



# IN THE LOOP

[www.avendale-drumclog.org.uk](http://www.avendale-drumclog.org.uk)

Bereavement - Call Ian Douglas on [REDACTED]

**SUNDAY** Booking is no longer required for services at both locations.

**MORNING: We are really looking forward to this week's worship being led by Valerie Sim from SU.**

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This will have you at the edge of your seat

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IN OUR CHURCH FAMILY - **MATTHEW DOUGLAS** HAS BEEN AWARDED A RARE AND PRESTIGIOUS AVIATION MEDAL

**The following is an extract from the Citation published by the Guild of Airline Pilots and Navigators in awarding Matthew the Master's Medal**

'During the summer of 2020, Number 11 (Army Cooperation) Squadron were deployed overseas flying armed Typhoon missions protecting Iraq and Syria from the threat of Islamic State attack.

On 8th July Flight Lieutenant Matthew Douglas was the leader of a pair of RAF Typhoons flying a night-time mission over Iraq. Operating at a considerable distance from their home base, on a moonless night, they were reliant on air-to-air refuelling to complete their task of providing armed overwatch of an Iraqi air base. Intelligence indicated an increased threat of attack following recent rocket strikes.

Douglas carefully coordinated his formation to search the surrounding area. Thirty minutes into the task, his internal cockpit lights failed fully bright, causing dazzling glare. Simultaneously his external lights failed, increasing the risk of mid-air collision with another aircraft in theatre. However, noting the significant threat to ground forces that night, he selflessly put their protection first and, with careful mitigation, he continued to provide air support. Over the ensuing hour Douglas' aircraft suffered increasingly severe electrical failures, culminating in indications of an engine malfunction. With potential engine damage, Douglas had no choice but to divert to the very air base he was charged with protecting, despite the increased threat of attack.

Declaring an in-flight emergency he commenced his descent. At this point his radios began to fail and he lost control of the critical fuel system. With utter professionalism and exceptional airmanship, he remained unfazed and descended into the danger zone for a precautionary single-engine landing. Safely down and parked up, he attempted to open his canopy. Due to the electrical failures, it remained firmly locked. He was now trapped in a cockpit with an ambient temperature of 41°C and no cooling. In the temperate UK, with engineering support, this situation is dangerous and complex, requiring swift action and specialist tooling to release a pilot prior to incapacitation. Instead, Douglas was alone with unfamiliar foreign groundcrew who had no knowledge of his situation. An available option was to jettison the canopy, but he knew this risked death to anyone it struck. Desperate to avoid this, he calmly explained to air traffic control the nature of his predicament, drawing diagrams on scraps of paper to show the groundcrew how to attempt assistance.

Having already dealt with an emergency landing, his patience and courage in a time-pressured, potentially life-threatening situation were remarkable. After eight hours in the cockpit, as the internal temperature became dangerously high, Douglas requested fire crews attempt to cut him free rather than risk jettisoning the canopy. With the cutter inches from his head, his eyes were affected by the fine canopy dust, but success ensued. Despite his physical discomfort, Douglas carefully made-safe his bombs and sent a report to base, before administering to his own needs.

During this traumatic event, Douglas showed exceptional bravery, despite escalating danger, intent on saving his aircraft and limiting the risk to those he was charged to protect. He is accordingly awarded the Master's Medal.'

**To our Church Family - apart from his great courage and skill, his safety and survival must also be attributed to friends and family- all around the world - who were praying for Matthew, when it became apparent that something had gone badly wrong. God answered our prayers that night and for that we remain eternally grateful.**

**Ian and Margaret.**



# Messy Church THIS SUNDAY

We had such a good time last month with 70 people enjoying Messy Church.

What a fantastic opportunity to build relationships and worship God as this proves to be popular service with families- Mums, Dads, Grannies, Grand-dudes & young folk learning, singing and crafting together. Followed by a colossal feast.

Do please come this  
Sunday 4-6pm



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## Tea & Coffee

Some work is being done in the church kitchen just now but it is hoped we will be able to re-start teas & coffees after the service soon. If anyone is willing to help serve, then please drop a note to [info@avendale-drumclog.org.uk](mailto:info@avendale-drumclog.org.uk). **Fiona Anderson** is drawing up the rota so you can also contact her directly on [REDACTED]



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## Shoe Box Appeal 2021

Your generosity to this appeal makes such a difference to people in countries like Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Kosovo, Moldova, Romania, Serbia and Ukraine.

The link to the website is [here](#) where you will find the checklist of contents and advice.

The deadline is **Sun 31st Oct** for those wishing to fill boxes.

**NB- You can also use a drawstring bag** which is available at Avendale for a £1 donation. **Alison McKinlay & Lynn Dyer** are coordinating this.



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## Prayer Zooms continue on Wednesdays

Please join with others on Zoom or on your own at home to pray for the World, our Nation, our Town and each other every **Wednesday 8-9pm**. If you wish to join the group on Zoom at this time click below:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82604527957?pwd=TTZjZ0prZFFRM0dDc1VKTjVWOWV5UT09>



For the full church diary, click [here](#)