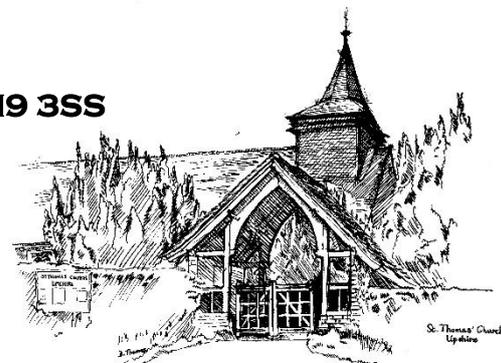


ST THOMAS' CHURCH, UPSHIRE EN9 3SS

NEWSLETTER

March 2026



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, Uphire, Waltham Abbey, Essex, EN9 3SS.
Website: <https://stthomaschurchupshire.com>
Email: lynanddavewackett@hotmail.co.uk

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

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 MARCH

- Sunday 1st Second Sunday of Lent
9.15am HOLY COMMUNION
Readings: Genesis 12:1-4a John 3:1-17
- Saturday 7th 10am onwards: Church/churchyard tidying session: all welcome, refreshments
3pm-4pm SEEDLINGS meet in the church
- Sunday 8th Third Sunday of Lent
9.15 am HOLY COMMUNION
Readings: Exodus 17:1-7 John 4:5-42
- Sunday 15th Mothering Sunday
9.15am HOLY COMMUNION
Readings: Exodus 2:1-10 Luke 2:33-35 or John 19:25b-27
3pm Mothering Sunday service in church followed by Tea in the Village Hall with Craft activities for children
- Wednesday 18th 11.30am for 12 noon COMMUNITY LUNCH in church. 07899 846711 to book, Please let us know if you have to cancel
- Sunday 22nd Fifth Sunday of Lent
9.15am HOLY COMMUNION
Readings: Ezekiel 37:1-14 John 11:1-45
- Wednesday 25th 2.15pm Uphire Mothers' Union Corporate Communion in church – all welcome
- Sunday 29th Start of British Summer Time (clocks go forward)
- Sunday 29th Palm Sunday
9.15am HOLY COMMUNION
Readings: Matthew 21:1-11 Matthew 26:14 to end of 27 or Matthew 27:11-54
- Saturday 4th April 3-4pm SEEDLINGS meet in the church
- Sunday 5th April Easter Day
9.15am HOLY COMMUNION
Readings: Acts 10:34-43 Either John 20:1-18 or Matthew 28:1-10

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, Sue, Ann & Cyril, Rosalind, Doreen, Maureen, Carol & George, Terry, Jackie, Andrea & her Mum & Dad, Nina, Carmel & the Price family, Nigel, Lola, Pearl, Susan & Alan, Jackie & Linda, Graham, Christine, Chris, Izzie, Pennie, Steve & Dan Smith

THE VICAR WRITES

Every year, on the fourth Sunday of Lent, the Church, along with much of the UK, celebrates Mothering Sunday.

Over time, many have adopted the more secular title of Mother's Day but I continue to hold firmly to the original name. I do this not out of a slavish attachment to tradition, but because I believe the word mothering matters deeply.

Mothering invites us to reflect on love that nurtures, shelters, and helps life to grow. On this day, our thoughts quite naturally turn to mothers and to those who have shown us care and affection. Yet Mothering Sunday has always been about more than family alone.

Traditionally, this was the day when people returned to their mother church — the church where they were baptised, where their faith was first nurtured, and where they experienced a sense of belonging. It was a day of homecoming: a reminder that the Church itself is called to be a place of welcome, care, and spiritual nourishment.

That understanding widens our vision. Mothering is not something we receive from only one person, nor is it limited to biology. It is a way of loving that reflects the very nature of God.

Scripture often speaks of God using motherly imagery: a God who comforts like a mother comforts her child; who gathers us as a hen gathers her brood; who labours patiently for our growth. These images remind us that love at its best is generous, resilient, and quietly strong — not flashy, but deeply faithful.

On Mothering Sunday, of course, we give thanks for mothers, and I do not wish in any way to diminish the importance of those who have fulfilled this role in our lives. But this day is about more than that. It also celebrates love freely given, sacrifices unseen, and encouragement offered when it was most needed.

At the same time, we acknowledge that Mothering Sunday can be painful — for those who grieve, for those who long, and for relationships that are complicated or broken. God holds all of this with tenderness, and so must we.

Mothering Sunday began as a time of returning: returning to one's mother church, returning home, returning to where faith first took root. Perhaps this year it can be a moment for us to return again to God, who is the source of all love, and to recommit ourselves to being a church that nurtures, welcomes, and cares.

This Mothering Sunday, may we learn anew what it means to reflect God's love — in patience, in kindness, and in the quiet faithfulness of everyday care.

