



Welcome to St. Thomas'!



A very warm welcome to St Thomas' Church.

This sheet is now also being sent via email! Please contact the office on our temporary number of 07702 822546 if you wish to receive an emailed copy.

St Thomas' Website - www.achurchnearyou.com/church/4121/

St. Thomas' Facebook - www.facebook.com/stthomasaldridge/

Rev's Ramblings

7th May 2020



Tomorrow we'll be celebrating 75 years since the end of World War Two, and remembering once again all those who lost their lives. I think it will be particularly poignant this year as we will also be thinking about all the deaths associated with Coronavirus – another enemy, but this time an unseen enemy.

Considering I wasn't born until 1950, I know so much about London in the war that I might as well have been there. Until I was ten I was brought up in South-East London in the house where I was born and where my mother and her family spent the war (my Dad was away in the RAF). My Nan used to regale me with tales of the Blitz, the bombers overhead, the Doodlebugs, anti-aircraft guns, sirens etc – so much so that I sometimes think I actually lived through it!! Outings in those days were by bus and from my favourite seat upstairs I could see lots of the bomb damage, with hoardings around the big holes and ruined buildings everywhere. It wasn't just London, either – there were many other towns and cities that had to go through major rebuilding programmes.

We'll all have to go through major rebuilding after Coronavirus – not buildings this time, but our lives. Nobody knows yet what the "new normal" will be – that's the latest catchphrase! – but I think life will be different for a long time to come. We've got used to the 2-metre social-distancing at the shops, but how will that work at church? I've just heard on the radio that churches in Germany have been allowed back today – but singing is banned!! How can we praise without singing? But, there again, how can we sing with face-masks on??!! However, whatever we will need to do, or go through, we will always have one constant who never, ever changes – Jesus. He will always be walking beside us, holding our hands, whispering words of encouragement – what a blessing and comfort we have in Him!!

Blessings

Sue Quibell

MISSION FOCUS



(Thank you to Janet Berril for this information)

No way out

Royda is a single mother, bringing up three young children in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania – one of the poorest countries in the world. Due to poverty, they have no choice but to live next to the city's main rubbish dump. Their lives and health are being harmed by plastic pollution every day, and they have no way out.

Life by a rubbish dump

Litter often overflows from the open dump into the community. There are no waste collection services in the area to safely dispose of rubbish. It piles higher each day and attracts huge amounts of flies, bringing sickness and disease.

In the hot and dry weather the dump often catches fire, sending harmful fumes into Royda's home. It's not safe for her and her children.

'The dump is on fire every two days,' says Royda. 'Sometimes, the smoke is so dark that you can't see the person in front of you.'

'I get breathing problems and eye problems too,' says Royda. 'The kids also get a lot of breathing problems; they cough a lot. When it is really bad, there is no way you can deal with it without going to the hospital... I am worried about my children's health because when it is very dry, the smoke always comes. I am sure in the long run they will develop health complications.'

Around the world, poor communities like Royda's are becoming dumping grounds for plastic waste. Tearfund is helping these communities set up waste management schemes, but more needs to be done by the companies responsible for the pollution.

PLEASE PRAY

- Lift up Royda and her children and ask for protection over their health. Pray that solutions will be found to tackle rubbish collection and recycling in communities like Royda's around the world.
- Pray for the leaders of companies such as Coca-Cola, Nestlé, PepsiCo and Unilever to take responsibility for the damage they are causing. Pray they will further commit to reducing their plastic production and pollution.
- Ask God to give you wisdom about the small steps you can take to protect our global neighbours and the environment.
- Prayer for the staff and partners of Tearfund that they will be protected at this time, as they are in lockdown in some of the worst countries.

Thank you for your support and prayers for this growing problem in the most poorest of countries.

Tearfund are still taking Jesus to where the need is greatest even in this broken world we live and these dark times.

God Bless

Janet

TEARFUND CHURCH REP

Digital Resources For Online Worship and Prayer

There are lots of options to keep us going! ...

Live Family Worship: Join the Drake Family on Wednesday's and Saturday's at 4pm for their live Family Worship session. Nick and Becky Drake are the people behind the songs such as 'Creator God', 'City on a Hill' and 'Big Family of God' if you know them. Their sessions comprise of some live acoustic songs, an interactive, family participation story and prayer, lasting about 30 mins. Well worth a watch, and the previous videos can be viewed at any time at: <https://www.facebook.com/worshipforeveryone/> Look at Facebook & Website

Faithlife: Please use this facility for spiritual teaching, where you can view some online services and listen to sermons that you may have missed or listen again to those that challenged you or that you enjoyed <http://faithlife.com/stthomas> Follow the instructions below to go direct to our sermon site, Look out the button on the bottom right, it's blue like a tray with an arrow on it. The option then comes up down load audio, or download video. If you download video you will get pictures too. Any problems let me know and we'll see what we can do. I'm hoping to expand our options as time goes on. God Bless. **Roger Woodhall**

1 click on <http://faithlife.com/stthomas>

2 scroll down to choose message or sermon you want

3 click on blue button on right hand side, looks like a tray with an arrow in to it

4 choose either download audio or download video from little blue box

5 wait for it to download then press the play button in middle of screen.

