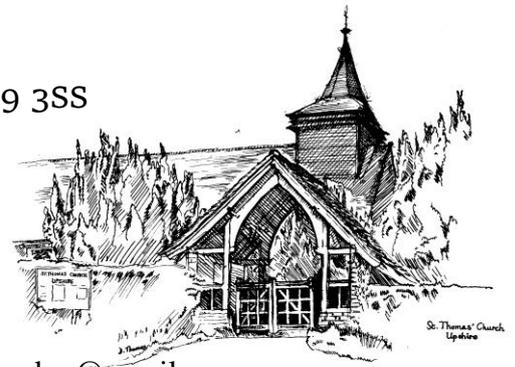


St Thomas' Church, Upshire EN9 3SS

Newsletter

December 2021



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

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 DECEMBER

Wednesday 1st 12 noon – 2pm CHRISTMAS LUNCH – fully booked

Saturday 4th 3 - 4pm MESSY CHURCH

Sunday 5th 2nd Sunday of Advent
9.15am HOLY COMMUNION
Readings: Malachi 3:1-4 Philippians 1:3-11 Luke 3:1-6

Wednesday 8th 2.15pm MOTHERS' UNION CHRISTMAS COMMUNION & tea. All welcome.

Saturday 11th 11am-3pm CHRISTMAS FAYRE

Sunday 12th 3rd Sunday of Advent
9.15am HOLY COMMUNION
Readings: Zephaniah 3:14-20 Philippians 4:4-7 Luke 3:7-18

Sunday 19th 4th Sunday of Advent
9.15am HOLY COMMUNION
Readings: Micah 5:2-5a Hebrews 10:5-10 Luke 1:39-55
5pm CAROL SERVICE

Friday 24th Christmas Eve
11.30pm MIDNIGHT MASS
Readings: Isaiah 52:7-10 Hebrews 1:1-12 John 1:1-14

Saturday 25th Christmas Day
9.15am CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION SERVICE
Isaiah 9:2-7 Titus 2:11-14 Luke 2:1-20

Sunday 26th Boxing Day – 1st Sunday of Christmas
SERVICE OF FAVOURITE CAROLS AND READINGS
Bring your own reading to share with the congregation

Sunday 2nd January Epiphany
9.15am HOLY COMMUNION
Readings: Isaiah 60:1-6 Ephesians 3:1-12 Matthew 2:1-12

The church will be open every Monday and Thursday from 11.30am to 12.30pm for private prayer only. Covid-19 restrictions apply.

The Vicar writes:

In his 2005 book “Yes Man” author Danny Wallace details an extraordinary year in his life when, following a suggestion by a man he met on the journey home, he decided to say “Yes” to any offers that came his way.

He said “yes” to pamphleteers on the street, the credit card offers stuffing his mailbox and solicitations on the internet. He got a bad haircut, was hypnotized by a dog and bought a mint green Nissan Figaro. He also met dozens of new people, got a huge promotion, and found true love.

As the opening words of his book say – “It is quite incredible how a bus – a simple, red, London bus – can change your life.”

As we approach Christmas once again our thoughts naturally turn to another “yes”, a yes that changed not only the life of the person who uttered it, but the very life of our world.

At the annunciation, the Angel Gabriel was sent by God to tell Mary that she had been chosen to be the mother of his son. That through her the redemption and salvation of humanity would be enacted. Having announced this news and outlined to her what was going to happen then...he waited. God’s plan was conditional upon her response.

A central tenet of the Christian faith is the precious notion of free will or consent, to give it a more modern terminology. Human beings have been created with the ability to decide what they wish to do, to walk their own path and make their own decision. No-one, not even God, can make a person do something if they do not consent to do it.

Thus the birth of our saviour, the reason we celebrate Christmas at all, was utterly dependent upon Mary’s consent to what was being asked of her.

Interestingly, the biblical account of this event records that Mary did not say yes straight away. She asked questions – sensible, assertive questions – and then she thought for a while. It was only after this that she declared “Yes! I’m in! So be it! I trust you Lord!” And the rest, as they say, is history....

