

# St. Matt's Midweek Update – 17<sup>th</sup> January 2025



I hope you have had a good week.

Last Sunday morning, we started a new sermon series on the armour of God from Ephesians 6:10-20. Suzanne spoke to us about how we know when we are in a spiritual battle, and I found what she said really helpful.

She reminded us that not everything that goes wrong in our lives is a spiritual battle. Life happens to all of us, and the devil is not responsible for every struggle in your life. However, if we are living a life of following God then we should expect to have spiritual battles. Suzanne explained that a spiritual battle is more about what is going on inside us than the circumstances around us. How am I reacting to the things that are happening to me? Am I feeling judged or mistrustful or feeling unloved and devalued? These negative feelings are lies from the devil, and it's easy for him to get us to believe them when there are other things going wrong in our lives.

Recognising when we are in spiritual battle, and that the things we are feeling are not from God, is the first step to then doing something about it.

At the end of the Ephesians passage about the armour of God, Paul says, "And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people."

So what do we do when we are in a spiritual battle? We pray, and we get other people to pray for us! Prayer can protect us and help to restore those truths that God tells us in our hearts. Going back to the Bible is also a good idea, to remind ourselves what God thinks of us and to combat those lies that the devil tells us.

"Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." Ephesians 6:14-17

## Notices

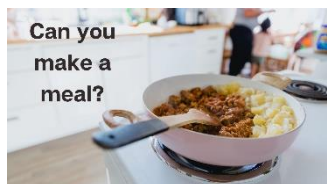


**This Sunday and next Sunday** we just have our main 10am service, with groups for children and young people. This Sunday Dedo will be speaking to us about the breastplate of righteousness, and the Bible reading is Romans 4:1-8. We will also be sharing communion together this Sunday.

**This week is a normal week in terms of groups and activities.**

We also have our **mission prayer meeting** on Wednesday 22nd January, 3.30pm at Mary's house or on Zoom.

**Knitting Hub** is happening on Saturday 25th January, 10.30am in the church centre.



**Could you make a meal this weekend and into next week?**

We would like to continue meals for Mandy and Tony up to next Wednesday, so if you could do a meal this weekend or next Tuesday, please let me know. Thanks.

**We will be baptising adults on Easter Sunday this year**, as we often do.

If you are interested in being baptised at Easter this year, then please speak to Chris or Hannah soon.



## Eating out at St. Matt's



On Friday 7th February in the evening, the church will become a restaurant for anyone who wants to come for dinner! It's a chance to get together and have fun at this dark and depressing time of year, and to be able to go out for dinner for a very small cost.

Bring friends and family along too!

Dedo will be cooking a variety of main courses, and there will be puddings as well. We're asking for a donation of £2.50 per person or £5 per family, but please feel free to pay what you can afford. You don't need to pay till the night, but please sign up soon so that we know how many people to cater for.

Sign up here <https://stmatts.churchsuite.com/events/ssl8xdti>



## Could you join the Ignite team??

As you may have heard a couple of weeks ago, Berti from Youth For Christ will be moving to Albania in a couple of months, so we will be losing him from Ignite. Chris and Carole have also been on the Ignite team, so with them leaving soon as well, we are going to be incredibly short of volunteers and may struggle to keep the group going without more people joining the team.

Ignite is our youth group for secondary school age young people. We have between 20 to 25 young people most Tuesday evenings, and it has grown by them bringing friends, so it is a really regular and close-knit group.

If you are interested in volunteering to help at Ignite, please do let me know, and you can come along to a session to see what it is like. Most volunteers help once a month, and the session runs from 6pm - 7.30pm, with dinner provided.



Here at St. Matt's, we use a **church management system called ChurchSuite** to manage our data, including contact details, rotas, children and youth, and more.

ChurchSuite is a secure web-based system, which enables us to keep all our data in one place and to comply with GDPR data protection guidelines.

One of those guidelines is to have consent for keeping people's details, so last week I sent out consent emails to all adults we hold details for, so that you can check your details and consent to us keeping them. You can also set your privacy settings and say how you want to be contacted. Thank you to everyone who has already updated their consent. If you haven't yet responded, please have a look for the email - it is just a click on a button in the email to see your details and respond. Thank you!

ChurchSuite also offers a free app called My ChurchSuite (found in your app store) for congregation members. It enables you to see all the details we hold for you and your children, as well as showing you upcoming events and rotas you are serving on, details of hubs and homes groups happening at St. Matt's, and easy sign up to events and groups. Do have a look and download it if you think it would be useful.

**Junior sized bed on offer** - Ruth has a wooden junior sized bed/cot bed, mattress and bedding (pillow and duvet) for anyone who would like them free of charge. Please speak to Ruth directly if you are interested or let me know if you need to be put in touch.

That's all for this week. We hope you have a lovely weekend and that we see you on Sunday. Please be in touch if you need anything.