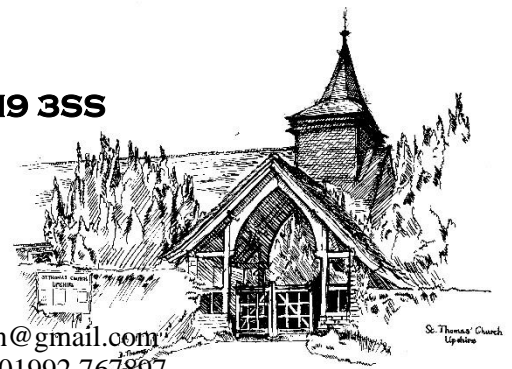


ST THOMAS' CHURCH, UPSHIRE EN9 3SS

NEWSLETTER

December 2024



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 January 2025 Newsletter: 7th 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

Sunday 1 st	First Sunday of Advent 9.15am HOLY COMMUNION Readings: Jeremiah 33:14-16 Luke 21:25-36
Wednesday 4 th	11.30am for 12 noon. CHRISTMAS COMMUNITY LUNCH in church – 07899 846711 to book. Please let us know if you have to cancel. Thank you.
Saturday 7 th	3.00-4.00pm SEEDLINGS meet in the church
Sunday 8 th	Second Sunday of Advent Readings: Malachi 3:1-4 Luke 3:1-6 3.30pm CHRISTMAS CONCERT with ENFIELD BRASS BAND Book with Lyn on 01992 711573 £10 adults, £5 under 16s
Wednesday 11 th	2.15pm Mothers Union Christmas Service followed by refreshments. All welcome
Sunday 15 th	Third Sunday of Advent 9.15am HOLY COMMUNION Readings: Zephaniah 3:14-end Luke 3:7-18 4.30pm SERVICE OF NINE LESSONS & CAROLS
Sunday 22 nd	Fourth Sunday of Advent 9.15am HOLY COMMUNION Readings: Micah 5:2-5a Luke 1:39-45 (46-55)
Tuesday 24 th	Christmas Eve 11.30pm MIDNIGHT COMMUNION Readings: tba
Wednesday 25 th	Christmas Day 9.15am CHRISTMAS DAY COMMUNION Readings: Isaiah 52:7-10 John 1:1-14
Sunday 29 th	First Sunday of Christmas 9.15am HOLY COMMUNION Readings: 1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26 Luke 2:41-end
Sunday 5 th January	Epiphany 9.15am HOLY COMMUNION Readings: Isaiah 60:1-6 Matthew 2:1-12

A HAPPY AND PEACEFUL CHRISTMAS TO EVERYONE

Our mailing list to receive the electronic version is now in excess of 100 participants so if you are not one of those and wish to be included please send your email address to Kate at dalek16@btinternet.com or phone 02085083942. We are looking to reduce our 'paper footprint' for climate change by printing fewer copies – your contribution will help. Thank you.

GROWERS CORNER December 2024

I can't quite believe it's December. Christmas is upon us. It will be our first Christmas without Dad, something I know will be tough. Dad loved this family time of year and all his Squirrels around him. (Squirrels Dad's name for his children, grandchildren and all children).

He loved running the plant stalls selling all the Christmas arrangements at the Christmas bazaar and taking orders from us. He always delivered my Christmas tree as he had a car to do it. Never once complained. This year my tree will be considerably smaller. Thanks Dad for all the small things you did, to me they were always big.

I've been busy tidying the garden, making sure tender plants have been put to bed. Also clearing some of the so called weeds. I never planted it but every year three cornered leek pops up in the garden and I dig out the plant and the bulblets. For those that don't know it's an invasive species brought over to the UK from the Mediterranean, it is an offence under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act in England and Wales to plant or otherwise cause to grow this species in the wild. The plant is edible so if you do have it in your garden too you can make pesto. It's actually pretty tasty. This time though it all went into the council waste bin. I do not compost it.

