



Welcome to St. Thomas'!



Services

13th December

10.30am - Morning "Said" Holy Communion IN CHURCH

ONLINE WORSHIP SERVICE AVAILABLE

No Evening Service

20th December

ONLINE Carol Service

4.00pm Virtual Nativity Zoom

6.30pm Evening Carols and Praise IN CHURCH

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

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

Phone 01922 453942 / Email office@stthomasaldrige.org.uk

**To open any of the links – simply position your cursor on the link then press
"control" and click**

Rev's Ramblings

Rev's Ramblings 10 December 2020

For the next few "Ramblings" I thought it would be fun to look at some Christmas traditions, so today we're beginning with carols.

The word "carol" means a song of praise and joy, and first carols were pagan song which would be sung all year round, not just at Winter Solstice celebrations (*I've got a picture in my mind of druids dancing around Stonehenge singing Good King Wencelas!! Sorry!!*). The celebration of the birth of Jesus took place at the same time as the Winter Solstice, with Christian songs being sung instead of the pagan ones. As early as 129AD, a bishop in Rome decreed that a song called "Angel's Hymn" should be sung at a Christmas service, and then carols began to be written all over Europe. However, they weren't particularly popular because they were written in Latin and ordinary people couldn't understand them!

St Francis of Assisi changed all this in 1223 when the stories in his nativity plays were told by carols in a language that everyone could join in with. In Elizabethan times carols were based very loosely on the Christmas story – "loosely" being the operative word as they were mostly sung round the piano in homes, rather than in church!

The next major change came in the 1640's when the Puritans banned the celebration of Christmas, so carols were sung in secret. This is where the "*Twelve Days of Christmas*" comes from – the gold rings, lords a'leaping etc being reminders of religious theme that couldn't be mentioned in public.

The singing of carols really took off in Victorian times when William Sandys and Davis Gilbert collected Christmas songs from villages all over England. Carol services now became popular, and people began to go round carol singing.

Do you know what the first Christmas carol to be sung in space is? Jingle Bells!! In December 1965 Tom Stafford and Wally Schirra on board the Gemini spacecraft sang it to Mission Control in Houston!! They also reported seeing a sleigh going past them, heading for Earth!! Ho! Ho! Ho!

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**

With Many Blessings,

Brian & Chris

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 11th December – The Glory of God Give Light

Monday 14th December – Bringing Down Rulers

Tuesday 15th December – Bringing Good News

Wednesday 16th December – Bringing Back The People

Thursday 3rd December – *Title for this one has not yet been announced*

BBC Radio 4 Sunday Worship, 13th December at 8.10am – “Cities of Promise, A place for nature”.

During this era of Covid the city seems to have been devalued as a place of human flourishing. Instead it's become a place of fear of contamination – a place to get away from, no longer a sought after place to live. But the biblical view is of a redeemed city, a place where human culture is valued alongside restored relationships – a place of beauty and worship of the living God. Such an understanding of the potential of the city might have inspired St Ebenezer Howard who, in 1920 founded Welwyn Garden City, a planned town that was intended to combine the benefits of city and countryside whilst avoiding the disadvantages of both. With the Rev Dr Rob Marshall, Rector of Digswell, Welwyn Garden City. Reading: Revelation 21:22- 22.5.

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 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

Sunday Service 13th December: Join us in church this Sunday at 10.30am for "Said" Holy Communion. If you would like to join us, please send an email to office@stthomasaldridge.org.uk by midnight tomorrow (Friday 4th December) and remember to let Genette know how many seats you would like to reserve.

Carols and Praise Sunday 20th December: Join us in church for an evening of Carols and Praise by Candlelight. Bring along a lantern, a hot drink in a sealed cup and some festive nibbles to eat yourself such as a delicious mince pie. Look out for the email next week inviting you to reserve your seats.

Christmas Cards and Giving to Misison Partners: Sadly it is not safe to bring Christmas cards to Church this year or to have the large card at the back of Church that we would usually sign and make donations to our Misison Friends. So to help with this Ron has created a dedicated Mission Just Giving Page which has already received £100 thank you so much! We would like to be able to send the donations received before Christmas, so if you would like to give, simply **PRESS CONTROL AND CLICK ON THE LINK BELOW**

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

Sing and Sign Together: Please don't forget to send Hannah your video of you singing, signing or playing a musical instrument to the joyful song: Hear the Bells by Nick and Becky Drake. Please remember to wear headphones during recording so that the backing track can't be heard.

PRESS CONTROL & CLICK ON THE LINK BELOW

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

Christmas Itinerary of Services and Events: Sue Quibell has very kindly created an Itinerary of Christmas Events **CHRISTMAS ITINERARY (press control and click to open!)**

Listed below are Christmas dates of interest, please view the Christmas Itinerary for full details.

Throughout Advent Follow The Star Nativity Trail begins, see the link for more information

13th December 10.30am "Said" Holy Communion at Church

13th December Online National Christingle

20th December 4.00pm Virtual Nativity Zoom

20th December Online Carols by Candlelight Service

20th December 6.30pm Evening Worship at Church

24th December Online "Midnight" Holy Communion

25th December Online Christmas Day – Join with Aldridge Parish Church

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/>

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 reminds us that We Are Enough 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

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

Hannah – 07921 387241 / 01922 693298 or hannahevans@stthomasaldridge.org.uk

Tearfund Donations: Many grateful thanks to all who donated to Tearfund following our appeal. A brilliant £280 was raised and to add to that a donation of £1000 from St T's Missionary tithe fund which is wonderful. Thank you again for supporting Tearfund you never fail to amaze us. God bless you all. With love in Christ, **Liz, Janet and Jean**

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 – 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://shoeboxonline.samaritans-purse.org.uk/?utm_source=O20EK8&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Operation%20Christmas%20Child&utm_content=Pack%20a%20Shoebox%20Online%20Button

Thomas Project, Christmas Request: Thank you to everyone who donated items for the childrens Bags of Joy, they are soon to be distributed. We are now creating small Christmas bags for elderly folk who are isolated. These bags will contain Christmas goodies of tea, coffee, biscuits, jam or marmalade and we will be grateful for any donations made. You can also let The Thomas Project know of anyone who you feel would benefit from this. We are open 10am–4pm Tuesday's and Wednesday's / 10am–6pm on Fridays. Thank you. **Liz Jones**

Watts in Madagascar: In this week's update Ted and Rachel ask us to pray for Christolin, a 5 year old boy who recently fell from a tree and fractured his larynx. The quick action of the team carrying out the treatment has meant that he is making good progress, but it could be weeks before they will be able to remove the breathing tube. Ted and Rachel ask, that whilst praying for his safety during his stay in hospital, that we also remember his loving family who are in attendance and that through the talks on the wards and compassionate care given by the nurses and doctors who are providing treatment, they will come to know Jesus.

Greetings From Judy and Steve Cathcart: We would like to wish all our lovely friends at St Thomas' a very happy Christmas and New Year! Dependent on guidelines etc we are hoping to see Iain, Lee, Jen and children during the Christmas period. Looking forward to seeing you in 2021 Covid-19 permitting. All the very best and stay safe. With Love from Judy and Steve xx

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.