

Monthly News for January 2024



Welcome to St Thomas'

CHRISTMAS EVE

Chairs – Geoff & Ed / Coffee – Brian & Margaret

10.30am Morning Gathering – The birth is foretold, Luke 1:26-48

4.00pm Christingle

11.15pm Midnight Communion

CHRISTMAS DAY

10.30am Christmas Celebration! – The birth of Jesus, Luke 2:22-40

Sunday 31st December:

Chairs – Simon & Sue / Coffee – Ann Bakewell

10.30 Morning Gathering. Jesus presented in the temple Luke 2:22-40

Sunday 7th January:

Chairs – Geoff & Ed / Coffee – Allison & Spencer

8.30am Early Holy Communion

10.30am All-In (suitable for all ages) – Unsung Heroes, Acts 9

6.30pm for coffee, starting at **6.45pm** for prayer & praise

Sunday 14th January:

Chairs – Clive & Genette / Coffee – Helen & Ann

10.30am Holy Communion – Prostitute & beast, Rev 17:1-19:10

3.00pm Wonderfully Messy Church

6.30pm for coffee, starting at **6.45pm** for prayer & praise

Sunday 21st January:

Chairs – Sue & Rich / Coffee – Brian & Margaret

10.30 Morning Gathering – The visions of the end, Rev 19:11-20:15

6.30pm for coffee, starting at **6.45pm** for prayer & praise

Sunday 28th January:

Chairs – Sue & Jane / Coffee – Colin & Sue

10.30am Morning Gathering – Jesus is coming soon, Rev 21.1 22:5

6.30pm for coffee, starting at **6.45pm** for prayer & praise

Ideally please share new items for the Notice Sheet before 20th of each month

PLEASE KEEP ME!

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A Message From Our Vicar, David

What a year! As we welcome in 2024 and look ahead to all that is before this year come, I pray that we all can remember that no matter how we approach this new year, with all its uncertainties, difficulties, even opportunities and possibilities, that we you can hold on to the one who holds you.

Holding on is a very common theme through music, films, and books. The holding on by our fingertips fearing falling into the void, maybe some of you have felt like that. Just hanging on for the new year.

Let me point you to Psalm 63 as we walk into 2024. David is in the wilderness; Saul is threatening to kill him, he is on his own, hiding. He has left behind him everything. David is in hiding in the desert, but just look at his response, there is no sinking into self-pity, or breathing blue murderous threats against those after him, there's no blaming of friends for abandoning him, or even against God who it must have felt had left him. In that moment David chooses not to push God away but to draw him in even closer, he chooses to hold on even more tightly. David thinks of the good times with God, seeing God in the temple, beholding his power and glory, enjoying his love. He remembers who God is and what he has done. Here in the desert place, David is bringing God into his desert place. He is trusting God for the future.

I do not know what this coming year has for you, or for me. But I do know that the God who was there in the past, is the God who will be with you in the future. That the God who was loving and faithful in the past, is the God who was the same yesterday, today and forever, and will be loving and faithful and good in the future.

Rather than letting go, I want to encourage you to hold on tighter.

So this year let us hold on tightly to God, let us hold on tightly to the one who loves us so much that he would come to be with and give himself for us. Whatever this year has for us let us cling to the Lord.

Every blessing in Jesus' name,

David Sims
Vicar

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News, Dates & Special Events

Wonderfully Made, Wednesday 3rd January, 3pm-5pm - for children with additional needs.

Healing on the Streets - Saturday 6th January, 11am-1pm in Aldridge Centre, near Costa. Details on Page 4.

Fizz, Saturday 13th January - 12pm - 2pm at Tynings Lane Church. Details on page 4

Wonderfully Messy Church, Sunday 14th January, 3pm - Church for children with additional needs. Details on Page 5.

Wide Awake Club, Saturday 20th January - 10am. For dads, male carers and children. Details on page 5.

Prayer & Percolation - Every Monday, Wednesday & Friday at 9.15am, in the Lounge. See details on Page 4.

Brick Church - Look out for dates for 2024 which will be shared soon!

Monthly Munch - Look out for dates for 2024 which will be shared soon!

Bistro Night - Look out for dates for 2024 which will be shared soon!

Knit Stitch & Natter, Friday 26th January, at 10.30am in the Annex. An opportunity to work on your creative projects in the company of other creative people. See page 4 for details.

Brownies & Guides, Every Monday evening in Term Time - see page 5 for details.