It's always nice to take the time and make some festive arrangements. Why not try making a wreath using your own garden.

How to make a sustainable wreath

The key is to look out for what you have already growing in the garden or friends' gardens. If foraging please do it responsibly and get permission from the land owner.

The goal is to avoid plastic and items that can't be recycled.

Materials

- A wreath base- make a willow base or buy one

- String/ jute

- floristry wire (this can't go in compost but can be taken off and recycled)

- Dried flowers - most flowers can be dried even dahlias. Next year I'm going to really focus on this. My sister Katherine is very good and dries most flowers she grows or is given

- Green materials: firs, olive branches, holly, rosemary sprigs, eucalyptus, moss etc

- Decorations: Pine cones, cinnamon sticks, feathers, holly berries.

- Secateurs/ gloves

Green materials can be tied into sections then secured onto the base with either string or wire. Always mark the wreath which way you want it to hang.

Once you have the desired look, you can add your highlights: this could be dried flowers, berries, feathers, pine cones etc

Ribbons can be added to finish off the wreath. If they made from non-natural fibres remember to remove before composting the wreath.

Jobs in the garden

- Make sure anything that isn't frost hardy has been put away. This includes pots and Knick knacks otherwise they are prone to get damaged.

- Lift pots off the ground by raising the pots with feet or any other materials. It will help with drainage and extend the life of your pots.

- Keep water baths topped up for the birds, defrost in icy weather.

- Take the time to observe the garden in its dormant stage, look for gaps and plan what changes you would like to make for the season ahead.

- Keep picking crops in the polytunnel/greenhouse (water when necessary)

- For those that have nurtured their brussels sprouts... they will soon need picking for the big Christmas feast. Yum

Have a wonderful Christmas with loved ones. I'm looking forward to planning gardening projects for the year ahead. My big focus will be the allotment and getting back on top of it. Here's to a Happy and Healthy 2025. Louise.

THE VICAR WRITES:

Dear Friends,

“The Twelve Days of Christmas” is a popular Christmas song that dates back to the 18th century. It’s often sung at this time of year as a fun celebration of gift-giving as well as a test of lung capacity and memory!

While on the surface it may seem like a whimsical song about increasingly extravagant presents did you know it has a rich and deeper Christian meaning that is shown by all the gifts?

The song itself, some believe, may have originally served as a tool to teach children the Christian faith during a time of persecution when practicing Catholicism openly was restricted in England. While this theory is debated, the symbolic interpretation of the song has taken root in Christian circles, with each gift representing an aspect of the faith.

The “partridge in a pear tree” symbolizes the ultimate gift of Jesus Christ, representing God’s love for us. The partridge is a bird known for its self-sacrifice, as it will protect its young from predators. This parallels with Jesus sacrificing himself for the salvation of others. The pear tree could be a symbol of the cross on which this sacrifice took place.

The “two turtle doves” represent the Old and New Testaments of the Bible. Together, they form the complete story of God’s plan for salvation. Turtle doves were also offered as a sacrifice in the temple, symbolizing peace and the covenant between God and his people.

The “three French hens” symbolize the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity (love), which are central to Christian living. These virtues are found in 1 Corinthians 13:13, which states, “And now these three remain: faith, hope, and love. But the greatest of these is love.”

The “four calling birds” represent the four Gospels – Matthew, Mark, Luke and John – together these books ‘call out’ the good news of Christ’s life, death and resurrection.

The “five golden rings” represent the first five books of the Old Testament, also known as the Pentateuch or the Torah (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy). These books tell the story of creation, humanity’s fall, and God’s covenant with his chosen people.

The “six geese a-laying” represent the six days of creation, as described in the book of Genesis. Each egg brings forth new life, just as the Creation story does. It reminds us of God’s power and the beauty of the world He formed.

The “seven swans a-swimming” signify the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit: wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord (Isaiah 11:2-3). These gifts, given to believers, help them to live out their Christian faith in daily life.