So as we gaze again upon the nativity scene this month I pray that the story of Mary inspires and encourages you to say “yes” to God, whatever he may ask of you.

You may not end up with a bad haircut, being hypnotized by a dog or buying a dodgy green car but you know what... I am pretty sure you will find true love. True love from the son of God that Mary’s “yes” enabled to be born into the world, the birth of whom we celebrate this Christmas.

May God bless you and all you love this Christmas time.

Rev Jane

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, Mick, Sarah, Sheila, Jackie, Jean, Barbara, Andrea and her Mum and Dad, Nina, Carmel & the Price family & Dave.

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.

NEWSLETTER DELIVERY – to ensure continued delivery of our free paper newsletter if there is anyone with free time to deliver to local addresses please contact Lyn Wackett.

CHURCH FLOWERS

Dedications for November and December from Terry Jones and Lyn Wackett.

As the weeks through to end December progress we will be creating festive designs so all foliage contributions are welcome.

Each month we can create memorial dedications, wedding, anniversary or special occasion flowers – all can be arranged for any week – contact Marion 07789 643147 or email

marionne.locke@btinternet.com to discuss.

Anyone wishing to practice or create a design of their own are very welcome, do make contact as above to arrange access.



ST THOMAS’ SEEDLINGS

1st Saturdays of each month (apart from January)

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

8th January

St Thomas’ Church, Horseshoe Hill, Upshire, EN9 3SS



ST THOMAS’ SEEDLINGS aligned to Messy Church

We have been asked several questions regarding the new children’s group at St Thomas’, called ‘Seedlings’. The word was chosen by those who run the group – this could go on to ‘Saplings’ or ‘Mighty Oaks’ depending on the age group, but I am getting ahead of myself! Our Seedlings ages range from babies to pre-school and several years beyond – it does not matter!

Messy Church is a way of being Church for families and others. It is Christ-centred, for all ages, based on creativity, hospitality and celebration, there is no charge for Messy Church Seedlings. See St Thomas’ website for further information.

We spend our time singing happy songs, chatting, story telling and prayer and divide up to try several different activities each month. So far we have coloured in posters and pictures, made a hanging sign for our bedroom doors, made a ‘stained glass’ table light, grown cress and broad beans in small containers and made a hedgehog picture. There is always a ‘take home’ element – personalised bags provided. After our activities we sit down for a story – theme based: harvest, Saints and in December the Nativity story told from the point of view of an owl! This time often leads to chats and questions, we are very open and flexible.

Plenty of toys, and play mats are available for the very young ones. A parent or carer stays with each child or family of children, so we are able to welcome babes in arms and push chairs!

The last five minutes onwards are spent in snacking and juice drinking and just generally chatting – our seedlings leave when they are ready – and then we clear up!

Please check with Rev Jane Yeadon or any of the helpers if you have a query. We generally meet on the first Saturday of the month between 3 and 4pm, but please note it will be the second Saturday in January (the 8th).

Maureen Smith

Insure your home and help the church

St Thomas insures the church through a company called Ecclesiastical, which specialises in church insurance. However, they also provide home insurance and for every new home insurance policy taken out with Ecclesiastical, they will donate £130 to an Anglican church of your choice. The company has been awarded the First Place Gold Ribbon in this year's independent Fairer Finance Customer Experience Ratings. So if your home insurance is due for renewal, why not consider Ecclesiastical Trust130 and help the church at the same time. Ring 08007830 130 or go to www.ecclesiastical.com/trust130 for more information. The offer is open until 31 December 2021.

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 or indoors to keep occupied during lockdown, etc, it all makes for interesting reading.

50/50 CLUB

Congratulations to the winners of the 50/50 Club draw for October, who were:

1 st : £35	No. 87	Brenda Pennison of Waltham Abbey
2 nd : £25	No. 84	Eileen Sims of Harlow
3 rd : £15	No. 40	George Green of Upshire

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

It will soon be time to renew 50/50 Club subscriptions; look out for the renewal form in next month's Newsletter. As we are now being charged for every cheque or cash transaction at the bank, we would appreciate Bank Transfer payment when possible. Contact Lyn Wackett on 01992 711573 for further information or email lynanddavewackett@hotmail.co.uk

CHURCHWARDEN'S CHATTER

Be very careful whilst driving on our local roads as the rut is still in progress. The deer are now in smaller groups led by a buck and they can find their way onto the local roads during the day or night at any time.

