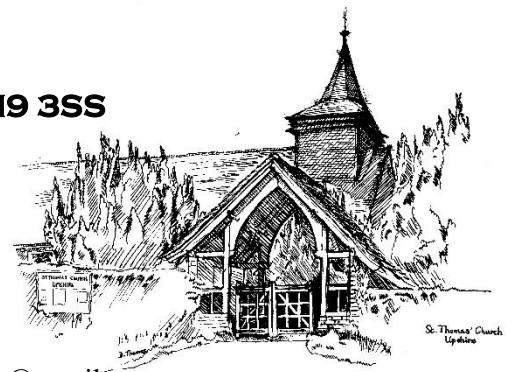


# ST THOMAS' CHURCH, UPSHIRE EN9 3SS

## NEWSLETTER

### *January 2025*



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This Newsletter is free: donations to Lyn Wackett. Copy date for February Newsletter: 14<sup>th</sup> 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.

#### SERVICES AND DIARY FOR JANUARY

Saturday 4 <sup>th</sup>	3.00-4.00pm SEEDLINGS meet in the church
Sunday 5 <sup>th</sup>	Epiphany 9.15am HOLY COMMUNION Readings: Isaiah 60:1-6                      Matthew 2:1-12
Sunday 12 <sup>th</sup>	Baptism of Christ Readings: Isaiah 43:1-7                      Luke 3:15-17, 21-22
Sunday 19 <sup>th</sup>	Second Sunday of Epiphany 9.15am HOLY COMMUNION Readings: Isaiah 62:1-5                      John 2:1-11
Wednesday 22 <sup>nd</sup>	2.15pm Mothers Union AGM in the Village Hall
Sunday 26 <sup>th</sup>	Third Sunday of Epiphany 9.15am HOLY COMMUNION Readings: Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10      Luke 4:14-21
Sunday 2 <sup>nd</sup> February	Presentation of Christ in the Temple 9.15am HOLY COMMUNION Readings: Malachi 3:1-5                      Luke 2:22-40

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](mailto: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.

#### 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](mailto: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, Chris, Izzie & Pennie.

#### 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.

### **THE VICAR WRITES:**

As the new year begins, we often find ourselves reflecting on the path ahead and how we will walk it and with whom. For Christians, the "with whom" is an important factor for we follow a God who calls us to community – He reminds us that our faith is not a solitary endeavour but a shared pilgrimage. Like travellers on a winding trail, we lean on one another, finding strength, encouragement, and joy in our fellowship.

One of my favourite books of the last few years was Raynor Winn's memoir *The Salt Path*. It tells the inspiring story of a couple who after facing devastating personal loss, set out to walk the 630-mile South West Coast Path. Along the way, they discover not only the healing power of nature but also the profound resilience that comes from walking side by side through challenges. As they navigated rough terrain and unpredictable weather, they learned to embrace the journey with courage and hope, finding beauty and strength in unexpected places.

Their story reminds us that life's journey is often filled with uncertainty and hardship. Yet, as believers, we have the assurance that we never walk alone. In Hebrews 10:24-25, we are encouraged to "consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another." Walking in faith together means leaning into this calling—supporting one another, sharing burdens, and celebrating victories, large and small.

As we step into 2025, let us commit to being a church that walks together. Whether through small group gatherings, worship services, acts of service, or shared moments of prayer, we are called to strengthen one another's faith. Like Winn and her husband, let us face the challenges of the year with courage, trusting that God walks with us every step of the way.

As we navigate this journey together, let's remember the words of Proverbs 3:5-6: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight."

May this January be the start of a meaningful journey for us all—a journey of faith, love, and togetherness. We are walking with God, and we are walking with each other. Let's step forward in hope and unity.

Revd Jane Yeadon

Team Vicar St Thomas, Upshire and Holy Innocents, High Beech

Benefice Youth Missioner

MB 07960 604416

### **Church Flowers**

Thank you to those who helped create the Festive Floral arrangements in December.

Each month we can create memorial dedications, wedding, anniversary or special occasion flowers - Contact Kate Dale email: [dalek16@btinternet.com](mailto:dalek16@btinternet.com) or 02085083942



## **ST THOMAS' SEEDLINGS**

**1<sup>st</sup> 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 8 letter anagram: HYENAPIP. The answer will be found elsewhere in the Newsletter.