Toms Toddlers - Return on 10th January, then every Wednesday in Term Time - 10am - 12pm - For children from birth to age 2½. See page 5 for timings & details.

Footprints. Return on 10th January, then every Wednesday in Term Time - 1pm - 2.30pm - For children from age 2½ to pre-school. See page 5 for timings & details.

Space to Pray. Return on 10th January, then every Wednesday - at 6.30pm - join us to pray together in church, all welcome. Details on page 5.

Café on the Close. Every Thursday (except for 28th December) - 10am-12pm, coffee, cake, conversation, and games. All welcome. Details on page 4.

Navigators. Every Friday during term time - See details on page 5.

We also have three fabulous external events which are open to everyone - Dance Lessons, Line Dancing, Black Dog Children's Fitness. (See pages 5 and 6 for booking details)

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Mission Focus

Jim Chalmers has shared news about our Mission Partners on our website under the heading Mission Focus. Or click here to view - <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/78262/view/>

Let's pray!

We meet for **Prayer & Percolation** in church lounge on Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays at 9.15 am - 9.45 am. Do join us even if you don't like coffee (tea is available).

Space to Pray - Wednesday evenings in church from 6.30 pm - 7.15 pm. Time to sit in the Lord's presence & pray as the Spirit leads. Do join us.

Church Prayer List - for prayer support.

Prayer Circle - for confidential prayer support from a small group of prayer warriors.

Remember that nothing is too small or too big for the Lord's help.

Prayer requests to Prayer Co-ordinator: Lizspiers55@blueyonder.co.uk or 01922 453944

Prayer Focus for January - As we enter the New Year 2024 and resolutions are made, let us firmly resolve to spend more time in the presence of the Lord in prayer. Let us make an effort to attend one or more of the weekly prayer meetings where joining with others adds strength to our prayers and "I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in Heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am with them". (Matt.18:19). Let us pray for more of the Holy Spirit at work in our world this year. Amen.

Adults - Regular Activities Held at St Thomas Church

Prayer & Percolation - All welcome every Monday, Wednesday, & Friday at 9.15 in the church lounge. Come & join us for coffee while we pray for our church, the world & each other.

Café on the Close - Offering a place to relax & enjoy a social time with others over coffee.

Opening hours - Every Thursday, 10am - 12pm.

Filling Station - Join with Aldridge churches for informal worship, teaching & fellowship with tea, coffee & cake! Meet on the 2nd Thursday of month at 7.30pm, (except for August & January). New venue to be announced for February 2024.

Knit Stitch & Natter (IN THE ANNEX) - Last Friday of month (excluding August & December), at St T's, 10.30-12.00pm. All welcome, bring your crafts. Contact Liz Spiers - lizspiers55@blueyonder.co.uk

Healing on the Streets - 1st Saturday of the month, 11am-1pm, at Aldridge Shopping Centre, near Costa.

Space to Pray - Wednesday evenings 6.30pm-7.15pm in church. Sit in the presence of the Lord; to lay before him the burdens of our hearts or just to sit at his feet & be refreshed. All welcome. For more details contact Liz Spiers - lizspiers55@blueyonder.co.uk

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Monthly Munch - an opportunity to meet once a month for a home-cooked lunch at 12.30pm, at St Thomas Church. Booking is essential, so please contact the office if you would like to come office@stthomasaldridge.org.uk. Suggested donations of £2.

Burning Questions - An evening of interesting discussion and learning, with a different topic faced each month. Held at Aldridge Parish Church, at 7.45pm.

FIZZ - Church for adults with learning difficulties or special needs & their carers. Meeting at Tynings Lane Church at 12pm - 2pm, on the 2nd Saturday of each month, (except August).

Dance Lessons (External Booking), Tuesday Mornings - Let's Dance provide one-one tuition for adult couples or individuals. To book lessons, or to find out more information, please contact Mandy 07761 235200.

Line Dancing (External Booking), Every Friday morning, 10am - 12pm. For all ages, everyone welcome, contact Dave Waring to find out costs, or just turn up - 0776 251 4598 / dotluc@hotmail.com

CHILDRENS' - Regular Activities Held at St Thomas Church

Brownies & Guides - Monday Evenings during term time. Contact Steph Chebsie - steph_steps@yahoo.co.uk

Phoenix Navigators - For boys & girls aged 5 to 18. Friday evenings during term time. Contact Allison Hopkins - allisonjhopkins@googlemail.com

Toms Toddlers - Wednesday mornings term time, in church 10.00am - 11.30am. For children from birth to pre-school age. Contact Hannah Evans - hannahevans@stthomasaldridge.org.uk

Footprints: For children from 2½ to school age. Every Wednesday term time, 1pm-2.30pm. Contact Hannah Evans - hannahevans@stthomasaldridge.org.uk

Wide Awake Club - For Dads, Grandads & children up to age 10. At St T's on 3rd Saturday of month, except August, 10am-11.30am. Hot drink & bacon, sausage or egg sandwich for adults, toast, squash, toys & crafts for smaller people.