During the last few weeks there have been two bad accidents on Horseshoe Hill, the cause of which have still to be confirmed.

There have been a number of large potholes noted in road surfaces locally – hopefully they will be dealt with by Essex Highways/ utilities concerned before the frosts of winter set in. Due to ground water getting onto our local road surfaces winter is a very dangerous time of year if it turns to ice following early morning frosts. Please be aware of road conditions when driving in the area.

Well done the new Seedlings group. Messy Church is going from strength to strength and being enjoyed by all who attend.

The December Christmas Lunch is now fully booked but please book for January by contacting Pauline on 07899 846711 to avoid disappointment.

We would like to thank the Community Pay-back Team for all their good work carried out in the churchyard over the last twelve months including moving furniture, strimming and mowing the grass and cutting back the front hedge by hand so that we can trim it next year with our hedge trimmer as it was getting beyond our reach.

We wish you all a happy Christmas and a healthy New Year.

Stephen Brown 07960 809799

KNITTERS AND WOOL WANTED!

Knitters wanted to make jumpers for babies and child refugees. Any size, any colour, any style, all will be appreciated.

Also to knit hat, scarves and mittens (or gloves if you're so inclined!) ready for shoe boxes for next year.

Wool also needed for all the above items (double knit preferred). Contact Lyn on 01992 711573 or leave wool or garments in the porch at 94 Upshire Road. Thank you.

ANAGRAM

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

GROWERS CORNER

Having viewed the seed merchants websites and catalogues you can now plan your borders and veg patch for next season. Place your orders for seeds etc and await their delivery.

On a nice day you can check your cold frame to see how your broad beans and sweet peas are growing. Remember any watering should be carried out after the frost and before lunchtime, also make sure that you have been able to keep the mice at bay.

If the ground is frost free, work from a pair of scaffold boards to prevent compaction of the soil and to keep mud off your boots.

On a dry day raking up all the leaves on your lawn is a good job done. Save the leaves for leaf mould for digging in later on your veg plot.

Your borders could benefit from a tidy up but only cut the dead flower heads, leave the rest of the plants for protection from the winter frosts.

In an area in a quiet corner of your garden you could position a bug hotel or a hedgehog house.

UPSHIRE MOTHERS' UNION

Upshire Mothers' Union have now resumed their meetings. Our next meeting will be our Christmas Carol Service and Corporate Communion in St Thomas' Church on Wednesday 8th December at 2.15pm. All are welcome to join us. The service will be followed by Tea, mince pies and cake in the church. Raffle: Gill Negus.

Further information from Ann Smith of 01992 767809.

SHOE BOXES

Thank you so much to all the kind, generous people who filled shoe boxes (or gave empty boxes and items to go in them) for Blythwood Care's 2021 Shoe Box Appeal. I'm delighted to announce that we sent exactly the same amount of boxes this year as last year – 120 – which is a marvellous result. Well done to everyone, keep up the good work!

Shoe boxes and items to go in them can be left in the porch at 94 Upshire Road or contact Lyn & Dave on 01992 711573 – it's not too early to start collecting for next year's Appeal. Thank you.

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.

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 or giving a donation to the church, 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.

Ruth would be pleased to answer any questions you may have regarding Gift Aid or joining the Parish Giving Scheme
Thank you

ST THOMAS CHURCH, UPSHIRE, EN93SS

CHRISTMAS FAYRE in the church
Saturday 11th December, 11am-3pm

There will be a wide variety of stalls – some old friends, some new. These include knitwear, jewellery, needlework, cards, plants, arts & crafts, silk painting, produce: jam, marmalade, pickles, chutney, Christmas puddings, eggs & honey, Last minute Christmas gifts for all ages, cakes, books & photos.

