



Welcome to St. Thomas'

Sunday Gatherings in Church and Online

- Sunday 20th March:** 10.30am Morning Gathering
6.30pm Evening Worship
- Sunday 27^h March:** 10.30am All-In (A Gathering for all ages)
6.30pm Evening Worship
- Sunday 3rd April 2022:** Early Morning Holy Communion
10.30am All-In (A Gathering For All Ages)
6.30pm Evening Worship
- Sunday 10th April:** 10.30am Holy Communion
6.30pm Evening Worship

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

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

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



HELLO FROM OUR VICAR!

Last Saturday I went to Sheldon country park with the two boys. Before we spent two hours watching a tractor, A and S spent quite a bit of time on the playpark next to it- particularly playing on a ropebridge. It was one of those with just one rope for your feet but two ropes a bit higher to hold on to, as you edge yourself along slowly. A bit like a tightrope!

Recently, I've been thinking a bit about the tightrope it can see that we can walk as Christians. We worship a God of love, who welcomes us as we are- but who also calls us to repentance, and to follow him and only him. In some ways, these two things can seem very, very different, but it's the same loving God who is also the God of magnificent holiness. The same God who dwells in unapproachable light, but who also beckons us to boldly come before his throne of grace.

It might seem that we're walking this tightrope between those two things sometimes. But the truth is, I guess, that God is so far beyond our understanding that, actually, these two things can live together comfortably. Anyway, I'm still thinking this through in my head- but what a glorious mystery that the God who calls us to repent, and sin no more, also welcomes us as his children. Good news!

David Sims

Vicar

NOTICES

PRAYER & PERCULATION: Join us for coffee and prayer at 9.15am every Monday, Wednesday and Friday in the Church Lounge. Everyone is welcome.

UKRAINE: The planned journey to Ukraine has very sadly been cancelled. This Sunday is the last opportunity that we will be able to take donations for Camp Maximum in Ukraine. You can also give online on our justgivingpage – <https://justgiving.com/crowdfunding/davidandericukraine>

LENT COURSE: 17.03.2022, The Lent Course this year is based on Living in Love and Faith and will alternate between Aldridge Parish Church and St Thomas Church on Thursday evenings. This week (17th) will be held at St Thomas, with a start time of 7.45pm (please try not to arrive before 7.40pm as there is another room-hire-booking in church until 7.30pm and the carpark may be congested with people arriving and leaving at the same time! (You may also find it easier to avoid parking in the car park).

KNIT STITCH & NATTER, 25.03.2022: All are very welcome to come and join us as we Knit, Stitch & Natter (or other crafts if you prefer) in church on Friday 25th March at 10.30 am-12 noon. Look forward to seeing you. Liz Spiers

WIDE AWAKE CLUB, 19.03.2022 –: We are excited to announce the re-start of Wide Awake Club for Dads, Grandads and children. Meeting in St Thomas Church on the third Saturday of every month at 10am – 11.30am. For newborns to age 10. We do hope you can come along! Adults can enjoy a mug of something hot with a bacon, sausage or egg sandwich and there will be toast, squash, toys and crafts for the smaller people to enjoy! So do come along on the 19th March, at the small cost of £3 per adult.

KNOW & GROWN MAKATON, 19.03.2022: A fantastic opportunity to learn Makaton sign language! Taking place at Tynings Lane Church on Saturday 19th March 2022 at 9.45am – 4.30pm. Bring your own lunch and learn every day sign language. Booking is essential as places are limited. Cost £25 per person. Contacts – janneke@counteveryonein.org.uk 07896 675538 or Kathy Robinson on kathymadang@gmail.com 07919382219

PRAYER CORE GROUP MEETING, 23.03.2022 - Wednesday 23rd March at 7.30pm in church. Anyone who is interested in joining the Prayer Core Group is welcome to come along to our meeting to find out what it's all about. Look forward to seeing you. Liz Spiers

MENS OF FAITH AT McDONALDS, 04.04.2022 –: Welcoming all men to Pop into McDonalds in Rushall for breakfast and fellowship with David on the first Monday of each month, from 7.00am to 7.30am. The next month's meeting is on Monday 2nd May.

