

St Matthew's Newsletter 11th October 2026

Message from the Vicar

Dear friends,

I have now been your Vicar for four months! On one level, those four months have passed quickly, yet in other respects it feels like I have been here a lot longer. I suspect that these are both good signs – the time has flown, and yet I have very quickly felt at home here at St Matthew's.

I have enjoyed spending much of these first few months beginning to get to know the church and, most importantly, the people of our congregation and parish. I have been struck by the warmth of the welcome that I have received, by the close-knit sense of community within our church, and the gifts of hospitality and welcome that are so prevalent. Last Sunday, it was a delight to have over sixty people present for our Harvest Festival service, and the tables overflowing with food at the bring and share lunch were a fitting symbol of the generous hospitality of this church.

We are now about halfway through the autumn, a rich season in the life of the Church. Having celebrated Harvest, we will soon turn our attention to those festivals of remembrance – All Saints, All Souls, and Remembrance Sunday – when we remember the saints who have gone before us, those whom we have loved and see no more, and those who have given their lives in war. But Christian life isn't just about looking backwards; we remember the past because it helps us to understand who we are and where we are going.

I think that is particularly appropriate for us as a church right now. We are blessed with a rich history and a strong identity, a 'goodly heritage' (Psalm 16:6) which we must treasure. But we must also build upon it – that is why I am particularly looking forward to our Parish Planning Day on Saturday. We have much to celebrate as a church, but we must also ensure that we continue to take the opportunities that lie before us so that we can continue to flourish and thrive, as we are guided by the Holy Spirit into the next chapter of our life together.

With my prayers,
Father George

This week's Services

Sunday 11th October 19th Sunday after Trinity
10 am Parish Mass and Sunday School

All are welcome to tea, coffee and biscuits in the lounge after the service

Monday

1:30 pm to 3:30 pm Bereavement & Friendship Group

Tuesday

7:30 pm Phone-in Service

Wednesday

4:30 pm: Evening Prayer at St. Paul's Hamstead

7 pm: Mass in the Chapel

Thursday

9:15am Morning Prayer

10 am Mass in the Chapel

Friday

9:15am Morning Prayer

10 am Mass in the Chapel

Sunday 18th October – 20th Sunday after Trinity

10am: Parish Mass and Sunday School

All are welcome to tea, coffee and biscuits in the lounge after the service

CONTACT DETAILS:

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Dates for your Diary

Friday Coffee Mornings

All are welcome for Coffee/Tea and Cake in The Lounge. This week's donations will go towards the Macmillan Coffee mornings appeal.

Every Friday 11am – 1pm

Bereavement and Friendship Group

If you've suffered a bereavement or are feeling isolated and lonely come and meet other who know how you are feeling. Every Monday, 1:30 to 3:30 pm in The Lounge.

Book Club.

The next meeting of the Book Club is on Wednesday 4th November. The book for October is "Out Of The Ashes" by Emma Törzs. If you love reading and would like to join us over a cup of tea/coffee you are warmly invited to our next meeting.

Guest Preachers

We are delighted to be welcoming a series of guest preachers at our 10am Parish mass during the season of Autumn and Advent. For further details see notices in church or the Web Site.

This Saturday, 10th October, there will be a Parish Planning Day in the church hall from 11am-2pm. This is an opportunity to discuss the future of St Matthew's together and to think and pray about possible plans. All church members are invited to come along.

Early notice of a new date for St. Matthews Christmas Fair. This year it will be moving to Saturday 5th December

NOTICES

A reminder that we welcome contributions towards the cost of flowers, perhaps in memory of a loved one. Please place any donations in the pot on the table.

Contributions of food for the **FOODBANK** are always welcome. Please give as generously as you can and place any items in the basket by the door.

Our church relies on the generosity of visitors and worshippers. If you would like to make a contribution to the ministry and mission of St Matthew's but don't have any cash, there is a contactless card reader on the table by the front door.

Please put your request for prayers during the intercessions on the sheet on the table.

If you could offer a lift to someone to Church, please let us know.

We are buying a memorial stone to commemorate Fr Michael Westlake's time at St. Matthew's. Contribution towards the cost of this would be gratefully received

Scripture Readings for This Week

Sunday 11th Oct (19th Sunday after Trinity)

	Matthew 22.1–14
Monday 12th Oct	Luke 11.29–32
Tuesday 13th Oct	Luke 11.37–41
Wednesday 14th Oct	Luke 11.42–46
Thursday 15th Oct	Luke 11.47–end
Friday 16th Oct	Luke 12.1–7
Saturday 17th Oct	Luke 12.8–12

A Collect for Sunday 11th October

Faithful Lord,
whose steadfast love never ceases
and whose mercies never come to an end:
grant us the grace to trust you
and to receive the gifts of your love,
new every morning,
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

St. Matthew's Prayer List,

Please Pray for The Sick and Those in Need:

Please contact Margaret Cox if you would like to add anyone to our prayer list.

- Sat:** Barbara Linley, Andrew & Gail Walker, John Hope, Barbara Hayward
Mon: Fr Barry Smart, Revd Frank and Margaret Finch, Bali Dhugga, John Duncombe, Pam Millard
Tue: Jayne Middleton, Loretta Charles, Bernadette O'Sullivan, Lorna Wild, Barrie Greenwood, Graham Staton, Rachel & Fay.
Wed: Shirley Woodley, Eileen Eveson, Jean Hayes, Irene Roberts

Thu: Dai & Lal Gravell, Shirley and Ray Hollins, Mark Hawkins Ann Edwards,
Mark and Roger Furnell
Fri: David & Anne Gadd, Barbara Dring, Sue & Tony Kyte, Henry Cole