One new contribution this year is a baby and young child stall, all proceeds going to St Thomas Church. We have carefully selected, from generous donations, a choice of toys and equipment; these include a baby bath, first steps baby walker, baby rocking seat, four seasons farm play mat, roller skates, guitar, swimming jackets & buoyancy aids, small bicycle, child's doll push chair, and many more! We will price these so that they are affordable and hopefully they will all find new homes by December 25th!

Please come and have a chat – perhaps there is a different stall you would like to see next year – or run one yourself – we are always open to suggestions.

Hot snacks will be served all day, including bacon rolls, soup, tea, coffee & hot chocolate
Cake and mince pies

A Bumper Raffle with many prizes – we have been promised a hamper!

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 Essex and Herts Air Ambulance. Stamps and coins can be left with Lyn and Dave at 94 Uphire Road and left in the porch. Note: please remember to leave about 1/2" of envelope around the stamp. Thank you.

ANAGRAM

The answer to the anagram is ENTHUSIASM.

3 FOOD 4 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.**

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.

UPSHIRE PRIMARY FOUNDATION SCHOOL

You may have noticed that Upshire Primary Foundation School have recently taken delivery of 2 train carriages. Here is some information from the school about the project.

This project started way back in 2019 when we got a grant to upgrade our library as part of the Tesco Bags of Help Scheme. The idea grew and our Headteacher, Mrs Blackburn, thought that it would be very exciting if we were able to get a disused train carriage to enable us to expand our library and make it more accessible to pupils during lunchtime. Our Deputy Head, Mrs Gritton, spent time emailing and phoning train companies until Porterbrook kindly offered to donate a carriage to the school.

Before the project could start in earnest, Covid-19 sent us all into lockdown and socially distancing children in school became a reality. As we looked to the future and the options available to accommodate children in a Covid safe manner, Porterbrook generously agreed to donate a second carriage. This would provide us with more space to offer services such as breakfast and afterschool club whilst still having the time to sanitise areas and resources between different groups of pupils.

Looking to the post Covid future we would be able to use the second carriage to offer additional pre-school places and let others from the community use the carriages outside of school hours to offer counselling sessions, adult literacy and numeracy classes and much more.

At this point we realised that we needed help with the installation of the carriages as this was a complex project to undertake. We had worked with Modular Building Consultants previously and they were happy to take onboard our unusual challenge.

With Modular Building Consultants guiding us we secured the help of Network Rail who invited companies, including Taziker and Railscape, to assist us. We have been very fortunate that many companies have helped us thus far free of charge or at a reduced cost. We have also benefited from cash donations and many organised fundraising events organised by the school PTA and individuals.

The children have all been very excited about the arrival of the carriages and enjoyed watching them being moved into their final positions. They are now keen to see the transformation into safe learning spaces and to read books in the large 1st Class seats!

If you are interested to see photos and videos of the installation please follow Julie Hockley on LinkedIn.

STAR

At a rehearsal for a Sunday school Christmas tableau, the teacher carefully lined up four little 'cherubs'. Each carried a huge cut-out letter. As they stood side by side, the letters would spell out "STAR". A slight mix-up occurred, and those present in the church auditorium nearly fell out of their pews as the four little performers took their places – in reverse.

Easy come, easy go

Father Christmas enters through a hole in the chimney and leaves through a hole in your pocket.

CHRISTMAS WORDSEARCH

All the words in the list 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.

