

St. Matt's Midweek Update – 24th May 2024



I hope you are looking forward to the bank holiday weekend and to half term! Well done to all those taking GCSEs and A-Levels - you're halfway there!!

This week I read something that really resonated with me and that is a really important truth for us to know as Christians.

And that is that God doesn't make bad things happen to us, but he can always use those bad things for good.

We are sometimes misinformed, or it is implied by well-meaning people, that God makes bad things happen, or that there has to be a reason for everything that happens.

I don't believe that is the case. I definitely don't think that God makes bad things happen to us or that these things happen because we've done something wrong or been a bad person. That is not who God is and that takes away grace and forgiveness and love.

The verse in the Bible that jumps out when we think about this is Romans 8:28...

"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."

That verse is often taken out of context, but if you go back and look at the rest of the chapter, we see the tension and the struggle between the flesh and the Spirit. The world we live in is broken, and we are flawed people. There will be bad things and suffering and pain for as long as we are living in this inbetween age before Jesus returns again, and these things affect believers and non-believers alike.

But the chapter also talks about the freedom that comes with being loved and forgiven by God, and the comfort of having the Holy Spirit with us as we wrestle with the broken world and bodies we live in.

So it is in that context that Paul says that God works for the good of those who love him, with the understanding that bad things will happen, but God will still be working and moving and bringing his glory.

The chapter then finishes with the amazing truth that none of the brokenness of this world can separate us from the love of God - our good, kind and generous Father.

Notices



This Sunday we have a normal **10am** service with groups for our children and young people, and then our monthly **7pm** service in the evening.

We are looking at Encounters with Jesus at both of these services...

10am - a man born lame from Acts 3:1-10

7pm - the centurion from Luke 7:1-10

Next Sunday is the 2nd June, so we have our monthly 8am communion service and then a family service at 10am. Gill will be speaking to us about the Damascus Road experience in the family service (Acts 9:1-19).



Our next monthly **prayer meeting is on Monday 3rd June at 8pm** in the church centre. We have missed the last couple of months, so do come along and pray with us for our world, our nation and our church. There is lots going on at the moment so let's cover it all in prayer.



Our next **walking hub** is on Saturday 1st June and the walk will be starting in Hildenborough at 10am.

We will be starting in Hildenborough and walking across country via Leigh to Haysden Country Park & lake where we can use the facilities - cafe and toilets.

The walk is approximately 45mins each way and is flat - suitable for all.

The meeting place is Hilden Park Road, Hildenborough. As you leave Tonbridge on the Hildenborough Road (passing the Oast Theatre and Premier Inn), turn left just before the BP/M&S garage. This is Hilden Park Road. Continue along to the corner of Stacey Road and park near number 39 (postcode TN11 9BN). Jill and Phil will wait there for people to arrive and park at 10am.

If you need more information or a lift, please contact and church office.



Following our APCM a couple of weeks ago, we have some **new members on our PCC**.

The PCC is the governing body of the church, dealing with all sorts of things like finance, buildings, safeguarding, HR, to name a few! St. Matthew's Church is also a registered charity, so the PCC members are the trustees of the charity.

Following the APCM, this is our PCC...

Chris Wicks, Hannah Mwesigwa, David Johnson, Brian Hobden, Kate Whitehead, Mary Wilson (Deanery Synod rep), Kevin Barnes (Deanery Synod rep), Ian Wilson, Julia Church, Suzanne Owen, Mike Southwick, Graham Church, Matt Taylor, Phil Grainger, Fiona Wilson and Kim Shilling.

Welcome to Kim, Fiona and Kevin who were elected at the APCM.

Please do be praying for our PCC and our Leadership Team, especially as we head into this year of transition and change.

Dates coming up...

This week is half term, so most groups have a break, but the Community Hub and the Community Larder will still be on this week.

Knitting Hub is on tomorrow morning, 10.30am in the church centre.

Sewing Bee Hub is on Friday 7th June, 7.30pm at Ruth's house.

Church BBQ lunch - Sunday 7th July - save the date! We will be having a BBQ in the Vicarage garden after church with our mission partners Sam and Abby Baguma from MAF in Uganda.

There will be **no Deeper on Monday 3rd June**, as both St. Matt's and St. John's schools have INSET days.

Ignite on Tuesday 4th June will be a BBQ at the Vicarage (72 Powdermill Lane) at the normal time of 6pm - 7.30pm. All young people are welcome!

Unlock walk - well done to all those who did the Unlock sponsored walk a few weeks ago! Between them the walkers raised just over £1,100 which will be eligible for about an extra £200 in gift aid. Liz wants to say thank you to everyone who walked and all those who sponsored the walkers for such a fantastic effort and brilliant result!

There won't be a newsletter next week, as I'm working a short week due to the bank holiday. Have a lovely bank holiday weekend, and we look forward to seeing you at one of our services this Sunday.