The “eight maids a-milking” refer to the eight Beatitudes, the blessings taught by Jesus during the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:3-12). These Beatitudes guide Christians in living a life of humility, mercy, and purity.

The “nine ladies dancing” symbolize the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit, listed in Galatians 5:22-23: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. These fruits are the outward signs of a life led by the Spirit of God.

The “ten lords a-leaping” represent the Ten Commandments, given by God to Moses on Mount Sinai. These commandments are fundamental to how we live with each other and with God.

The “eleven pipers piping” signify the eleven faithful apostles who continued to spread the Gospel after Judas’s betrayal, piping the message of salvation to the ends of the earth.

The “twelve drummers drumming” represent the twelve points of doctrine in the Apostles’ Creed, a foundation statement of Christian faith. These points affirm belief in God the Father, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, and key beliefs such as the resurrection and eternal life.

At its heart, “The Twelve Days of Christmas” is more than just a festive carol; it is a reflection of the Christian journey of faith. While the historical accuracy of the song’s religious symbolism is debated, the association of the gifts with aspects of Christian teaching has allowed believers to reinterpret it as a celebration of God’s generosity and grace.

The twelve days themselves, from Christmas Day to Epiphany, are an invitation for Christians to continue the spirit of Christmas well beyond December 25th. As the Magi travelled from afar to offer their gifts to Christ, so too are we called to offer the gifts of our faith and love to the world.

In this way, “The Twelve Days of Christmas” reminds us that the joy of Christmas is not confined to a single day, but is a journey of faith, hope and love that lasts throughout the year and beyond. Whether through personal reflection or joining us at church in worship this Christmas, may the spirit of the Twelve Days of Christmas inspire your faith and actions both now and throughout the year.

Have a blessed and happy Christmas everyone.
Revd Jane Yeadon
Team Vicar St Thomas, Upshire and Holy Innocents, High Beech
Benefice Youth Missioner
MB 07960 604416

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 Laura, Alan & Pam, Lesley, Charlie & John, Anne, Pam & John, Barbara, Vernon, Mal, Louise, Sue, Ann & Cyril, Rosalind, Doreen, Maureen, Carol & George, Beverly, Terry, Jackie, Andrea & her Mum & Dad, Nina, Carmel & the Price family, Dave, Pat, Nigel, Lola, Pearl, Susan & Alan, Jackie & Linda, Eleanor, Peter, Graham, Brenda, Adrian, Joan & Christine.

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, it all makes for interesting reading.

Church Flowers
We will start the festive arrangements at the beginning of the month to celebrate this time of year. Any foliage contributions would be most welcome.
If anyone would like to come along and help, we will be in church on 6th December and 20th December from 10am.
Each month we can create memorial dedications, wedding, anniversary or special occasion flowers –
Contact Kate Dale email: dalek16@btinternet.com or 02085083942



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



ANAGRAM Unscramble this 11 letter anagram: RELITBEACON. The answer will be found elsewhere in the Newsletter.

SOUTH WEST ESSEX CHOIR
60th ANNIVERSARY YEAR

MESSIAH
HANDEL

With the National Symphony Orchestra
Saturday 7th December at 6.30pm
Chingford Parish Church, The Green, Chingford E4 7EN

Tickets £16, £5 for under 18s Available at www.southwestessexchoir.org.uk
Tickets can also be purchased on the door Registered Charity No. 289613

COMING UP AT ST THOMAS'

Sunday 8th December ENFIELD BRASS BAND CHRISTMAS CONCERT, 3.30pm

Sunday 15th December SERVICE OF NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS 4.30pm Seasonal Refreshments after
Community lunches every month from February to December – see separate article.

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.

ST THOMAS' CHURCH COMMUNITY LUNCHES 2024

Wednesdays, 11.30 for 12noon-2pm

DECEMBER 4th

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.

STAMPS Please continue to save your postage stamps and foreign or out of circulation coins as the charities we support can use them to raise funds. At present we collect the coins for Essex and Herts Air Ambulance and The British Legion and stamps for St Clare Hospice. -Stamps and coins can be left with Lyn & Dave at 94 Upshire Road – please leave in the porch if no reply. Please leave about ½“ of envelope around the stamps. Thank you.