ANGEL GABRIEL	KING	MARY	I	V	Y	M	Y	R	R	H	W	E	S	G	N	I	K	C	O	T	S	
ANGELS	MANGER	MARY	M	C	R	D	E	S	H	F	A	S	D	L	I	O	O	C	R	R	O	E
BABY	BAUBLES	MIDNIGHT MASS	I	A	H	K	O	C	G	R	R	E	G	B	T	O	G	I	C	I	L	
BELLS	BIRTH	MINCE PIES	M	C	R	O	R	N	T	N	A	A	R	I	T	A	A	D	K	N	E	B
CANDLES	CARDS	MISTLETOE	O	U	E	U	I	S	K	C	I	I	N	O	P	N	T	S	W	I	G	U
CAROL SERVICE	MYRRH	NUTS	T	S	H	D	L	R	R	E	V	D	R	K	G	E	T	S	R	I	F	A
CATTLE	CHOIR	ORGAN	N	C	D	E	C	A	E	P	Y	G	I	N	I	H	C	B	T	A	L	B
CHRISTMAS/PUDDING	PANTOMIME	PARSNIPS	A	U	G	R	C	A	A	I	R	O	I	T	G	N	A	N	M	R	C	L
CHURCH	PEACE/ON EARTH	PRAISE	P	N	T	K	E	R	K	E	N	K	J	I	O	G	C	I	I	A	E	R
CRACKERS	PRESENTS	REINDEER	A	S	E	S	S	H	E	E	P	D	L	Y	L	N	L	E	R	M	N	E
CRIB	DATES	SANTA	S	R	N	N	D	T	P	R	D	Y	E	E	B	Y	E	O	N	E	E	G
DONKEY	SERAPHS	SERENE	S	H	I	O	I	U	E	E	R	L	G	E	G	A	L	A	O	S	R	N
DUNDEE CAKE	SHEEP	SHEPHERDS	S	P	R	N	W	S	N	I	H	N	O	N	R	S	B	T	R	E	E	A
FAIRY LIGHTS	SLEIGH	SNOW	E	G	I	E	O	A	D	A	S	I	G	E	E	E	I	P	T	S	M	
FAMILY	SOCKS	SPROUTS	H	S	L	N	S	F	R	B	E	F	H	R	P	L	L	E	R	T	H	S
FRANKINCENSE	STABLE	STAR	G	E	T	D	A	T	E	S	F	E	V	O	T	R	E	T	U	T	S	E
GOLD	STOCKING	STRAW	I	S	A	T	N	L	M	U	H	I	C	S	L	K	A	O	T	U	H	R
GOODWILL	STUFFING	TIDINGS	E	G	N	R	L	A	T	A	C	I	I	A	N	L	R	I	S	A	A	A
GREETINGS	TREE	TURKEY	L	A	A	S	T	S	C	E	S	M	P	N	K	P	Y	E	S	T	C	P
GROTTO	VIRGIN	WORSHIP	S	S	A	M	T	H	G	I	N	D	I	M	S	E	J	O	S	E	P	H
HEARTH	HEROD																					
HOLLY																						
ICED CAKE																						
ICING																						
INNKEEPER	IVY																					
JESUS																						
JOSEPH	JOY																					

Too clean

My mother is a cleaning fanatic. One Saturday she told me and my brother to get down to the living room and straighten it up. We had held a party there the previous evening, and she was none too happy about the mess. As she watched us work, it was clear that Mum was completely dissatisfied with our cleaning efforts and let us know it. Finally, my brother, exasperated with having to do it all over again, reached for a broom and asked Mum, "Can I use this, or were you planning to go somewhere?"

Camels

In Jane's Christmas drawing, two of the camels were approaching the inn, over which was pictured a large star. The third camel and its rider were going directly away from it. "Why is the third man going in a different direction?" her mother asked. Jane replied: "Oh, he's looking for a place to park."

Angel tidings

The little boy was to be an angel in the Christmas play and his one line was: "Behold, I bring you good tidings." He asked what tidings were and his mother explained that the word meant news. On the night of the play, the youngster had stage fright and, after a long silence, blurted out: "Hey, have I got news for you!"

Grandfathers

I was talking to my young Sunday School class, and a four-year-old boy suddenly asked me: "Miss, do you have a grandfather?"

I replied, "I used to have two, but they both went to Heaven to be with Jesus."

He thought, shook his head sadly, and said, "One of my grandfathers hasn't gone to Heaven."

(Long pause while I tried to decide how to proceed.)

"He's gone to Bexhill-on-Sea."

Miscellaneous observations on modern life

I don't always go the extra mile, but when I do it's because I missed my exit.

Humans are about 60% water. Basically, we are ice cream with anxiety.

A lot of money is tainted - It taint yours and it taint mine.