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](mailto:Ruth4366@gmail.com)

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

### **CHRISTMAS FAYRE**

The Christmas Fayre on 23<sup>rd</sup> November raised £2,166 which will be used for the upkeep of the church. Thank you to all those who helped set up, clear away or manned a stall on the day. Also thank you to those who worked hard preparing for the day, especially the jam makers and cake bakers, also those who donated prizes and made donations. Finally thank you to everyone who attended. We hope you enjoyed it.

### **ST THOMAS' CHURCH COMMUNITY LUNCHES 2024**

Wednesdays, 11.30 for 12noon-2pm

No lunch in January, 19<sup>th</sup> February

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.

## GROWER'S CORNER JANUARY 2025

Happy New Year!... I hope this new year brings great health and happiness to you all.

For me the new year brings a sense of hope and opportunity for garden. It's a time to look forward and make plans for the year ahead and reflect on the things that did go well and we have learnt.

Despite all the challenges including personal ones, my biggest achievement last year was redesigning our garden and building an outbuilding in our small urban garden. It took months of planning with my husband and he then did all the hard work along with some trades. But I can honestly say, it's been the best decision we have made.

Although it has used space in the garden it has meant that we make proper use of the bottom of the garden. It's now our office, gym and garden room. My favourite pastime is watching the birds, we are close to the feeders so I get to see them up close. Also when the weather allows having a coffee break sitting on the bench on the new little patio is just 'perfuck' as Pop Larkin would say. (Darling Buds of May reference)

For the garden I'm really hoping that the slug/snail population does not cause so much damage as it did this year. It felt like a complete battle. Seedlings nurtured lost overnight, countless re-sowings and ultimately a fair few failures. The weather seemed to be against us too. Mild and wet winter followed by a lacklustre spring/summer. Some things do not just go on... including my aubergines.

Gardening Goals for year ahead

-To be more organised I have brought myself a growing calendar to keep on top of sowings and what jobs need to be done.

-To plan the new areas on our allotments- that means as Dad would say it's time to get the graph paper out. I'm currently thinking new fruit trees and a fruit cage.

-Remember to stop, and enjoy our green spaces.

-To visit more gardens across the country. I love the National gardening scheme and want to plan a few trips to private gardens. Always nice to see what others have achieved in similar sized gardens to your own. Other places I have yet to visit include Sissinghurst and Arundel Castle.

Jobs for January

- Sort your own seeds out, think about what you would like to grow. Take time to look over the seed catalogues and make some orders where necessary
- If you have a space for a heated propagator and grow lamps. You can start to think about sowing chillis and aubergines.
- Start sowing seeds of hardy annuals, such as cornflowers, cerinthe and ammi, in modular trays for early flowers
- Keep an eye on over wintering plants for pest and diseases. As well as any tubers you are storing.
- Keep feeding the birds and maintaining good cleaning hygiene on your bird feeders.
- Start cleaning pots and trays in preparation for season ahead.

Wishing everyone a successful growing season ahead. Louise

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**STAMPS** St Clare Hospice no longer take used postage stamps but I found that British Heart Foundation are happy to take them so I was able to give the about 4kg of stamps. They were delighted! 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 British Heart Foundation. 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.

**ANAGRAM** The answer to the anagram is EPIPHANY.

## WALTHAM ABBEY CHURCH

**Music for Lunch** – Saturdays at 12 noon. Refreshments available from 11.30am. Free admission with retiring collection.

January 4<sup>th</sup> A10 Strings, conductor David Boarder. Programme includes Corelli's *Christmas Concerto*  
11<sup>th</sup> Andrew Caskie *organ*  
18<sup>th</sup> Jonathan Lilley *piano*. Music by local composer the late James Burgess  
25<sup>th</sup> Fumi Otsuki *violin*, Gesela Meyer *piano*