Wonderfully Messy Church - A Faith based group for littlies with additional needs & their grown-ups. Every 2nd Sunday of the month, 3pm-4.30pm. Booking essential, please contact our Vicar David Sims vicar@stthomasaldridge.org.uk

Brick Church - A monthly get-together (except Summer Holidays). Come and hear a Bible story, have fun with bricks & share a chippie tea. Booking is essential for catering purposes!

Black Dog Children's Fitness - This wonderful children's fitness group is run by Lucy Khayat, please contact her for details - lucykhayat4@gmail.com [Black Dog Children's Fitness | Facebook](#)

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What's On ...		
Monday 1st January	Prayer & Percolation <i>No Brownies & Guides</i>	9.15am (Lounge) Evening
Tues 2nd January	<i>No External – Dance Lessons</i> <i>No Toddler Set-Up</i> <i>No Band Practice</i>	9.00am – 1.00pm 1.00pm – 3.00pm 8pm – 9.30pm
Wed 3rd January	<i>Prayer & Percolation</i> <i>No Toddlers</i> <i>No Footprints</i> Wonderfully Made <i>No Space to Pray</i> <i>No External - Dancing</i>	9.15am (Lounge) 10.00am – 11.30am 1pm – 2.30pm 3pm – 5pm 6.30pm – 7.15pm Dance Practice
Thurs 4th January	<i>No Life Group (Sheila G)</i> Café on the Close	10.30am – 12.00pm 10.00am – 12.00pm
Friday 5th January	Prayer & Percolation External Line Dancing Navigators	9.15am (Lounge) 10am – 12pm Evening
Sat 6th January	External – Black Dog Fitness Healing on the Streets Songwriting Circle	9am – 12.30pm 11am - 1pm (Aldridge Centre, Nr Costa) 2pm
Sunday 7th January	Gathering on front sheet	
Mon 8th January	Prayer & Percolation Brownies & Guides	9.15am (Lounge) Evening
Tues 9th January	External – Dance Lessons Toddler Set-Up Band Practice	9.00am – 1.00pm 1.00pm – 3.00pm 8.00pm – 9.00pm
Wed 10th January	Prayer & Percolation Toddlers Footprints Space to Pray External – Dance Practice Sunday Group Meeting	9.15am (Lounge) 10.00am – 11.30am 1pm – 2.30pm 6.30pm – 7.15pm 7.30pm 8pm (Annex)
Thur 11th January	Life Group (Sheila Gilchrist) Café on the Close Filling Station	10.30am – 12.00pm 10.00am – 12.00pm 7.30pm
Friday 12th January	Prayer & Percolation External – Line Dancing Navigators	9.15am lounge 10am – 12pm Evening
Sat 13th January	Black Dog Children's Fitness FIZZ	9am – 12.30pm 12pm – 2pm (at Tynings Lane)
Sunday 14th January	Gatherings on front sheet Wonderfully Messy Church	3pm
Mon 15th January	Prayer & Percolation Adoption Support Group Brownies & Guides	9.15am (Lounge) 12.30pm Evening
Tues 16th January	External – Dance Lessons Toddler Set-Up Band Practice	10am – 1.00pm 1.00pm – 3.00pm 7pm – 9pm

