



## *Welcome to St. Thomas'!*



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### Services

#### 6<sup>th</sup> December

Morning Worship ONLINE ONLY

Christingle Zoom 4pm

Evening Worship IN CHURCH 6.30pm

#### 13<sup>th</sup> December

Morning "Said" Holy Communion 10.30am IN CHURCH & ONLINE

No Evening Service

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St Thomas' Website - [www.achurchnearyou.com/church/4121/](http://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/4121/))

St. Thomas' Facebook - [www.facebook.com/stthomasaldridge/](https://www.facebook.com/stthomasaldridge/)

Phone 01922 453942 / Email [office@stthomasaldridge.org.uk](mailto:office@stthomasaldridge.org.uk)

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**To open any of the links -**

**simply position your curser on the link then press "control" and click**

## Rev's Ramblings

3 December 2020

December is upon us!! For me, it's one of those months that you know is coming, but always creeps up on you unexpectedly!! Mind you, everything this year seems to have crept up on us!!



However, December is here – the shops are full of goodies for Christmas (those that are able to open at the moment!) – their stores are decorated – and some people have put up their Christmas trees and lights already. The TV adverts are in full swing, the big stores trying to outdo each other by having the most popular one – my favourite is Aldi's Kevin the Carrot!! I just love his adventures (not sure what that tells you about my intellectual state!!).

For me, December is also the time to get ready for the Christmas services at church – to plan how we can tell the Christmas story a little differently each year, so that it continues to be fresh. This year has obviously been very different – no tree to put up, no candle trays, no snowmen in the foyer – just a nativity scene lit by candles on the Communion table. I've just watched the Advent Sunday service and seen the "stable" through the camera lens. I was struck by how moving I found it – there was no need for anything else – just that simple scene telling the story of the birth of Jesus.

It was just that, wasn't it? A simple birth to an ordinary woman. There were no bells and whistles – our Saviour arrived with no fuss. There were no announcements pinned to palace gates. We don't need to make a fuss, either, about the time we spend with Him – we don't need special places to meet with Him – we can do that anytime and anywhere.

And so, for Christmas we don't really need all the lights and tinsel – we don't really need the fancy food and all the presents. We just need to meet with our Lord Jesus – to allow Him to be reborn into our hearts.

*Blessings*  
*Sue Quibell*



## Mission Focus For December

### Krasif Aid



Christmas greetings to everyone at St. Thomas' in these strange times for us all. As this year draws to a close we want to thank you for the support you continue to give to Krasif Aid and ourselves personally. Some will have received our recent News update, and for others, a link for this is attached here...

<https://mailchi.mp/2fecd07d94fc/krasif-aid-update-november-2020?e=cf3b1833c2>

We are delighted to report that our Christmas Appeal has been a great success raising over £4000 to provide new heating for Sliven Baptist Church and gifts for those in need through our various Bulgarian church partners. Do also check out the Christmas crafts available in our poster!

We do look forward to being able to visit you once again as hopefully life begins to return to something more like normal in 2021. With Many Blessings, *Brian & Chris*

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*Brian & Chris*

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## Digital Resources For Online Worship and Prayer

**Family Worship:** 'Worship for Everyone: Family at 4' – this is online fun, faith filled family worship. The sessions can all be viewed at any time

at: <https://www.facebook.com/worshipforeveryone/> or their YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/worshipforeveryone>

Brought to you by the Drake Family from Birmingham.

**Bible Buds:** On Facebook every fortnight <https://www.facebook.com/biblebuds/>

**Worship For Everyone:** The Drake family are back for a 7 week series looking at 'Amazing Babies in the Bible, each Saturday at 4pm. They can be found on their worship for all YouTube and Facebook pages, to watch their family fun sessions of story, games, songs and activities. Definitely worth checking out.

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=663265871046024>

**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 at 9.45am each morning.**

Services are available every day with spiritual reflection, bible reading, prayer and Christian music. Simply tune in at 9.45am.

