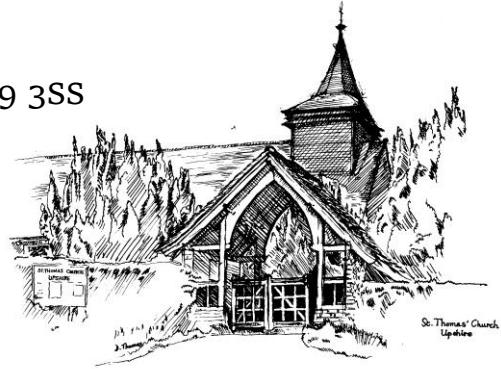


St Thomas' Church, Upshire EN9 3SS

Newsletter

February 2021



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

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 FEBRUARY

7th: 2nd Sunday before Lent
14th: Sunday next before Lent
21st: 1st Sunday of Lent
28th: 2nd Sunday of Lent

Colossians 1:15-20
2 Corinthians 4:3-6
1 Peter 3:18-22
Roans 4:13-25

John 1:1-14
Mark 9:2-9
Mark 1:9-15
Mark 8:31-38

PRAYER REQUESTS

You are invited of 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, Debbie & Tracy.

The Vicar writes:

All you need is love according to the Beatles – and February is a time when thoughts tend to turn to love as the feast of St Valentine is celebrated on 14th February.

As romantic heroes go St Valentine is an unlikely candidate. Little is known about him – even who he actually was as there were several Christian martyrs named Valentine. The most likely candidate is believed to be a Christian priest who was martyred about 270 AD by the emperor Claudius II Gothicus. Why this particular saint became associated with love is also a matter of some conjecture.

One legend contends that Emperor Claudius II decided that single men made better soldiers than those with wives and families, he therefore outlawed marriage for young men. Valentine, realising the injustice of the decree, defied Claudius and continued to perform marriages for young lovers in secret.

Another legend contends that an imprisoned Valentine actually sent the first “valentine” greeting himself after he fell in love with a young girl – possibly his jailor’s daughter—who visited him during his confinement. Before his death, it is alleged that he wrote her a letter signed “From your Valentine,” an expression that is still in use today.

Although the truth behind the Valentine legends is murky, the stories all emphasize his appeal as a deeply romantic figure. By the Middle Ages his association with love was well known and the idea of Valentines day being a day to declare one’s feelings of love was set.

Over the years the focus has increasingly become one of romantic love and apparently it’s now the fifth most popular day to propose (Christmas day is the most popular in case you were wondering). In the past however it was a day when all sorts of love were celebrated, the love between parents and children, between siblings, between friends and of course the love of God for us, his creation.

This love, between God and humanity is the purest and most intense love that there is – and as much as February’s love fest is focused on Valentines day it is also the month that Lent begins. Lent is the period of the church’s year when we prepare to celebrate the agony and joy of Easter, those days where God proved his love over and over again in the unfolding events and its continued effect on our lives today.

So maybe this Valentines day as we exchange cards and presents, have a dine in meal for two and maybe even get proposed to we could also do well to remember the greatest love of all

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life” *John 3:16*

Happy Valentine’s Day everyone – may it be a day when you know how much you are loved.

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.

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.

God loves each of us as if there were only one of us. St Augustine of Hippo
We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in that. Oscar Romero

ANAGRAM

Unscramble this 10 letter anagram: ALTOCHIMED. 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 $\frac{1}{2}$ " of envelope around the stamp. Thank you.

50/50 CLUB

Congratulations to our December Bumper Draw winners, who were:

1 st :	£45	No. 93	Ruth Bradley of Enfield
2 nd :	£35	No. 37	Ellen McGowan of Gravesend
3 rd :	£25	No. 1	Ruth Battams of Swaffham
4 th :	£20	No. 66	Carol Wilkins of Loughton
5 th :	£20	No. 9	Colin Ward of High Laver, Ongar

Special thanks to the kind person who donated their winnings to the church Fabric Fund.

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

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' 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:

VEHICLE THEFTS

We regret to report that in the last few weeks in the area, there has been a spate of vehicle and attempted vehicle thefts from driveways, some in daytime, so do be vigilant and report anything suspicious to the police. A grey VW Golf was seen in the vicinity on two occasions in the village.

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 1.00pm at **13 SUN STREET**. (please note the earlier closing time)

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 **METHODICAL**.

Leave them be

The National Trust has urged the public to stay away from certain areas during breeding season this Spring. It hopes to mimic the effects of lockdown last year, which helped more vulnerable species.

The call follows the discovery last year that lockdown did our peregrine falcons, grey partridges and other species a real favour.

The tern colony at Blakeney Point in Norfolk had a bumper season, with more than 200 little tern chicks fledged, the most in 25 years. The Peak District saw more curlew, and the Llyn Peninsula saw more stoats, weasels and rabbits emerging from the woodlands of Plas yn Rhiw. Meanwhile, the ruins of Corfe Castle in Dorset became home to peregrine falcons, and a cuckoo arrived in Osterley, west London. Even Dartford warblers were on the move, some to as far as Shropshire.

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The birds and bees

Here is some good news: all new major roads will have wildflower-friendly verges that could boost our numbers of birds and bees.

Highway England has said that vibrant road verges will be created as standard on new roads over 300 miles in England, using low nutrient soils which will be seeded with wildflowers or left to grow naturally.

A staggering 97 per cent of our meadows have been destroyed since the Thirties, due to modern agriculture. This means that the 238,000 hectares of road verges across the UK could become a vital habitat for pollinators.

The Government has pledged to build 4,000 miles of new road by 2025.

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.

Join the Second High Beach Virtual Quiz

on

Friday 12th February, 7.30 to 9.30 pm

You can join with a team of up to 6-8 adults (plus children if they want to come!). During the quiz, the teams will meet in a Zoom Room – which means you can be in a team with friends or family or both, in other households. So you could have a team with people in London, Leicester, Liverpool or Latvia if you wanted. Then we will come back together in between rounds for one large Zoom meeting and answers.

There will be 6 rounds plus an activity for the interval. No entry fee but a donation please to High Beach Church. We do have a donation button on our website.

If you would like to participate, and quite frankly what else do you have to do on a Friday night during the current crisis, please book a place by emailing Louise on **lougarner@tiscali.co.uk**. Please book asap as places may be limited and it is easier to cancel than to add.

Miscellaneous observations on modern life

As any member of a church committee will tell you, after all is said and done, there's a lot more said than done.

I used to eat a lot of natural foods until I learned that most people die of natural causes.

Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day. Teach him how to fish, and he will sit in a boat and drink lager all day.

If you tell the truth, you don't have to remember anything.

Good judgment comes from bad experience, and a lot of that comes from bad judgment.

A closed mouth gathers no foot.

'Most cars on our roads have only one occupant, usually the driver.' (*BBC reporter*)

I really don't mind getting older, but my body is taking it badly.

I thought getting old would take longer.

Cleaning is just putting stuff in less obvious places.

If I wanted to hear the pitter-patter of little feet, I'd put shoes on my cat.

Eyesight

A man went to his doctor to say that his eyesight was getting worse. The doctor asked the man to look out the window and to tell him what he saw. "I see the sun," the man replied. The doctor replied: "Just how much farther do you want to see?"