### Upshire Mothers' Union

In November Maggie Ratcliffe gave us an interesting talk on 'A Lady and Her Spitfire' (Carolyn Grace). Carolyn was born in 1952 on a rural farm in New South Wales, where air travel was an essential part of everyday travel to cover long distances in rural Australia. It was while working on the family farm she met her husband Nick, an English design engineer and pilot. They had 2 children Richard and Olivia. They came to England and made a business working from Nick's boat. Nick had always wanted to own a Spitfire. In 1979 he saw 2 dilapidated Spitfires advertised for sale by auction in Strathallan in Scotland, which he won the bid for. The planes were moved to St Merryn airfield in Cornwall, (where Carolyn and Nick had moved to). It took them 5 years of hard work, restoring one and using the other for parts, completing it in 1985. It was while they were restoring the plane that Carolyn decided to learn to fly, she learnt in a biplane. The restored Spitfire took its first flight on January 6<sup>th</sup> 1985. In 1988 her husband Nick was killed in a car crash in Sussex. Following his death Carolyn wanted to sell the plane but was persuaded to keep it. That made Carolyn determined to learn to fly the Spitfire (which needed an extra qualification). Her family were not keen on this idea as a mother of two, but she was determined to do so to commemorate her husband. She was taught to fly the plane by their good friend Pete Kinsey, Chief pilot of the Fighter Collection. On July 7<sup>th</sup> 1990 she took her first solo flight and qualified as a pilot for the Spitfire. The Spitfire ML407, which she and her husband had restored to working order, then became known as the "Grace Spitfire". Carolyn was the only woman in the world to own her own Spitfire and fly it. Women had flown Spitfires in the Second World War as part of the Air Transport Auxiliary, but never in conflict. She went on to get her Acrobatic License so she could attend Airshows. Carolyn became the first woman to fly a Spitfire in a flying display. As far as is known, no woman had flown a Spitfire since the war. Carolyn did many Airshows at Duxford. Most men didn't have the time of day for a lady pilot apart from Ray Hanna, an Aerobatic pilot from New Zealand. Carolyn got to fly in unison with Ray at an Airshow. She also flew in unison with the Red Arrows when one of their pilots was poorly. She kept her Spitfire at RAF Bentwaters near Woodbridge in Suffolk. Her plane had been the first to shoot down an enemy plane on D-Day. It had flown 176 successful missions throughout the war. Carolyn flew over 900 hours at various events. In 2004 she flew over Chartwell as part of the remembrance of D-Day (60<sup>th</sup> anniversary). In 2011 she flew the plane as part of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary commemorations of the Spitfire's first flight in 1936. She ran Air Leasing Ltd, a company based in Sywell, Northampton which specialised in restoring old planes. Her children were co-directors. Sywell is where her Spitfire is now kept. In 2017 Carolyn decided to retire from flying. Her son Richard then started to fly the Grace Spitfire. Sadly, Carolyn was killed in a car crash at Goulburn, New South Wales, on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2022 at the age of 70. Her son Richard was a passenger in the car but he escaped with minor injuries. Following her death Richard took over the running of her Restoration company. Sadly, Richard passed away this year on 15<sup>th</sup> October from cancer aged 40, he leaves behind his wife Daisy and 2 young children. Throughout the talk Maggie's husband, Tony, was showing us slides of Carolyn, her family, her Spitfire, airshows etc.

Our next meeting is on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> January, our AGM in the Village Hall followed by tea and cake. All are welcome. Tea Hostesses: Gill Negus and Eleanor Huxter. Raffle: Ann Smith.

### **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.

### 50/50 CLUB

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

1 <sup>st</sup> :	£35	No. 50	Ann Wilcox of Stanstead Abbots
2 <sup>nd</sup> :	£25	No. 89	Sheila Gleeson on Waltham Abbey
3 <sup>rd</sup> :	£15	No. 85	Sue Smith of Waltham Abbey

Our thanks to the generous people who donated their winnings back to St Thomas' Church.

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](mailto: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: .....

