

ST. THOMAS' & ST. MARY MAGDALENE'S – 26TH JULY 2026 – TRINITY 8 – RUTH'S GOODBYE SUNDAY

8.00am	Holy Communion at St. Thomas'
10.00am	Joint Service at St. Thomas' (No service at St. Mary Magdalene's) followed by Bring and Share lunch at Church Hall with gift-giving to Ruth
1.30pm	Baptism of Theo and Laurent
6.00pm	No Services at 6.00pm

Dear Friends,

It is difficult to put into words the immensity of gratitude I have for my time spent living and ministering amongst you all over the past three years. A dear friend of mine once said to me, 'You give your life to God and He takes you to places you can never have anticipated'. That is very true.

I arrived as a nervous Deacon trying to navigate my way through the first few months here, having moved to a 'foreign land', you might say. But Stockton Heath and Appleton soon became home due to the abundance of welcome, support, care and loving kindness shown to me by yourselves. You certainly know how to 'love your neighbour', I can testify to that, and I will be forever grateful. And I must take this opportunity to thank Michael for his guidance, patience and great care as my training incumbent, colleague and now very dear friend. I think we can both say we have had a whale of a time ministering together! I am also truly grateful to both Michael and Joanne for welcoming me into their home and lives for the past three years.

The quote, 'Parting is such sweet sorrow' from Romeo and Juliet is often used at such a time as this and it does seem appropriate because I do indeed feel a sense of sweet sorrow as I come to say goodbye. However, this is not 'Goodbye' but 'Au Revoir'! I will pop over from time to time to say 'Hello' and of course you are all more than welcome to come over and visit me. But leave I must as God calls me to a new place and a new church community at St Helen's, Witton, Northwich.

We hear in Ecclesiastes 3:1, 'There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens'. My season at St. Thomas' and St. Mary Magdalene's has come to an end but your season continues. So keep being those workers for God in the harvest fields, for He does indeed need you to reap and to sow, and to continue to grow His kingdom in this wonderful part of South Warrington and beyond.

God Bless and much love, Ruth x

A Blessing for Ruth

May the peace of the Lord Christ go with you wherever He may send you.

May He guide you through the wilderness, protect you through the storm.

May he bring you home rejoicing at the wonders He has shown you.

May He bring you home rejoicing once again into our doors.

And the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit
be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Prayer Focus

- That the Kingdom of God may be found in our lives: May we yearn for it like a hidden treasure, desire it like a pearl of great price and work for it by spreading our net wide.
- Blessings on Ruth's ministry as she completes her time with us. May she make new friends quickly, build up the people of God through Word and Sacrament and may the Lord give her wisdom and strength in her incumbency at St. Helen's.
- Our new Prime Minister Andy Burnham: may all parties respond to his leadership and may his desire to move the country on in a collaborative way be fulfilled especially in relation to youth unemployment, the cost of living and home building.
- The "forever wars" in our world, in Iran, Gaza, Lebanon, N. Nigeria, Syria, Congo, Sudan, Afghanistan, Myanmar, Ukraine and so many places. May our world leaders seek peace and reconciliation rather than domination and recrimination.
- Holiday times: bless those who are going away and those who are having staycations. May August be a time of rest and recuperation.
- Bless our farmers battling against the dry weather.
- Thanksgiving for the Tuesday Fun Lunches taking place in the summer – may they be a source of physical and spiritual sustenance and bless the leaders, cooks and helpers.
- Pray for healing for those who are hurting, especially Barbara, Kenneth, Phil, Frances, Bill, Freda, Val, Chris, Monica, Ollie, Kirsty, Ivy, Zara, Gary, Olly, Hazel, Lawrence and Lisa.
- Remember in love those who have died recently, especially Frank Deakin, Margaret Warrington, Mark Winstanley, Patricia Ledgerwood, Peter Kemp, Maureen Jones and those with anniversaries.

Sunday 2nd August – The Transfiguration

8.00am	Holy Communion at St. Thomas'
9.30am	Family Communion at St. Mary Magdalene's with Prayer Ministry
10.45am	Parish Communion at St. Thomas'
6.00pm	Evening Prayer at St. Mary Magdalene's

Dates for Diary

Mon-Fri	9.15am	Morning Prayer on Zoom
Monday		<i>Praise and Play on summer holiday until 7th September</i>
Tuesday	12noon-2pm	Free Fun Lunch at St. Thomas' every Tuesday during August
	7.00pm	PCC at St. Thomas'
Wednesday		<i>Little Sunbeams on summer holiday until 9th September</i>
	11.00am	Holy Communion Service at Belong
	12.30pm	Quiet Day Planning at St. Thomas'
Thursday	10.00am	Holy Communion at St. Thomas'
Friday	1.30 – 3.30pm	The Pantry at St. Mary Magdalene's
Saturday		<i>No Bible Study at St. Mary Magdalene's – on summer holiday until 29th August</i>

Advance Notice

- ❖ **Holy Communion and Lunch** - Wednesday 5th August at St. Mary Magdalene's. If you would like to come, contact the Church Office: office@stthomas-stocktonheath.org.uk or leave a message on 01925 214709.
- ❖ **Pilgrim Course** for new Christians to grow in faith. Begins Wednesday 2nd September at 7.30pm at the Vicarage – ring Michael 01925 261396 about taking that first step of faith.

Treasurer's Update

- **Congo Ebola Appeal** - We sent our contribution of £1,231 to the Diocesan appeal to assist the outbreak of Ebola in Congo. Of this £750 was sent from our Outward giving surplus 2025, the remainder being generous donations from the congregations in both churches.
- **Stockton Heath Festival Weekend** - This was a great fundraising and community engagement success! Takings from the Pick a prize Hamper on the Festival field were £913-94p an increase on last year. The Thursday and Friday concerts raised £137 with £20 expenses. Music for a Summer's evening raised £942 less £89 expenses giving £853 which will be shared with Sixpence Voice Studio and Melody Makers.
- **Fun Lunches** - We will be hosting Bible themed free family fun lunches throughout the school holidays: 28/7, 4/8, 11/8, 18/8 and 25/8 12noon -2pm in St. Thomas' Church. All welcome, booking required with Sue 07736 375 951.

Summer Time : All our services are as normal

- come to a different service – 8am on Sundays or 10am on Thursdays if you're out for the day on a Sunday
- use the "Everyday Faith" app day by day
- bring back a Church Magazine from the Church you visit when you are on holiday

Eco Church

Our parish features in the latest Diocesan Eco Church Network Newsletter with our hedgehog house workshop. <https://tinyurl.com/3t4z9rjp> There are lots of other interesting articles to read, so check it out and get involved!

Attendance

For parents seeking their child's admission to St. Thomas' School in September 2027 there is now an Attendance Register which is held by the Churchwarden. Please go to Katharine at the end of Services, or the leader of a Children's Praise.

St. Thomas' Open Church

We open weekdays 10:00-12noon and a dedicated team provide fellowship, tea and coffee. We need more volunteers – please contact Sarah Walton through the Parish website contact form or church answerphone 01925 214709.

Creamfields (25-31 August 2026) – Volunteers Required & JAMMIE DODGER DONATIONS PLEASE

[Creamfields 2026 poster PDF](#) (NB if you cannot click the link, the address is <https://tinyurl.com/42482wc9>)

If you can help in any way please contact Melanie Girdharry via email : m.girdharry@priestley.ac.uk

CONTACTS:

Website www.stthomas-stocktonheath.org.uk

Parish Office phone 01925 214709

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

Parish Instagram https://www.instagram.com/stthomas__stmarymagdalene

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

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