



Welcome to St. Thomas'

Forthcoming Services in Church and Online

Sunday 18th July: 10.30am Holy Communion

Sunday 25th July: 6.30pm Evening Worship

Sunday 1st August: Details of this service to be shared soon

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

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

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



Rev's Ramblings
15th July 2021

This has to be about the football, doesn't it? What a shame it went to penalties – I think they're so unfair! Football's a team game, not a competition between one player and a goalie. Anyway, that's it – it's all over ... it is now!! (Sorry, couldn't resist that one!).

What an effect the Euros have had on the country, though – on all the countries that took part. After the depressing 18 months of restrictions due to Covid, there was finally something else to focus our minds on – even if you don't like football! For a few weeks the latest Covid figures and the hoo-ha over when/how lockdown should end, were third or fourth down the list of news items. Of course, there's been Wimbledon as well as the football.

What has struck me most over the past few weeks is the pressure people in the public eye are put under. Of course, for some it is self-inflicted by their own actions in their public or private lives – but for so many it's not their fault. We've had the tennis player who pulled out of Wimbledon because she felt unable to cope with the interviews, and there's been all the hype over whether Murray and Federer will play again.

There seems to be an innate need for interviewers to prise out the athlete's deepest and private feelings. "How do you feel losing to ...?" "What will you do now?" "Pig-sick", and "Put my head under my duvet" would be my replies – but of course the interviewees have to be polite!

And then there's the horrendous racial abuse! I thought we were supposed to be a civilised country, but I'm deeply saddened by what goes on in so-called "social media" – what's "social" about abusing someone? If used wisely, these technical innovations should be benefitting mankind, not causing division and hatred. Sport, particularly, should be an even playing field whatever a person's colour or creed – it's the player's gifts and abilities that are important and should be celebrated.

But, what can we do, here in Aldridge? As Christians I think we should be making concerted efforts to complain whenever we feel upset or offended by what we see or read – it's no use tutting or puffing – we need to act – send letters, emails, whatever – to let those in authority know what is not acceptable to us – whether our own personal concerns or those of other people.

And, conversely, we should send letters of praise and encouragement to those we feel have been doing a good job – send notes of support to those who have suffered / are suffering abuse. I've said emails etc, but there's nothing nicer than a handwritten note or letter – it can be stashed away and read over again. However, an email or text is still good if it's easier.

In the New Testament we read how Jesus overturned the tables of the moneylenders etc in the Temple; how He touched the untouchables; how He had compassion for the underdogs and those who were being treated unfairly. Jesus didn't huff and puff – He acted!

We are His hands on earth now – it's up to us.



MISSION FOCUS: Africa News From Vera – June & July 2021

Thanks again for the gift from your church for helping to build a Dorobo church building in Ilkilorit in the Loita Hills. The money went to Pastor David Letuati on Friday and the church had a building weekend. They bought 26 iron sheets and nails and paid some skilled builders to oversee the work for a day. The sides went up on the building. An entrance way went up as well. The gift you sent (half of the total) came to 52,000/- (Kenya Shillings). What they spent this weekend came to 36,000/- They still need to put in a double door, a single door and four windows. The remaining money you sent will cover the double door and one window and they will buy and put those in soon. That still leaves a portion for the church to raise to finish (about 18,000/-) but as the Maasai say in their proverb, when someone gives you a cow, you have to provide the rope to lead it home. So I think they can be responsible for the last door and windows as their “rope to lead the cow home.” Thanks for buying them a “cow”, and giving such generous gift. I’ve attached pictures from the pastor that show the progress on the church from the poles and mabati (paid for by me last year) up until this weekends building the sides of the church with iron sheets. Thanks again and I hope this report will be an encouragement to your church.

PS, I didn’t get all the way up to the church this weekend as the road from the Naroosura side was quite bad. But Pastor Musanga and I did show the Jesus film four times to two villages (Olepishet and Olushuru) at the base of the Loita Hills. Over 500 watched the film in the four showings and about five young people prayed to receive Christ. So God’s work is continuing among the Dorobo.