The Holly and the Ivy

There are many different versions of the Christmas Carol but whatever its origins, holly and ivy as partners go back a long way. It was thought to be bad luck to bring ivy into the house except at Christmas, and even then, it must be accompanied by holly, which overcomes ivy's potential to bring back luck.

WALTHAM ABBEY CRAFT MARKET

Craft Market and Table Top Sale in Waltham Abbey Town Hall, EN1 9DE

10am Tuesday 3rd December.

50/50 CLUB

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

1 st :	£35	No. 79	Rosalind Edwards of Epping
2 nd :	£25	No. 88	David Pennison of Waltham Abbey
3 rd :	£15	No. 7	Pennie Murphy of St Neots

It is now time to begin Draw 15 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 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).

Our thanks to all our members for their support of St Thomas' Church. Good luck to everyone who enters.

St Thomas' Church 50/50 Club Draw 15

January to June 2025

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 404520, 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 your entries to Lyn Wackett, 94 Upshire Road, Waltham Abbey, EN9 3PA.

Name:

Address:

Telephone:

Upshire Mothers' Union

This year Mothers' Union have continued to promote their RISE UP Against Domestic Abuse campaign. Mothers' Union will again be sharing prayers and resources through their Facebook and Whatsapp groups throughout the 16 Days of Activism which runs from 25th November till 10th December. The MU Global Day of Action – Mothers' Union's response to the 16 Days of Activism - is on Saturday 30th November.

On Mothers' Union's Global Day of Action, we hold our No More 1 in 3 campaign to highlight the fact that, devastatingly, 1 in 3 women around the world are subjected to physical or sexual violence. Mothers' Union are raising awareness of and calling for an end to gender-based violence and abuse in all its forms.

The following RISE UP poem was written by Jim Bradshaw, Bristol Diocese.

Respond, don't ignore abuse, you can't let it pass.

Inform someone who can help them at last.

Support those who suffer often in silence.

Empower them to leave and find a safe house.

Unite those who've suffered with aid to be safe.

Pray for them always for help by God's Grace.

The logo for the RISE UP campaign has a Dove symbol within it. Why a Dove? The dove is considered a symbol for peace, purity, hope, renewal, transformation and new beginnings which makes it a gentle yet powerful image for those affected by Domestic Abuse. In the Old Testament, it was a dove that signalled the end of the flood when it returned to the ark with an olive branch. As a result of this story, a dove with an olive branch came to mean peace, forgiveness and deliverance. It has been suggested that doves also represent compassion and kindness to others during difficult transitions. The dove is therefore symbolic of our love and support for victims of domestic abuse.

If you have been affected by domestic abuse or any form of violence, or are concerned for someone else who has, please contact: National Domestic Abuse Helpline: 0808 2000 247.

In October we held a Just Desserts afternoon in the Village Hall. It was an enjoyable afternoon. Thank you everyone who came along and supported it and for the lovely feedback we got.

Our next meeting is our Christmas Carol Service and Corporate Communion in church on Wednesday 13th December at 2.15pm. Followed by refreshments in church. Everyone is welcome to come along and join us.

ANAGRAM The answer to the anagram is CELEBRATION.

UPSHIRE SHORT MAT BOWLS CLUB

Held in Upshire Village Hall, Mondays 2.00-4.30pm, Tuesdays 7.00-9.30pm No experience necessary.

Tuition and bowls available. It's fun to play! Contact Fred on 01992 711720 or Jean on 07733 084815.

PUDDING BASINS

Please remember to save your pudding basins and return them to Lyn at 94 Upshire Road so that I can keep the costs down for next year. Thank you.

