

ST THOMAS' CHURCH, UPSHIRE EN9 3SS

NEWSLETTER

January 2021



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This Newsletter is free: donations to Lyn Wackett. Copy date for February Newsletter: 14th January

We are committed to safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults. The PCC has adopted the Church of England's policies and best practice on safeguarding which may be found on the Church of England website and also on the Diocese of Chelmsford website.

With the Covid infection rates locally being sky high and a Tier 4 stay-at-home order in place we, as a benefice, feel it's just not safe to gather together in the church building, so sadly, there will be no services in church for the foreseeable future.

The decision will be reviewed regularly but there will need to be a significant drop in infections before we will resume services in church. However, we will be having a 9am Book of Common Prayer Communion Service and a 10.30am modern language Communion service each week on Zoom, for log-on details contact Beth Horton on 07853 335880. Lists of the services and service sheets to download are available on the services page of the new St Thomas' website: <https://stthomaschurchupshire.com/>

St Thomas' Church will NOT be open for private prayer on Tuesdays.

READINGS FOR JANUARY

3 rd : Feast of the Epiphany.	Isaiah 60:1-6	Matthew 2:1-12
10 th : Baptism of Christ	Acts 19:1-7	Mark 1:4-11
17 th : 2 nd Sunday of Epiphany	1 Samuel 3:1-10	John 1:43-51
23 rd : 3 rd Sunday of Epiphany	Revelation 19:6-10	John 2:1-11
30 th : Candlemas	Malachi 3:1-5	Luke 2:22-40

PRAYER REQUESTS

You are invited to offer names to be added to our prayer diary to remember those who are unwell or unhappy, and to remember special dates, anniversaries, weddings, baptism, etc.

First names only are required as God will know who we are praying for.

Contact Lyn Wackett on 01992 711573 or email lynanddavewackett@hotmail.co.uk

This month we pray for Glenis, Laura, Alan & Pam, Lesley, Charlie & John, Anne, Pam & John, Barbara, Vernon, Mal, Louise, Sue, Ann & Cyril, Rosalind, Doreen, Barry, Maureen, George, Beverly, Terry, June, Rose, Peggy, Shirley, Mick, Sarah, Sheila, Jackie, Jean, Barbara, Les and Debbie.

The Vicar writes:

Happy New Year!

I suspect many of us are very happy indeed to have got to the end of 2020. Never have we longed for a New Year's Eve as much as we have this one – even if we can't have our usual parties and celebrations. But with a New Year inevitably come New Year's resolutions.

Like many others I suspect, my resolution is to lose some weight – the lockdown pounds have settled in for the long run and something needs to be done.

I try and shrug it off by saying I have an over appreciation of God's good gifts.... which is just a clever way of saying "Greed".

Out of all seven deadly sins it's probably the one we are most relaxed about in our society. Financial greed is almost respectable - we disguise it with words like "ambition" and "success". We are told that having "enough" isn't good enough, and we need to work harder, earn more, have more. We never seem quite satisfied.

Newspaper columnist Bernard Levin wrote this: "Countries like ours are full of people who have all the material comforts they desire, together with such non-material blessings as a happy family, and yet lead lives of quiet . . . desperation, understanding nothing but the fact that there is a hole inside of them that however much food and drink they pour into it, however many motor cars and television sets they stuff into it, however many well balanced children and loyal friends they parade around the edges of it. . . it aches."

My primary school dinners weren't as delicious they are now, and the dinner lady used to loudly proclaim "There are starving children in Africa you know" to encourage us to finish our food. I never really understood what that had to do with the cold lumpy semolina sitting in my bowl (unless there was an option to fly it over there, which apparently there wasn't). Perhaps she was trying to make us feel grateful because we weren't the ones starving? Because we had food, and they didn't?

Jesus once took some of a child's food, gave thanks, and with it fed the hungry - a lot of them, and as a result they wanted to make him their king. But when he responded by telling them that He is the Bread of Life, who alone can fill that deep spiritual hunger within, almost everyone left him. That's the problem with greed, it causes us to focus on the gifts, and not the giver.

So I pray that in this new year of 2021 we can find some time to focus on the giver, to spend time with Jesus - who not only provides for all our needs, but fulfils our deepest need. Love, and fills that aching hole within.

