

Dear Friend

This comes to you with greetings from all in the Ministry Team at St Matthew's. Following a two-week break at the end of August, we have met to review the sending of daily emails, and we felt that now is the time to move to a less frequent message! So we will be sending you a message each Monday which we hope will encourage you in your walk with the Lord, as well as keeping you in touch with all that's going on at St Matthew's, now that we are back in church - at least for now!

I am all too aware of the stress and strain that we are still facing at this time, and the real possibility of a second wave of the Covid-19 virus. As people of faith we have the great privilege of being able to see behind and beyond the situation the world as a whole is facing, not just with the pandemic but the threat of climate change, the extinction of species, the vast movements of people fleeing war, persecution or poverty and so on. Our faith gives us eyes to see behind all this to God on his throne. The Bible gives us the assurance that our God is both sovereign, and loving. From his heavenly throne God is in control of everything that is happening on earth, as the consequences of the disobedience of us all continues to be worked out. But he is also loving and longs for people to turn to him as the only source of hope, life and love. So let us keep our eyes fixed on this unchanging and almighty Love, so that whatever we as individuals are going through, or whatever is occurring on this beautiful fragile planet, we may have peace in our hearts. The peace that only God can give to us.

In our lovely prayer garden is a rock in front of the bench, and in front of the rock on a piece of slate is a verse from Isaiah 26.4: "Trust in the LORD for ever, for the LORD, the LORD himself, is the Rock eternal." (NIV)

Looking further ahead, we are celebrating our Patronal Festival on Sunday 20th September with a service in church at 10.00am. We are delighted that our new Archdeacon Rosemarie Mallett will be preaching that day. We are still very restricted on numbers, so if you are intending to come, please let Terry Mitchell know via email - churchadmin@stmatthew.org.uk - to make sure of a place. We cannot have more than fifty people at any one time in the church. Please also bring your own tea/coffee to have after the service.

May our sovereign and loving God keep your heart and mind in his perfect peace, as you keep yourself centred and focussed on him.

With much love and prayer

Simon

