

ST. THOMAS' & ST. MARY MAGDALENE'S – SUNDAY, 6 SEPTEMBER 2026 – BACK TO SCHOOL SUNDAY

8.00am	Holy Communion at St. Thomas'
9.30am	Family Communion at St. Mary Magdalene's
10.45am	BACK TO SCHOOL SERVICE AT ST. THOMAS' (bring school bags, book bags & pencil cases to be blessed)
6.00pm	Evening Prayer at St. Mary Magdalene's

Dear Friends,

Isaiah 43:19 - "The Lord says behold I am doing a new thing"

September is a time for "new things." Perhaps you're beginning a new job, moving home, retiring, starting school for the first time, leaving school and going to university or college, returning to work after paternity/maternity leave? "New things" can be scary – I was talking to a parent whose last child is leaving home and was worried about "empty-nest syndrome" and several families who've just had a new baby – their smiling sleep-deprived faces said it all!

And of course on this "Back to School Sunday" our thoughts and prayers turn to our young people - there will be a tear or two shed as little ones begin "big school" for the first time : and no doubt a few Year 7 pupils will be apprehensive about High School.

Wherever you are in your life, we know that the future is in God's hands. Isaiah the prophet who lived at a time of political danger, including exile to Babylon, could tell the people of Israel with hope that God was going to do a "new thing" : even in the face of disaster.

One of my favourite hymns by John Keble has the lines "New every morning is the love our wakening and uprising prove" – based on another prophet Jeremiah's words "the steadfast love of the Lord never ceases" – the hymn plots the coming day in terms of God's presence in every situation – through perils, the trivial and common, the good and the bad: and concludes: "and help us this and every day to live more nearly as we pray."

I pray that God will be near you this week as He reveals His love in a new way.

Yours, as always, Michael.

Prayer Focus

- That our Lord Jesus will be present in new ways this coming week.
- Young people and all students beginning school, moving to new schools and leaving home for Higher Education. May the Lord walk beside them, protect them and hold them in the scary moments.
- Thanksgiving for the Church Tent at Creamfields. We pray that conversations, not to mention Jammy Dodgers will have brought many closer to the Kingdom.
- The Food, Faith & Community Project at the end of this month – as it contributes to our Major Works Project and puts us more in touch with past habits and healthy ways of living.
- As autumn comes and the grass becomes green after the drought, we give thanks for our beautiful, fragile world, so much in danger from global warming.
- The floods in Nepal and Tibet – for families grieving loved ones and those who have lost everything : may international aid be swift in arriving.
- For all our Groups beginning again: Bible Studies, Pilgrim for young and old, Little Sunbeams, Bible Explorers, Praise & Play, not to mention Action Groups and PCC. May we all be united in Jesus and grow in the power of the Holy Spirit.
- Our Diocese at a time of change : a "new thing" is arriving involving potential reconstruction of our Deaneries : may Parishes work together to break down boundaries and work more closely together.
- The "Forever Wars" in Ukraine, Myanmar, Afghanistan, Sudan, Congo, Syria, Northern Nigeria, the West Bank, Lebanon, Gaza, Iran. May world leaders be more willing to stand up against powerful bullies and dictators.
- Pray for healing for those who are hurting, especially David, Monica, Ollie, Kirsty, Ivy, Zara, Chris, Freda, Val, Gary, Paul, Olly, Hazel, Lawrence, Bill, Kenneth, Bernard, Keiko and Ron.
- Remember in love those who have died recently, especially Caroline Moore and Kathleen Driscoll and those with anniversaries.

Next Sunday – 13 September – Trinity 15

8.00am	Holy Communion at St. Thomas'
9.30am	Family Communion at St. Mary Magdalene's
10.45am	Parish Communion at St. Thomas' with Bible Explorers in the Church Hall
6.00pm	United Service with Methodists at St. Mary Magdalene's

Dates for Diary

Mon-Fri	Zoom Morning Prayer
Monday	1.00-2.30pm Praise & Play at St. Thomas'
Tuesday	12noon – Bible Study at St. Thomas' – Acts of the Apostles 7.30pm – Standing Committee at the Vicarage

Wednesday	9-11am - Little Sunbeams at St. Mary Magdalene's 7.30pm – Pilgrim Course at St. Thomas'
Thursday	10.00am – Holy Communion at St. Thomas' 6.30pm – Pilgrim for Young People at St. Thomas' Church
Friday	1.30pm-3.30pm – Ventry at St. Mary Magdalene's
Saturday	8.15am – Bible Study at St. Mary Magdalene's

Nurture & Bible Studies

- Pilgrim for Adults – Wednesday, 9 September, 7.30pm at St. Thomas' Church (for new Christians to grow in faith or anyone who wants a refresher – sign up in Church or ring Michael, Jan or Lee).
- Pilgrim for Young People – Thursday, 10 September. 6.30pm at St. Thomas' Church (initial meeting for parents and children leading up to 25 October Confirmation – meeting weekly on Sundays at 4.00pm) – sign up in Church or ring Michael or Sarah.
- Tuesday Bible Study – Tuesday, 8 September, 12noon-1.15pm at St. Thomas' Church (Studying the Acts of the Apostles – meeting every Tuesday).
- Saturday Bible Study – 8.15am at St. Mary Magdalene's – meeting every Saturday.

Quiet Day – Saturday, 19th September, 9.30am-3pm at Frandley Meeting House, Antrobus

An opportunity to enjoy beautiful surroundings and fellowship. Free – all welcome – sign up sheets in Churches.

Food, Faith and Community Recipe competition and event

There have been few entries for the competition - thank you to those who have entered! You can still enter and complete the entry form - in church or on the website just to give me an idea of dishes - no photo necessary as there will not be a shortlisting process, anyone previously shortlisting can now also enter. All entries will be invited for judging **by attendees** at the Heritage **Event on Friday 25th September** 7pm in church - please come along and support the event.

Macmillan Coffee Morning - Friday 25th September 10am - noon

If you are able to contribute a cake please sign the list at the back of both churches & please support the event.

Date for your diary - 'Bring and share' Harvest Supper Saturday 3rd October.

Eco News

- **Eco Fair - Saturday, 26 September 11am – 2.30pm : Free entry!**
Come along and celebrate our wonderful planet! We will have locally grown plants and produce, energy saving advice, handmade soaps and candles, eco-themed children's books, cleaning products, beauty products, café with homemade refreshments, talks, demonstrations, clothes exchange (see below) and much more!
- **Eco Fair Clothes Exchange – Saturday, 26 September**
Refresh your wardrobe sustainably and give your unworn clothes new life!
-How the Clothes Exchange works: Donate items to receive tokens, then use your tokens to shop for clothes at the Fair. You can donate up to 8 items of clothing per person.
-We accept: Adult and children's clothing, coats and accessories in clean, great condition (no stains, rips, frays, missing button or broken zips!)
-We can't accept: Underwear, socks, swimwear, shoes, damaged or dirty items.
-When and where to drop off: Bring your items to St. Thomas' church during a drop-off window so we can check them in and give you tokens ahead of time. If possible, bring your items on hangers!
Sunday 20 September 9.30am – 10.30am
Tuesday 22 September 10.30am – 11.30am
Thursday 24 September 6.00 – 7.00pm
On the day of the Eco Fair you can bring your items to the Hall in the first hour of the Fair, 11am – 12noon
Don't have any clothes to swap? No problem! You can still join in by purchasing tokens on the day for £1 each.
Contact Sheila for more details on either the Fair or the Clothes Exchange.

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.

CONTACTS:

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Parish Office phone 01925 214709

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

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