Friday 27<sup>th</sup> November – Do not judge

Monday 30<sup>rd</sup> November –The City, a place of good news

Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> December – A place of gifting

Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December – A place of comfort

Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> December – *Title for this one has not yet been announced*

**BBC Radio 4 Sunday Worship, 29th November at 8.10am – “Cities of Promise, A place for good news”.**

On the eve of St Andrew's Day theologian and scholar of Celtic Christianity Gilbert Markus, and Parish Spiritual Director Anne Buhrmann, reflect on a vision of the heavenly city.

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## 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](mailto:Lizspiers55@blueyonder.co.uk) who will share your request and start praying. **Liz Spiers, Prayer Coordinator**

**Weekly Zoom Prayers:** If you would like to take part in our weekly live Zoom prayer meetings you would be most welcome to join on Sundays at 5.30pm for the whole church. If you would like to take part, please give Roland a ring on 01922458769. He will help you to join the meeting, and provide you with the relevant pass numbers. **Roland Jones**

**Praying For Our Nation:** Please pray at 6pm each evening during lockdown.

## NOTICES

**Services in Church:** We are now able to resume services in Church. Our first service will be this Sunday at 6.30pm for Evening Worship. If you would like to join us, please send an email to [office@stthomasaldrige.org.uk](mailto:office@stthomasaldrige.org.uk) by midnight tomorrow (Friday 4<sup>th</sup> December) and remember to let Genette know how many seats you would like to reserve.

**Sing and Sign Together:** To find out about our exciting plans to bring us together this Christmas PLEASE PRESS CONTROL & CLICK ON THE LINK BELOW

<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/4121/page/65388/view/>

**Christmas Itinerary of Services and Events:** Listed below are Christmas dates of interest. Please press control and click on the link below to access full details about each of these Christmas Events and more!

### **CHRISTMAS ITINERARY (press control and click to open!)**

<b>Advent</b>	See the link to find out more about St Thomas' Advent Calendar
<b>Throughout Advent</b>	Follow The Star Nativity Trail begins, see the link for more information
<b>6<sup>th</sup> December</b>	Online Morning Service
<b>6<sup>th</sup> December</b>	6.30pm Evening Worship at Church (remember to reserve a seat!)
<b>6<sup>th</sup> December</b>	Church of England booklet "Comfort & Joy" will be delivered this week
<b>13<sup>th</sup> December</b>	10.30am "Said" Holy Communion at Church
<b>13<sup>th</sup> December</b>	Online National Christingle
<b>20<sup>th</sup> December</b>	4.00pm Virtual Nativity Zoom
<b>20<sup>th</sup> December</b>	Online Carols by Candlelight Service
<b>20<sup>th</sup> December</b>	6.30pm Evening Worship at Church
<b>24<sup>th</sup> December</b>	Online "Midnight" Holy Communion
<b>25<sup>th</sup> December</b>	Online Christmas Day – Join with Aldridge Parish Church

**URGENT Christingle Zoom Reminder:** Please can all those wanting to join us for a virtual zoom on Sunday, let myself or Roland know by the end of **TODAY (Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> December)** so that we can get their 'Christingle in a bag' delivered to them in time! **Hannah Evans, Children and Families Worker**

**Christmas Cards and Giving to Misison Partners:** We are unable to sign the large card at the back of Church and make a donation to our Misison Friends this year. Ron has therefore set up a dedicated Just Giving page. Please press control and click the link below to access this.

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Stthomasmissionchristmas>

**Together At Home:** Please look on our website for the section titled "Children – Together At Home" or PRESS CONTROL & CLICK ON THE LINK BELOW TO JUMP STRAIGHT TO THE PAGE

<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/4121/page/56973/view/> This week looks at the promise of Jesus' return.

**Tom's Toddlers and Footprints:** Please see weekly updates on Facebook and also the Church Website, look for "Children – Tom's Toddlers and Footprints"

or PRESS CONTROL & CLICK ON THE LINK BELOW TO JUMP TO THIS PAGE.