The Church of England Website: Please look at this website as it provides a variety of helpful tools for online worship and prayer. Please copy or type the following link in your search engine:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-churches> Then click **Digital Resources** (*found in the middle/left of your screen*). You should see lots of options, such as - apps for prayer, audio services, online streaming and a link to BBC Radio 4 Live Lent.

BBC Radio 4 Daily Services: Sunday 10th May, 8.10am. This service is titled "What Sort Of Victory?" and marks the 75th anniversary of VE Day. Dr Rowan Williams will ask how our nation can rise to its present huge challenges as it seeks to emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic.

BBC One TV, Sunday Worship: Fifth Sunday of Easter, 10th May at 10.45am (*Please note service times can fluctuate from week to week*). This week's service will be at Hereford Cathedral for VE Day and will be led by the Right Revd Rose Hudson-Wilkin. The service was filmed before the closure of all church buildings.

NOTICES

Praying Together: At this time of world crisis when we are not meeting together to worship or pray to the Lord we can still do this as individuals (couples or families) at home at the times some of us would be meeting together.

Monday 6.30pm-7.15pm – is when Space to Pray usually meet. **Wednesday 7.30pm-8.00pm** – is when the Revival Prayer Meeting usually takes place. Their members will be praying at home so why not set aside these times to join together 'in spirit' as we ask the Lord to intervene in our world and in our nation. We could also pray on **Fridays between 12 noon-1.15pm** when Jan's prayer group would be meeting and also on **Sundays when church would be meeting**.

There is always so much to pray about but even more at this time, so let's come together in Spirit and show the Lord that we are serious in our requests. Let's also just keep reminding ourselves of God's promises to us and remember that He is still Sovereign over all. Peace of the Lord be with you. **Liz Spires**

Prayer Circle: The Prayer Circle was originally set up many years ago to pray for those amongst us who were ill or suffering bereavement. Over the years we have prayed for many other things including job loss, even sick pets, as well as for people to come to know Jesus – God is concerned with every aspect of our lives, nothing is too big or too small for Him. This service is here for you, so if you have any worries about anything at this time, do get in touch and we will pray for you. We are a group of about a dozen St Thomas' members who are willing to pray for you or your loved ones each day. Prayer requests are contained within the Prayer Circle, Sue Quibell and Jeremy Bakewell, on a confidential basis and not shared with the wider congregation. Please get in touch with Liz Spiers on 01922 453944 or email Liz at Lizspiers55@blueyonder.co.uk who will share your request and start praying. **Liz Spires, Prayer Coordinator**

Your world needs you to keep on praying! Have you been joining in with our set prayer times? For me personally, on Mondays at 6.30pm there has been a 'stillness' in the air as if the Lord is saying 'come now is the time to pray' and there has been a real feeling of meeting with Him at that time. This time is when Space to Pray would have been meeting and it recently occurred to me that previous prayers have been answered but in the most unexpected ways anyone could imagine.

Over the past year or so the 6-8 of us who have been meeting on Mondays have prayed for our world and the things that concern us. Some of the things we prayed for were: That people would have more respect and love for one another and now we are hearing stories of acts of kindness and people going out of their way to help others, building a community spirit.

Continued ...

NOTICES

We prayed about children and family life. Most families now have more time to spend together and hopefully the children are getting all the love and attention they need and building up relationships. Though we still need to pray against abuse.

We prayed about the homeless, that somehow they would find permanent homes. Councils have now found homeless people rooms in hotels to take them off the streets and will hopefully find them more permanent places in due course.

We prayed for knife crime to stop and now people are not allowed to meet up therefore lessening the opportunities for young people to injure one another.

We also prayed about human rights in China and now have a virus from there which is trying to destroy mankind, God's creation. God responds to our prayers and the devil tries to counteract but God always brings good out of the bad.

On Wednesdays at our Revival Prayer Meetings the 3-4 of us have prayed for revival in our church and our nation. We are now seeing more 'online' church services available to everyone to hear the gospel and Sue and Jeremy have been posting prayers and bible studies for us to join in with. We have been receiving the weekly prayer list to pray for those working with the NHS or suffering the effects of Coronavirus. Who knows how many people have turned to God in prayer over the last few weeks or heard a sermon for the first time. If this Coronavirus doesn't get people praying then I don't know what will.

When I took on the role of Prayer Co-ordinator my desire was for us to come together as a praying church and though few of us have been meeting each week I hope we are now becoming that praying church from our own homes. My other long held desire is for us to become a healing church and my prayer is that the Lord will equip us for when we emerge from our homes into this hurting world.