That is my prayer for this New Year that and a smaller waist! Amen

Blessings, Jane

ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER

Our mailing list to receive the electronic version is now in excess of 30 participants so if you are not one of those and wish to receive the electronic version please send your email address to marionne.locke@btinternet.com. We are looking to do our bit to reduce our 'paper footprint' for climate change by printing fewer copies. Your contribution will help. THANK YOU.

SHOEBOXES

Have you bought new shoes recently or are you about to? If so, if you are able to get the box with them please save it for the Blythswood Shoebox Appeal in 2021. Boxes can be left with Lyn & Dave at 94 Upshire Road, or just leave them in the porch. Thank you to the kind people who have already donated their shoe boxes, several of them have already been covered with brightly coloured paper ready to be filled later in the year.

Church Finance

Many of you may be wondering how the church finances have fared during the year. As expected income from regular giving and from fund raising is well down this year. However, expenditure has also been down and we have been blessed with some generous legacies in recent years, so at the moment church finances remain healthy.

Thank you to everyone who has donated to St Thomas' during 2020.

If anyone would like to donate as a one off by bank transfer or regularly by standing order, the church's bank details are as follows:

Name: St Thomas Church Upshire PCC

Sort Code: 40 45 20

Account Number: 00724505

Please let me know if you choose to do this, also if you are willing to gift aid your donation. I can be contacted by email at ruth4366@gmail.com or on 07852668633.

Another way to donate regularly if you are a taxpayer is by the Parish Giving Scheme. Giving is by direct debit and has the advantage for me that the tax is automatically reclaimed. Please contact me if you would like more details.

Ruth Moore, Treasurer

ANAGRAM

Unscramble this 10 letter anagram: PIANOSITAR. The answer will be found elsewhere in the Newsletter.

STAMPS!

Please continue to save your postage stamps and foreign or out of circulation coins – many charities can use them to raise funds. At the moment we are supporting the Herts and Essex Air Ambulance. Stamps and coins can be left with Lyn and Dave at 94 Upshire Road and left in the porch. Note: please remember to leave about ½” of envelope around the stamp. Thank you.

50/50 CLUB

Congratulations to our November winners, who were:

1 st :	£35	No. 85	Sue Smith of Waltham Abbey
2 nd :	£25	No. 94	Pauline Callaghan of Upshire
3 rd :	£15	No. 79	Rosalind Edwards of Epping

Good luck and thank you to everyone who enters, all profits go towards church projects.

January is here again and it's time to begin Draw 7 of St Thomas' 50/50 Club. There will still be monthly draws and the entry fee is £12.00 every six months (or £2 for every month of membership). The first two draws, nominally for January and February, will take place at the end of February to allow for the maximum number of entries. Each member is entitled to a maximum of two entries, couples can have four. Please complete the form below and return it to me, along with your subscription to the address stated. Good luck to everyone who enters.

St Thomas' Church 50/50 Club Draw 7

January to June 2021

I wish to become a member of St Thomas' new 50/50 Club and enclose cash/cheque for £12 per entry (maximum 2 per person). Please make cheques payable to **St Thomas' Church** and return your entries to Lyn Wackett, 94 Upshire Road, Waltham Abbey, EN9 3PA.

Name:

Address:

Telephone:

NEWSLETTER

Although the church is not open at present for Sunday services, I hope to continue with the Newsletter each month. It may be a lot shorter than normal, but it does help to keep people in touch. To make this possible, I need your help. Can you write an article for the Newsletter? It doesn't have to be long, but it doesn't have to be short either – it's up to you. Tell us what you are doing to keep occupied during these difficult times. Have you moved away from Upshire – tell us what life is like where you live. Anything you care to offer will be gratefully received! Send to Lyn either by post or email: addresses on front page.

FLY TIPPING

If you see anyone fly tipping in the forest, please take a note of the registration number of the vehicle, the make of the vehicle and any other information which might help track the perpetrators and then pass this information to the Corporation of London. If you find any fly tipped rubbish please report it to the Corporation on the number below. The sooner such instances are reported, the better chance there is of finding out who is responsible.

The number to ring is **0208 532 1010** which is a **24** hour number and messages will be passed onto the duty team.

FREE FOOD FOR YOU

No assessment or referral needed. Just drop in. We will have all the basic groceries and essentials for you and your family.

Open every Monday and Friday between 11.30am and 1.30pm at **13 SUN STREET.**

If you require urgent support please contact us: 01992 842642, email info.3food4u@gmail.com

Please note: you will be required to adhere to all the latest social distancing rules. Volunteers and donations would be greatly appreciated.

