

St. Matt's Midweek Update – 15th November 2024



How has your week been?

We're getting into that season where everything is about the run up to Christmas, aren't we?! Now that Remembrance is over, as you'll see from the notice sheet today, it feels like everything is focused on Christmas!

I love Christmas and there are so many good things about it, and lots of opportunities to have quality time with family and friends.

But the run up can be exhausting and over-whelming, and this year I am feeling a bit daunted by it all. My head is already coping with too much, and then the seemingly endless lists and things to do mean I risk not enjoying any of it and just trying to keep my head above water and get the tasks ticked off.

So what can we do to make sure we keep our focus on the one who Christmas is all about, and not just get bogged down under all the preparations?

It is so important to look after ourselves - to eat well, to rest well, to talk to people, and to know that sometimes we can't do it all. I know it's easier said than done, but let's try and turn our eyes back to Jesus when we are feeling overwhelmed, instead of focusing even harder on all the things we have to do.

And remember that Christmas is about celebrating the birth of our Saviour, not about making our house look amazing, or buying enough presents or going to all the parties and events. All those things are lovely if we can manage them, but they shouldn't be our focus and we shouldn't feel bad if we can't manage it all.

Care For the Family have got a free downloadable Christmas Guide with practical ideas and encouraging content to remind you to enjoy the small moments amidst the chaos! If that would be helpful for you, you can get it here <https://www.careforthefamily.org.uk/your-free-family-christmas-guide/>

I was also reminded this morning of the lovely song "Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus". Such a good reminder to turn our focus back to him. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Ka7bVQmbnk>

Notices

Community Larder Christmas Event - Saturday 23rd November 10am - 12 noon



The larder are having their annual Christmas fair at the Bethel Hall, with pavement BBQ, cake and gift stalls, tombolas and a raffle, live Christmas music and lots of coffee and cake and chance to socialise. Everyone is welcome!

The larder team would really appreciate donations for the tombolas...

Any form of bottle - champagne, shampoo and anything inbetween!

Chocolate - any type of chocolate product

You can leave things at the back of church in the larder box.

Also, if anyone has time to bake, especially savoury items like cheese straws and sausage rolls, that would be great. Please let Liz know if you can bake anything.

Thank you!



This Sunday we just have our main morning service at 10am.

Chris will be speaking about our value of welcome (Romans 15:1-7 and 13) and we will be sharing communion together.

We will have groups for our children and young people during the service.

Next Sunday, we have two services at 10am and 7pm.

This will be our last 7pm service, as we are stopping it due to low numbers and stretched resources to run it.



Our **Christmas Event** for ladies is just 3 weeks away now, so please buy your tickets and invite your friends! It's on **Friday 6th December 7.30pm - 9.45pm.**

Come and make some Christmas crafts & decorations, with mulled wine and Christmas nibbles throughout the evening. Tickets are £12 per person - which includes refreshments and anything you make.

This event is for women aged 14 and over.

You can buy your tickets

here <https://stmatts.churchsuite.com/events/add1rshq> or

email me on office@stmattschurch.org.uk

Kevin would like to offer something for the men while the women are having their craft night...

Men's meet up at Kevin's House, Friday 6th December from 6.30pm.

Beer, mulled wine and sausages round the fire in their wooded garden. Bring wellies and a drink of your choice and if you are musical perhaps an instrument so we can have a sing song of festive tunes if the evening pans out that way!! (Subject to weather - if raining may need to postpone)

It would be helpful if you could sign up for this so Kevin has an idea of how many people are coming. You can sign up here <https://stmatts.churchsuite.com/events/dtkzm6xe>



Choir and hand bells for Christmas services...



Choir - Our carol service this year will be on Sunday 22nd December in the evening, and Suzy will be getting a choir together again to sing a few numbers and lead the carols.

If you would like to be involved, please let Suzy know. Rehearsals will probably start on Monday 25th November at about 6.30pm but we will confirm that as soon as we can.

Join our Christmas hand bell team! - We are planning to once again put together a team of people to ring Christmas carols on hand bells at our Christmas services. And we need your help! If you are interested, please join us for hand bell practice sessions which we will be holding in the run-up to Christmas.

If you have not rung hand bells before – it's not that hard if you have a good sense of rhythm! Or, if you have been part of our team in previous years, please come along to refine your technique!

We are aiming to hold practice sessions after the morning service on the following Sundays (subject to confirmation): **November 23, December 8, December 15.**

Children need to be age 9+ and must be accompanied by a parent or guardian at all practices and services for the hand bell ringing.

If you are interested, please let Chris Horseman know either in person, or via the Church office.

Thank you!



Christmas Services

As we get into the busy period and the diaries fill up, make sure you add our Christmas Services to your calendars...

Wednesday 18 th December 8pm	A Reflective Christmas (this is a quiet service for those who find the noise and chaos of other Christmas services hard)
Sunday 22 nd December 10am	Christmas Nativity
Sunday 22 nd December 7pm	Christmas Carols
Christmas Eve 4pm	Christingle Service
Christmas Eve 11.15pm	Midnight Communion
Christmas Day 10am	Family Christmas Celebration

Painting / decorating help needed...

Could anyone help Dedo with painting a wall and skirting board, or can you recommend someone reasonably priced to do it?

She had someone who didn't do a great job on a room and left it unfinished, so just needs to get it finished off nicely! Thanks.

Once again, thank you to everyone for all your support for Chris, Carole and myself as we all cope with the things life throws at us and as we prepare for Chris being off again.

We are also here for you, so if you need any help or support, please do be in touch through the office.

We hope to see you this weekend.