HOPEFULLY MADE, 13.04.2022: An Easter activity at St T's at 2pm – 3.30pm. For children with additional needs and their grown-ups. Looking at faith with a range of sensory activities. Please contact David if you would like to attend - vicar@stthomasalldridge.org.uk

FILLING STATION: There will not be a Filling Station in April. The next gathering will be on May 12th. Filling Station regularly takes place in the 2nd Thursday of each month.

Holiday Club: Full details on page 4 ...

Church Flowers: PLEASE NOTE, Anita is not currently able to come to church to check the list on the notice board, therefore please phone her directly to request floral arrangements. To pay for church flowers in memory of a loved one or to celebrate a special date, please contact Anita - 01922 441324 or 07850 156134

Baptisms: Please let David know if you are interested in being Baptised at Easter.

CHILDREN & FAMILIES NOTICES

New Leaders: We are also currently recruiting team and young leaders to run the events listed below- if this is something you would like to be a part of, please get in touch with Hannah:

Hannahevans@stthomasaldridge.org.uk or 07921 387 241

Hope to see you there, there are always heaps of fun!

10th-14th April – HOLIDAY CLUB, BACKPACKERS: Our much awaited and postponed holiday club from 2020 is back this Easter! 10.00am – 12.00pm, 10th April until 14th April. Places cost £10 per child (£5 per sibling). Book now to reserve your child's place:

<https://aldridgeparish.org.uk/under18s/holidayclub/holidayclub.php>

15.04.2022 - Easter Celebration Morning (at St. Thomas Church): Friday 15th April 2022

Tom's Toddlers / Footprints: To all of our fab Toddlers Families...

- Each session will be limited to **15 adults only** (and their respective babies and children of course). To better accommodate all of our families, we are asking that you attend only **once a fortnight** to allow others to come the other week. This feels fairer than some attending every week, and others not being able to attend at all.
- To be able to limit the numbers and avoid having anybody having a wasted journey, we ask that you **register online** to attend. We have tried to avoid doing this up to now, because we recognise just how tricky it is to plan to leave the house with small children, and how sometimes, this isn't possible or opportunity arises at the last minute that you weren't expecting. But we really do not want to have to turn anybody away on the door, after succeeding at even getting out of the house! So please only come if you have registered here first: <https://forms.gle/Q9oYj7fW58JhoB5r9> (If you have signed up and your circumstances change, it would also be helpful if you were able to let me know, so that your space can be re-allocated)

Help Needed, Sunday Groups: Now that Sunday Groups have restarted, we are looking to recruit members of the team to lead or support the groups and to run creche. We are looking for people who love the Lord and are keen to share this love with the children. Sunday Groups involve providing a safe space for the children, telling stories, running crafts, games and activities, and praying and worshipping with the children, as part of a team on a rota to share to planning and delivery. Resources and materials are readily available and can be provided. Enhanced DBS clearance and safer recruitment procedure will be required before commencement. If this is something you might like to give a try, or see in action, please speak to Hannah Evans (details on back page). If joining the team is not up your street, may we ask you join our team of prayer warriors, praying for the children, the children's work and team. The children are not the future of our church, but are our church!

MISSION FOCUS – Watss In Madagascar, March 2022

When Ted and Rachel returned to Mandritsara in November last year they wrote in their first update, "First and foremost please join us in giving thanks to God who has graciously answered our prayers and met our needs." They still echo that phrase today after a great start to 2022 at the Good News Hospital.

January started well with the launch on the 5th of the surgical training program PAACS (Pan-African Academy of Christian Surgeons) with the two Malagasy doctors who have been selected, Dr Tefy and Dr Rado. After a very busy two weeks of completion work, by a great team of workers, the 14th brought the inauguration and dedication of the new theatre block, as well as the official launch of the surgical training program. At the ceremony Ted along with his two surgeon colleagues, washed the feet of the two trainees. Explaining it was to show them the kind of servant hearted surgeons that they wanted them to become. It was reported to be a very uplifting day for all in attendance and the occasion was blessed with glorious sunny weather. Please continue to pray for Ted and the team, as they take these trainees through their course over the next five years, and put the new theatre block to good use in healing people who come for help. Please also pray for the daily gospel talks that take place throughout the hospital.

