

ST THOMAS' CHURCH, UPSHIRE EN9 3SS

NEWSLETTER

February 2023



Rector: Revd Peter Smith, 01992 767897
Team Vicar: Revd Jane Yeadon, 07960 604416. email janeyeadon@gmail.com
Benefice Office: Abbey Church Centre, Waltham Abbey, EN9 1XQ. 01992 767897
Church address: Horseshoe Hill, Upshire, Waltham Abbey, Essex, EN9 3SS.
Website: <https://stthomaschurchupshire.com/>
Editor: Mrs Lyn Wackett, 94 Upshire Road, Waltham Abbey EN9 3PA. 01992 711573.
Email: lynanddavewackett@hotmail.co.uk

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

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.

SERVICES AND DIARY FOR FEBRUARY

Saturday 4 th	3-4pm SEEDLINGS meet in the church
Sunday 5 th	Third Sunday before Lent 9.15am HOLY COMMUNION Readings: Isaiah 58:1-9a (9b-12) Matthew 5:13-30
Sunday 12 th	Second Sunday before Lent 9.15am HOLY COMMUNION Readings: Genesis 1:1 – 2:3 Matthew 6:25-end
Wednesday 15 th	11.30am for 12noon-2pm LUNCH in the church – 07899 846711 to book – please let us know if you have to cancel. Thank you.
Sunday 19 th	Sunday next before Lent 9.15am HOLY COMMUNION Readings: Exodus 24:12-end Matthew 17:1-9
Sunday 26 th	First Sunday of Lent 9.15am HOLY COMMUNION Readings: Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-7 Matthew 4:1-11
Sunday 5 th March	Second Sunday of Lent 9.15am HOLY COMMUNION Readings: Genesis 12:1-4a John 3:1-17

The church will be open every Monday and Thursday from 11.30am to 12.30pm for private prayer only.

I am not what I might be, I am not what I ought to be, I am not what I wish to be, I am not what I hope to be; but I thank God I am not what I once was, and I can say with the great apostle, 'By the grace of God I am what I am.' - *John Newton, former slave trader*

ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER

Our mailing list to receive the electronic version is now in excess of 70 participants so if you are not one of those and wish to be included please send your email address to : marionne.locke@btinternet.com. We are looking to reduce our 'paper footprint' for climate change by printing fewer copies – your contribution will help.

THE VICAR WRITES:

On 22nd February Lent begins with a day known as Ash Wednesday. Interestingly, though most people these days are not that familiar with the church calendar, Lent is still part of the folk memory of this country and the idea of “giving something up for Lent” is a popular activity. Yet the day it all starts, Ash Wednesday is much less well known.

You may have noticed a few people wandering about with little black smudges on their forehead but have you ever wondered what that was all about?

Well these are ash crosses on their forehead and the people wearing them are marking Ash Wednesday, an ancient Christian observance of sin, suffering, penitence and redemption.

But, and this is the obvious question, why? Nowhere in the Bible does it mention the drawing of ashes on someone’s forehead - However, the Bible does talk a lot about sackcloth and ashes. People throughout the Old Testament, when they had something very big to mourn or seek forgiveness for, would sometimes destroy their clothes and cover themselves in ash as an outward sign of their inner repentance. The marking of the ash cross on the forehead is the modern equivalent of this.

Some sources place the current tradition of Ash Wednesday back to the 10th century. Regardless of precisely when it started, much of the worldwide church will observe Ash Wednesday now. But what can we learn from such an ancient practice?

First, as mentioned, Ash Wednesday is the first day of Lent. Lent is a time when Christians all over the world and all throughout history willingly forgo something for forty days — they do this to refocus on God and to symbolically participate with the sufferings and temptations that Jesus underwent in the desert at the start of his ministry. So Ash Wednesday kicks off this ancient discipline by reminding us just why we need to refocus on God. And it reminds us how lost and sinful we are on our own. It’s no coincidence that Lent culminates in Holy Week, the week leading up to Easter. Ash Wednesday reminds us of the sin in our lives that lead to Jesus coming amongst us on earth and His eventual death.

One of the more meaningful aspects of Ash Wednesday stems from where the ashes actually come from. If you’re familiar with the Christian calendar at all, you know Palm Sunday is the Sunday before Easter — it celebrates Christ’s triumphant entry into Jerusalem, when people waved palm fronds and shouted “Hosanna!”

In order to make the ashes for Ash Wednesday, the palm crosses from the previous year’s Palm Sunday are burned and mixed with a little oil. And in this lies perhaps the most meaningful subtext of Ash Wednesday. If Palm Sunday represents our praise and adulation for God, Ash Wednesday represents the knowledge that that adulation has turned to dust: In a year’s time we’ve forgotten Him, we’ve sinned against Him and our fellow humans. It’s a powerful reminder to us of how quickly our hearts can turn from God.