Let us keep praying. The world needs us to. And God does answer prayers but in most unexpected ways. **Liz Spiers – Prayer co-ordinator**

Watts in Madagascar: Further prayer points –

- Please pray that the national and local government and health officials make wise and compassionate decisions.
- Please pray protection for the people from anxiety and fear driven unrest because of the restrictions in place.
- Continue Lord to give courage and strength to all staff at the hospital to minister the Good News of Jesus in the best ways possible now that daily gospel meetings have been suspended by law.

NOTICES

Tom's Toddlers and Footprints: Please look out our new prayer activity which was posted on our website on the 6th May. **Hannah Evans, Children and Families Worker.**

Children's Activity: Please look out for our new **Homegrown Faith** which although it is not ready just yet, it will be available to view very soon! The new activity will be based on John 14, Jesus comforting his disciples and you will be able to access this in the following ways ...

- **Website** – From the menu, look for “*Children's Activity (12) Jesus Comforting His Disciples*.”
- **Facebook** - <https://www.facebook.com/StThomasAldridge/>
- **Email** – Hannah will be emailing this to families who have requested it, so do contact Hannah if you would also like to receive this by email.

Hannah Evans, Children and Families Worker.

Why Did God Allow Coronavirus? Please look on our website for ways to help children with this very difficult question. There are 2 versions, depending upon the age of your child and how much you want to explain this. You may find this to be helpful in your household over the coming week, or in advance of the question at a later point. **Hannah Evans, Children and Family Worker**

Helping Children Say Goodbye: Please look at our website for an attachment, called '*Saying Goodbye*'. I hope this is something that you will not need to use, but it is shared as another 'up your sleeve'/'just in case pocket' (Peter Rabbit fans!) It's a support for if you should have to help your child in this way. We found this quite useful for Emily in understanding how she was feeling and happy things to remember, whilst coming to terms with the death of our elderly neighbour from Covid-19. **Hannah Evans, Children and Family Worker**

Thomas Project, Request For Craft Items For Children: The Thomas Project would like to give out bags of crafty items to children during the lockdown. These bags will be given out to families through Foodbank. If you have any spare new craft items you can donate we'd be really grateful. We need new things only please, crayons, paper, playdough, books etc for ages 3+ years up to 12 years. Donations can be left at the project on Wednesdays 10am to 1pm or Fridays 3pm to 6pm. The Food Bank will still be open during the usual hours on Wednesdays and Fridays.

St Thomas' Church Office: Hannah and Genette are currently working from their homes. Please see the end page for contact details.

Caravan Holiday Bookings: Please check with Marlene Bradburn regarding future bookings of their static caravan at Dyffryn Seaside Estate, Barmouth. contact Rob on 07873 403748 or Marlene at 01922 457790 for more details. Thank you. **Marlene Bradburn**

ALL REGULAR WEEKLY GROUPS ARE CURRENTLY SUSPENDED

CONTACT INFORMATION

Clergy:

- Rev Jeremy Bakewell 07790 986575
- Rev Sue Quibell 07889 885545 if you want would like to talk please feel free to phone on the numbers above.

Church office

- Office hours are usually **Monday to Thursday from 9 am till 12 pm**. Genette Andrews is currently working from home and will be happy to help, you can contact her on the following temporary number:
- Telephone 07702 822546 / Email: office@stthomasaldridge.org.uk
(Please be mindful that messages may not be seen or heard on Fridays, Saturdays or Sundays)

Children and Families Worker: Hannah Evans

- Hannah is currently working from home and can be contacted on the following numbers:
- Telephone 01922 693298 or mobile 07921 387241 / Email: hannahevans@stthomasaldridge.org.uk
(Please be mindful that messages may not be seen or heard on Mondays, Saturdays or Sundays)

Pastoral Care Coordinator: Vera Russell

- Telephone 01922 616383 or 07806 519301 / Email: vjruss@gmail.com

Prayer Coordinator: Liz Spiers

- Telephone 01922 453944 if you wish to discuss any prayer needs, including ongoing prayer ministry and details of the Prayer Circle.

Wardens

- **Clive Thomas:** 07811 341212 or email clivethomas62@yahoo.co.uk
- **Sue Grundy:** 07772 925069 or email susan.grundy@yahoo.com
- **Andrew Dickson:** 07989 143388 or andrewjdickson999@hotmail.com
- **Vera Russell:** 07806 519301 or email vjruss@gmail.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 **Sue Grundy (for children) on 07772 925069** or **Sue Quibell (for adults) on 07889 885545** (see poster in church foyer for other numbers and information). **A copy of our safeguarding policy is available from the church foyer and church office.**

Fabrics and Health and Safety – Andrew Dickson may be contacted via 07989 143388 or andrewjdickson999@hotmail.com directly, if you notice or need help with any such issues.

Cooper and Jordan School Applications: Parents should be aware that we follow the school's admission policy on attendance and 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.**
Thanks, Genette.

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.