## **GIVE HIM AN INCH AND HE'LL TAKE AN ELL**

Having guillotined the aristocracy and nobility of France the French Revolutionaries in 1795 decided that society should be more egalitarian and secular and one of the ways this was to be achieved was by the introduction of a new calendar. One hour became 100 minutes, one minute became 100 seconds and New Year was moved from January 1<sup>st</sup> to September 22<sup>nd</sup>. More radically the week became 10 days rather than 7 so everyone had to work for 9 days before having a rest day on the tenth. To eliminate religious consciousness Sundays became a typical weekday in order to disorient people and make them forget 'Sunday', the day for going to Church. Bizarrely, in Communist Russia Stalin also imposed a new calendar. Weeks were reduced to 5 days to eliminate the holiday of Sunday. Workers and the days of the week were assigned colours so when the day was the same colour as yours, you took the day off. Unfortunately, members of families and friends invariably had differing colours so never had time off together! In 1806 Napoleon ended the ridiculous 'artificial time' and reinstated the Gregorian calendar, however, having conquered much of Europe he wanted to standardize trade so the metric system which had been devised originally in 1670 by a Lyons priest was made compulsory, however, the metre was introduced by the French Revolutionaries who based it on a ten-millionth part of a line running on the Earth's surface from the North Pole through Paris to the Equator, subsequently found to be incorrect! The metre was then based on the wavelength of the radiation from an iodine-stabilized helium-neon laser before finally resorting to measurement in terms of the speed of light. Prior to this most of Europe used a variation of the imperial system, for instance whilst we used an ounce, a sixteenth of a pound, the French used an unce, being a twelfth of their equivalent of our pound.

Although the imperial system reigned supreme in this country being based on natural things, for example: a yard being the average pace and a hand being 4 inches, the width across the palm, what is often not realised is that the Weights and Measures Act of 1985 gave equal prominence to both systems. With the coming of the European Communities Act the W & M Act was amended to make the metric system take dominance although with some exemptions: lengths, widths and heights on public highways were to continue to be miles or part miles which also applies to any path to which the public has access. Somehow Transport for London seems to be above the law as all their direction signs are in metres! Other exemptions are the good old pint in the local, and milk but for milk this only applies to bottles that are returned for re-use. So when you buy your milk from the supermarket make sure you return the bottle otherwise they could be in trouble. One major supermarket has just recently converted entirely to metric sizing which is a 12% reduction in quantity for the four-pint container. Unfortunately they only reduced the price by 8% so an actual price increase in real terms. This, alas, has been a major problem of the introduction of the metric system. Remember when you used to take a pound box of chocolates to your girlfriend's mother to show that you really were a nice chap, well a pound box of 454 grams quickly reduced to 450 and then 400 grams whilst the price kept going up. Needless to say, there are numerous examples covering all types of food products. On a personal note, whilst I can't remember Mars Bars costing an old 3d (11/2p) which I believe was the original price I can remember them costing 6d (2 ½p) and they were considerable larger than today, now a lot smaller they cost 17shillings (85p) or more. There have been moves for several years and more-so since Brexit for the Weights and Measures Act to be returned to its former state where imperial and metric have equal parity. There have been numerous arguments against this citing that manufacturers would incur extra costs but if they found that their customers would prefer to remain 'metric' then they would need to do nothing; however, conversely if their customers would prefer to trade in imperial then it would pay to change. Probably where more change would be noticed is on our market squares where goods are often weighed but modern weighing machines are quite capable of changing from one system to another that there should be no problem. The customer is always right so if one should want a quarter of lemon sherberts then what really is the problem? The other argument is that modern children have only been taught one system at school and that they would not be able to cope with the change, which is somewhat of an indictment of our education system. People of my age were taught both systems and, indeed, would have to do complicated calculations in which conversions from one system to the other would be included. Both systems have their uses and advantages so would it not be better for our weights and measures to be put on equal footing? In case you're wondering, an ell is based on the length of a person's arm from his elbow to the tips of his fingers, used in the cloth trade it is now equal to 45". An ounce whilst being the equivalent of 28 grams is also a snow leopard. Adrian J Liddle

## **WALTHAM ABBEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Monthly talks on Friday evenings at 7.30pm at the Baptist Church, Paradise Road, Waltham Abbey, Essex EN9 1RL. Visitors welcome, donation of £2 per person requested.

17<sup>th</sup> January: Briggens House, Roydon, was the home of Section XIV of the Special Operations Executive in WW2. Like Bletchley Park, the extraordinary work carried out there was top secret. Speaker: Charles Pither. ("IPSEITY" is our speaker's book about Briggens and its brilliant team. Copies will be on sale at the meeting.)

21<sup>st</sup> February: The Fosse Way – a journey along the Fosse Way from Exeter and Axmouth to Lincoln, examining the history of the 214 mile Roman road, why it was built so straight and how the Romans surveyed and constructed it. Including some digressions to look at Boudicca, Roman mileposts, the Lincoln imp and Lancaster bombers. Speaker: Richard Thomas.

## **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.

## **WALTHAM ABBEY FLOWER CLUB 2024**

We meet on the 4<sup>th</sup> 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.