We will be holding Ash Wednesday services 10am and 8pm in Waltham Abbey if you would like to join us for this ancient rite but regardless if you go to a formal service or not, I pray that you can use this day the way it’s meant to be used. Let yourself be reminded of your sin and brokenness. It’s not pleasant and it might involve some suffering, but instead of pushing away the thoughts of things you’ve done (or left undone) against God and others, accept them and repent. Then receive the unconditional and joyful forgiveness of God.

On this Ash Wednesday may you be reminded to restore God to the place he belongs: first in your heart and first in your life. And then carry that knowledge out of Ash Wednesday and into the rest of the year.

Blessings, Jane

God’s love is not drawn out by our lovableness, but wells up, like an artesian spring, from the depths of His nature. - *Alexander MacLaren*

PRAYER REQUESTS

You are invited to offer names to be added to our prayer diary to remember those who are unwell or unhappy.

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, Carol & George, Beverly, Dave P, Terry, June, Rose, Peggy, Shirley, Sheila, Jackie, Jean, Andrea and her Mum and Dad, Nina, Carmel & the Price family, Tim, Dave, Pat, Christine, Kathrine & Paul, Nigel, Susan & Alan, Eleanor & Linda.

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES

Thank you to the people who have sent in articles to be included in the Newsletter. Please keep them coming!

Anything: maybe a poem you have written, what you have been doing in the garden, childhood memories, something that happened to make you smile etc, it all makes for interesting reading.

THE BUXTON BANNER used to hang in the church following the death of Sir Thomas Buxton with this inscription beside it (Sir Thomas died in 1915):

'This Banner belonged to the late Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton, 3rd Baronet. During his lifetime it hung in St Paul's Cathedral in the Chapel of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George of which order he was a Grand Commander. After his death it was removed from the Chapel and will now hang in the Church which he built.

The Lion with the Mullets forms his Coat of Arms. The Red Hand of Ulster is the Badge of a Baronet of the United Kingdom'

Sadly, the banner has had to be taken down because of its condition. Its background fabric is silk, which only has a lifetime of around 100 years. It has at some point had remedial work to arrest further deterioration but unfortunately this is now failing and the banner remains wrapped in the vestry in an effort to preserve what remains.

Following the successful completion of the Waltham Abbey Tapestry. it was suggested that a group of keen stitchers, under the instruction of Anthea Godfrey BA Hons, ATD, RSA . Artistic Director of the Embroiderers Guild and Retired Principal Lecturer at University of the Arts, London, should investigate what could be done about the banner.

Anthea suggests that unfortunately further preservation of the original banner, at the moment, would not be possible financially. She suggests that we make a replacement banner, using modern day materials for longevity whilst keeping as near as possible to the original banner.. A group of us propose to start this project shortly and we are currently sourcing the materials needed. This is obviously not a short term project but we will keep you updated. Hopefully, we'll maybe be able to have a few coffee mornings for you to be able to see progress.

ANAGRAM

Unscramble this 10 letter Anagram: SAVELINNET

CHURCH FLOWERS

FEBRUARY and following the cold spell signs of SPRING abound as we progress to the start of Lent on 22 February through to 8 April. Easter Lilies will then be the focus for display with memorials recorded in the dedication book. These are required to be ordered in advance (£2.50 per stem) so please confirm your order and dedications in good time.

Each month we can create memorial dedications, wedding, anniversary or special occasion flowers – all can be arranged for any week – email marionne.locke@btinternet.com to discuss.

STAMPS!

Please continue to save your postage stamps and foreign or out of circulation coins – many charities can use them to raise funds.

We collect the coins for Essex and Herts Air Ambulance and I have recently been told the British Legion collect them too.

The Air Ambulance no longer take the stamps so I made contact with St Clare's Hospice and took two large bags of stamps weighing over 3kg to them – they were delighted so I will continue to save the stamps for them.

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.

St Thomas Church, Upshire Bank details

St Thomas Church Upshire PCC

HSBC Bank Sort Code 40 45 20 Account number 00724505

Any queries regarding setting up a Standing Order, giving a donation to the church, Gift Aid or about joining the Parish Giving Scheme please contact our Treasurer, Ruth Moore on 07852 668633

Ruth4366@gmail.com

If you are able to Gift Aid donations this increases your gift without any extra cost to yourself.

CHURCHWARDEN'S CHATTER

Last month's weather was to be expected – snow, frost, fog and rain but we were still able to hold our Sunday 9.15am services, Seedlings and Open Hour Monday and Thursdays 11.30-12.30.

Our church cleaner, Eleanor has retired due to home and family commitments. We thank her for her many years' service in carrying out her duties and wish her well in her retirement.