Working in partnership with Waltham Abbey Town Council, Rotary Clubs of Loughton, Buckhurst Hill & Chigwell, Voluntary Action, The Lions Club and Gandhi Oriental Foods.

ANAGRAM

The answer to the anagram is **ASPIRATION.**

TEDDIES FOR TRAGEDIES

made with love, to bring love, to be loved

The December Newsletter from Tricia Gibb of Teddies for Tragedies:

What a year 2020 has been for us all! The pandemic situation is not improving so we must hope that the arrival of the corona virus vaccine will mean a better year for 2021.

Due to the pandemic, of course, there has been little or no movement of Teddies during the year, so my Teddy stocks have gradually increased. As mentioned in my summer newsletter, 50 went in January with a load of school items in a mini bus which was driven from St Albans to the Gambia. The money was raised in the UK to purchase the bus which will be used in the Gambia to transport the children from outlying areas to the school for the deaf.

The 500 Teddies collected from me in March for Uganda, unfortunately, haven't yet left the UK due to the ongoing Covid restrictions.

In October, 1000 Teddies were collected by a local charity for inclusion in a container load of aid being sent from Birmingham to Syria. Unfortunately this has also been delayed in leaving the UK due to the pandemic and red tape.

As ever, a big thank you for all the Teddies and bags which I have received since the last Newsletter. Welcome, too, to new knitters. With all good wishes for Christmas and the New Year. Keep well and stay safe Tricia

Where do we go from here?

Perhaps this was a question the Wise Men asked after seeing the infant Jesus. They had come from a distant land to Jerusalem. They had followed a star and expected to see a royal child. Now in Bethlehem, they saw things differently. No doubt, Mary and Joseph shared with these men their recent experiences and knew God was with them. Now the Magi had to have eyes of faith to recognise that this child was God in the flesh.

On 6th January we will celebrate Epiphany. On this day we remember the Eastern Men bringing their gifts to Jesus. The word 'epiphany' describes their 'revelation' or 'insight' that this was no ordinary baby. Who could they tell? Not King Herod. They had a dream warning them to return home a different way. Their return to familiar surroundings was going to be different. They couldn't be silent about what they had experienced. Their lives were now changed. On returning home they faced new circumstances and challenges.

Doesn't this sound a bit familiar to us today? The Covid-19 pandemic has affected all of us in one way or another. Where do we go from here? We have celebrated our Lord's birth, but now we are returning to our previous activities. The festive break is over, and we are returning to changed, very difficult circumstances. We go into a New Year that is so different from this time last year. While we might be downcast with all the upsets around us, there is one thing that has not changed.

It is almighty God! He is our rock. We can look to Him in this world of confusion and uncertainty. Perhaps, from now on, we shall be worshipping and serving Him in different ways. So, with the challenges that lie ahead, let's continually seek His guidance.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding....and He will make your paths straight. (Proverbs 3:5-6)

Plants in your front garden

What's in your front garden? If it is sparse, why not consider adding some plants this year? Apparently, the presence of greenery can lower your stress levels as much as two months of mindfulness sessions. Plants can also help you to feel happier.

A recent trial study by the Royal Horticultural Society found that people who introduced ornamental plants such as juniper, azalea, clematis, lavender, daffodil bulbs and petunias had a significant lowering of the stress hormone, cortisol, and many reported that they felt 'happier'.

The Fourth Gift

The fourth gift they had was Wisdom, the one they needed for themselves and the world.

Wisdom to leave the familiar in search of a new security, more precious than the gifts they gave.

Wisdom to discover, in the starlit child, a significance above gold, frankincense and myrrh.

Wisdom and the eyes of faith to receive God's showing of His Son.

The gifts we read about were three, but the fourth gift they had was wisdom. *By Daphne Kitching*

LATEST NEWS ON TRAFFIC CALMING : HORSESHOE HILL to CROWN HILL

In a letter from Highways to village residents dated 27 November we are advised that the planned scheme to slow vehicles using the road has now been cancelled. The reason given states ‘after consulting with the local farmer it was established that we are unable to maintain the road width to accommodate the farm vehicles that use the road’.

This is really disappointing news and having consulted the Highways website we find that the scheme cost was set at £62,500 which is staggering, particularly so in that with less than three months left in this current financial year it is likely this budget will be lost.