Shel Arensen.

Resources For Online Worship and Prayer

Virtual Sunday School: Every week, Virtual Sunday School release a fun Sunday School session to watch involving a story, activity or game and prayer. These are full of energy and lots of fun. These can be watched here: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMu2bG8L2dp7ywUZVa9uXDA>

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

Worship for Everyone

For a whole host of fun, faith filled family worship and story sessions available online, do check out the Drake Family either on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/worshipforeveryone> or on you tube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC2dYemDuCz36mIKAt0DwhcA>

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.

Lectio 365 – this is a free downloadable audio 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: Weather - Wind
Monday: Rest – Day of Rest
Tuesday: Rest – God at Rest
Wednesday: Rest – The Heart Rejoices
Thursday: Rest – Rest in God
Friday: Rest – Rest for Your Souls

BBC Radio 4 Sunday Worship, Sunday 18th July, 8.10am

Rebirth and Renewal in Senghenydd – The community of Senghenydd near Caerphilly knows what it is to experience both trauma and revival. The scene of two of the UK's worst mining disasters, the first of which happened 120 years ago. It is also the location of St Peter's Church, a congregation which until recently had been in sharp decline and whose building stood at risk of closure.

Just a few years after the mining disaster, in the last Welsh revival, this had been a place of such zeal that even the rugby team disbanded, its members more focused on saving souls than scoring tries.

Tragically the shortcomings exposed in the first mining disaster were not resolved and in 1913 what remains the UK's most serious industrial disaster took place: hundreds of lives were lost. Their deaths resulted at the time in compensation payments to their families of just 1 shilling and 11 pence.

Rugby began again in the town within a few years, while the mine closed in the late 1920s and in recent years the town has erected lasting memorials to the men and boys who lost their lives. Now too at St Peter's Church a new and young congregation is growing, supported by other churches in the Llandaff dioceses.

Bishop June Osborne preaches in a service exploring how after trauma can come rebirth and renewal. The service is led by Ministry Area leader Father Mark Greenaway Robbins, with contributions from members of the congregation including former miners.

PRAYING TOGETHER

I would just like to mention the various ways of getting prayer for ourselves, our friends or our families whilst we are not meeting up and just a reminder that nothing is too small or too big to ask for the Lord's help with:

Prayer Circle

The prayer circle is a group of about a dozen people who are willing to pray for anyone or any situation that needs prayer. A weekly list of prayer needs is produced which is circulated to Prayer Circle Members and remains confidential to that group and is not shared anywhere else. Prayer requests should be passed on to Liz Spiers at Lizspiers55@blueyonder.co.uk. If your request is for someone else please ensure you have their permission before sharing.

Special prayer list

This was originally set up to pray for those known to us who were suffering the effects of, or affected by, Covid19 but has now expanded to include those who have other needs and wish to be prayed for by all members of the church rather than within the confines of the Prayer Circle. This information should still respectfully be kept within the congregation. Any requests for this list should either be passed on to Liz Spiers or Genette Andrews in church office. If your request is for someone else please ensure you have their permission before sharing.

We need to keep on praying, however we do it. The Lord needs to hear our prayers for our world and ourselves. Be encouraged that the Lord does hear all our prayers. 'The prayers of a righteous person has great power' James 6.16 **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**

A CALL TO PRAYER: Can we ask you to commit to praying at 6pm each day focusing on the NHS and those working there. We will then know that we will be praying powerfully together every day. Please also continue to pray for this situation during your usual prayer time.

This is the least we can do for one of our sisters in Christ, and for all those who daily put their own lives at risk in fighting Covid. There is strength in praying together. *(Jesus said...)* Again, truly 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 gather in my Name, there I am with them. Matthew 18:19-20. Thank you.

The Wardens, Sue and Jeremy * <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/4121/page/62951/view/>

Please pray for David and Kimberley Sims and their family (our new minister) as they prepare to leave their home and say farewell to friends and church family in Wellington to come and join with us here in Aldridge. Please pray for a smooth transition and that they will settle in well and feel at home when they get here, and that the children would soon make new friends and be happy. Please also pray for us as church family that we might be loving and welcoming to them and excited to be part of the next phase of the Lord's plans for St Thomas Church.