ST THOMAS' CHURCH, EN9 3SS

CHRISTMAS CONCERT

with ENFIELD BRASS BAND

Sunday 8th December 3pm for 3.30pm start

Adults £10, under 16s £5, book with Lyn on 01992 711573
Seasonal refreshments, raffle

SHOEBOXES

Thank you to everyone who donated filled shoeboxes and items for the Shoebox Appeal; 144 boxes (exactly the same as last year) were collected along with 4 sacks of surplus items to be used at the depot to make up more boxes or delivered to needy people in Ukraine and Kosovo. It means a lot to these poor people suffering such hardship to know that somebody cares for them, so thank you again. Please keep saving your empty shoeboxes and snap up any bargains in the sales ready for next year! With love to you all, Lyn & Dave x

ST THOMAS' CHURCH, UPSHIRE, EN9 3SS

SERVICE OF 9 LESSONS AND CAROLS

SUNDAY 15th DECEMBER at 4.30pm
Seasonal refreshments

WALTHAM ABBEY CHURCH

Music for Lunch – Saturdays at 12 noon. Refreshments available from 11.30am. No admission charge or ticketing but donations welcome

Weekly recitals stop for December but there is a **Seasonal Bonus Recital** on December 14th:

Britten's A Ceremony of Carols for upper voices and harp, conducted by David Boarder.
Recitals resume on January 4th.

Songbirds by Candlelight

An evening of festive music and carols on Saturday 21st December at 7pm in Waltham Abbey Church. Tickets £15 each (includes seasonal refreshments) from Linda on 07484 851358 or www.ticketsource.co.uk/songbirdsessex
Proceeds to ongoing church maintenance.

ST LAWRENCE CHURCH, Ninefields EN9 3EL invite you to a **CHRISTMAS SING-ALONG**.

All are welcome on Saturday 7th December from 2pm to 4pm to join us to sing Christmas carols and songs.
Hillhouse C of E School (in the school hall).
Mulled wine and seasonal refreshments will be served. (Retiring collection).

WALTHAM ABBEY FLOWER CLUB 2024

We meet on the 4th Tuesday in the month except January, June, August and December at Waltham Abbey Community Centre, Crooked Mile, EN9 1QD. Door open 1.30pm for 2pm start. All are welcome, raffle, sales table, tea, coffee and homemade cake. Further details from Chris on 07792 594443.

Friday 20th December Christmas Evening - Members' history contributions and Mince Pies.

7.30pm, at the Baptist Church, Paradise Road. Visitors welcome; donation of £2 per person requested."

THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY INNOCENTS, HIGH BEACH

Christmas in the Forest, Sunday 15th December at 3.30pm, an afternoon of traditional carols, wassails and storytelling. Tickets £12, accompanied children under 14 free, includes seasonal refreshments. Tickets from <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/stephen-fellowes>

Carols by Candlelight, Wednesday 18th December at 7pm.

This year we are having a Mexican theme but you, the audience, will still be able to choose your favourite carols to sing. Yule logs, Christmas cake and mince pies will be served during the interval, washed down with mulled wine or a soft drink. This is a free event but with a retiring collection, the proceeds of which will be donated to The Children's Society.

Christmas Concert by The Woodford Singers, Sunday 22nd December at 2pm. Tickets to include seasonal refreshments £10 each from Margaret Wackett 07949 961184.

CHINGFORD MORRISMEN Boxing Day Tour in Waltham Abbey, Thursday 26th December

12noon: The Angel

12.45pm: The Market Square

1.45pm: The Woodbine

CHRISTMAS

There has been only one Christmas – the rest are anniversaries *W.J. Cameron*

I will honour Christmas in my heart – and try to keep it all the year *Scrooge, A Christmas Carol*

Peace on earth will come to stay when we live Christmas every day *Helen Steiner Rice*

Christmas! 'Tis the season for kindling the fire of hospitality in the hall, the genial fire of charity in the heart

Washington Irvine

This is the message of Christmas: We are never alone *Taylor Caldwell*

Christmas is a necessity. There has to be one day to remind us we are here for something besides ourselves

Eric Sevareid