More workers have responded to God's call and have gone to serve. As Ted and Rachel returned, a family of two doctors and their two young children arrived from Australia to join the team long term. Also serving for six months, a midwife and nurse from France and a doctor and midwife from the U.K. Please pray for and give thanks for these new arrivals who have taken their skills to the people of Mandritsara.

A short while ago Ted and Rachel asked for prayers for a 5mth baby girl. Praise God she responded well to the treatment and has now been discharged. They ask for prayers for the family, that the daily gospel messages they have heard, would have an impact on their lives, as they tell family and friends of the caring treatment their daughter has received from staff at the hospital, and of God's grace and mercy in sparing her.

Please continue to pray for the relief work that continues in the parts of Madagascar affected by the recent tropical storms.

On a lighter note, Ted and Rachel tell us, with more team members around, they were blessed with a three course Valentines meal cooked by the team at their house and they even looked after Ethan and Jamie whilst they enjoyed it. They write "Thank God for such a wonderful generous team around us."

Earlier this year Ted and Rachel forwarded the picture below with a message that follows. Thank you for your prayers and interest in their work for God in Madagascar.



Dear Friends,

Thank you so much for your support and prayers over these last two years. It has been truly amazing to see God answering so many prayers, and we are so grateful for His sustaining power and daily grace. Your partnership with us is such a source of joy and encouragement to us, and we hope is in turn, a blessing to the people of Madagascar, with much love,

Ted, Rachel, Ethan and Jamie xxxx

PRAYING TOGETHER – Liz Spiers Prayer Coordinator

I would like to mention the various ways of getting prayer for ourselves, our friends or our families 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**

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/>

Space to Pray: Will be returning on the 5th January at 6.30pm-7.15pm, Wednesday evenings in the church extension. An opportunity for all to come together to pray in a socially distanced space. We do hope those of you who feel able to will join us as we lift the things on our hearts to the Lord. All welcome. Liz Spiers - Prayer Core Group Coordinator.

WHAT'S ON!

Monday 21st March	Prayer & Perculation Brownies & Guides	Lounge 9.15am Evening until 9.30pm
Tuesday 22nd March	Band Practice House Group, Lounge	Evening 8pm–9.30pm
Wednesday 23rd March	Prayer & Perculation Toddlers Space to Pray, Extension House Group, Corner Room	Lounge 9.15am 12.30pm – 2pm 6.30pm-7.15pm 7.30pm-9.30pm
Thursday 24th March	House Group Karate Lessons Lent Course at APC <i>Various House Groups</i>	10.30am-12pm 6.30pm-7.30pm 7.45pm-9.15pm <i>on hold until after lent 7.45pm-9.45pm</i>
Friday 25th March	Prayer & Perculation Knit Stitch and Natter Navigators	9.15am 10.30am – 12pm evening until 9.30pm
Saturday 26th March		
Sunday 27th March	Morning Worship Evening Worship	10.30am 6.30pm

CONTACTS

- **Clergy –**
Rev David Sims (VICAR) vicar@stthomasaldridge.org.uk, office number 01922 453942
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 –**
Administrator - Genette Andrews. Office hours are **Monday to Thursday from 9 am till 12 pm.**
Genette will be happy to help with your queries.
Office contact details - 01922 453942 / office@stthomasaldridge.org.uk
Please note that messages may not be seen or heard on Fridays, Saturdays or Sundays.
- **Children and Families Worker: Hannah Evans -**
Telephone: office 01922 453942 / home 01922 693298 / mobile 07921 387241
Email: hannahevans@stthomasaldridge.org.uk
Please note that messages may not be seen or heard on Fridays and Saturdays.
- **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 -**
Sue Grundy: 07772 925069 or email susan.grundy@yahoo.com
Andrew Dickson: 07989 143388 or andrewjdickson999@hotmail.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.