Liz Spiers

NOTICES

Live Services: Please reserve your seat in advance by Wednesday of each week, by emailing office@stthomasaldridge.org.uk or leave a message on the answer phone on **01922 453942**.

We would love you to join us.

Sunday 18th July: 10.30am Holy Communion

Sunday 25th July: 6.30pm Evening Worship

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Watts back in the UK: As Ted, Rachel, Ethan and Jamie continue to meet up with family and friends, now their quarantine period has ended, please pray for their protection until they have had their Covid vaccinations. This is one of the benefits of being back in the U.K. as the Covid vaccination programme in Madagascar has only recently started. They ask for prayer:- Firstly for all the work, that is still needed to be done to start the Surgical training programme in January 2022, both the completing of the building then finally the equipping. Secondly the planning of the program which they will be working on whilst on home assignment. Please continue to pray for their colleagues covering their time away from The Good News Hospital in Mandritsara. **Colin and Sue Goodall.**

CHILDREN & FAMILIES NOTICES

Together At Home: Please look on our website for the section titled "Children – Together At Home".

Church Website - <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/4121/page/56973/view/>

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

Hannah Evans, Children and Families Worker

Tom's Toddlers and Footprints: Tom's Toddlers and Footprints restarted on 21st April. Albeit differently to usual for the time being and outside in smaller groups. So feel free to spread the word with your families and neighbours with young children and direct them either to me for more info:

hannahevans@stthomasaldridge.org.uk

You will need to register to reserve your place - For all those of you wishing to return (or start) at Tom's Toddlers or Footprints as we return this term, please register by clicking the link below.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/hannah-evans-33145555043>

Numbers are limited per session for us to remain covid-secure, so registration is vital for attendance, I'm afraid. Please be aware that registration is for each following week in order to maintain consistent groupings and bubbles. Looking forward to welcoming you all back!

You can also find the link on our website and Facebook -

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

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

Sunday 25th July 11am - Church Family Picnic: Families, let's join together for lunch and outdoor games in the church garden! Bring a picnic for your own family, something to sit on such as a picnic blanket or camp chair and maybe an outdoor activity/toy and join us for a long awaited church family get together in the garden. (If the weather is wet, we can space out in the main church). Just so we can gauge numbers, please let Hannah know if you would like to be there via email: hannahevans@stthomasaldridge.org.uk

July Family Services & Group Zoom:

If you wish to attend, please contact Hannah by email or phone register – 07921 387241

hannahevans@stthomasaldridge.org.uk

11th July - Family Service 10.30am - Theme: Paul's Ministry. Please sign up to book a family table with Hannah Evans.

25th July - Sunday Group Zoom 10.30am (Theme TBC, please contact Hannah Evans to sign up to receive the zoom log in details)

1st August - Family Service 10.30am - Theme: Paul's Ministry Part 2. Please Sign up with Hannah Evans - *presumably we will still be signing up and having to run with limited numbers at that point unless all is 'back to normal' by then*

(No Sunday Group Zooms during August)

THIS WEEK'S REGULAR CHURCH GROUPS

Monday: Guides 8.00pm-9.30pm

Wednesday: Preschoolers in the Park' Session 1: 9.30-10.30am
Preschoolers in the Park' Session 2: 11am-12noon

Friday: Navigators 5.15pm- 9.30pm

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@stthomasaldridge.org.uk** **Please be mindful that messages may not be seen or heard on Fridays, Saturdays or Sundays.** *(for urgent or emergency contact, Genette's personal mobile number is 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@stthomasaldridge.org.uk**
(Please be mindful that messages may not be seen or heard on Mondays and Saturdays)
Pastoral Care Coordinator: Vera Russell -
Telephone 01922 616383 or 07806 519301 / Email: **vjrus@gmail.com**
- **Prayer Coordinator: Liz Spiers -**
Telephone 01922 453944 / email **lizspiers55@blueyonder.co.uk** 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.