

St. Matt's Midweek Update – 27th March 2026



How has your week been?

A few things this week have all fed into me thinking more about trying to reduce distractions, spending less time on social media, slowing down and giving myself time to focus on God. And as we move into Holy Week this weekend, it's a time when we should be focussed on Jesus and all that he has done for us in his death and resurrection.

But life is busy, isn't it? And phones and social media are addictive!

I've been reading a book (very slowly over a couple of months!) called "The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry" by John Mark Comer. It's a great book, and it's more about reducing distractions in our modern world, and focusing on the right things, as well as slowing down and going back to Biblical principles like observing the sabbath, solitude, silence, among others. We may not be able to check out of the busyness of life, but we can find rhythms and practices that feed us and keep us feeling spiritually alive and healthy.

I've also been receiving emails during Lent about doing a carbon fast, so trying to reduce things that harm our environment. Today's email was all about social media and general online use, and the amount of energy that these platforms use in their vast data centres. And then there's AI... But this email also talks about these online platforms (which have been designed to get us addicted to them by the way) doing so much more damage to our spiritual lives - stealing our attention and time from God, stopping us from being fully present in our relationships, keeping us constantly wanting more and focusing on the wrong things.

So as I've been writing this email I have done what I've been thinking about doing for a while - I've taken Facebook off my phone and I will only use it on my computer for work.

I'm not saying we all need to delete social media suddenly, but maybe this Easter is a good time to think about the things that are distracting us from our relationship with God and keeping us constantly occupied and worn out.

Maybe there are things we can do to allow ourselves the space and the time to fully focus on Jesus this Easter, and to really ask God to show us afresh what His death and resurrection means for us.

Hebrews 12:1-3:

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart."

Notices



This Sunday (29th March) we have our main 10am service, and Liz will be speaking to us about Jesus' trial and Peter's denial (Matthew 26:57-75). It is Palm Sunday this Sunday, but we will be following on our journey with Jesus to the cross, so sorry if that is confusing!



This week is a really busy week in church, as all our groups are still meeting for their last session before Easter, and then we have all our Easter services!

A few dates to note this week:

Knitting Hub - Saturday 28th March 10am in the church centre

School Easter service in church - Monday 30th March - please pray for St. Matt's School as they come down to church for this service, and for Mike as he speaks to them.

All our midweek groups will carry on right up to Maundy Thursday, and will then have 2 weeks off after Easter.

Community Larder - will be opening on Saturday 4th April at the usual time instead of Good Friday.

Easter at St. Matt's Church

Next week is Holy Week, leading up to Easter weekend, and we'd love you to come and reflect, worship and celebrate with us in our services:

Maundy Thursday (2nd April) - Tenebrae service led by Jane Edwards - 8pm in church and online. Tenebrae means darkness, so this is a short communion service which finishes with readings by candlelight of Jesus' last night before his crucifixion. As each reading is finished, a candle is blown out until we end the service in darkness.

Good Friday Family Service (3rd April) - 10am in church and online. This is an all-age service but more reflective than our usual family services.

Easter Sunday 8am communion (5th April) - 8am communion service led by Richard Arding in church. This is our usual monthly BCP communion service to celebrate Easter.

Easter Sunday Family Celebration (5th April) - 10am in church and online, with talk and communion led by Sheila Perkins. This will be a much more joyful all age service as we celebrate the resurrection together!



Please do share the Easter advert we have from our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/stmatthewshighbrooms> and our Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/stmatthewshighbrooms/>

There are also flyers at church which you can give to anyone you would like to invite to church over Easter.

APCM and PCC vacancies

This year our APCM (annual meeting) will be on Sunday 12th April during our morning service. We will be looking back over the last year and thanking God for His faithfulness to us, as well as doing the business parts of the meeting.

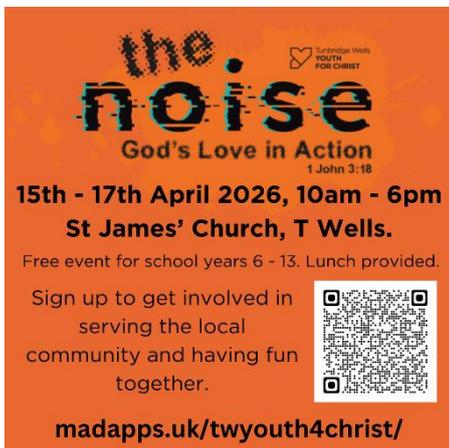
The APCM is the meeting where people can stand for and be voted onto the PCC (Parochial Church Council) and this year we are also voting for Deanery Synod reps.

Since our PCC meeting this week, we now have 3 vacancies for PCC, and 2 vacancies for Deanery Synod. Two current PCC members whose 3-year term is ending are nominated to be elected again to PCC. We also have two people willing to stand as our Deanery Synod reps. If you are interested in standing for PCC this year, please let Brian or myself know before the APCM so that we can chat to you about the role.



Unlock Walk - Every year some of our congregation take part in the Unlock Walk in London, to raise money for urban churches.

The walk this year is on **Saturday 18th April** and will be around the areas of Kilburn and Hampstead. If you are interested in joining the walk, please talk to Liz and pick up a sponsor form from the back of church.



the noise
 God's Love in Action
 1 John 3:18

Tunbridge Wells
 YOUTH
 FOR CHRIST

15th - 17th April 2026, 10am - 6pm
St James' Church, T Wells.

Free event for school years 6 - 13. Lunch provided.

Sign up to get involved in
 serving the local
 community and having fun
 together.



[madapps.uk/twyouth4christ/](https://www.madapps.uk/twyouth4christ/)

Youth For Christ run The Noise every Easter for anyone in school years 6-13.

The Noise is a chance for young people to give up their time to serve a Tunbridge Wells community and show God's love through practical projects such as litter picking, gardening and running children's clubs, as well as learning more about God's heart for mission, both locally and further afield.

The Noise is on 15th - 17th April at St. James' Church in TW. Each day runs from 10am-6pm and lunch is provided. It is free to attend.

You can sign up for one, two or three days here <https://www.madapps.uk/twyouth4christ/p26937.html>

News from Mission agencies

Just a reminder that details of all our mission partners and their latest newsletters are on the noticeboard on the Gordon Road side of church - do have a look.

Tearfund currently have an appeal for the Middle East, with information about what is happening on the ground in Lebanon and Gaza. You can find out more and donate here <https://www.tearfund.org/campaigns/middle-east-emergency-appeal>



News from Nigeria - Richard Foot has also asked me to share this petition "**Christians are being slaughtered in Nigeria. SIGN NOW to stop the silent genocide.**"

The petition is addressed to the UN Human Rights Council whose session is ending on Tuesday 31st March, and to the UN Special Reporter on Freedom of Religion and Belief.

You can sign the petition here <https://citizengo.org/en-gb/fr/17790> and please pray for our suffering brothers and sisters, especially over this Easter period.

Please do be in touch if you need any help or support at the moment.

We hope to see you on Sunday - **don't forget the clocks go forward on Saturday night!!**