The Events Group met this month and all events at the church other than services will be published soon. The Wednesday Community Lunches 11.30am for noon are now back on track. Please contact Pauline on 07899 846711 to book for the next lunch on 15th February, please let her know if you have to cancel later as there is usually a waiting list so your place could be offered to someone else. The meal will be roast meat, Yorkshire pudding, new potatoes, carrots and peas with gravy, dessert with custard or cream plus tea or coffee. There is a veggie option but this must be ordered when booking. We will also have our produce stall selling eggs, honey, jams and pickles, also a raffle. See you there!

Stephen Brown 07960 809799

GARDENERS NOTE Free bagged compost ready for collection: ring 07960 809799.

Any donation to the church fabric fund would be appreciated. Thank you.

COPPER JAR

Our thanks to all who donated their coppers and small change to Water Aid via the Copper Jar, raising £27.50 in the last month.

May God give you...

For every storm, a rainbow, for every tear, a smile,

For every care, a promise and blessing in each trial.

For every problem life sends, a faithful friend to share.

For every sigh, a sweet song and an answer for each prayer.



ST THOMAS' SEEDLINGS

1st Saturdays of each month (unless otherwise stated)

A free Stay and Play church group for children and those who care for them
Join us Saturdays 3-4pm for messy craft, play, songs and stories along with a welcome cuppa
St Thomas' Church, Horseshoe Hill, Upshire, EN9 3SS



ST THOMAS' CHURCH COMMUNITY LUNCHES 2023

- WINTER WARMER LUNCH - WEDNESDAY 15th FEBRUARY
- SPRING LUNCH - WEDNESDAY 15th MARCH
- SPRING LUNCH - WEDNESDAY 19th APRIL
- SPRING LUNCH – WEDNESDAY 18th MAY
- SUMMER LUNCH – WEDNESDAY 21th JUNE
- SUMMER LUNCH – WEDNESDAY 19th JULY
- SUMMER LUNCH – WEDNESDAY 16th AUGUST
- AUTUMN LUNCH – WEDNESDAY 20th SEPTEMBER
- AUTUMN LUNCH – WEDNESDAY 18th OCTOBER
- AUTUMN LUNCH – WEDNESDAY 15th NOVEMBER
- CHRISTMAS LUNCH – WEDNESDAY 6th DECEMBER

PLEASE BOOK YOUR PLACE TO CONFIRM ATTENDANCE : 07899 846711

If, after booking you are unable to come, please phone to cancel, we can then offer a place to people on the waiting list. Thank you.

GROWERS CORNER

You should visit your local garden centre or nursery this month to get in your spring supplies, i.e. F1 seed compost plus potting compost while supplies are available. Whilst there you could buy your seed potatoes; there is a wide range of varieties on sale, so read the labels and pick the ones that will suit you. Your seed potatoes can be chitted by standing them on end in a box placed in a frost free cupboard in the dark, in a few weeks they will grow shoots and when the soil is warmed up they can be planted out in the garden to give you a head start.

The planting of trees and shrubs is best completed by the end of this month while they are still in their dormant state.

Rose pruning should best be carried out by the end of this month before the sap rises. Your cutters must be sharp to give best results, remove all dead wood and prune to your desire shape. Dip your cutter each time into an anti-fungal solution to keep black spot and the like at bay.

It is a little bit early to be sowing seeds unless you have a heated greenhouse or polytunnel. It is best to wait a few more weeks.

If you have broad bean seeds they could be sown now into deep pots of potting compost, placed in your greenhouse or polytunnel and transplanted once the garden soil has warmed up.

Your snowdrops should now be making a display and next month we can look forward to crocuses and daffodils in the garden, and with bluebells in the woods and tulips in the garden spring will soon be here.
Stephen

ABBAYFIELD SOCIETY – WALTHAM ABBEY
WARBURTON LODGE, MEADOW CROSS EN9 3DJ
VACANCIES AND RESPITE ROOMS AVAILABLE NOW FOR THE OVER 60's

Rooms with en-suite facilities, rent includes meals, heating, lighting, laundry & cleaning
Communal dining room, lounges, and gardens. All rooms have fridge, kettle, and toaster.

Call or email to book a visit to see what we offer
Tel; 01992 719003 Email; manager@abbeyfieldwa.co.uk
Registered Charity 221563

Give the ones you love wings to fly, roots to come back, and reasons to stay. *The Dalai Lama*

UPSHIRE MOTHERS' UNION

Our Christmas Carol Service in December was cancelled due to the heavy snow.

There is no meeting in February.

Further information from Ann Smith on 01992 767809.

ANAGRAM

The answer to the anagram is VALENTINES.

A moral tale – a water bearer in India had two large pots, one hung on each end of a pole, which she carried across her neck. One of the pots had a crack in it whilst the other pot was perfect and always delivered a full portion of water at the end of the long walk from the stream to the house whereas the cracked pot arrived only half full.

