



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

Thursday 16th July 2020



Last Saturday we walked from our house across the fields into Pelsall, enjoying the nice weather. The fields we pass through have had different crops in them over the years, but this year we thought they were looking particularly dead and scruffy. However, on looking closer at what we thought were overgrown weeds, we realised that this was a crop of oilseed rape waiting for harvesting.

Oilseed rape is that beautifully bright yellow crop that has become more common over the last 10 years or so, but to get the oil from the seeds the plants actually have to go black and dry. Once that happens, the seeds are crushed into a lovely light yellow cooking oil.

Don't you think that's what life can be like? The seeds are planted, the plants grow and flourish into beautiful vibrancy and life, then begin to die down and become a little dry. Certainly as we get older the vibrancy seems to seep from our lives, but that is the time to take up new pursuits and hobbies to reinvigorate ourselves.

It's the same with our faith, as well. We hear the Word, we believe, we flourish – but, if we aren't careful, when we get to the seed ripening stage we can begin to dry out and shrivel as Christians. That's why we need to keep reading our Bibles, listening to different speakers on-line or on DVDs or CDs, playing Christian music that we may not normally listen to. By keeping our faith fresh, the oil of God's love will flow from us and, no matter how old or young we are, we will continue to flourish both within ourselves and as witnesses to those around us.

Blessings
Sue Quibell



Mission Focus – Monthly Update For July

NEWS FROM KRASIF AID

(Thank you to Brian and Chris for sharing this news)



KRASIF AID UPDATE...

Greetings from Devon! We are amazed that we have already been living in Cullompton for a whole year. None of us expected to be facing this strange time with Coronavirus, and we pray continued protection for all of you at St. Thomas'... we miss you.

Thankfully, the outbreak in Bulgaria has been small with less than 200 deaths, although the concern is over the effect of opening up the holiday resorts for the summer. We have been using lockdown to write the next book with all the stories over the past 10 years. We hope this will be available in a few months.

Many will have received our recent Krasif Newsletter, but there is link below if you have not had a copy. With many Blessings, Brian & Chris x

<https://www.krasifaid.org.uk/K%20News%2019%20-%20web.pdf>

(if you are unable to open this link, simply copy and paste the text into your search engine)



Digital Resources For Online Worship and Prayer

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

Family Worship: If you are looking for online fun, faith filled, family worship sessions, why not take a look at, the 'Worship for Everyone: Family at 4' sessions which were originally streamed live via facebook, twice weekly throughout lockdown. The sessions can all be viewed at any time at: www.facebook.com/worshipforeveryone/ or their YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/user/worshipforeveryone

'Family at 4' is presented by members of Gas Street Church, Birmingham: Nick and Becky Drake and their 4 children. 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' songs, an interactive, family participation story and prayer, as well as games and challenges. Each session lasts about 30 mins.

St Thomas' Online Services: We are providing regular weekly online services which you can view via You Tube, Faithlife or on our Church Website at <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/4121/> To view via Faithlife simply 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 download 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.

Lichfield Diocese Daily Prayer: A daily prayer video posted on the [diocesan Facebook page](#) every weekday at 1pm for people across the diocese to join in prayer together.

Lectico 365 – this is a free downloadable app providing a daily devotional resource that helps you pray the Bible every day.

BBC Radio 4 Daily Services: Sunday 19th July at 8.10am – A Word For All Seasons. This week's service will be celebrating the Catholic Church's 'Year of the Word' and the importance of scripture from the Diocese of Leeds.

Songs of Praise: Sunday 12th July at 1.15pm. The Rev Kate Bottley is in Derbyshire to hear the story of Eyam, a village where 355 years ago two vicars began a lockdown that led to a third of parishioners dying, but which saved the north of England from the spread of the bubonic plague.