Church Website - <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/4121/63466/view>

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

This week Hannah thinks about how Mary might have felt when Angel Gabriel told her she would have a baby.

**Family Zoom:** We are now offering a weekly Family Zoom on Sundays for the children (and their grown-ups). It will be a chance for our children to catch up with each other, sing together, enjoy a story and activities too. If you and your child would be interested in taking part, please let Roland or Hannah know

**Roland – 01922 458769 or [rolandjones2@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:rolandjones2@blueyonder.co.uk)**

**Hannah – 07921 387241 / 01922 693298 or [hannahevans@stthomasaldridge.org.uk](mailto:hannahevans@stthomasaldridge.org.uk)**

**Tearfund Donations:** Following our special Tearfund service last week, you can still make an online donation to Tearfund. Use TEARFUND as your reference.

**Account Details - St Thomas Church 60-01-40 65624149**

**Tearfund Christmas Cards:** There is a fabulous range of Christmas cards to view and buy.

PRESS CONTROL AND CLICK HERE TO JUMP TO THIS PAGE

<https://tearfund.us5.list->

[manage.com/track/click?u=cd19eb0b2a74af14054950f15&id=8c427c1673&e=967027af45](https://tearfund.us5.list-manage.com/track/click?u=cd19eb0b2a74af14054950f15&id=8c427c1673&e=967027af45)

Thank you. **Jean Whitehouse & Janet Berrill**

**Krasif Aid Christmas Creations:** Beautiful handmade decorations are available to buy. Please contact Chris Clarke on 01884 508126 or 07948 375762 or email [chrisclarke686@gmail.com](mailto:chrisclarke686@gmail.com) – click below for poster



KRASIF CHRISTMAS CREATIONS 2020.pdf



Krasif Christmas Creations 2020.jpg

**Pack a Shoebox:** Please go to the following link or PRESS CONTROL & CLICK BELOW to find out how we can still support this valuable project:

[https://shoebonline.samaritans-purse.org.uk/?utm\\_source=O20EK8&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Operation%20Christmas%20Child&utm\\_content=Pack%20a%20Shoebbox%20Online%20Button](https://shoebonline.samaritans-purse.org.uk/?utm_source=O20EK8&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Operation%20Christmas%20Child&utm_content=Pack%20a%20Shoebbox%20Online%20Button)

**Thomas Project, Christmas Request:** We are providing Christmas Gift Bags for girls and boys aged 5-7 and 8-11. We are hoping that people can kindly donate **new** items to fill the bags, suggested items are as follows: **toys, games, colouring books & pens, hats, gloves, socks, tights.** You can deliver items to the Thomas Project 10am – 4pm Tuesday's and Wednesday's / 10am – 6pm on Fridays. Thank you for your help with this. **Liz Jones, Thomas Project**

**Watts in Madagascar:** In their last newsletter Ted and Rachel write, "We are not sure what the coming weeks and months will bring - whether relaxation of restrictions will bring about increasing numbers of cases or whether a local peak is yet to come. So please do continue to pray for protection for the hospital and it's staff". As with hospitals here in the U.K., in Mandritsara they are now starting to see patients, who were not able to be seen during restrictions. Ted and Rachel ask us to continue to pray that the Good News Hospital would be able to keep fulfilling the vision to bring compassionate healthcare and gospel hope to the people of Mandritsara district and beyond. As they deal with this busy period, we pray that they would find good family times of relaxation and refreshment as they also prepare for Christmas celebrations.

**Thank You:** Ann Vernon would like to say "thank you" to everyone involved in creating online services and offering support with phone calls, bible studies and all of the other kind things that people are doing to support one another.

## CONTACTS

### 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 with your queries. Messages on the office answer phone are listened to twice weekly (01922 453942) / Emails are read Monday's-Thursdays **office@stthomasalldridge.org.uk** **Please be mindful that messages may not be seen or heard on Fridays, Saturdays or Sundays.** (07702 822546).

### 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@stthomasalldridge.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: **virus@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 **virus@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.