Highways previously advised that if this scheme did not go ahead it would be unlikely further schemes would be considered. They had planned to extend the calming measures throughout the village road, as well as making repairs to the pavement, where it exists.

Our Highways Councillor Ricky Gadsby is the contact for comments to be made, do write

Cllr.ricki.gadsby@essex.gov.ukalso to Highways at trafficregulation.order@essexhighways.org

There is a Highways panel meeting scheduled on 18 January where this is being reported.

START THE NEW YEAR WITH HOPE WORDSEARCH

All the words/phrases in the list mean START or HOPE are hidden in the diagram below. Words are printed across, up, down or diagonally, but always in straight lines. Letters may be used more than once.

ACTIVATE	GET GOING	E T A L P M E T N O C O R I G I N A T E
ALPHA	INCEPTION	T X O M T R F M B L P R G P N T S W S O
AMBITION	INITIATE	A N P S B A O E E T I N A S I P I T A T
ANTICIPATE	INSTIGATE	G C U E E I H M I R I G T V I O A A G D
ARISE	INSTITUTE	I R O L C O T M I E G I H R E B N N W R
ASPIRATION	INTRODUCE	T S W N P T I I B S T E A T L H I E E A
ASSURANCE	ISSUE	S E P E F S A O O U E T T I H N T C E W
AWAIT	LAUNCH	N N F R M I T T T N I T S I R T N I I R
BE AMBITIOUS	LEAP TO IT	I U I A I N D E I O N H U A O E R S A O
BEGIN	LIGHT	L B E G I N T E N O O O E O M T S I N F
BE HOPEFUL	LONG	F R E E I A G T N E N Y I M K U P O B K
BELIEVE	LOOK FORWARD TO	D O M A V R C N T C S O O T E A I A I O
BIRTH	NEW LEAF	N O U I M E O A O Q E C I C P T E N E O
BREAK OUT	NEW YEAR	C O T N P B P B U I T T N T O E T R S L
COME INTO BEING	ONSET	D C N S D I I A E U T A A M P R C I B A
COMMENCE	OPEN	A E O O C A R T R L R A N I O E S N R U
CONCEPTION	OPTIMISM	H R S I K E T N I U I I E D T E C I O N
CONFIDENCE	ORIGIN	P S T I O C O I S O T E U R N I S N E C
CONTEMPLATE	ORIGINATE	L N I N R N E S O E U C V E C E N P I H
CRAVE	PIONEER	A N E W Y E A R S N E S G E T G O I N G
CREATION	PROMISE	
DAWN	PROSPECT	
DESIRE	RECKON ON	
DREAM	SET IN MOTION	
EMERGE	SPRING	
ESTABLISH	SQUARE ONE	
EXPECTATION	TRUST	
FAITH	TURN ON	
FOUNDATION	WISH	
GENESIS	YEARNING	

The cat A vicar and his wife were going out for the evening, and carefully set the security lights and put the cat out. But when they opened the door to go to the taxi, the cat slipped back in and disappeared upstairs. Irritated, the vicar followed it. The wife waited with the taxi driver. Not wanting him to know that they were leaving the parsonage empty, she said: "My husband is just upstairs for a quick word with my mother." A few minutes later, the husband arrived, breathless. "Sorry I took so long" he said, "but she put up a fight! Stupid old thing was hiding under the bed and I had to poke her with a coat hanger and grab her by the scruff of the neck to get her out."

Sign in an old church porch to reassure any visitors: In this church many are cold, but few are frozen.

Numbers When the minister announced the first hymn on Zoom, "Ten thousand times ten thousand!" the little boy turned anxiously to his father. "Does he want us to work that out?"

Response The mother of a lively youngster was struggling to get him into his pyjamas one night. "Jamie, lift up your arms!" she said. To which the child promptly replied: "We lift them up unto the Lord!"

Henry Ford's secret When the late Mr and Mrs Henry Ford celebrated their golden wedding anniversary, a reporter asked them: "To what do you attribute your fifty years of successful married life?" "The formula," said Mr Ford, "is the same formula I have always used in making cars - just stick to one model."

Memorable Many years ago, the Salvation Army's founder General William Booth was in full spate. Suddenly he stopped and stabbed a finger at a young man busily writing, and called out, "Young man, are you saved?" To which the astonished individual replied: "ME, sir? I'm a reporter!" - *Colin R Coote*

Late Sidesman to timid parishioner: "Why are you late?" Timid parishioner: "Church started before I got here."