For two whole years this went on daily, with the bearer delivering one and a half pots of water to the house. The perfect pot was proud of its accomplishments, perfect to the end for which it was made. But the poor cracked pot was ashamed of its own imperfection and miserable that it was able to accomplish only half of what it had been made to do.

Eventually it could bear what it perceived to be its bitter failure no longer and the cracked pot spoke to the water bearer: "I am ashamed of myself and I want to apologise to you." The water bearer asked why the pot was ashamed. The pot explained that for the last two years it could only deliver half of its load because the crack in its side caused the water to leak out all the way from the stream to the house and because of its flaws, the water bearer had to work harder.

The water bearer felt sorry for the cracked pot and in her compassion told the pot to look at the beautiful flowers along the path from the stream to the house. As they went up the hill, the cracked pot saw the sun warming the beautiful flowers growing on one side of the path but it still felt bad because it had again leaked out half of its water. But the water bearer asked the pot if it had noticed that there were flowers only on its side of the path but not on the side of the perfect pot. Then the water bearer told the cracked pot that she had always known about the crack and she took advantage of that by planting the flower seeds on the path by the side of the cracked pot. So every day when she walked between the stream and the house the seeds were watered and grew into beautiful plants which were then picked to decorate the house and fill it with their scent.

This story should speak to all of us because we are all flawed in some way or another, each of us has our own unique flaws. We are all cracked pots. But it is the flaws and cracks we each have that make our lives so interesting and rewarding. We have just got to take each person for what they are and look for the good in them.

Remember that nothing is small in the eyes of God. Do all that you do with love.

St Therese of Lisieux

ANOTHER THANK YOU LETTER FROM BLYTHSWOOD

Dear friends of St Thomas' Church,

Thank you for bringing hope this Christmas

This is the 29th year of Blythswood's Shoe Box Appeal. The Appeal continues 29 years after it started as the need certainly continues. Thanks to your support in 2022 we have been able to send shoeboxes to people in need in Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Kosovo, Moldova, Romania, Serbia and Ukraine. The need is great indeed this winter for those living in war-torn Ukraine, and for those having fled from the conflict. The need remains great for those whose lives are daily shaped by poverty, isolation and want. Your kindness has helped to bring hope to people in great need this Christmas. Thank you very much.

It's been said by one of our volunteers that "every shoebox is a smile." Every gift in every box makes a difference. As useful as the items inside are, the beauty of shoebox gifts goes beyond this – each gift lets a person in need know that someone that they've never met before has thought about them and cares about them. Long after the toothpaste has been used up, the candles burned and socks grown out of, the hope and love conveyed by a shoebox goes on. Support for Blythswood Care's Shoe Box Appeal makes a difference that lasts. Whether you have donated boxes, fillers or money to the Appeal, I would like to sincerely thank you and to let you know that you have made a difference.

It's my privilege to be able to thank you for your kindness and support on behalf of Blythswood Care, but thank you especially on behalf of those you might never meet or see, but whose lives will be made better thanks to your kindness and care.

Wishing you all the very best for 2023,
Mairi McHardy
Fundraising Administrator

50/50 CLUB

Congratulations to the winners of the 50/50 Club Bumper Draw in December, who were:

1 st : £45	No. 42	Gwen Hall of Waltham Abbey
2 nd : £35	No. 19	Sarah Gullefer of Welham Green, Hatfield
3 rd : £25	No. 58	Beverley Turner of Epping
4 th : £20	No. 62	Carol Songer of Nazeing
5 th : £20	No. 33	Fred Corsham of Upshire

Our thanks to all our members for their support of St Thomas' Church.

It is now time to begin Draw 11 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). Each member is entitled to a maximum of two entries, couples can have four. Please complete the form below and return it to me; payment by Bank Transfer is preferred to the church's account St Thomas Church Upshire PCC, Sort code 404520, Account number 00724505, HSBC Bank or alternatively you may pay by cheque or cash to the address stated. Please let me know if you pay by Bank Transfer so I can include your number in the Draw (email lynanddavewackett@hotmail.co.uk or phone 01992 711573). Good luck to everyone who enters.

St Thomas' Church 50/50 Club Draw 11

January to June 2023

I wish to become a member of St Thomas' 50/50 Club and have paid by Bank Transfer to HSBC Bank, A/c St Thomas Church Upshire PCC, Sort Code 40 45 20, A/c No: 00724505.

OR I enclose cash/cheque of £12 per entry (maximum 2 per person). Please make cheques payable to St Thomas Church Upshire PCC and return you entries to Lyn Wackett, 94 Upshire Road, Waltham Abbey, EN9 3PA.

Name:

Address:

Telephone: