

St Matthew's Newsletter 20th September 2026

Message from the Vicar

Dear friends,

On Sunday we will celebrate St Matthew's Day, our patronal festival. This offers us an opportunity to remember who exactly St Matthew was – the real, flesh-and-blood historical figure who lived in Judea two thousand years ago, and who now has thousands of churches around the world named after him.

You may recall that Matthew was a tax collector before accepting the call to follow Jesus, but to our modern ears that phrase 'tax collector' fails to adequately capture how reviled a man like Matthew would have been. He was not the equivalent of an HMRC bureaucrat, but more like a loan shark working on behalf of a corrupt and oppressive regime, overcharging the people and lining his own pockets in the process. Tax collectors were social outcasts, reviled by the Romans as socially inferior servants of the Empire and rejected by their fellow Jews as traitors and collaborators. No self-respecting Jew would have been friends with a tax collector.

And yet, Jesus did befriend tax collectors, and even asked one to be among his band of 12 disciples. He saw them as people, and did not define them by their role within Roman society. In doing so, he set the bar high for his Church to be a truly inclusive community that welcomes all.

The 20th Century Anglican priest Percy Dearmer once stated his belief that 'all the apostles would have been excluded from the Church of England... with the possible exception of Judas!' This may be overly cynical, but we should ask ourselves how we respond to those whom society would rather reject. Do we turn them away, or do we welcome them, just as Jesus welcomed the outcast and the stranger? After all, we are all equally in need of God's grace and healing, whoever we are.

With my prayers,
Father George

This week's Services

Sunday 20th September – celebrating St. Matthew's Day

10 am Parish Mass and Sunday School

Preacher: The Revd Canon Mark Chapman Former Vice-Principal Ripon College, Cuddleston

With Ayub Khan MP for Birmingham Perry Barr. Providing an update about the response to the recent floods. He will also be available to chat after the service.

All are Welcome to Tea, Coffee and cakes after the Confirmations

Tuesday

7:30 pm Phone-in Service

Wednesday

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 27th Septembr – 17th Sunday after Trinity

10 am Parish Mass and Sunday School

Preacher: *(Preacher: Mother Charlotte Gibson)*

All are Welcome to Tea, Coffee, and biscuits which will be served in the Lounge and Family Room after the 10 am 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

Every Friday 11am – 1pm

Berevemenent 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 8th October. The book for September is "Ink Blood Sister Scribe" 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.

Dates for your Diary

October 4th will be St. Matthew's Harvest Festival, followed by a Bring and Share lunch

On 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

Photos from Last \week's Confirmation Service are now available on the Web Site.

Morning Prayer will now be held in the Chapel every Thursday and Friday at 9.15am. All are welcome to join in this short act of worship.

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 20th Sept (16th Sunday after Trinity)

	Matthew 20.1–16
Monday 21st Sept	Matthew 9.9–13
Tuesday 22nd Sept	Luke 8.19–21
Wednesday 23rd Sept	Luke 9.1–6
Thursday 24th Sept	Luke 9.7–9
Friday 25th Sept	Luke 9.18–22
Saturday 26th Sept	Luke 9.43b –45

A Collect for Sunday 20th Sept

O Lord, we beseech you mercifully to hear
the prayers of your people who call upon you;
and grant that they may both perceive and know what things they ought to
do,
and also may have grace and power faithfully to fulfil them;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

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
Wed: Shirley Woodley, Eileen Eveson, Jean Hayes, Irene Roberts
Thu: Dai & Lal Gravell, Shirley and Ray Hollins, Mark Hawkins Ann Edwards, Mark and Shiv Furnell
Fri: David & Anne Gadd, Barbara Dring, Sue & Tony Kyte

