

We just wanted to let you know that we raised just over £3,000 from our offerings over Christmas, which will go to Life & Soul for the work they do with young people in our town. Thank you so much to everyone who gave.

Gardener needed...

A local charity is looking for a gardener/groundsman to look after the gardens of this 26 flat complex. Main duties will be mowing and scarifying lawns, weeding, hedge trimming, keeping grounds tidy. Knowledge of different plants an advantage. Flexible hours.

If you are interested, please contact Phil on 07483 326849.

Riding Lights Theatre Company...

The Riding Lights Theatre Company is putting on their production "The Narrow Road" at St. John's Church in Hildenborough on Thursday 14th March at 7.30pm. All the information is here <https://stjohntheevangelist.churchsuite.com/events/tlyo6eli>

And we would still love to hear from you if you would like to join one of the teams that run the ministries in St. Matt's. Maybe you needed time to think and pray about it. Please do talk to Chris or I if you are interested in volunteering (all the details were in last week's email).

Have a lovely weekend, and we look forward to seeing you on Sunday.