--

Rev'd Jane Yeadon
Team Vicar St Thomas, Upshire and Holy Innocents, High Beech
Benefice Youth Missioner
MB: 07960 604416

Monday is my rest day

GROWER'S CORNER

March is one of the most uplifting months of the year. New life is emerging in the garden wherever we look, new shoots, blossom and buds. After an incredibly soggy start to the year the spring bulbs are emerging and colours are filling our borders and pots.

We also have more light!...The clocks changing excites me even now as an adult. It generally means I have more scope to spend longer in the garden or allotment. This makes me happy as there is more chance of taking a seat outside to have a well-deserved cuppa. Win-win!

Update on the plots:

Stephan and I have tried hard to get the infrastructure done over the winter months to give us a head start now the growing season is really kicking off. The new bare root trees, shrubs and fruit are in. The fruit cage weeded and mulched.

We have been using the greenhouse to over-winter some pots and keep the rain/cold off. It's steadily filling up with trays and seedlings which hold lots of promise. I still have areas that need sorting. The weather hasn't really allowed us to do a proper tidy/organising the sheds so hopefully this will be the month we get going with that. At the back of the plot I want to plant some climbing roses I've grown from cuttings and climbing hydrangeas that I've been growing on which I picked up from the clearance section. This is to try and prevent people wanting to climb over the fence from the public footpath that runs along the back of the plots.

I have ordered some more metal raised beds as I want to use them for parsnips and carrots! I never had much success before. So here goes!

March to do:

- warm areas of soil with plastic sheeting ready for plantings in April
- Continue to protect plants against cold weather
- Hoe off weeds
- Clean greenhouse windows for maximum light, also polytunnels
- Keep an eye on temperatures, we still have frosts in March. Young plants are tender and will need protection
- Continue to mulch to prevent weeds

March planting/sowings:

- In a cold greenhouse or warmed soil outside the following can be sown: Brussels sprouts, summer cabbage, spinach, chard and broad beans, early carrots, swedes and leeks
- Plant early potatoes towards the end of the month once soil temperatures rise
- On heat aubergines and tomatoes can be started.

Flowers/shrubs/trees

- Protect early blossom with fleece or netting
- Feed soft fruit with high potash fertiliser
- Plant new strawberry plants
- Sow hardy annuals such as cornflowers, nigella and calendula
- Plant summer-flowering bulbs
- Prune bush and climbing roses
- Check seed packets for further flowers to sow

Tip: Fleece up - make sure you fleece up your tender plants until the risk of frost has passed.

"Blossom by blossom the spring begins." Algernon Charles Swinburne

Happy gardening
Love Louise.

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.

CHURCH FLOWERS

Following Lent (18th Feb until 2nd April) the Easter Lilies will be the focus of our floral arrangements. Easter Lilies need to be ordered in advance (£2 per stem) with memorials to be recorded in the dedication book. Please confirm your order and dedications in good time by contacting Kate Dale, by 21st March please.

We will be flower arranging in the church on Saturday 4th April from 10.00 am, you are welcome to come along and help.

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



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



ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER

Our mailing list to receive the electronic version of the Newsletter 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.

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.

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

ST THOMAS' CHURCH COMMUNITY LUNCHESES 2025

3rd Wednesdays, 11.30 for 12noon start

18th March, 15th April, 20th May, 17th June, 15th July, 19th August, 16th September, 21st October, 11th November (a week earlier than usual), 2nd December (Christmas Lunch)

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

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

The APCM of St Thomas' Church will be held on Sunday 19th April at 3pm. All are welcome to attend the meeting but only those on the electoral roll will be allowed to vote. At this meeting the church accounts and past activities will be reviewed and elections held for church wardens and PCC members. If you are interested in joining the PCC in any way please speak to Rev Jane Yeadon.

UPSHIRE MOTHERS' UNION

In January we held our A.G.M., Eleanor and Kate will continue in their roles as Treasurer and Secretary and 'caretaking' the Leaders roll between them.

This year our donations will go to the English for Women and Away from It All projects.

At the heart of this 150th milestone year is Kathleen Snow, Worldwide President of Mothers' Union. She is partaking in a Global 150th Anniversary Challenge: 15 10 kilometre runs in various dioceses around the world to raise funds and spotlight MU's worldwide fellowship. Running in different dioceses while travelling for ministry reflects the global expression of solidarity and celebration that sustains Mothers' Union work and reminds us that wherever we are in the world, we are connected.

Kathleen has already completed two runs, an early-year winter 10km in her hometown Fredericton, Canada, and a run in Bahrain during the Diocesan Synod of Cyprus and the Gulf.

Kathleen shared: "As I attended the Diocesan Synod in Bahrain, it feels deeply meaningful to include this place in the challenge. Running becomes a way of praying with my whole body; praying for the local Mothers' Union and their work, the Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf, the wider Province of Jerusalem and the Middle East, and for all whom we are called to serve."

Over the coming months, Kathleen will continue the challenge with planned runs in dioceses across the UK, North America, Africa, and beyond, from London and Wales to San Diego, Durban, and Tanzania, making this a truly global expression of shared commitment and celebration.