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Wed 17th January	Prayer & Percolation Toddlers Footprints Space to Pray External – Dance Practice	9.15am (Lounge) 10.00am – 11.30am 1pm – 2.30pm 6.30pm – 7.15pm 7.30pm
Thurs 18th January	Café on the Close Life Group (Sheila Gilchrist)	10am – 12pm 10.30am–12.00pm
Friday 19th January	Prayer & Percolation External – Line Dancing Navigators	9.15 (Lounge) 10am – 12pm Evening
Sat 20th January	Black Dog Children’s Fitness Wide Awake Club	9am – 12.30pm (Annex) 10am
Sunday 21st January	Gatherings on front sheet	
Mon 22nd January	Prayer & Percolation Brownies & Guides	9.15am (Lounge) Evening
Tue 23rd January	External – Dance Lessons Toddler Set-Up Band Practice	10am – 1.00pm 1.00pm – 3.00pm 7pm – 9pm
Wed 24th January	Prayer & Percolation Toddlers Footprints Space to Pray External – Dance Practice	9.15am (Lounge) 10.00am – 11.30am 1pm – 2.30pm 6.30pm – 7.15pm 7.30pm
Thur 25th January	Café on the Close Life Group (Sheila Gilchrist)	10am – 12pm 10.30am–12.00pm
Frid 26th January	Prayer & Percolation External – Line Dancing Knit, Stitch & Natter Navigators	9.15am lounge 10am – 12pm 10.30am – 12pm Evening
Sat 27th January	Black Dog Children’s Fitness	9am – 12.30pm
Sun 28th January	Gatherings on front sheet	
Mon 29th January	Prayer & Percolation Brownies & Guides	9.15am (Lounge) Evening
Tues 30th January	External – Dance Lessons Toddler Set-Up Band Practice	10am – 1.00pm 1.00pm – 3.00pm 7pm – 9pm
Wed 31st January	Prayer & Percolation Toddlers Footprints Space to Pray External – Dance Practice	9.15am (Lounge) 10.00am – 11.30am 1pm – 2.30pm 6.30pm – 7.15pm 7.30pm

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Contacts

- **Clergy –**
Rev David Sims (VICAR) vicar@stthomasaldridge.org.uk, office number 01922 453942
Rev Jeremy Bakewell 07790 986575
Rev Sue Quibell 07889 88554
If you would like to talk please feel free to phone on the numbers above.
- **Church Office –**
Administrator - Genette Andrews. Office hours are **Monday to Thursday from 9 am till 12 pm.**
Genette will be happy to help with your queries.
Telephone - 01922 453942 / Email - office@stthomasaldridge.org.uk
Please note that messages are not be seen or heard on Fridays, Saturdays or Sundays.
- **Children & Families Worker: Hannah Evans -**
Telephone: office 01922 453942 / home 01922 693298 / mobile 07921 387241
Email: hannahevans@stthomasaldridge.org.uk
Please note that messages are not be seen or heard on Fridays & Saturdays.
- **Intern –** Barney Doel 01922 453942
- **Prayer Coordinator: Liz Spiers -**
Telephone 01922 453944 / email lizspiers55@blueyonder.co.uk if you wish to discuss any prayer needs, including ongoing prayer ministry & details of the Prayer Circle.
- **Wardens -**
Sue Grundy: 07772 925069 / susan.grundy@yahoo.com
Andrew Dickson: 07989 143388 / andrewjdickson999@hotmail.com
Glennys Davis: 07905 210399 / glennys49@hotmail.com
Joyce Peel: 01922 456140 / joycepeel@btinternet.com
- **Safeguarding -**
Safeguarding is *everybody's* responsibility. If you have concerns about how somebody might be treating you or another person, please do not hesitate to contact the following people –
Sue Grundy (for children) - 07772 925069 / susan.grundy@yahoo.com
Sue Quibell (for adults) - 07889 885545 / s.quibell@gmail.com
(see poster in church foyer for other numbers & information). **A copy of our safeguarding policy is available in the church foyer & church office.**
- **Fabrics & Health and Safety –**
Andrew Dickson: 07989 143388 / andrewjdickson999@hotmail.com

Websites <https://stthomasaldridge.org.uk/> or www.achurchnearyou.com/church/4121/)

Cooper & Jordan School Applications: Parents should be aware that we follow the school's admission policy on attendance & in accordance with Diocesan guidelines 'regular attendance' at **worship** constitutes a minimum of at least **two services per month**. The guidelines further suggest that regular attendance should have been for at least two years before application. Please see the Welcome Desk to ensure your attendance is recorded. **New information: Supporting letters are now being done in batches when we receive the list of applications from C&J. The letters are then sent directly back to C&J but feel free to check with our office that your child's name features in the list.**

Gift Aid: The Government adds 25% to each 'Gift Aided' donation at no cost to you. If you don't have a regular Gift Aid arrangement, but would nevertheless like to Gift Aid a donation today, please use one of the brown Gift Aid envelopes available from the leaflet rack, or do ask a Steward to find one for you. Please see our Treasurer, **Ron Heaton** for more information if needed.