

Bulletin for St Thomas' & St Mary Magdalene's – Sunday, 7th July 2024 – St Thomas

Dear Friends

*"You are no longer strangers and aliens but you are citizens... of the household of God.
... with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone." (Ephesians 2:19-20)*

As we remember St Thomas, our patron, today, I would like to think that Thomas' character is alive in our fellowships. Although known as 'doubting Thomas' he should be called 'believing Thomas' as he is the first to call Jesus God "my Lord and my God" (John 20:29). May we be believing disciples not afraid to confess Jesus as Lord in every situation. Also Thomas was impetuous and brave – on one occasion, when facing danger with Jesus, he urged his fellow disciples "let us also go, that we may die with Him" (John 11:16). I know many of you work in hostile work environments – you have to be brave to put your "head above the parapet" and yet this is what Jesus tells us in saying "Take up your cross and follow me (Matthew 16:24).

Finally, Thomas wasn't afraid to ask questions. When Jesus tells His disciples that they know the way to the place where He is going, Thomas says "Lord we do not know where you are going, how can we know the way?" (John 14:5). May we be an inquisitive and questioning congregation, always wanting to know more about Jesus rather than resting on our laurels.

So let's be a believing, impetuous, brave and questioning people of God in this parish, working to be successors of Thomas.

Yours as always, Michael.

PS. Thank you so much for last week's celebration for my 40th anniversary of priesting – the presents, generous retreat donation and, above all, your prayers and support – a priest could not ask for a better parish!

Sunday 7th July : St Thomas

8.00am	Holy Communion at St Thomas'
9.30am	Family Communion at St. Mary Magdalene's
10.45am	Family Communion at St. Thomas'
4.00pm	STOCKTON HEATH FESTIVAL - SONGS OF PRAISE AT ST THOMAS'

Prayer Focus

- A spirit like Thomas : believing, impetus, brave and questioning. May the Lord build us together spiritually "into a dwelling place for God."
- The General Election and the newly elected MP's – may our Government make wise and just decisions for 'strangers and aliens' and all citizens.
- Forgiveness for the times when, like Thomas, our faith falters – may we turn from doubt to faith.
- Thanksgiving for our village and the many activities which have brought us together through the Festival.
- Innocents caught up in war and devastation in Congo, Sudan, Myanmar, Afghanistan, Syrai, Ukraine, Gaza, Palestine, Israel and in too many countries. May women and men of goodwill seek the peace which comes through loving forgiveness.
- Walking Day next Saturday – may it be a joyful celebration of Christ's unity in His Church : may those who watch be drawn to the fire of God's love.
- For our beautiful world which we have misused. Help for countries suffering extreme weather events, especially the West Indies after hurricane Beryl.
- Bless our Churchwardens and PCC as they help to lead our Churches : we give thanks for the incredible contribution so many people make to our fellowships. We pray for more volunteers.
- Comfort for all who are sick and in need of healing – our prayers surround them with love:- Geoff, Mark, Rachel, Abby & baby Bobby, Jack, John, Hazel, Pat, Ken, Sheila, Joan, Kara, Ivy and Mary.
- Welcome into the light those who have died recently: John, Audrey, Janice, Christine, Cheryl, Tony, Celia and Brenda. Give comfort to those remembering anniversaries at this time.

Walking Day

This year's date is Saturday 13 July : put the date in your diary now and consider if you can act as a marshal on the day. We also need help on the day to put up posts in the park to show where churches and bands are going. Above everything, we want you to walk on the day.

Notices

Mon-Fri	9.15am Morning Prayer on Zoom
Mon	1- 2.30pm Praise and Play at St Thomas'
Weds	9-11am Little Sunbeams at St. Mary Magdalene's
Thurs	10.00am Holy Communion at St Thomas'
Thurs	3.00pm Funeral of Audrey Britland at St Thomas'
Thurs eve	Youth Group bowling event
Sat	1.45pm for 2.00pm Service on Alexandra Park - WALKING DAY

Tues, 16th July 7.30pm – Deanery Synod at St Thomas' (NB. PCC changed to 23rd July)

Weds, 17th July 7.30pm STAG meeting at St Thomas'

Thurs, 18th July 8.00pm Baptism Preparation Evening at St Thomas'

Tues, 23rd July 7.30pm PCC at St Thomas'

Sat, 27th July Afternoon Tea at St Thomas'

Next Sunday 14th July : Trinity 7

8.00am	Holy Communion at St Thomas'
9.30am	Family Communion at St. Mary Magdalene's
10.45am	'Come to the Table' All Age Communion at St. Thomas'
12.30pm	Baptism of Jude and Ruben
6.00pm	Evening Prayer at St Mary Magdalene's

Contemplative Prayer - Takes place on the third Tuesday of the month, normally at 6.00pm-6.45pm. For those interested, the timing is flexible. Please contact Christine.

FRAS Update

Date for the diary Saturday July 27th - there will be an Afternoon Tea fundraising event in St Thomas Church Hall.

Tickets will be available soon at a cost of £10.

'Encounter' Family Holiday Club – Volunteers needed

This summer holiday we will be running a Holiday Club for children and their families at St Mary Magdalene's, 10am to 12 noon on the following dates:- Wednesdays - 31st July, 14th, 21st, 28th August

We need volunteers please to welcome families at the sessions, support in the kitchen preparing snack and preparing resources beforehand, such as cutting out. If you are able to volunteer on any of the dates or with preparing resources beforehand please speak to Ruth.

St Thomas' Church : volunteer cleaners wanted

If you have a spare hour every 2 or 3 weeks please consider offering to help clean our beautiful church.

Materials provided. Please contact me as below or speak to me after church. Thanks Sheila.

Creamfields 2024

'We are Church at Creamfields' are asking for donations of Jammie Dodgers (the official ones with a heart shaped jam hole!) again this year. Please drop off donations in Church. If you would like to volunteer for the Church Tent at Creamfields this August Bank Holiday weekend, follow this link to sign up: <https://tinyurl.com/bdeuxspk>

Eco Tip

Sometimes not doing something is a huge eco action, for example not using balloons or other plastic decorations, not buying that take-away coffee, choosing not to buy plastic cutlery for that barbecue - you will probably save money too. Sheila.

CONTACTS

Website www.stthomas-stocktonheath.org.uk

Parish Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/stthomasandmarymagdalenes>

Church channel on YouTube www.youtube.com/channel/UCpsYBGYSbFuulUITYYxICQw

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