If you wish to support Kathleen in her challenge throughout the year, you can donate at: <https://www.justgiving.com/page/kathleen-snow-1>

Throughout 2026, Mothers' Union are inviting every diocese across Britain and Ireland to help grow MU by welcoming brand-new members (or friends of MU), new voices, new hearts, and new hands to join Mothers' Union. If you are interested in finding out more about Mothers' Union or you think you may like to join us and join in, please come along to one of our meetings or events, especially ones celebrating our 150th year. Details of meetings/events can be found in this newsletter every month.

Our next meeting is on 25th March at 2.15pm, our Corporate Communion service in Church, followed by tea and cake. Everyone is welcome to join us.

Tea Hostesses: Ann Smith and Eleanor Huxter. Raffle: Lyn Wackett.

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 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.

HIGH BEACH CHURCH

Sunday 1st March: Sunday afternoon tea in church from noon to 3pm. All welcome

Good Friday 3rd April, noon to 1pm: Easter Garden Service – an interactive service suitable for all the family.

Come and make an Easter Garden to take home with you.

1-2pm: Reflections for Good Friday

2-3pm: Good Friday service with choir and readings.

Easter Sunday 5th April: 5.30am Easter Dawn Service

10.30am Easter Eucharist followed by Easter egg hunt for younger people

ANAGRAM The answer to the anagram is PARENTHOOD.

At **HOME INSTEAD** Epping Forest we recognise that as we get older, you may need help to be able to stay living in your own home. We Tailor our care packages to meet your needs making it possible for you to stay living in your own home where you are happiest.

Our services include Dementia Care, Personal Care, Home Help, Companionship and much more.

Our monthly Memory Lane and Singing for the Brain Sessions are held at Theydon Bois Village Hall providing lots of fun complimented with refreshments served by our lovely Team. Why not contact us to find out more and to get a copy of our What's on Where Guide (WOW Guide) and future newsletters.

Telephone 01992 666777 or email: Victoria.rigby@homeinstead.co.uk

ABBEY CHURCH Music for Lunch – Saturdays at 12 noon. Refreshments available from 11.30am. All welcome, free admission with retiring collection.

March 7th: Jonathan Lilley *piano*

14th: What Shapes a Soul? Music for *saxophone and piano*

21st: The Harmonaires Choir

28th: Barney Silverstone *organ*

Easter recess

April 18th: Selva Armonica vocal ensemble

25th: Jennifer Townsend *flute*, Jonathan Lilley *piano*

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.

WOOL Several of our members and their friends knit items for various charities but our supply of wool is running low again. If you have any spare wool you no longer need we would appreciate it: donations can be left with Lyn at 94 Upshire Road (leave in porch if no reply) or brought to church on any Sunday. Thank you

50/50 CLUB

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

1 st :	£35	No. 15	Bobby McMillan of Waltham Abbey
2 nd :	£25	No. 49	Cathy Abrey of Ilford
3 rd :	£15	No. 2	Daniel Wackett of Epping

It is not too late to join begin Draw 17 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 17

January to June 2026

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:

POETRY AND FAITH IN LENT

with Bishop Adam Atkinson

Epping Forest and Ongar Deanery invites you to three Monday evenings during Lent with Bishop Adam to explore faith and poetry together, with refreshments.

Available in-person and online on Facebook and YouTube: @StJohnsLoughton

Mondays 9th, 16th and 23rd March at 7pm, St John's Church, Loughton, IG101PD

WALTHAM ABBEY FLOWER CLUB

We meet on the 4th Tuesday in the month except January, June, August and December at Waltham Abbey Community Centre, Crooked Mile, EN9 1QD. Doors open 1.45 for 2pm start.

Next meeting: 24th March. All are welcome, raffle, sales table, tea, coffee and homemade cake.

Further details from Chris on 07792 594443.

ENFIELD BRASS BAND 'SPRING INTO BRASS'

Join us for this lively concert on
Sunday 12th April 3pm for 3.30pm start in the church

To book phone Lyn on 01992 711573 Adults £10, children under 16s £5
Refreshments, raffle

WALTHAM ABBEY POPPY PROJECT

Saturday 1.00-3.00pm. Monthly meet up at Waltham Abbey Library. Come along and get involved.

Cooper's Cards

40a Sun Street, Waltham Abbey EN9 1EJ

Greetings cards, balloons, toys, wrapping paper, stationery and seasonal items

Family run and friendly shop, pet friendly

Monday to Saturday 8am to 5pm

Coming up at St Thomas':

Monthly Community Lunches (see separate article)

15th March: Mothering Sunday Service and Tea in Village Hall

12th April: Brass Band Concert

2nd May: Quiz Night

10th May: Plant Sale and Sunday afternoon Teas. Afternoon Teas 2nd & 4th Sundays

26th July: Summer Fayre & Teas

19th September: Macmillan Coffee Morning

27th September: Harvest and last Sunday of Afternoon Teas

17th October: Quiz Night

21st November: Christmas Fayre in Village Hall

13th December: Brass Band Christmas Concert

Did you know that Sunflowers can help clean radioactive soil