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**

Help Required With Online Services: As many of you are hopefully by now aware, we have been creating online services each week, in place of being able to meet in person. So far the 'behind the scenes' collation, editing and publishing of these has fallen to Andy Evans each week. We are very grateful to Andy for all his hard work on top of continuing to work full time (as well as to the leaders, preachers and prayers of course!) But in recognition that the online services may need to continue for a number of weeks yet, we are looking for other volunteers who might be able to share the load with Andy a little. If you think you might be able to edit and compile videos sent online from the leaders, preachers and prayers each week, please do get in touch with Andy on 01922 693298 or 07763 488 827. Even if to just talk about what is involved and whether you think you might be able to have a go, if you have never done anything like this before. Many thanks.

NOTICES

Watts in Madagascar: In the latest update from Ted and Rachel, they ask us to give thanks that even in the midst of a pandemic, some things are going on as usual but with just a little difference. They write that the staff at the Good News Hospital in Mandritsara were recently able to send home a lady after fistula treatment in her new dress symbolising her new life, and the new life we have in Christ, but now the occasion has the extra blessing of a matching mask for that extra protection on the journey home. **Colin and Sue Goodall**

Prayer: There is a Zoom (Live) prayer meeting for the whole church on Sunday evening at 6.30pm. You would be most welcome to join. If you would like to take part, please give Roland a ring on 01922458769. He will help you to join the meeting, as pass numbers are required.

Roland Jones

Roof Fund Update: Many thanks to all that have donated so far - we have collected a total of just over £13K! This is a great start, but we still have a way to go towards our £31K target. If you are still thinking about it, or simply putting it off until after the lockdown, could I ask that you drop me an email to 'pledge' your donation. We can arrange to collect the actual money at a later date. Equally I am happy to receive cash/cheques (payable to St Thomas Church) at my house (73 Lazy Hill Road), if you would prefer. Thanks Again. (ronmaurheaton@hotmail.co.uk)

Ron Heaton

Children's Home Grown Faith Activity: Please look on our website at <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/4121/>, look in the menu for "*Childrens Worship Activity (20) Feeding The Widows*". The PDF includes live hyperlinks to YouTube and the web if you just click on where it is underlined in blue.

Hannah Evans, Children and Families Worker.

Tom's Toddlers and Footprints: Look out for our latest video about Jesus healing a man with leprosy. You can find this on the following sites -

Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/StThomasAldridge/videos/2990665504364619>

Church website www.achurchnearyou.com/church/4121/

You can also find a history of all of our videos on our church website under the heading Tom's Toddlers and Footprints. While you are there keep a look out for our latest activity which will be the link at the very bottom – this week it's called "**We're Going On a Psalm Walk**". Have fun!

Hannah Evans, Children and Families Worker

NOTICES

The Thomas Project: The Thomas Project are now also providing support to children from a number of local schools and further donations of the following suggested items are urgently required! Donations can be left at the project on Wednesdays 10am to 1pm or Fridays 3- 6pm.

Themes – Dancing, super-heros, craft, unicorns, prince, princess, fairy tales, mini beasts, cars.

Examples - crayons, paper, felt tip pens, colouring books, reading books, balls, skipping ropes, craft packs etc. **Liz Jones**

House Available To Rent: If anyone thinking of renting a house in Aldridge at a reasonable price would they please get in touch with Lilian Jones, Tel. 01922 452496. Thank you. **Lillian Jones**

Help For Children and Families: Our website includes three pages which families may find helpful especially during this time of Coronavirus. Look for them in the menu at www.achurchnearyou.com/church/4121/ ...

(1) 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

(2) 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**

(3) What is justice?: This is a reflection page which might be appropriate and helpful to share and discuss as a family. **Hannah Evans, Children and Families Worker**

Domestic Abuse, IRIS: Look in the menu on our Website

<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/4121/> under the heading "Domestic Abuse" for contact information. We all need to keep people experiencing domestic abuse and their children safe!

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

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: vjrus@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 vjrus@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.